



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DELL'AQUILA

D. Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees.

Since several years UNIVAQ has considered fundamental for its development the international cooperation. Research within internationally recognized teams was the first motivation for cooperation and mobility of teachers and talented students. Over the last 5 years the great acceleration of the processes for the constitution of EHEA and ERA and the everyday more tangible effects of globalization in the economic, political, social, cultural, and knowledge spheres, required a continuous revision of general policies of higher education at national and institutional level. The Italian government approached these topics by following EU and international policies in several steps and producing several (partial) reforms of the HE system till the last one, in course of implementation, that gives a key role to the internationalization in terms of evaluation and accreditation of institutions and degree courses. University of L'Aquila strategy and policy anticipated the reform by promoting actions allowing students and staff to cope with the challenges and compete in a globalised environment. The university international strategy concerns three main components:

1) Internationalization of education at home by:

- helping students of all cycles to develop an international vision of education and capacities for living and working in a multicultural context (development of intercultural understanding through International degrees, and language competencies enhancement)
- increasing attractiveness of EU and non-EU students (courses offered in English, implementation of projects within TEMPUS and EM)
- increasing the number of "visiting professors" in the framework of taught modules (identification of multiple sources of funding)

2) Internationalization of education abroad by:

- organizing multiple/joint curricula and international short courses and placements (LLP-IP, summer courses, stage)
- optimizing the Erasmus bilateral agreements for a better structured mobility (identification of partner institutions and modules that best fit the curriculum design)
- enhancing and increasing the bilateral agreements with non-EU institutions as result of the international cooperation projects successfully implemented

3) Internationalization of research by:

- internationalization of 3rd cycle (increase of programs in co-tutelle)
- preparation of projects within international, EU and national cooperation programmes for education and research (FP7, National research Programme, bilateral research cooperation, etc.)

In order to achieve the expected results listed above, the University identified an "International Project Team" within AGERI, to support academic staff in answering the calls for proposal within EU and International Programmes, to manage projects (administrative and financial issues), to disseminate results and experiences. The team, in cooperation with URI, implemented several International projects: in the fields of education, mobility, cooperation and Research (LLP Erasmus, 6IP, Grundtvig,



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8 double degrees, 1 EMMC, 7 EMA2, Bilateral Exchange agreements, 2 Italy-France double degrees and joint PhD, Marie Curie, 14 TEMPUS, 8 Interreg IIIA,B,C, 1 Interreg IVC, 1 EC-Canada, several FPs, Life, Foreign Affairs cooperation programmes). Partners for Erasmus are selected on the basis of the modules they offer and the selection is made by the departmental coordinators. A revision every 3 years aims to identify the complementarities and the added value for student and staff mobility. Special attention is given to partners whose competencies, for similarities and/or complementarities, could allow the subscription of a MOU for delivering a double degree, at BA and MA level, when mobility is implemented within a pre-ordered scheme. For research projects partnerships are identified by the research teams on a scientific base and in view of active participation of doctoral students and post-docs. For cooperation projects partners and activities are identified on the basis of coherence with institutional internationalization strategy and of national and EU policies. Mobility of students, teaching and administrative staff within the established partnerships is a fundamental issue of the internationalization strategy set up by the University. Students are encouraged to implement mobility for both study and placement and additional funds are provided by Azienda per il Diritto agli Studi Universitari to students economically disadvantaged, but this is not sufficient for coping with the difficulties in which Italian families are living. Teaching staff mobility for teaching and training is well developed but meets the obstacles due to the lack of a real recognition in the framework of evaluation indicators recently established by ANVUR. Administrative and technical staff mobility is strongly encouraged especially for the harmonization of procedures in the management of international degrees, but language barriers did not produce so far the expected results.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme

Cooperation activities are promoted by research groups or single teachers. Pro-rector and the International Project Team verify the feasibility of the planned actions in view of the institutional strategy (attractiveness, complementarities with other projects, sustainability, international degrees, competencies and staff involved) The target non-EU countries are identified according to existing connections of university staff and to the specific role of Italy and Abruzzo region (MA of Adriatic IPA programme) in the process of harmonization of skills and policies in the fundamental fields of environment protection, social cohesion, education systems reform, migration, etc. Thus, the Mediterranean region, middle east, Balkans, Caucasus, Africa are the natural target of cooperation for historical cultural and geographical connections (2 TEMPUS projects are located in North Africa, 1 in Israel, 2 in Caucasus region, 1 TEMPUS and 1 EMA2 in Balkans). But also USA, Canada, Central and South America, Japan and industrialized countries are target of bilateral cooperation agreements especially for research and mobility at PhD level. The successful implementation of 5 TEMPUS and 4 EMA2 projects in Central Asia increased the number of enrolled students from that region and the subscription of 2 bilateral agreements funded by the KZ Ministry of Education. The cooperation concerns mainly teaching methods and tools up-grading, curricula up-dating, exchange of knowledge at level of governance and internationalization. The implementation of these projects is leading to the extension of agreements to the other countries of CA and direct cooperation with the Ministries of Education of KZ, KG, TJ, UZ in view of outcomes sustainability and further cooperation. Bilateral agreements and 4 TEMPUS projects reinforced cooperation with Russian institutions. Bilateral agreements for cooperation in double degrees organization with Universities from India and Mongolia are in phase of negotiation



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Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve.*

- 1) The main reasons for the reduction of students at tertiary level of education in Italy are demographic change and the high rate of unemployed among youth irrespective of the level of study attained, making university expenses useless and time wasting. Public financial restriction is reducing the opportunity for talented students to get a position in the universities or research centers, increasing the brain drain. UNIVAQ is coping with these issues through a clear information on educational opportunities, an information campaign at schools for a tutored and tailored guidance in study choice. A cooperation with the regional decision makers for a targeted use of ESF in support of students at all levels could reduce the drop-out.
- 2) UNIVAQ is developing a reliable quality assessment method on degree course design, modularization and teaching infrastructures according to Tuning methodology (14 questions) for a continuous revision of curricula constantly consulting relevant stakeholders. The enhancement of the e-learning platform, mentoring, tutoring and guidance from enrolment to graduation and afterwards foster individual potential reaching diverse groups of learners.
- 3) The University strategy for quality enhancement considers in/out mobility of students and staff the key point for the internationalization of its activities. The already established partnerships with EU and non EU institutions represent the starting point for the improvement of relationships with the rest of the world and the enhancement of rules and procedures in recognition of exams, degrees, research activities and organization of double/joint degrees. The successful experience within EM and Tempus made UNIVAQ an attractive pole for talented students and staff from all the continents.
- 4) UNIVAQ is achieving a real link between education research and business. Results are:
 - 10 spin off
 - 50 scholarship for PhDs and young researches for technological transfer within enterprises
 - 2 Business plan competitions
 - 17 patents
 - 20 research projects submitted to multinational corporations, in cooperation with McKinsey
 - participation in 6 regional innovation poles
 - 1 virtual incubator
 - 3 editions of specialization course on “Intellectual/Industrial Property and Technological Transfer”
- 5) One of the main issues connected with internationalization is the availability of suitable funds. The EU Programmes provide funds for the pilot phase but sustainability of successful activities requires dedicated funding. The budget allocated yearly needs integration thus UNIVAQ started the exploitation of several source of financing. A Pilot agreement with Region Abruzzo (ESF ROP) funded mobility of PhDs, in/out international degrees students, in/out visiting professors and intensive language courses. INTERREG Projects provided additional funds for research and innovation. Further agreements(ESF,ERDS, MIUR) and projects (EMA2 and TEMPUS) will extend the cooperation areas for teaching and research activities.