

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija / Higher Education Institution (hereinafter referred to as KVK) is the 3rd third-largest Higher Education Institution in Lithuania that provides professional Bachelor degree studies. KVK graduates are granted with Degree of Professional Bachelor Qualification and Diploma of Higher Education. KVK cooperates with Lithuanian and foreign education and science institutions, including organizations representing employers. KVK participates in international projects to benefit of development, exchange and transfer of knowledge with institutions from all over Europe. KVK commits itself to the Life Long Learning support, as staff and student exchange with our partner education institutions, contributes to exchange of international experience and expertise for both Lithuanian and international students and staff.

The KVK's strategy, objectives and priorities for its Erasmus activities

Active participation in Erasmus Program is an integral part of our institution to comply with the requirements of European Higher Education Area. KVK will continuously strive to be innovative and visionary on the international and the European scene while actively forming an alliance with local and regional authorities in the area of internationalization.

KVK includes the following objectives in its EPS:

- Increase outgoing and incoming Erasmus mobility (students and staff);
- Maintain and enhance relations with the current partners for purpose of student and staff mobility;
- Broaden and deepen the academic curricula through cooperation with partner institutions;
- Increase foreign language proficiency among students and academic/administrative staff;
- Guarantee a European education for its students through exchanges with various European higher education institutions;
- Increase the cultural awareness among students and staff;
- Develop intensive relations with selected Higher Education Institutions for the purpose of Intensive Programmes.

Under the Erasmus scheme, the KVK currently has over 200 Erasmus partners offering exchanges to students and staff. These partnerships are reviewed annually with a view to consolidating and strengthening each relationship.

Visibility of Erasmus activities

It is hoped that with increased visibility and promotion of the programme, mobility can be expanded. The Erasmus programme is promoted actively through the International Relations Department and each faculty. Erasmus activities are made visible in many ways: the objectives, measures and results are discussed in internal working groups; meetings and info-sharing days for students and staff are organized; heads of departments promote and support the specific opportunities for Erasmus mobility offered in their subject areas; information on notice board and website is updated regularly. The Erasmus Policy Statement will be displayed on the website as well.

Non-discrimination objectives

The KVK aims to create a working and learning environment that is inclusive and maximizes the potential of all staff and students. It seeks to ensure that students and staff are not treated less favourably on the grounds of sex, race, class, colour, racial group, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, physical or mental disability.

Quality of mobility activities

International Relations Department is given the responsibility to manage student and staff exchange and to further projects that have cross-national partnership.

Outgoing students mobility

Full-time and extramural students have an opportunity to study or go for placements abroad for the period of 3-12 months. With the help of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the study period in a foreign country is fully recognized at KVK. While choosing partner institutions for Bilateral Agreements special attention is given to compatibility of study programs to facilitate the recognition later.

Outgoing students participate in selection process where their linguistic skills for studies/practice abroad are evaluated by means of proficiency test. Their motivation and grades are included into evaluation criteria. Functioning of Erasmus programme and all practical information (process on selection procedures, financial issues, recognition of study period abroad, necessary documents, etc.) is clearly defined in the internal Erasmus regulations which are accessible at KVK's website. Students are advised about appropriate course options and assessment which are confirmed via a Learning Agreement with the host institution prior to departure.

The aim of student placements is to provide a valuable international experience for students which will be recognized as part of their studies and will enhance their employability after graduation. Placement partnerships are established mainly through existing academic links where partner Higher Education Institutions act as intermediate between the KVK, students and companies/enterprises. A placement contract which details the responsibilities of each partner and the student is signed between the partners. Students are also issued with a job description or learning agreement which includes their individual responsibilities and objectives. Arrangements for guidance are made before the start of the training. Students have to report about the progress of the training and their assignment on a regular basis.

Incoming students mobility

Incoming students receive details about specific course options and credits from the International Relations Department. It also provides assistance in finding suitable accommodation in KVK's dormitories or in the city. Incoming students get pick up service, integration week, individual counseling, social and cultural programme, info sheets. The first week of arrival students have integration week when they receive information about libraries, computer facilities, examination regulations, timetables, student union and practical/other information about living in Lithuania. Free Lithuanian language classes are available at the KVK. There is a functioning Mentor system in KVK which unites students willing to assist Incoming Erasmus students and help them to settle in new environment. Special attention is given to the importance of connecting the students with each other and to open their way to the various social activities that take place within the local student community.

Staff mobility

Staff mobility is an essential part of KVK's international strategy and it encourages its staff to visit other Higher Education Institutions and participate in their educational activities. The main achievement of this programme is sharing expertise and experience and establishing cultural awareness and international focus with the staff members. KVK invites staff from other institutions and actively participates in educational programmes.

Staff applying for Erasmus mobility participate in selection process. Key criteria are appropriate language knowledge, importance of offered topics and motivation. Prior to mobility period staff have a possibility to choose language courses. After the mobility, academic staff help to coordinate incomings and provide all the teaching material in foreign language.