

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

The higher vocational school of Photography and Material design educates in two fast growing fields of multimedia and industrial design, with long lasting deficit in experts. The knowledge from other european schools can give a higher quality to the field of education on both our programs (Photography and Material design-especially stone processing). With exchanging knowledge, references and competences, implementing them in their vocational field, the students will be able to solve the vocational challenges with creativity in their future work. With the changing process of higher education in Europe the Erasmus mobility and intensive programs are a great opportunity to develop joint programs, maybe joint diplomas and set basis for further projects between partners. As a small and specific institution we were able to find only few suitable partner institutions to develop joint programs. This year ERASMUS IP program will be the great opportunity for the participating institutions. The joint program with a school from Oviedo is one of the results.

The craft chamber of Slovenia, our municipality, the development agencies and the local environment support our college. Our region is known for stone processing, but we all think it is not promoted as it should be. They all agreed to be our partners in different projects and give our students the high quality of education and gaining competence in the practical part of the curriculum. In this way they will have the possibility to get the suitable, high quality, creative knowledge that the local environment needs. Also the program of Photography is developing strong connections with professional and important institutions such as museums, archives, galleries as well as creative companies and all kinds of media. Our aim is to lift photography at the higher level and we are doing very well. During the Erasmus mobility one of our students developed the winning photographs of the most prestigious award in our country (<http://www.emzin.si/sl/photography-of-the-year/current>.)

The Erasmus Charter of Higher Education would allow the school better international cooperation and with the allocation of the enlarged document for the entire period, the school would be able to obtain consistent position in Europe, which is one of the main priorities of our institution. In the organization of practical training and mobility of students and staff we will provide the highest quality.

On the website of the school there are current, transparent, and easily accessible all the information related to our short cycle program, including the curriculum, credit points within the modules ... Incoming students will be provided with adequate housing, appropriate mentors who will monitor and guide students through the entire duration of the course, will help them to develop contacts with our students and help them to integrate in the new work, learning and social environment. All the time they will be in touch with our co-ordinator of the Erasmus program, who will assist and provide all the relevant information. They will be able to learn the basics of communication in Slovenian. They will not be charged any fees and other contributions.

Our high school program is designed to give an important role to practical training and obtaining competent knowledge. Our priority objective is to provide students a long-term opportunity of practical training abroad with the aim of raising the quality of the educational program, what precisely the ECHE would allow us. We have already established contacts with various foreign companies

whose activities are consistent with the goals of our educational program where students will learn and develop skills, which require practical training program and will gain appropriate, high-quality and innovative knowledge. With the companies we will sign a contract in advance and ensure adequate and quality mentor and arrange for the student the most suitable accommodation. Practical course will be prepared on the basis of objectives and competencies identified in the catalogues of knowledge for practical training. The organizer of practical training at our school will with the mentor of the company adapt the program and the amount of practical education for each student, thereby ensuring the achievement of set goals and transparency. The student will be in the course of practical instruction in a foreign company assisted, advised and taught by the mentor of the enterprise. Constantly will be connected with foreign mentors as an organizer of practical training as well as the Erasmus coordinator at our school.

Practical training abroad will be recognized as a prescribed practical training in the education program and will be evaluated by an appropriate number of credits. The number of credits will depend on the volume of practical training, which will be reflected in the reporting and assessment of the mentor in the company.

To incoming students who wish to pursue practical training in Slovenia, we can provide traineeships in companies that provide high-quality implementation of practical instruction. Students will be provided by appropriate trained mentors and quality accommodation.

As a young and small organisation our steps are long, but not longer than they should be. Year by year the number of students and staff mobility is increasing. The quality and not the quantity is one of the leading values of our organisation. Our strategy is to strengthen the cooperation with experience exchange, development of our programs and recognition of educational achievements on institutional level with already established partnerships as well as building new partnerships. We already achieved a high level of international awareness among teaching staff members which reflects also in new student centred learning approaches and openness towards recognizing the value of such mobility for them and recognizing the value of such mobility for their students which makes it much easier to objectively recognize the students ECTS gained elsewhere. The higher educational program of our school (Photography and material design) is new, developed on the basis of Bologna standards (with ECTS credit system) with transparency and European comparison of higher educational programs. We will make all the agreements with foreign higher education institutions before the mobility. We will also make all the comparison between programs with topics and aims of the curriculum. The suitable number of ECTS will be given to our students, studying abroad. They will be given all the information about the educational program, the needs and the activities, the right accommodation and all the contacts abroad by our Erasmus coordinator.

The management of the organisation supports and enables the mobility of professors and other teaching staff. It also supports the exchange of good practice with foreign experts and also the learning of foreign language. The acquired knowledge and references are necessary for their professional and personal development. We have made contacts with many companies abroad (in the vocational field of Photography and Stone cutting) through our local partners (The community of Sežana and the Chamber of craft and small business). These companies agreed to be our partners in

Erasmus projects and give our students the high quality of education and gaining competence in the practical part of the curriculum. In this way they will have the possibility to get the suitable, high quality, creative knowledge. We will make all the necessary arrangements with the companies (the high skilled trainers, and the most suitable accomodation). The training program will be arranged on the basis of the curriculum. It will define knowledge, skills nad competence to be acquired, the detailed program of the training period, tasks of a trainee and the monitoring and evaluation plan. To facilitate the monitoring and skill development during the placement we prepared the documents to be filled in by student as well as by the mentor. It is a kind of report with listed all the aims and skills that the student should achieve and develop during the practical training. So the recognition of ECTS is easy. On satisfactory completion of the training program, our school will award the suitable number of ECTS and will record the training period in the Diploma supplement.

