

## European Charter for Higher Education – n. 29228-LA-1-2014-1-IT-E4AKA1-ECHE

### Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Despite the small dimension Tuscia University boasts quite a number of students and academic staff; in fact students are today 11.000; the academic staff counts little less than 300 units. According to the new law the University is not any more organized in faculties but only in departments in charge of teaching and research. In total it has seven departments that have made of European cooperation their personal task. Tuscia University has made of international cooperation its philosophy and its main core. The rationale is to link the Italian University to the International network of research and teaching. This attitude allowed the signing of quite a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements with universities and scientific institutions of Europe and all the other continents. Generally the partners are suggested by the academic staff which have stable relationships with some colleagues of foreign institutions; often the international mobility office is directly contacted by possible partners interested in establishing a cooperation and developing activities with Tuscia. Particular attention is given to mobility of staff and students according to the financial possibilities assigned by national and international bodies. In addition the University of Tuscia is giving two-three grants for students interested in collecting data for their thesis in developing countries. With this opportunity it has been possible to send students to Kenya, Malawi, Burkina Faso, Nepal, Ghana, in the last two years. In the framework on the internationalization of our three cycle studies, we sign Double Diploma Agreements with many European Universities thus giving students the possibility of obtaining the diploma recognized by University of Tuscia and the foreign partner, at the end of their studies. Moreover, with some partners the Phd cotutela thesis has been signed; this gives the Phd title - which is considered in part a teaching activity but also the first step in research area - according to the European educational Agreement from the Bologna process, an international breath. It is evident that the goal to have a citizen-based Europe, mainly in these days, needs the maximum integration of young generations and Tuscia University's policy grounds on increasing students' chances to meet and exchange feelings, perspectives, and desires.

Tuscia University intends to increase the number of foreign students attending BA and MA degree courses at reduced fee cost and assign grant to the most on a merit base. This intention is evidently related to the financial availabilities which are driving the possibility of increasing the number of incoming students. In addition we are planning to increase the number of courses taught in English. After a survey among Italian students we realized that they will be very favourable to follow courses in English but the limitation is mainly due to their poor linguistic competence. For this purpose we plan for the next a.y. to organize advanced English courses to increase the level of language knowledge among Italian students and start up the new courses.

**If applicable, please 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.**

In 2010 the University has organized, inside the International mobility office, a task force (COPI) for European and international projects to help and support the academic staff in participating in European research and project calls. The presence of experts in European project activities has allowed the University to be financed for 29 research projects within FP7 and 13 projects in different EC programs covering several subject areas. In particular Tuscia University coordinates a multiannual IP project on food safety and legislation, which is involving students and professors from different Universities from Spain, France, Poland, and Italy. This course is on its third year of activity and it has in program to enlarge its partnership. Another successful project is Grundtvig multilateral project named EDUCARE which is about the elderly carer and active ageing. The presence of COPI allowed the University to participate with local stakeholders in different successful projects. This aspect is a very promising activity due to the difficulties generally faced by stakeholders when accessing to European funds. As far as the FP7 research projects are concerned, the most successful topic is related to agriculture and environmental studies which is a recognized excellency of University of Tuscia.

Under the Erasmus umbrella that we joined in 1988 sending students to the Netherlands and the UK, we have been able to offer mobility abroad to around 3,000 students, with no negative records, and hosting almost the same number. With other important cooperation with a consortium of US Universities (USAC) we have managed to create a stimulating multicultural environment.

The international agreements with enterprises has allowed students to acquire an entrepreneurial attitude to be exploited in the local area. The experience we have developed so far is very positive and some students have been permanently employed in European companies after their placement period.

**Please 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.**

Since the a.y. 2011-2012 each department of the Tuscia University has a student tutor to promote the LLP Erasmus project and increase student mobility. In the current year we have doubled the number of Erasmus applicants which is likely to substantially double the student mobility. In addition we are defining in advance the study activities of each partner university. This policy is making the exchange and the credit recognition easier and faster and the efficiency is more cost effective. Tuscia University has always believed that the added value of the Erasmus experience is not only creditable in ECTS but represents a relevant international aspect of students' lives. This is the primary way to experience a foreign university context and breath multicultural atmospheres. The building of the Europe of citizens begins from the youngest generations and the Erasmus activities represent the first brick in the making of this solid wall/principle. Moreover the mobility experience is valued 1 point at the thesis discussion when graduating. The Erasmus placement mobility has also a great success and this complies with the requirement of creating a positive link between academia and job market. Tuscia University is partner in an Alpha project named RIAIPE III in cooperation with Latin America. The central issue of the project was the participation in HE for under represented groups. This research represents a good basis to create better condition for less represented groups at Tuscia University. Moreover, we have an ongoing statistics survey which enquiries about students' performances and is

aimed to reduce drop out. Besides being partner in two Erasmus Mundus projects, two other projects have been recently submitted by Tuscia, as coordinator, in the last call. The participation in the programme is therefore fundamental to carry out on going activities and allow a considerable number of non EU students and staff to experience the European HE system. Also convinced that the cooperation with local stakeholders is the secret for the development and the growth of this area, Tuscia University has submitted a project within LLP multiple partnership aimed to establish a degree course in entrepreneurship which represents the necessary connection between knowledge and job market, preparing students to look at their job career market with a different perspective. Other aims that Tuscia University pursues are a greater involvement of local SMEs in research, to contribute to local economy. To increase the synergy between University and job market, new courses have been opened targeted to better responding to the job market requests; this with the exploitation of new learning modes will be the crucial elements to meet the requirements of new learners in this changing world. Finally the University governance has increased the financing in favour of the mobility in the name of a better targeted ways to contribute to the creation of Europe of knowledge and experience.