



## Erasmus Policy Statement – Strategy

**The University College of Business in Prague (UCBP)**, not-for-profit organization was established in 2000, when it gained the state approval to act as a private higher educational institution. The accreditation in accordance with the higher education law was granted to the UCBP in International Territorial Studies. The first academic year was opened in 2001/2002. The UCBP provides Bachelor and Master programs and prepares highly qualified specialists in the following areas: tourism, informatics in tourism, tourism guide, aviation transport services in tourism, flight operations, aviation business management, and tourism management.

Internationalization is a strategic priority of the UCBP and is accorded a particularly high status in terms of the university's academic planning and development. The international strategy of the UCBP is based on:

A pluralist, multicultural, community nurtured through the provision of a supportive environment and a research led education experience that prepares graduates for the multiplicity of global, socio-economic, political environments and cultures in which they must operate;

A series of international partnerships in targeted global areas which supports and builds the university's global capacity and capability in research, teaching and learning, external engagements and in technology transfer;

The bi-directional mobility of students, staff and administration to undertake collaborative projects, research and education within other international institutions and strategic partners;

An international, intercultural educational ethos based on international student recruitment, internationally compatible curricula contributing to a positive internationalized student experience.

The UCBP is a committed participant in the Erasmus program since 2003 and currently has inter-institutional agreements with 56 partner universities and 12 international Memorandum of Understanding. Partner universities are selected on the basis of a number of criteria including complementarities of academic interests and disciplines, reputation, quality, personal contacts, excellence of students' support services and transparency of recognition procedures.

The provision of student mobility opportunities across the EU will remain a core activity of the Erasmus program at the UCBP. As a mandatory study or work placement is incorporated into Bachelor programs it can be anticipated that the demand for mobility opportunities will continue to grow and the UCBP will encourage and support more students as they take up the challenge of adding an international dimension to their studies. The structure of Master programs at the UCBP allows the students to participate in mobilities too.

The UCBP will continue to welcome students at all levels from participating countries and will proactively seek out new partners in third countries which will permit the establishment of exchanges on a reciprocal basis.

The UCBP has placed a strong emphasis on the strategic development of staff exchanges as a means of accessing specialized expertise found in partner institutions. This approach will continue. The teaching staff element of the Erasmus program has provided opportunities for the UCBP teaching staff to engage with academic counterparts and students across a range of disciplines in partner institutions. In addition, since 2007 administrative staff have benefited from professional development opportunities through the staff training part of the program. The UCBP will continue to engage in bi-directional staff mobility and welcomes the extension of staff training opportunities to third countries and to enterprises.

The UCBP has a track record of collaboration and partnership to meet local/regional/national/ international needs. Within the new Program opportunities to allow for the strengthening of cooperation with stakeholders such as enterprises, local and regional authorities, education and research institutions, and other relevant actors will be exploited.

The original Erasmus program acted as a catalyst for the development of an international agenda at the UCBP. During the 20 years the UCBP has undergone a fundamental transformation as it has evolved from an institution operating primarily at local/regional/national levels to one which now has a clearly defined international strategy. The UCBP has:

Developed cooperation with partners in other EU and non-EU countries; promoted student and staff mobility; strengthened the quality of its programs by focusing on excellence in teaching and learning under the framework of the Bologna Process; built strategic partnerships nationally and internationally.

The UCBP is committed to the EU's modernization and internationalization agenda in higher education in the context of the priorities of this agenda. The institution, through the provision of accredited undergraduate and postgraduate programs, will respond to labour market needs at regional/national/EU levels. It will continue to interrogate its program provision in the context of the need to increase attainment levels in order to provide graduates that Europe requires to service the knowledge economy. Mobility, which enhances the employability of graduates by providing them with the skills required for the globalised economy in which they will operate, will continue to be an institutional priority. The UCBP is committed to the preparation of joint Masters on a transnational basis and will take advantage of the opportunities available under the new program to attract high calibre students from European, non-European and third countries.

The quality agenda has been a major priority for the UCBP and the commitment to quality assurance and excellence in teaching, learning and service provision is continued under the new Program. The development of quality indicators will be supported at institutional level and the UCBP will implement policies under the Program aimed at improving governance in the higher education sector. In addition, the commitment to capacity building and cooperation with third country institutions will continue.

The UCBP recognizes its role and responsibility as a focus for regional, economic development and has a track record in collaborating with business/industry to drive such development. The new Program is the key driving forces in relation to the continued internationalization and modernization of the UCBP.

Students and staff are being regularly informed on possibilities to participate in the Erasmus+ Program. The UCBP also ensures the Erasmus University Charter and European Policy Statement is displayed in a visible place and on the internet. There is information about Erasmus program provided during the Open Days, Erasmus Info Days, informative meetings and student seminars. Erasmus Week including an international workshop is organized regularly.

