

In the following sections of the application form, you will need to explain how your institution will fulfil the ECHE principles if the Charter is awarded. You are encouraged to consult the [ECHE Guidelines](#) for support in completing this application.

Please note that your Erasmus+ National Agency will monitor your Erasmus Policy Statement and your answers to the questions given in the application. The Erasmus+ National Agency reserves the right to request more information on your activities and propose supplementary measures, for the purposes of monitoring and implementing the Charter principles by your institution.

1. ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

1.1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff



Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices



Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities



Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees



Partnerships for Innovation



Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation:



1.2 Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the

goal of building a European Education Area¹ and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Internationalisation of education is one of the main priorities for the European Union, for Estonian national education policy and for the Estonian Aviation Academy (hereafter the Academy). According principles are stated in the Statutes of Estonian Aviation Academy as well as in the Development Plan and in the Strategy for International Cooperation. In a context of internationalisation all aspects like opportunities for students to gain international experience, exchanging practices and ideas internationally between teaching and administrative staff, international horizon of teaching, research and development are extremely important. Hereby participation in Erasmus+ programme is one of the main support mechanisms that helps us to develop and broaden all before mentioned dimensions.

The Academy is a state-owned professional higher education institution educating and training specialists for Estonian aviation enterprises and organisations. By today the education institution founded as Tartu Aviation College in 1993 and renamed Estonian Aviation Academy in 2008 has become a successful Estonian higher education institution in the study process of which the standards of Estonian higher education and those of international aviation are applied. The Academy has actively participated in Erasmus programmes from 2007 and has met all quantitative and qualitative requirements set by the programme. Erasmus programme has been vital instrument for our small institution, because internationalisation would have not been possible in a used extent without its support.

If our Academy obtains right to participate in the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme, then we will definitely continue with high-quality student and staff exchange. Our successful cooperation samples that origin from previous mobility programmes support us on this way. We will do our best to become even more attractive destination for international students and we wish that all our students would have an international experience in a form of learning or traineeship mobility, from participating in international lectures at home or from virtual mobility options. The first forms presume a great courage and self-confidence from students and the Academy takes all steps that would foster these characteristics. Other activities like short-period mobility or participation in international lectures at home presume a high quality of these actions. Assuring the mentioned quality is also continuously important for the Academy. All students shall have an opportunity to participate in international activities no matter what their social background or opportunities are. For this, a good and wide network and effective cooperation relations are essential. Furthermore, for developing these relations it is important to deepen interactions between staff as well as to guarantee support for the actions from management and well-functioning coordination of international relations. We believe that our Academy has met these mentioned presumptions.

In the context of internationalisation of study process, the Academy foresees opening English-taught aviation curricula during the new programme period. Both the international degree-students and exchange students could take courses from new curricula. Aviation is one of the most international industries and regarding that the internationality of aviation studies is also normality, not exception. We believe that thanks to the new international curricula the variety of subjects for incoming exchange students increases, students could grow their social capital even more, the knowledge circulation grows and the visibility of the Academy increases. While working out international curricula we definitely continue developing e-learning options. Virtual learning supports international knowledge exchange even more – in that way there are no distance or borders that may hinder the process.

¹ For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website:

https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

The Strategy for International Cooperation establishes the general goals of the Academy's international cooperation and the general goals of international cooperation are as follows:

1. Enhancing the international visibility and competitiveness of the Academy by expanding its research and development activities and by quality assurance.
2. Providing the Academy graduates with international experience and highly valuing the teaching staff by offering opportunities for professional development and by the motivation system.
3. Increasing the coherence between the Academy and aviation industry and the society as a whole.

To reach the goals set on international cooperation the activities are formulated in the following courses of action:

1. Internationalisation of the study process and the R&D activities in cooperation with foreign partners.
2. Organisation of international cooperation with the present and new partners from abroad.
3. Development of the environment supportive to international cooperation.
4. Adequate funding of the activities of international cooperation.

