

Erasmus Policy Statement

Wekerle Business School (WBS) being a relatively young and small, but state accredited private institution considers the Erasmus+ programme to be an excellent opportunity for the expansion of its own internationalisation, and through internationalisation for its own further modernisation. These two objectives are the main principles of the institutional strategy, and shall enable the institution to contribute to the goals of a European Education Area, where education and culture can and will fulfil their decisive roles in generating jobs and improving employability, in increasing social fairness and active citizenship, and in enhancing the experience of European identity in all its diversity.

Currently WBS offers Bachelor level programmes in the field of Economics and Information Technology. By modernisation we mean the improvement of the attractiveness of the college in several aspects:

- most importantly in terms of the content and the methodology of its academic programmes,
- which cannot be achieved without the continuous development of the academic staff,
- and the constant drive for new research projects that respond to the newly emerging needs of a highly globalised world and its labour market,
- while both the working conditions provided for the staff and the services offered to the students shall be improved,
- acknowledging the fact that all the above objectives can only be reached if the management itself is willing and able to renew its working procedures, especially those responsible for quality management. And since all the above changes are interrelated with and interdependent on one another, the modernisation process can be regarded as the joint learning of all concerned: students, lecturers and staff within a learning organization.

For the above reasons WBS shall continue and intensify its participation in the KA 1 Learning mobility activities, and shall join KA 2 Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices, as well as KA 2 Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities. For the success of the activities, WBS is determined to

- develop cooperation with partners in other countries in the framework of a clear strategy for internationalisation;
- promote and support student and staff mobility, especially for individuals with fewer opportunities, and further develop non-discrimination policies;
- pursue a clear policy towards the development of integrated, transnational teaching activities (joint courses / curricula);
- recognise the importance of, and provide visibility to, the results achieved by the staff members engaged in individual mobility or in cooperation projects with strategic partners;
- take into account the results of internal monitoring of European and international mobility and cooperation activities to date, thus further improving its international performance.

We believe that during the upcoming Erasmus+ programme period, high quality mobility and new strategic partnerships will enable WBS to better perform on its strategically important development areas, i.e. on

- the increase of the number of its students, both Hungarian and international, especially those who are studying full-time;
- the decrease of the number of dropout students;
- the acquisition of the state accreditation of the academic programmes, each containing a mobility window;
- the increase of the academic programmes and courses available in the English language;
- the improvement of the collaboration with the local communities;
- the improvement of the digital learning and teaching environment within WBS and through collaborations with partners;

- the improvement of foreign language and intercultural competencies of students, lecturers and staff,
- and the development of a more environmentally conscious attitude within the institution.

The reason why we believe that this learning process can be enhanced by internationalisation in general, and by the Erasmus+ Program in particular is that it carries the element of the new in itself, if one is either a sender or a receiver partner of the program: the meeting of new people and finding new friends, the experiencing of new cultures and new working/learning conditions, the facing of new challenges and testing new solutions – the list could be further continued. All these would allow the participants to see themselves and their own routines from a new perspective, and would enable them not just to acquire new knowledge and skills, but also to change certain attitudes, which is indispensable to change those routines. If there were just one feature to be gained, it should be collaboration, which on the one hand should permeate the whole institution, and the increased level of which would certainly contribute to its expected improvement on the other.

Although during the past few years – partly because the college mostly had corresponding students – our participation has been rather moderate (with 4 teacher mobilities and 5 bilateral contracts), the intensification in the new period is essential. It is expected to help retain and improve the already existing programmes of the college, and will hopefully lead to the development of new ones as well as to the increase of the number of international students and lecturers alike.

Every year we expect 5 students to complete their internship abroad. They will most certainly gain work experience in an international context, will establish work relationships with their colleagues, and might as well be able to find a job abroad. Also, we would like 5 students a year to study a semester at an institution abroad in order for them to see whether they can compete with their peers, and what new approaches they can spread after their return home. During and after the internship/semester, they will be required to share their experience with their Hungarian mates through a blog and social media tools, or even in the form of club events, thus promoting the Erasmus+ program and the unique opportunity it offers within the institution.

Beside the students, every year we hope to send 10 lecturers (to teach or to do research) as well as 10 staff members (to participate in trainings) to partner institutions. Thus our lecturers would be able to compare academic content and methodologies to their own, while staff members would have the chance to study institutional management procedures, student services, cross-cultural programmes and many other aspects of higher education that can later be converted into their own context. Certainly all these mobilities would offer the possibility of building new professional relationships, both on the personal and the institutional level, all in all leading to the increase of the visibility of Wekerle Business School on the international platform. It is very important that all participants of the program would be required to share their experience with the rest of the college staff: lecturers through workshops and publications, staff members through reports and formal/informal meetings, thus strengthening the collaborative approach within the institution.

As for the Cooperation among organisations and institutions, we are considering to place study programmes in the field of economics into the focus of these projects, and to elaborate on how higher education in general, and economic programmes in particular can be supported by Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence based material, methods and services. If WBS can find its partners in 2021, project plans can be elaborated during 2022, and they can be implemented during 2023 and 2024.