

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

OVERALL STRATEGY

The State University of Applied Sciences in Koszalin (hereinafter: PWSZ in Koszalin) founded in 2009 is today a comprehensive university with more than 700 students involved in undergraduate and graduate programmes in nursing, medical rescue, physiotherapy, human nutrition, cosmetology, sports, education and national security. Located in West Pomeranian Voivodship, where 24,1% of young people under 30 years of age are affected by unemployment (by the end of 2018, source: <http://eregion.wzp.pl/obszary/rynek-pracy>, access: 2020-05-19), PWSZ in Koszalin aims at giving them the opportunity to start a career by gaining education on a higher level, professional experience and know-how, as well as inter-cultural and linguistic skills. In order to ensure that its students are prepared for both local and global working environment, PWSZ in Koszalin strives to increase the cooperation with HEIs and business partners in EU and worldwide, and thus to enhance the mobility of students, as well as of the teaching and administrative staff, to modernise and internationalise the curricula and to create a multicultural study environment being home to a diverse student community. Student and staff exchange is one of the most important steps towards this end. Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) is therefore a crucial step towards the modernisation and internationalisation of PWSZ in Koszalin and the realisation of its strategy.

In regard to this, PWSZ in Koszalin strives to contribute to the creation of European Education Area through:

- creating the best possible learning, training and self-development conditions, for both students and staff in order to increase the level of key competences and skills,
- offering students high-quality, modern education irrespectively of their socio-economic background in order to improve their sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, as well as of self-empowerment and self-esteem,
- providing students with an international experience of studying and working abroad,

- giving students the chance to improve their linguistic skills and intercultural awareness in order to reinforce their sense of European identity and the knowledge of the European cultural heritage,
- enabling home students to study alongside international students and encouraging academic and social interaction,
- providing opportunities to benefit from the experience, know-how and knowledge of international teachers and experts visiting PWSZ in Koszalin as well as from those of home teachers who gained an international perspective through teaching at partner institutions,
- increasing digital skills of students and staff,
- promoting the idea of lifelong learning.

PWSZ in Koszalin indubitably considers the Erasmus programme as one of the crucial tools to achieve its strategy of modernisation and internationalisation. Furthermore, inclusive education based on common values and culture would in the future contribute to the economic growth and social cohesion at the local, regional, national and international levels.

KA1 mobility projects are the basis of PWSZ in Koszalin's modernisation and internationalisation strategy and a chance for students and staff to access modern, high-quality education founded on European values, as stated above. However, PWSZ in Koszalin would also like to take part in relevant KA2 projects, either as partner or coordinator. Increasing the awareness of the whole Erasmus programme and the opportunities it offers to the HEI's community among faculty members is therefore crucial to achieve this objective.

On administrative level, the programme is managed by the Erasmus Office with Erasmus Coordinator and involves all other departments and units of the HEI. Erasmus Coordinator is also responsible for promoting the programme, as well as for preparing and enabling students and staff to participate in the mobility within the Erasmus scheme and to benefit from it in the best and the most exhaustive way. To facilitate this, the Erasmus Office cooperates with the Department of Foreign Languages at PWSZ in Koszalin in offering to both academic and administrative staff English courses free of charge (financed from Erasmus OS funds). EO and DFL offer intercultural and linguistic support before and during the mobility, as well as reintegration support for students after their mobility period.

Being aware of the importance of foreign languages, PWSZ in Koszalin`s authorities introduced compulsory courses of two foreign languages (English and French or German) into seven study programmes (nowadays PWSZ in Koszalin offers eight different study programmes). The first language is taught at B1/B2 level or higher, the second starts at the beginning level.

The main goal of taking part in the Erasmus programme consists in increasing the quality of education through establishing creative and modern curricula which integrate international dimension. In regard to this, PWSZ in Koszalin aims at:

- increasing the number of inter-institutional agreements and maintaining geographical diversity,
- increasing the number of outgoing students to 5% of the student body,
- increasing the number of courses given in English and/or French/German in order to become more attractive for international students,
- encouraging both faculty and administrative staff to take part in the mobility in order to gain an international experience to be afterwards implemented at the home institution,
- increasing the number of incoming teachers in order to provide an international dimension at home;
- promoting KA1 and KA2 actions in order to fully benefit from the European dimension of the programme,
- promoting inclusive education,
- becoming more digital, also by using Erasmus digital tools,
- promoting environmentally-friendly practices,
- engaging former participants in the promotion of the programme.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

PWSZ in Koszalin does not discriminate any individual or group of individuals on the basis of age, ethnicity, disability, gender, origins, race, language, religion or any others. PWSZ in Koszalin pledges to abide by the universal rules and norms of human rights and liberties and rejects discrimination in all forms and at every level. The principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion are set out in the official PWSZ in Koszalin`s documents and statements and guarantee an equal and

equitable access to the programme to all students and staff members, regardless of their background.

Disabled and disadvantaged students are informed by the Erasmus Coordinator about the mobility opportunities and the support they can benefit from within Erasmus scheme and are fully encouraged to take part in the Erasmus programme.

