

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you chose your partners, b) in which geographical areas(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees.

It has been one of the most significant priorities in the development of our College to establish a network of international partners. This task is even more important due to the linguistic profile of the College that should ensure the opportunity for international mobility to the country speaking a given language, which is in our opinion a basic requirement of a higher educational institution offering language studies. The main form of cooperation with foreign partners involves the mobility of students as well as that of teaching and administrative staff within the Erasmus Program. Whenever it is impossible to sign an agreement within the Erasmus Program framework, the College tries to identify other mutually beneficial forms of cooperation. At present, we have an extensive partner network in Spain and a sufficient one in Germany. We intend to sign new agreements in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Given the dynamic development of oriental language studies provided by our College we will try to establish partnerships in China and Japan, as well as in South Korea. Our long-term perspective provides for establishing of cooperation with Nordic countries.

So far only our first cycle students have had an opportunity for mobility. However, as we expand our range of second cycle studies, we intend to sign relevant agreements. We are also going to organize a possibly largest number of student internships abroad as well as teaching and administrative staff's training stays abroad.

The following most crucial elements are considered when selecting foreign partners:

a) convergence of the curricula of both institutions. A partner university should offer at least one curriculum similar to that provided by WSJO. It is important to send our students to a host university of their preference on the one hand, and to offer an interesting program of studies to the candidates from the partner institution on the other. Another significant element

considered when selecting an exchange partner is an opportunity for staff mobility. Quite a narrow range of specializations offered by our College partly facilitates the analysis of curricula of our potential partners;

b) geographical area. It is important for students to study language as well as the literature, history and culture of a given area, while experiencing its everyday life. Our primary focus involves Spain, English speaking countries, German speaking countries and the Nordic countries in the future. Outside of Europe, we are going to establish cooperation with China, Japan and South Korea;

c) the will to cooperate. Provided that the curricula of both institutions are convergent, we try to welcome any cooperation offer whenever approached by a foreign institution, even if it means only unilateral mobility. We have observed that it is relatively easy to develop a partner network in Spain, whereas our cooperation requests are most often rejected by the institutions in English speaking countries;

d) students' preferences. The preferences of potential exchange students are among the most significant factors. They frequently enquire about the possibility of going to a given country, and we try to take their preferences into consideration as we develop the network of partners. The student does not have to abandon his preferred destination even when there is no agreement with the institution he has chosen. If it is feasible to establish cooperation with a given institution we approach their foreign cooperation department with a proposal. When the agreement is actually signed, the student who has come up with the initiative to establish cooperation with this particular partner is a preferred candidate for a stay there;

e) the feasibility of achieving mobility. Having organized student mobility for many years we know the number of students interested in mobility and their most preferred destinations. We are not looking for further partners in German speaking countries since the students of German are barely interested in mobility. The largest number of our partners is located in Spain, as this country is most frequently indicated as a preferred destination by the students of Spanish and other students.

In simple terms, modern language studies, as we understand them, are about shaping open intercultural attitudes. Studying a new language, reading foreign literature, learning about the history and cultural landmarks, a student goes beyond his native mentality and behaviors.

Apart from linguistic and academic benefits, the development of students' intercultural competence is the fundamental purpose of stays abroad. We do realize that the experience of Erasmus stays abroad goes far beyond the 'studies abroad'. Mobility provided by the Erasmus Program facilitates the shaping of worldview that is open to other cultures, teaches self-reliance, tolerance and influences the ultimate choice of a student's professional path. The students return positively transformed and more mature.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organization and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme.

We have high hopes for the new Erasmus Program providing the opportunity for cooperation with non-EU countries. Our fundamental purpose remains to establish cooperation with the countries speaking the languages we teach in our main language studies programs. We would particularly appreciate partners from China, Japan and South Korea, but we do not exclude Spanish speaking countries of South America. We are interested in all forms of cooperation providing for the mobility of students and teaching staff as well as programs offering two diplomas.

Our students of English can take an advantage of the 2+2 Program. This is a four-year program comprising two years of studies in Poland and two years in the UK, concluded with the student obtaining two diplomas of higher education: Polish *licencjat* and British BA. So far we have implemented this program with University of Bedfordshire, and now we are concluding agreements with two new partners, namely University of Huddersfield and Middlesex University.

The opportunity to obtain two diplomas has turned out to be so attractive that we would gladly set up similar projects with partners from other countries, for the students of other languages.

Additionally, we would like to reinforce our position as a center for teaching Polish as a foreign language. We have offered a course in Polish to foreign students arriving to WSJO within the Erasmus Program. The experience we have gathered, the staff and facilities developed have enabled us to plan further development in this field.

We are also going to provide foreign students with a possibility of completing student internship within the Erasmus Program at our Foreign Cooperation Office and various departments. Also teaching placements are conceivable for students of teaching English, German or Spanish as a foreign language programs, who could act in the capacity of a language instructor's assistant.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernization of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the *Modernisation Agenda*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve.

Our participation in the Program impacts on a number of factors related to the operations of a higher educational institution. The objectives to achieve as regards the priorities defined in the *Modernisation Agenda* involve the following:

a) increasing the number of higher education graduates

The opportunity for mobility is attractive for young people and is frequently crucial for their choice of a university or major of studies. In the case of modern language studies, the students' future professional life will require the command of a foreign language, combined with their knowledge of the culture and civilization of a target language area, therefore the stays abroad offered by the College are even more valuable. Expanding the network of our foreign partners, by means of including both educational institutions and employers, we want to be able to provide each student with an opportunity for mobility as a student or an intern.

It is highly important for our College to attract non-EU students (we recruit students from Ukraine) who can then take advantage of the Erasmus Program mobility provided by our College that would otherwise be unavailable for them.

b) Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

The most beneficial aspect of the Erasmus Program in this context involves foreign internship allowing students to gather their first professional experience and providing a significant source of information on the elements of education that are particularly appreciated by potential employers of future graduates.

c) Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation

Students' stays abroad and the mobility of teaching and administrative staff in particular contribute to strengthening quality providing a platform for the exchange of experience and examples of good practice both in teaching and administration that can be directly or indirectly transferred to the home institution;

d) Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

In the course of our further participation in the Program we are going to develop a data base of verified foreign employers providing internship for visiting students (in particular with respect to foreign language teaching and translation). Feedback from these employers concerning their expectations as well as students' strengths and weaknesses will be taken into consideration by the Curriculum Council when improving curricula;

e) Improving governance and funding

Training stays abroad of administrative staff facilitate the introduction of the most efficient governance of an educational institution, ranging from marketing and candidates' enrollment, through the organization of the educational process, to the establishment of relationship with the local and European labor market, to efficient financing of various activities. It should also be emphasized that the exchange of experience and tested solutions allows for a bilateral transfer of good practice.