We are firmly committed to ensuring human rights, and we will in the selection of candidates for training in the Erasmus respect the principle of non-discrimination which we already respect being a public institution . All applicants will have an equal opportunity for entry. In case of any disability or special needs we support the student with individual treatment regarding the exam term or form (depending on the nature of disability or student's needs). Photography as a mostly visual expression is ideal for the integration of students with hearing disabilities and they can be very successful. Our student population is male and female even in the program of Material design – stone and it is something unique in the branch of stone processing. We have also regular students from bordering countries (Croatia and Italy).

Each study year the Erasmus students and staff members prepare at least one or two events to present their Erasmus experience. The presentations are usually followed by a free discussion and they turned out to be the best way to motivate new paricipants. We organize also Erasmus parties with exhibitions and multimedial presentations. We inform the public by articles and notices on our WEB site www.vivis.si/vss and on the WEB site of the school center www.ss-sezana.si. We also inform the local and national media about the events connected with Erasmus and other international activities. The WEB site of the higher vocational college is a bit old fashioned and it is difficult to put blogs, videos and photogalleries. It is in the process of a new web design. We have a very good facebook profile Višja strokovna Sežana which is updated with all actual information about mobilities and projects .

This year we updated the Vision of The higher vocational college, but we have to preserve our primal mission and follow our direction into the future by a strong commitment to the following values: the expertise, professionalism, competitiveness, creativity, innovation, perseverance, responsibility, honesty, reliability, trust.

The new Vision in addition to regional importance, stresses the importance of international connections. The international mobility programs and activities, have proven to be extremely important.

The new vision is:

We are a reputable educational institution in the fields of design, photography and video. Taking into account the real needs and tradition we will dictate the development at the national and international level.

Internationalisation and modernisation is a part of our Development plan (with strategic aims, priorities, the vision) and can be proven by every year's Quality report.

Vocational College is part of the School Centre Kosovel Sežana that educates high school students for many years, economic technicians, and the last two years also visual merchandisers. As an Educational center of Karst we are perfectly incorporated into the environment. We collaborate with the Community of Sežana, Kosovel Culture Home, Regional Chamber of Craft Sežana, Regional Development Agency-ORA, Local Community Action for Rural Development, Institute of Sport, Tourism and Leisure, Park Škocjanske caves and numerous local enterprises. For several years we have participated within the Middle school of economics besides other international projects also in the Leonardo da Vinci - Mobility programs. We received two quality awards The golden apple for quality 2005 (LDV - MOB Together we ride) and in 2008 (LDV-MOB The comparison of market strategies between slovenian and moravian karst). We have 2 more LDV-MOB projects for visual merchandiser. With the acquisition of high school we want to participate in the Erasmus program and enable our students to seek new knowledges abroad and transfer them to the areas where they are needed. We successfully applied for Erasmus 2010-2013. This year we have developed also a Erasmus IP program Stone in picture and shape, approved by our national agency, with partner schools from Spain and Croatia. One of the guiding principles of our institution is that we want as many students, professors and lecturers to enable a quality education abroad. Foreign professors raise the quality of education at our school. In this way our students can obtain comparable European knowledge, competencies, skills and experience in their field of expertise in other European higher education institutions and enterprises. We are confident that the new knowledge will help to increase their capacity and competitiveness in the labor market, at home and abroad. All this could be realised by the Erasmus program with the international exchange of students. By the exchange of students we want to cross the border of Slovenia and to promote intercultural dialogue, facilitate learning about other cultures, learning and upgrading of skills in foreign languages and making new acquaintances. So they would be able to adapt on their professional field to the constant changes and become responsible and active citizens of the EU. By sharing the acquired knowledge, professional experience and skills, and consequently the implementation of knowledge in professional work they could encourage innovative approaches to solve professional challenges. Within the program, we will strive to improve the quality and scope of cooperation with other higher education institutions and enterprises in Europe.

This year we extended the group of people who work on international projects. A group consists of the project managers, ICT experts, language experts and also support in accounting.

All activities of the Erasmus program will be available on the school website, Erasmus coordinator will regularly present them to students and lecturers. The school management will inform and raise awareness about the importance of these activities for students and lecturers. All the interested will have the opportunity to obtain more detailed information from the Erasmus coordinator. On the school website will be published the ECHE and the Declaration EPS. This will allow all the students, professors and other website visitors to have an insight into the content of the Charter and the Declaration EPS. The University Act defines the principles to which school by signing these documents is bound. Erasmus project will be presented and promoted in newspapers, radio broadcasting, presentations of the school, at school events and other events. ECHE will be displayed in a prominent place, easily accessible to the students and professors.