The European Policy Statement of the UCBP has been based on the University's policy in the main areas such as study, research, development, and international relations. This document was discussed at the rector's office level. The European Policy Statement will be used on daily basis at the University in the process of new projects development and evaluation.

The UCBP enables education to students without any gender, racial, national or religion discrimination. Education of students to racial and religious tolerance is an inevitable part of study programs of the University and the professional profile of its graduates.

Handicapped students are also fully integrated into the day-to-day activities and they have all rights as other students.

The UCBP is open to all students and teaching staff who wish to join from abroad and try to ensure that no one will meet with xenophobia, racism and discrimination. There are 25 percent of international students (including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Colombia, China, Croatia, Italy, Moldova, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Slovakia, Germany, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Vietnam) studying at the University in current academic year.

The UCBP will ensure high quality for student and staff mobility by system of education, ECTS, individual study programs for outgoing and incoming students and teachers.

The Erasmus coordinator is reporting to the Vice-Rector for international affairs and external relations. They together with managements of the UCBP ensure the quality of exchange and academic recognition of studies and teaching abroad. The practical side of incoming students, such as housing arrangement, language

preparation courses, introduction programs, mentor system promotion is organized by Erasmus coordinator. The co-operation of the team enables that outgoing and incoming students are informed about application rules and forms by means of ECTS information packages, information days, etc. The selection criteria are based on academic merit, foreign language knowledge, motivation, and communication skills. The Erasmus coordinator helps outgoing and incoming students to obtain relevant information about partner institutions. One of the important tasks is to get feedback after the mobility is over.

ECTS – European Credit Transfer System has been implemented in 2010/2011 academic year. The UCBP provides information for incoming students and staff on university web sites in English.

The UCBP ensures high quality of education for students. It collaborates with institutions, companies and organizations in the field of employing its graduates. Training in real working environment is incorporated into all programs offered by the UCBP. Placement of students during their work there. Trainings are evaluated and acknowledged in curriculum. Students submit reports and a part of their thesis based their trainings.

For the next period 2021-2027 our institution has defined a clear strategy of an expansion with an international vision having the full engagement of all members of the university community. All academic levels recognize the crucial importance of internationalization in terms of the objectives of Erasmus+ and the key support that international expansion requires to enable the institution to meet its goals. Everyone from the highest academic level at the university to the students is interested in implementing a successful strategy of internationalization.

From an organizational point of view, at the UCBP, the Erasmus+ office operates as the department in charge of all procedures for handling all the tasks related to institution's internationalization strategy. This includes, offering information and advising all teachers and students interested in engaging in any exchange activities abroad. The Erasmus+ office is now implementing the Erasmus+ Dashboard, in order to develop the digital internationalization strategy. We are now adapting the workings of the institution in order to meet the requirements of the European Commission proposed strategy (Digital Erasmus initiative) with regard to proposed digital steps. We are now implementing the initial digital steps so as to be fully prepared for when these become mandatory. During the period 2021-2027 institutional digital strategy will follow all instructions of Erasmus program strategy for the digital implementation.

The Head of the Erasmus+ office is a multilingual proficiency administrator and fully qualified for running all the tasks related to this Digital Erasmus initiative.

Regarding our interest in the Charter for Higher Education, our main objective in participating in this program of internationalization is to span a broad diversity of actions – exchange mobility, information exchange, mutual publications, and visits of high-level staff members, academic forums, language training and international research activities with bilateral partners. These are common practices which are applied in order to enhance the interest and the engagement of the institutional community with the digital international strategy.

We are interested in implementing the advice and strategies provided by the European Commission for improving our processes to launch the undertaking with new initiatives that can contribute to the momentum of our internationalization process.

We are engaged in implementing diverse strategies, such as: Erasmus without paper Network, Erasmus+ Dashboard, European Student Card, the implementation of Erasmus + mobile app, Erasmus going digital and all environmentally friendly initiatives. We are implementing all activities according to European Commission requirements and those processes are supporting us in enhancing the global scale our internationalization strategies.

Our participation in the Erasmus+ strategy will significantly contribute to the growth of our institution. We expect that the arrival of a growing number of foreign European students will significantly increase the number of overall students and will contribute to the diversification of the point of view of our taught subjects and the pedagogical methodologies, which will make the education processes in our university more effective. Our programs in teaching, which are fully taught in English, in the field of tourism are fully accredited by the Czech Ministry of Education.

