

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

The Faculty of Design, Associated Member of University of Primorska is a relatively young institution established in 2005. The study programme 'Design' incorporates Bologna declaration standards and applies European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Since the academic year 2012/2013 besides first cycle studies (Bachelor's degree) the Faculty also provides second cycle studies (Master's degree) in the field of Interior Design, Visual Communications, Textiles and Fashion Design and Design Management. One of the priorities of the Faculty of Design is the internationalisation of higher education programme, which is a key to the development and an important aspect with regards to quality as it includes the internationalisation of teaching, learning, cooperation and competition. International cooperation and the effective transfer of knowledge are fundamental to the successful sharing of outcomes between higher education institutions and the labour market. As a higher education institution Faculty of Design is responsible for the development of the intercultural and global competences of their graduates. A particular focus is placed on promoting entrepreneurial drive, innovation-oriented mindsets, foreign language proficiency and development of the digital skills and competences for living and working in an age of digital transformation. Even though international mobility is the most effective mean to internationalize education, we aim to implement high-quality internationalised curricula that include intercultural dimension into study programmes at all the study levels. The key benefits for pursuing internationalisation are improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, preparing students to live and work in a globalised world, fostering international research collaboration, development of international curricula and increased international exchange of students, staff and knowledge.

The Faculty of Design offers an elaborated interdisciplinary study program that positions the school among the modern European institutes of higher education in design. Although a very young institution the Faculty has become one of the most sought for educational establishments in the field of design in Slovenia and currently enrolls approximately 400 students. With its undergraduate studies program, The Faculty of Design has been successfully transferring know-how into Slovenian business entities via innovations, patents and development projects which add value to the companies in their design and technological solutions and create new jobs. With its artistic activity it participates in the projects with a distinct artistic and conceptual approach, which establishes design as a socially engaged field of operation and education.

Although we have grown in numbers we still take great pride and invest a lot of effort into the individual approach towards our students. A constructive and stimulating environment is created, a balanced set of skills is given so that graduates are equipped with the knowledge required to enter the labour market successfully. Design is a complex field involving different expertise from the field of sociology, technology and science. Without the merging of all three areas design can't be innovative, creative and offer high added value products or solutions. According to the latter an institution offering education in design must be up to

date with new teaching approaches and trends in the field. Therefore it is of paramount importance to incorporate international, intercultural and global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a programme. We strive to engage our students with internationally informed research and cultural and linguistic diversity so they will develop intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens.

Faculty of Design actively participates in Erasmus+ programme since the academic year 2007/2008. Erasmus programme is integral to providing international dimension in learning and teaching experience at the Faculty of Design. Participation in the programme brought several benefits such as ongoing intensive exchange of students & staff and significant internationalization of our institution which resulted in advancing strategic thinking leading to innovations, offering advantages in modernizing pedagogy, encouraging collaboration between students and staff, stimulating new approaches to learning and creating new research collaborations. Our long term aims of internationalisation strategy are to improve the quality of teaching and learning at our institution, to increase international awareness of global issues by students, to enhance international cooperation and capacity-building, to strengthen institutional research and knowledge production capacity, to provide students with skills for global job market and to increase international networking by faculty and researchers. Faculty of Design feels obliged to provide relevant knowledge for the students and their professors. That is why we strongly believe that mobility is one of the biggest incentives and guarantees for quality studies. Innovative solutions must include latest knowledge from the field of design, incorporating the results which are based on scientific research and respond to the current needs of the market.

By participating in the Erasmus programme the Faculty of Design would like to continue in:

- increasing student & staff mobility throughout Europe
- achieving the internationalisation of study at home (by involvement of foreign lecturers and experts, internationalisation of curricula, offering classes in foreign language, integrate foreign students with Slovenian students)
- enabling non-mobile students to develop international and inter-cultural competences
- extending the international network and cooperation with partners, participate in international research projects
- strengthening quality and European dimension in higher education
- improving the quality and increase the volume of cooperation between Faculty of Design and enterprises
- strengthening the capacity of international office
- facilitating the development of innovative practices in education and training
- expanding digital learning opportunities and support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services and pedagogies

The Faculty of Design recognizes the instrumental role of the Erasmus+ programme in building the European Education Area by offering access to learning mobility as well as partnerships for more inclusive, life-long, flexible, gender responsive and innovation driven education and training. We support the efforts in opening the education towards more flexible learning opportunities as well as by ensuring inclusive and innovative approaches in efforts of tackling inequalities. We strive to ensure the highest quality in academic mobility activities and that Erasmus activities are made available for all eligible students and staff. We provide equal and equitable access and opportunities to participants from all backgrounds, paying particular attention to the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities.

