

Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)

In order to complete this section, please refer to the instructions given below. Please note that your EPS shall be given wide visibility in your institution and must be published on the web page of your institution. The EPS should set out the overall Erasmus co-operation strategy of your institution in relation with its mission statement, underlying its Erasmus cooperation plan as well as any other activities to be proposed in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

a) Please describe briefly your institution's strategy, objectives and priorities for its Erasmus activities (mobility, multilateral projects and thematic networks, etc.) and any other actions in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013).

b) Please also provide information on the following points:

What specific actions are planned to give visibility to Erasmus activities and what type of publicity will be given to the Erasmus University Charter and the EPS?

What kind of arrangements, if any, does the Institution ensure to comply with non-discrimination objectives (e.g. actions related to gender equality, integration of disabled students and staff, enhancement of social and economic cohesion and combating of xenophobia and racism)?

Despite its not huge dimension Tuscia University boasts an increasing number of students and of academic staff; students are today 11.000; the staff is made up of 320 units. The University counts now 6 Faculties that have made European cooperation their personal task. In the past 3 years 4 different Leonardo Projects have been financed by the EC. These projects have allowed 120 graduates to spend a period abroad aimed at providing them with a professional experience. This mobility aspect will be widely fostered with the presentation of new projects. Tuscia University has also viewed joint curricula as an important element to increase the European dimension and they have proven to be relevant in creating a common cultural background. Among these, the joint curriculum in Ecological Agriculture is a successful example. Initially elaborated by 7 Universities in Western Europe it is now made up of 30 Western and Eastern Universities and taught in three different languages as a BSc level course, stuck to the 3+2 new scheme. The Degree Course in Ecological Agricultural (BSc) and in Agroecology (MSc) have been recognized by the Italian Ministry of University as high qualitative ones and funded in the national Internationalisation Programme. At a European level, the DAAD has selected Tuscia course as a successful study-case for Transnational mobility. Given these positive results, Tuscia's aim is to further develop and enlarge this cooperation. Steps in this direction have been made with other European countries and this relationships will lead to signing didactic agreements and courses to be attended by students in each other country. At Tuscia the Socrates activities are supervised by the "Socrates Board", chaired by the Institutional Coordinator. This Board has representatives of each Faculty and they are in charge of spreading information about Erasmus initiatives and procedures. This board has proven to be very effective and thanks to it a continuous exchange between the people involved is possible; adjustments are made and new solutions are sorted out for a correct implementation of the programme. Tuscia University, in compliance with the regulations of the EU, has always assured that the Erasmus Programme were applied in respect of social equity and gender equality principles. Not any discrimination has even been denounced by participants. New initiatives are being planned for disabled students. The Socrates Board will organize a meeting with the higher Academic representatives and great visibility will be given to the Erasmus University Charter. The University press agent will write articles on the local newspaper and information will be offered to students about the innovations of the LL programme. The EPS will be shared among the University components and transferred to local institutions. The students' hostel, run by regional authority, foster the social cohesion and the University is strongly committed in getting a higher number of rooms.

Quality of academic mobility activities:

What kind of specific measures are implemented in the institution to ensure high quality in academic mobility activities?

Details should be provided on: recognition and credit systems, the provision of information on curricula, information and counselling of outgoing students, tutoring and integration of incoming students, provision of student services (in particular accommodation), preparatory and refresher language courses, support and acknowledgement of staff mobility.

In order to guarantee high quality and adequate support for student and teaching staff mobility, the University of Tuscia has implemented both logistic and financial actions. In particular, special attention has been devoted to language preparation of outgoing students by organizing English and Spanish language courses at different levels. The presence of a new structure - the Academic Linguistic Centre - will allow to have more continuity in the organization of language courses assuring a more competent attention to the didactic problems. Moreover, this centre will be highly useful for the incoming students this new structure being also devoted to the preparation for Italian language. At present, we have Italian courses at two levels - beginners and advanced -; the collaboration with the centre will provide incoming students with a more individually tailored linguistic support. The website dedicated to the Erasmus project - <http://tuscia.socratesmanager.it> - is already in Italian and English. It is our intention to add a translation in some other languages - probably Spanish - with all the useful procedures to get to Viterbo, to apply for the students' house, to contact the Departmental coordinator and the International Office. The completion of the new students' house will allow Tuscia University to offer a greater number of rooms for Erasmus students at very convenient cost. However, Tuscia University signed an agreement with Viterbo City Hall to facilitate Tuscia's students in finding private accommodations. The presence of Erasmus Student Association (ASES) is making the cohesion between incoming and local students incredibly easier. Twice a year a welcome party represents a great occasion to fuse students together. All faculties agree to recognize 100% of credits of student mobility. The procedures approved by the Academic Authorities about teaching mobility will certainly allow a higher exchange of staff and will increase the European dimension of the University.

Quality of student placement activities:

What kind of specific measures are implemented to ensure high quality in student placements? Give details on how the work-programme and the placement agreement are prepared and implemented. Please describe the practical arrangements agreed between the parties. Please specify also the monitoring and evaluation of the placement period as well as its recognition in the curriculum.

Placement is compulsory in the curricula available at Tuscia University. A package of ECTS credits is allocated to students' placement in observance with the requirements of the different degree courses. These credits are given for placement activities spent in a farm or other institutions involved in the local food-chain, in industrial sector or in tourist activities, museums, banks and other agencies. Between the client institution and Tuscia University an agreement is signed by all parties - including the student -, designing a plan of activities related to vocational training. Special attention will be given to the respect of work principles in force at the hosting partner, considering the experience of students (both incoming and outgoing) as an important aspect of their total training and probably their first real contact with the job market. At the moment several agreements with local institutions have been signed by each Faculty. Placement reports by the students are usually evaluated by the academic board in the process of awarding graduation titles.

The good relationships with political-economical activities working on Tuscia territory allows our students to have a practical training in farms, factories, companies, newspapers, etc., and will be utilized also for implementing the programme in regards of the incoming students. Agreements will be signed with our partner Universities and with the network of partners who cooperate in the Leonardo projects for the placement of outgoing students in Europe. It is our intention to advertise on the web a list of possible placements available in the Province thus allowing incoming students to make the right choice before arriving. We will ask our partners to provide us with a similar list so that Tuscia students can easily match with the most suitable placement available abroad.