

D

original language

EN

working language

not applicable

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)?

It is the mission of Burgas Free University to be a flexible institution, to constantly investigate and analyse the needs for knowledge and to develop skills and self-confidence of the students for a successful career in the globalizing environment of today. BFU provides education devoted to the national prosperity and oriented towards the European values. European academic integration is viewed as a basic tool for achieving the aims and objectives of the University's strategic development plan.

Burgas Free University considers the expertise developed through international projects and the established relations with foreign universities to be an institution's strength and a source of opportunities for future developments in the European integration context. However, the University management considers as a weak point the low number of student and teaching staff mobilities, as well as the inactive participation in European networks.

Therefore, the Academic Council has discussed and agreed on the following objectives of the Erasmus cooperation activities and priorities for 2007-2013, in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme:

1. To further improve and extend the ECTS documentation and its dissemination;
2. To develop and apply measures for quality control and evaluation of the University's and the faculties' participation in European programmes, by actively implementing the ISO 9001:2000 standard, for which the University is certified;
3. To further develop the selection system for the outgoing students and teaching staff and provide transparency;
4. To increase the number of bilateral agreements with foreign partners on student mobility and to monitor the full academic recognition;
5. To encourage academic staff to participate in a larger number of staff assignments and transnational projects;
6. To promote cooperation among language and subject area specialists in order to extend the use of European languages in teaching and research and to apply the information technologies in language learning;
7. To develop and disseminate the policy of non-discrimination against gender, nationality, ethnic group, social status, and to implement this policy in all Erasmus activities;
8. To facilitate the participation of disabled students and staff in all kinds of projects in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

The EPS basic aims and objectives have been agreed after broad discussion and recognition by the University Management. The planning and coordination is held on central level and the faculties are responsible for the implementation of the policy and the dissemination of results.

Wide visibility will be given to all kind of Erasmus activities to ensure transparency and access to participation of a larger number of staff and students in all the actions. The Erasmus Policy Statement and the Erasmus University Charter will be published on the Internet site of the University, as well as in the University Students' Newspaper.

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.

To ensure high quality in academic mobility BFU has proposed a new comprehensive procedure for completing bilateral agreements with a strong emphasis on supervision by the host institution. For 3 years Burgas Free University has developed a system for evaluation of the quality of mobility and successfully applies it into practice through questionnaires on the opinions and satisfaction of participants in the mobility programmes. Monitoring of the outgoing students by outgoing teachers and visiting administrative and academic staff is a useful and successful method for checking the quality of the mobility of the students and the host university. To help the outgoing students to be more successfully integrated in the foreign country, they will be informed about the host university, the academic programme, and also about the city and the country in which they will study and live for a certain period of time. Meetings between future and former Erasmus students will be organised. Information brochures and cd-s with information about Burgas Free University will be distributed in the receiving universities and popularize the opportunities our university and country can provide. Help and assistance will be provided to the incoming students. A special integration programme is provided for them to facilitate their adaptation to the specific characteristics of the academic life at the university, the city and the country. Incoming students will be integrated by providing them with information on the curricula, social life, cultural activities, local events, etc. Special assistance will be given as regards the accommodation of the incoming Erasmus students. The lecturers will be stimulated to establish more contacts with EU colleagues and contribute to the increase of the number of bilateral agreements. Their participation in the mobility programme is part of their professional development and will be acknowledged and taken into consideration during the attestation process.

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.

It is part of the policy of Burgas Free University to constantly develop and implement specific activities that contribute to the close links between the academic environment and the practice. In order to ensure high quality of the students placements, all faculties have incorporated in the curriculum of each particular specialism a detailed programme of a compulsory practical placement in institutions related to the specificities of the specialisms, namely: various judicial institutions, companies, publishing houses, electronic media, social work establishments. Students can choose from the list according to their specific interests. Usually, the practical placements comprise three stages – observation, practice and practical placement project validation by a State examination committee. The length of the practical placements varies from two to three semesters and they contribute from 5 to 20 credits towards the academic achievements of each student. The work-programme and the placement agreements are designed by teams of representatives of the faculty and administrators from the respective institution that are experienced in supervising practical placements of trainee students. The placement agreements are then signed by the respective specialists, authorised to do so. The placement programmes aim at developing students' skills which reflect the real-world needs of the future specialists. The practical training projects are the core of each student's placement programme. The teams of specialists are, then, responsible for training the students how to design and develop their practical training projects and are, later on, involved in the process of the implementation of these projects, the monitoring and evaluating of the results at the various stages of the practical placement. At the end of each placement period trainee students are expected to present and defend the outcomes of their practical placement, and they are awarded credits, as previously mentioned.