PWSZ in Koszalin will implement the European Student Card Initiative in the following steps:

- in 2021, PWSZ in Koszalin will implement the use of Erasmus without Paper network, first to manage inter-institutional agreements and online learning agreements. Simultaneously, the Erasmus+ Mobile App will be promoted among the student community,
- in 2022, PWSZ in Koszalin will implement the use of Erasmus without Paper network to receive and send students` letters of nomination and acceptance,
- in 2023, PWSZ in Koszalin will exchange transcripts of records through Erasmus without Paper network,
- In 2025 all the students should be able to benefit from the European Student Card Initiative.

PWSZ in Koszalin will implement and promote environmentally friendly practices through:

- Promoting sustainable lifestyle,
- Promoting measures to deal with environmental problems,
- Raising broad environmental awareness,
- Developing green competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes) compulsory to move towards a sustainable society,
- Improving the use of Erasmus digital tools such as Erasmus without Paper network and minimise the use of printing,
- Reducing the use of paper and other material, looking for the ways to reuse and recycle them.

MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

In taking part in the Erasmus programme PWSZ in Koszalin aims at increasing the sense of civic engagement and European identity among students (both outgoing and incoming) through:

Before the mobility:

- Promoting European values in academic curricula,
- Promoting the idea of community diversity,
- Providing information and resources with learning materials and best practices on intercultural skills,
- Raising socio-linguistic awareness and curiosity,
- Promoting open-minded attitudes (without judgement),
- Organising meetings and webinars with former participants in order to minimise the fear of having to face another culture,
- Improving communication skills,
- Inciting outgoing students to develop a country preparation plan by making a research on the country they are going to.

During the mobility:

- Providing information on current political, social and cultural issues,
- Involving incoming students into civic activities, such as volunteering,
- Providing inter-cultural and linguistic assistance to home students being at partner institutions in order to help them deal with a new situation.

After the mobility:

- assisting the outgoing students in their reintegration process,
- encouraging them to become Erasmus ambassadors and share their experience and best practices within the home community,
- setting up a network of former Erasmus students (both incoming and outgoing) in order to provide them a way to stay in touch.

PWSZ in Koszalin guarantees full automatic recognition of the outcomes from a mobility period abroad as well as a blended mobility, according to what was agreed beforehand in a learning agreement and confirmed afterwards in the Transcript of Records, in line with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

The procedure of the outcomes recognition is as follows:

Before the mobility:

- Transparent criteria for recognition of outcomes are applied and communicated;

- Directors of study programmes are responsible of assisting the student in his/her choice of courses from the course catalogue of the partner institution,
- Directors of study programmes verify the outcomes of the courses chosen are in line with Polish qualification frameworks and academic curricula;
- The Learning Agreement is then signed by the student and Vice-Rector responsible of the Erasmus Programme. By signing the LA PWSZ in Koszalin the outcomes of a mobility period will be fully recognised if confirmed in the Transcript of Records;
- The Learning Agreement is then sent to the partner HEI in order to be signed;

During the mobility:

- Any changes to be introduced in the LA during the mobility are first discussed with the directors of study programmes at both partner and home HEIs, then confirmed by their signature, as well as by the signature of Erasmus Coordinator;

After the mobility:

- At the reception of the Transcript of Records Directors of study programmes verify the achievement of outcomes in regard to the Learning Agreement;
- The outcomes are then validated by the Vice-Rector for Studies and Students and recognised as a part of the study programme;
- The courses and outcomes achieved during a mobility period abroad/blended mobility are included into Diploma Supplement;

Staff mobility is an integral part of PWSZ in Koszalin`s internationalisation strategy. PWSZ in Koszalin`s authorities ensure the selection procedures are transparent, inclusive and non-discriminative. PWSZ in Koszalin guarantees equal mobility opportunities to all its staff members, both faculty and administrative, independently of their background, status, age or professional experience.

Promotion:

- Online information communication (HEI`s website with special section dedicated to the Erasmus programme, social media),
- Information and communication in site (posters and leaflets – to be replaced by digital tools),
- Presentations,

- Meetings and workshops (formal and informal),
- Sharing-experience reports and meetings with former mobility participants.

Support:

- linguistic support: English language courses free of charge (financed from Erasmus OS funds) and available to all the staff members,
- assistance to staff in organising the mobility,
- reallocation of teaching time in order to include the mobility into scheduled working plan.

Recognition:

- part of the professional development strategy of both faculty and administrative staff;
- part of the periodic assessments of the faculty staff.

The web link where the Erasmus Policy Statement will be hosted:
https://www.pwsz-koszalin.pl/erasmus_informacje.html

VISIBILITY

All the activities supported by the programme are regularly promoted, up-to-dated and published on the HEI's website, in the section dedicated to the Erasmus programme, as well as in those addressed to the staff and students. Any information concerning the programme activities is also communicated through social media and student organisations, as well as during staff meetings. PWSZ in Koszalin also promote the programme in local media, such as

Since PWSZ in Koszalin is a small institution, at the institutional level Erasmus programme is directly managed by Vice-Rector for Cooperation and Development who also plays the role of Erasmus Institutional Coordinator. The principles of the ECHE are and will therefore be directly applied by the HEI's authorities, communicated at all the levels and hierarchically monitored. The ECHE and the EPS will be posted on the HEI's website. Being a crucial element of the modernisation and internationalisation strategy, the principles of ECHE will be fully respected and applied.