

TO: Assembly

FROM: Romer Palad

RE: The Future of DU Bilateral Agreements upon the Discontinuation of UK Participation in the Erasmus Scheme.

DATE: 11 March 2021

Assembly Notes

-That the government announced that the UK will not be participating in the Erasmus scheme after the 2021/22 academic year. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/29/world/europe/brexit-erasmus-uk-eu.html>

-That a new replacement program 'The Turing Scheme' is intended to replace Erasmus+ and possibly replicate its benefits. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-turing-scheme-to-support-thousands-of-students-to-study-and-work-abroad>

-That individual departments at DU have had long-term bilateral agreements since the inception of Erasmus in 1987. The Chemistry department for example has had 12 EU partners with at least 22 guaranteed UG/PG exchanges annually.

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/erasmus/outgoing/degree/where/science/chemistry/>

-That the bilateral agreements go beyond simply nullifying fees, they are bespoke and have certain agreements regarding other factors such as specific Student Union assistance, accommodation, utilities discounts, guarantorships etc.

-That there is a lot of uncertainty regarding replicating such agreements as we transition into the Turing Scheme, but what is certain is that current bilaterals are untenable and may not be replaced at all.

Assembly Believes

-That the SU has a role to play in mitigating the effects of losing these long-term agreements.

-That we as a university should endeavour to piece together what we can from current agreements as we transition into the new scheme.

-That our student body and academic community benefits from having an international presence, and this transition period should not make the DU look less attractive as a destination for potential non-domestic students.

-That the university executive, students, the SU, and departments will all have different perceptions of our unique selling points. It is important that the student body and the SU has a say in the strategy to attract international students and academics going forward.

Assembly Resolves

-To advise our UG and PG Academic officers to communicate with departments to assist in maintaining links with partner universities, building a new framework/strategy that facilitates UK-EU exchanges.

- To mandate the SU to lobby the University to clearly designate a contact for prospective international students for support and advice, which should be listed on widely available webpages across the University community (e.g. DUO, SU & University websites).

-To mandate the DSU to lobby the university executive to have a say in the strategy to attract global students and academics in light of a change in strategy due to Brexit and gain/loss of exchange schemes.