

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

Olaine Technology College of Riga Technical University (RTU OTK) international strategy focuses on the development of the college as a whole, to improve education and training standards, based on the latest achievements in this field in education institutions in Europe, its efficiency, as well as development and strengthening of international co-operation and academic staff mobility.

Study process in the RTU OTK is targeted and based on the labour market determined by employers; students taking into account their experience and the necessity, put into effect their inner potential. Active and successful participation in EU education programmes and projects is considered one of the most important directions of the RTU OTK strategy concept.

One of RTU OTK strategic goals is to promote international dimension of students and staff activities, by supporting the internationalization of the study process and mobility. Therefore, regular short- and long-term planning of ERASMUS activities and co-ordination is an important task and duty of the administration. To achieve this, the following will be necessary:

1. Raise numbers of outgoing and incoming ERASMUS students.
2. Enable full time students and RTU OTK staff participate in international mobility at least once every 3 years.
3. Integrate the principles of international mobility in to RTU OTK daily activities.
4. Ensure quality of Erasmus activities by providing information support, communication with partners, mobility preparation, problem solving, and dissemination of good practices.
5. In long-term, operate with other ERASMUS programme activities, which will be available in 2021-2027, for example, the ERASMUS intensive programmes, curriculum development projects, projects focusing on co-operation development between higher education institutions and enterprises.

The overall development strategy of the RTU OTK includes the following priorities:

1. Student, teachers and administrative staff mobility is valued, recognized, and supported.
2. Student, teachers and administrative staff mobility planning and promotion, as far as possible providing language study opportunities.
3. Raise target group awareness of the ERASMUS programme activities in an understandable way.
4. Provide support to the ERASMUS activities in the RTU OTK, providing human resources and access to information, the necessary equipment, and materials for effective programme activity implementation.
5. Promote international co-operation.

The aim of the RTU OTK is to join the ERASMUS+ European and international mobility activities, to promote the ERASMUS activities through the RTU OTK website, by publishing there reports and information materials. ERASMUS University Charter and the EPS will be published and listed along with the information on the completed or planned ERASMUS activities.

The main criteria in choosing partners from EU and non-EU countries is a common interest in the training of young specialists, capable to compete in the labor market, being knowledgeable and competent in the applied technologies, would exchange experiences and share cultural interests.

International co-operation is successfully promoted by geographic diversity because European and international mobility activities help to understand the latest technological development trends and principles of operation by co-operation with both the neighbouring countries, and European countries further in the South, East and the Central Europe.

RTU OTK key objectives of international co-operation are to improve the first level (short cycle) vocational higher education quality, motivate students and teachers to be creative to studies and work, to build and strengthen international co-operation between higher education institutions (HEI) and enterprises, because practical training is an integral part of the study process.

European and international mobility target group comprises short-cycle students and HEI academic staff to develop and improve co-operation between higher education institutions (HEI) and enterprises, to meet the demands of the rapidly evolving field of technology, which may help to improve existing programmes and create new ones, to develop a more efficient system of knowledge, skills and competences evaluation, as well as to improve the RTU OTK structure and management.

The RTU OTK general policy is to work with both students and teachers on the basis of non-discrimination principle, for example, integration of basic issues of inclusion and tolerance of socially vulnerable groups of people in study programmes.

In order to ensure the effective participation of students in the mobility, college will apply a credit transfer system and academic recognition.

According to the RTU OTK vision and mission, one of its activities is to develop a partners co-operation network. The RTU OTK is interested in supporting the ERASMUS programme activities using available resources, in order to promote international mobility and participation in international co-operation projects, development of each individual and the RTU OTK as a whole in the intercultural environment.

The Erasmus Policy statement (EPS) project has been developed according to the new programming period and the RTU OTK development strategy, where one of the directions is an international co-operation. The RTU OTK keeps track of the changes in European higher education opportunities and will provide activities contributing to the students and academic staff growth and benefits. Future policy plan focuses on a new co-operation of partners and increasing the number of partners in European countries and mobility opportunities to all

students and academic staff in all study programmes. Student mobility has an emphasis on the quality.

An essential aspect is internationalisation therefore it is important that the RTU OTK can use European funds to achieve its objective. The RTU OTK has resources to provide mobility activities and funds acquisition. Communication is the key to success.

To ensure incoming and increase the number of outgoing students and academic staff, the development of training programmes and activities in other international projects, RTU OTK should provide language courses for outgoing/incoming students and academic staff language skills improvement. Ensuring availability of information in English for foreign students and partners on the RTU OTK website - both staff contacts and the necessary documentation. Overall, the RTU OTK international co-operation strategy excludes any form of discrimination based on ethnicity or geographical origin, age, gender, religious affiliation, and political and psychological confidence.

The ERASMUS programme support is particularly important for the implementation of new ideas, gaining new professional experience, mastering language and communication skills, networking and overcoming geographic barriers in the European education space, which generally promotes increase in the quality of the study programmes offered by the RTU OTK. This improves the quality of curriculum, quality of co-operation between the European Member States, quality of development strategies, extended range of partners involved in joint projects.

The RTU OTK affirms that participation in the programme is inextricably linked to the RTU OTK development strategy, it will encourage the student and staff mobility, participation in European and international co-operation projects, improve the quality of higher education and student experience by participating in the EU higher education modernisation and internationalisation plan implementation, taking into account the five key priorities:

1. Increase quality of higher education, thus giving Europe the necessary researchers and graduates.
2. Reinforce the importance of higher education.
3. Mobility and international co-operation will help to increase the quality of higher education.
4. Promote higher education, science, and business interconnections.
5. Improve higher education funding and supervising.