

## ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

### **1. Describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy.**

"Toledo" Art School is a school of over 100 years. It has been a cultural landmark in the history of the town. It features an exhibition hall and a small museum of applied arts which houses decorative works of art, made within and outside the school, which served as models to students in the beginning and now are part of their heritage. The building that houses the school is a Cultural heritage site, considered a landmark building in the town of Toledo.

Education is provided in the first and second years of Baccalaureate in Arts, plus vocational education in Plastic Arts and Design. High School students account for about 50%. "Toledo" Art School is part of a relatively small group of art schools in Spain, usually one per province. It is located in Toledo, Castile-La Mancha, south-central Spain. The student body is diverse in age, background and interests. A large part of high school students enter university, usually Fine Arts and its various forms, and some of the students continue their education studying Higher Level Training Cycles of Plastic Arts and Design, some of which are provided by our School.

No modern institution, especially an educational one, can nowadays turn its back on international cooperation programmes and projects and mobile staff and students and neither can we. We agree with the 2014-2020 EU programme for education, training, youth and sport and its five-priority agenda and we are interested in the modernisation and internationalization of our institution, which is proved by our intention of participating in the Programme, specifically in its key action 1.

International cooperation programmes ensure the quality of education, broaden the academic and professional horizon of its students and staff and serve their teaching and learning needs. And mobility helps staff and students increase their professional, social and intercultural skills and employability, which is essential for the internationalisation and modernisation of education.

Finding the appropriate partner is vital for a successful cooperation project, therefore it is essential that the process of identifying partners for projects begins as early as possible.

We try to find our partners according to what we hope to achieve, the nature of the project and the experience that we need in order to make the project work. The nature of the projects we prefer are

related to Art, so we are mainly interested in institutions or enterprises related to artistic or design studies.

We do not simply choose our partners because we already know them or looking at where they are from, but we try to check the partner's profile, expertise and reliability.

Once we choose the partners, we try to have discussions in order to make sure we all understand and share the goals, design and schedule of the project and that collaboration will be guaranteed.

We also pay attention to the fact that behind the partner is a whole structure instead of just one or two persons.

As to the geographical areas, in general, it is easy to understand, taking into consideration what we have stated above, that geography is not a priority when it comes to choosing our partners for a project.

It is true that living in a Mediterranean country we might be tempted to choose similar countries, apart from the fact that they are nearer and it might reduce stress in mobile students, but experience has taught us that results can be much more interesting and rewarding with partners which do not seem to be very similar.

But in the case of student mobilities for traineeships, we prefer Italy because the studies we provide have a lot to do with design and in this sense, Italy is a reference point.

The most important objectives are to:

- Develop cooperation with partners from other EU or non-EU countries.
- Promote and support student and staff mobility, and doing it in compliance with the Programme's desires of including underrepresented groups such as that of artists.
- Develop joint courses in cooperation with teachers from other countries.
- Disseminate the past and present results of individual mobility or in cooperation projects.
- Carry out the selection of mobile staff and students in a fair and transparent way, complying with the principles of non-discrimination set out in the Programme and ensure equal access and opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds.

- Ensure full recognition of staff and student mobility.

## **2. Describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme.**

First, we prioritize mobilities within the framework of agreements set up between institutions. These agreements establish the roles and responsibilities of the different parties, especially as regards the selection, preparation, reception and integration of mobile participants. In the case of mobilities with enterprises or other organizations, we ensure that the conditions for high quality mobilities are settled in the agreements, learning agreement for students and mobility agreements for staff.

As to the selection of participants, we publicise mobilities, establish the selection criteria, schedule the process and promote applications, including the necessary level of linguistic command.

After that, we provide assistance related to travel, insurance and accommodation. Likewise, we ensure that mobile participants going abroad are well prepared for the mobility from the linguistic point of view.

In the case of incoming mobile participants, we ensure equal academic treatment and services and organise a period of mobile students' induction at the beginning of their stay and provide all the relevant information during this period.

All aspects related to mobilities must be established in the agreements and validated between the sending and receiving institutions and the participants, either staff or students. It is especially important to establish the tasks to be performed in the workplace or the activities to be undertaken.

Staff members are appointed from the beginning to coordinate and monitor the mobility, sign the agreement, recognise the credits earned during mobility and provide guidance to the participants.

The satisfactory completion of the mobility is recognised at the end of the mobilities, specifying details such as the modules taken at the home institution, the activities undertaken or the location of the mobility.

Finally, all the information regarding the mobilities are published on the website for contact and consultation purposes.

**3. Explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda\*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve.**

Broadly speaking, it goes without saying that Erasmus mobilities contribute to develop the personality of the participants in the human, personal and professional aspect.

The aims of the Erasmus Programme, which are to support the development of higher education and foster its innovation, are key elements in the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs.

**I. Increasing attainment levels**

Participating in the Programme will increase the number of pupils and of better prepared graduates of our institution. These graduates will be more competent, skilled and increasingly valued by employers thanks to their command of foreign languages, greater intercultural awareness and adaptability. Thus, the Programme increases job prospects and encourages labour market mobility in the future.

The framework is not the town, region or country anymore and it becomes an open space full of personal and training opportunities.

**II. Improving quality and relevance**

The Erasmus Programme modernises higher education in Europe and its impact can be measured on individual skills enhancement, employability, institutional development and development of individual competences.

New technologies have brought us closer to people from all over the world and have permitted the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, but it is necessary the real coexistence to finish up the internationalization.

The philosophy of think locally act globally is attained thanks to the exchange of lives, experiences, etc.

On the other hand, it is a motivating both for staff and for students, even dropouts, who claim something different and more challenging and more adapted to labour market than ordinary teaching. At the same time, ECTS facilitate transfer and progression across the European Union.

**III. Mobility & international co-operation for quality**

The mobility and international cooperation inherent in this programme contributes to the internationalisation of the participating institutions and encourages the development of partnerships which lead to improvements in the quality of the education and training they provide.

These partnerships result in subsequent contacts for the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Also, the partnerships with enterprises can be maintained and enrich our view of the labour market.

At the same time, the participating staff also improves their competences and outlook, which reverts in the institutions they work for.

#### IV. Strengthening the "knowledge triangle"

Erasmus stimulates entrepreneurial, creative and innovation skills and learning environments where they can be accomplished.

It will also encourage partnership and co-operation between our institution and business from which we all get a benefit and mutual exchange involving students and staff.

#### V. Creating the right governance and funding conditions

The investment in education and cooperation projects must be sufficient but also efficient and well-targeted.