We believe that mobility is the key in improving students' personal development, their involvement as active citizens in society and increasing their employability in the European labour market. We also believe it is necessary to support the professional development of those who work in the education with a view to innovating and improving the quality of teaching. With participating in Erasmus mobility actions the participants enhance foreign languages competences, raise the awareness of other cultures, increase the opportunity to build networks of international contacts and develop sense of European citizenship and identity. That is why we plan to increase the number of possible mobility in the future by offering more than 18 students to participate in study exchange/ training and more than 10 staff to participate in teaching/training mobility (these are the numbers of mobility of previous years).

As our aim is to increase capacities, attractiveness and international dimension of the Faculty of Design with offering activities and programmes that better respond to the needs of individuals within Europe, we will strive to improve the quality of the projects' implementation. We started in 2019 to evaluate our performance, quality of implementation and experience of mobility by conducting the survey among all the participants in the mobility (foreign Erasmus students and students of the Faculty of Design).

An essential part of our internationalization strategy is also building longer-term, sustainable academic partnerships and identifying partners with a strong attention to similarity of focus and complementarity of skills and knowledge to ensure there is a shared interest and added value for all parties involved. We have established Inter-institutional agreements with 54 academic institutions within European Union so far. The first objective when establishing partnership is to match the study program from the respective field. Only this way we can guarantee quality mobility and a transparent process of recognition. Besides the program the mode of instruction is of great relevance. Our students are educated through a conceptual way of thinking, managing between design and social aspects of the final design.

We are furthermore consolidating partnerships for the mutual benefit of staff and students through several international networks:

- **GIDE** (Group for International Design Education) is an international network of higher education art and design schools from Scotland, China, Slovenia, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Switzerland working together to enrich intercultural experiences of students, educators and institutions by providing opportunities for collaboration, benchmarking and knowledge exchange. GIDE group delivers international workshops every year to explore cultural, social and ethical dimensions of design. Within GIDE platform the principal activities of the Erasmus programme are implemented. Regular student and staff exchange is maintained, project topics change every year and research into new aspects of design, a student workshop, conference and exhibition are organized annually.
- **A.L.I.C.E.** (Architecture/Landscape/Interiors/Culture/Emotions) is a platform associating institutions from Slovenia, Poland, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Russia forming a CEEPUS III network.
- **WDO** (World Design Organization) is an international non-governmental organization that promotes industrial design and its ability to create better products, systems, services and experiences. WDO has a special advisory status in the United Nations Organization. It consists of 140 members from 40 countries around the world. The Faculty of Design became a member of the association in January 2017.
- **BEDA** (The Bureau of European Design Associations) is a non-profit organization with 46 Member states in Europe. The members are design associations and other publicly funded organizations that promote design at national and regional level, as well as professional associations for designers from all over Europe. The association represents 400.000 designers from all over Europe.

The mission of the Faculty of Design is to actively contribute to the development of the knowledge society by stimulating human curiosity and desire for knowledge, research and creation in the field of design. Moreover we build synergies with other associations and institutions and facilitate connections between academics, researchers and entrepreneurs. We want to educate socially responsible designers who will be able to align to the needs identified in smart specialization strategies, seize opportunities for innovation in priority sectors and help local businesses and other organizations adopt new way of thinking.

Living in a knowledge-based society driven by the wide-spread diffusion of ICT gives rise to the need to acquire new competences and master new skills related to the use of ICT. Faculty of Design recognizes the need to stimulate, support and scale up purposeful use of digital and innovative education practices (such as e-learning and blended learning). The adoption of innovative approaches and digital technologies in education and the development of digital competences including digital media literacy and digital safety are crucial to strengthen future employability and personal development of young people. Innovation in education systems, understood as the adoption of new services, technologies and competences helps to improve learning outcomes, enhance equity and improve

efficiency. The transformational benefit of ICTs and other new technologies will be used to enrich teaching, improve learning experiences, support personalized learning, facilitate access through distance learning and create new opportunities for research.

The Faculty of Design will in the coming years also undertake all the necessary steps to implement digital mobility management in line with the technical standards of the European Student Card Initiative. Digitalisation of the Erasmus+ mobility management process will be done through the Erasmus Without Paper infrastructure that will become a key element in communicating mobility-related data with other higher education institutions in the future.

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