We expect that the incoming students will bring their previous experiences and knowledge to our institution. The engagement with local students and foreigners coming from other countries can enrich the topics and academic treatment of subjects in other countries and we believe this will be the case at our university.

Furthermore, in spite of the official language for communication being English, incoming students can improve their skills in other languages including Czech, German, Spanish, Italian or Russian. The department of languages at the UCBP offers several possibilities for improving skills in foreign languages and students can choose a language according to their own needs.

The open attitude of our institution toward international faculties and universities contributes to maintaining the quality of our teaching and allows us to keep the syllabus, lectures and classes up to date. We also upgrade the new catalogue of subjects each semester according to the accreditation of our program taught in English.

The outgoing staff mobility has a paramount effect on our educational system. The teachers who visit international campuses can interact with colleagues dealing with similar topics, and in the end scientific results such as articles, common publications and research projects can be produced.

For students, the main benefits in participating in foreign exchange programs are the enhancement of their cultural and professional perspective and an improvement in their proficiencies with regard to their chosen academic field as well as foreign languages. Attending subjects in foreign countries allows them to improve the knowledge in technical aspects suitable for their career and also gain skills in foreign languages in the native country. We pay particular attention to select students according to the language demands of the country to which they are travelling.

According to institutional internationalization strategy traditions, one additional dimension in the institutional operation is the engagement with scientific and educational projects with European and non E.U. partners. Previously, we have signed mutual international projects in educational and scientific fields, in which the participation of our staff has been crucial during the planning stage in addition to the running of the activities.

One of several criteria for signing an inter-institutional agreement is the identification of mutual academic programs and joint scientific vision in order to extract benefits of the synergies and spillovers that can be transmitted between institutions. The general experience is a fruitful exchange of knowledge and pedagogical achievements that contribute to the growth of partners.

This compatibility and coherence in the scientific and international engagement guarantees the success in all derived academic and pedagogical activities.

In choosing our partners we also consider the expectation of our students with regard to the high academic level, the quality of infrastructures, the profile of academic staff, etc. As far as possible, we try to look for a perfect match between our own schedules regarding the timetable of our partners.

In normal terms all outgoing mobility of staff is approved under the assumption that the activity will convey professional and academic progress to the teacher. The University College of Business in Prague eases all permission and authorizations for replacing lecturers with a different schedule, in all cases of absences due to outgoing teaching experience.

As long as the outgoing mobility contributes to an improvement in quality, we firmly encourage all staff to take up the different opportunities posted by the university information system. To the extent that the participant interacts with a partner in the receiving institution we expect an improved result in terms of theoretical developments and pedagogical strategies. The spillover effect of the interaction of two experts brings an expected improvement to both institutions.

Upon the consolidation of a consistent inter-institutional research scientific group, the opportunities for applying for and receiving additional funds and grants from European and national sources are enhanced.

The increase in productivity that benefits our institution can be measured in terms of the number of the articles and mutual publications, the number of projects launched by our staff and the increase in the quality of teaching activities. Increasing interest of staff and students concerning international mobility is also a measured indicator of the success of our internationalization strategy.

The University College of Business in Prague focuses on programs that require international cooperation and knowledge sharing. That is true by the programs of Tourism or Digital economy. Therefore, the UCB reflects the international impact also in its own quality indicators, according to the model of EFQM. The model enables to constantly improve the process of quality in all relevant spheres.

More specifically, the indicator 9.1g reflects the number of students and employees in the framework of international mobility. The goal is to achieve an increasing tendency, both by students and employees, both for incoming and outgoing categories.



The indicator 9.2b is connected with international cooperation. It includes the mobility of students and employees, activities in research and development and other activities as joint conferences, projects etc.

Both indicators are analysed once a year and they are the part of the comprehensive Quality report of the University College of Business in Prague.

Coordinator of mobility is supported by the Marketing department of the UCBP. The coordinator leads the participants through every phase of the process and actively searches for opportunities of future collaboration after the mobility had finished. Joint events and projects are a firm part of the Erasmus + programme, together with the possibility of enhanced cooperation of research projects.

It's in our utmost interest to enhance the possibilities of cooperation with other European partners (also non-European partners in activity K107) and expand the opportunities for the development for our students and staff. Each year we are working towards the signing of effective and productive new inter-institutional agreements and for bridging contacts with international institutions for a deepest cooperation. In such terms, we assess the number of new effective and active contracts mainly in the fields of educational activities of accredited programs as we manage at our institution.

For the sake of providing an operational and productive, diverse set of agreements, we consider it to be a positive and productive international scheme which allows the prompt flow of both incoming and outgoing mobility. We aim our strategy also towards agreements that are connected to specific products and projects.



(+420) 810 888 500



info@vso-praha.eu



www.vso.cz