These goals for international cooperation base in a remarkable extent on opportunities that participation in Erasmus+ programme gives. The Academy's strategic documents have set goals for student exchange as well as for the staff mobility. Mobility itself depends firstly on the sufficient number of cooperation partners and secondly on the fact, if we have anything to offer to partners. In light of it developing English-taught courses, e-courses and growing the number of subjects that have e-support has been our priority and will be our priority in future.

The Academy's goals for internationalisation cover the principles of European Education Area building policy. We believe that European Education Area can be born only if all stakeholders contribute into this process. Our actions are characterized by following principles:

1. It is our moral obligation to coordinate mobility, because we believe that spending time abroad to study and learn should become the norm. Enriching students' regular studies, giving them a chance to study abroad and probably learn something that we do not teach on our premises – this is our duty. It is our responsibility to offer opportunities for gaining international experiences. After returning to Estonia, all these knowledges can be used in developing Estonian aviation industry. Certainly, we should not forget additional benefits like developing social skills, European way of thinking and strengthening common values. Our experience has shown that after the mobility, the students are more open-minded, social and their horizons are broader. Probably this logic applies to incoming exchange students as well.
2. Considering the mobility as a part of curriculum is normal principle in all means.
3. Students' language skills shall be wider than knowing one's mother tongue and English language. Our curricula does have enough space for foreign languages. Additionally European Commission's initiative *Online Linguistic Support* has given a wonderful opportunity to develop language skills by following free online language courses for students who have participated in Erasmus+ programme. Hopefully this initiative will remain.
4. Estonian education is free of charge and this is a first presumption that people with weaker socio-economic background have an access to higher education. A short selection of aviation related continuing education courses is available for everyone without any fees. There are several options to gain international experience during studies, but we find that it is a higher education institution's obligation to support these options. Most of our students have noted in the Mobility Tool feedback that they would not had gone to mobility if Erasmus+ support had not provided. This is the main argument, why Erasmus+ support for students is so essential. In conclusion, the Academy holds a position that if we are doing what we think is right, these activities contribute to establishment of the European Education Area and achieving goals set by EU and our country. This proposal gives a comprehensive overview about our plans.

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional

strategy.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

The Academy's main goal in the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme is participating in **Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1)** - Learning mobility: The mobility of higher education students and staff. If we find during the programme period that participation in other actions – Erasmus Key Action 2 and/or Erasmus Key Action 3 is necessary, then according steps will be taken.

The Academy has a long-time experience in organising Erasmus learning mobility (from beginning of year 2007). The internal document "EAVA Procedure for the Management of Erasmus+ Learning Mobility Programme" regulates according procedures. The Academy has achieved the mobility purposes for outgoing, incoming student mobility and staff exchange, set in the Development Plan and Strategy for International Cooperation mainly thanks to participation in Erasmus programmes, which continues hopefully. Implementation of these actions will take place as follows.

Outgoing student mobility: all students can take part in mobility actions if they meet programme's requirements. Different forms of mobility can be combined and the Academy enables students to use Erasmus+ up to 12 months. Public internal admission process takes place in spring. During this process, applicants are provided with consultation, information about possible options and help with choosing the best solutions. After the end of internal admission, all applicants have an interview with Erasmus+ Coordinator and the Head of her/his speciality department. The aim of the interview is again comparing several alternatives and analysing optimal ways to continue regular studies after the mobility. Students can submit applications for traineeship mobility all year around, because finding traineeship in aviation is challenging. Thus, every traineeship matters and we must use all chances. Erasmus+ Coordinator assists students in compiling application documents as well establishes first contact between host institution and students, who have studied in selected HEI before. Agreements for Erasmus+ scholarships are signed before the mobility as well as the first payment done. All mobility results are a normal part of curriculum. Erasmus+ Coordinator holds the contact with students during mobility regularly. Final scholarship payment is done after Mobility Tool feedback submission and meeting other requirements. In case students agree, they are welcome to act as Programme ambassadors in several events.

Incoming student mobility: incoming students can apply to exchange studies at the Academy twice a year and they are accepted, if they meet the requirements on a minimum level and submit admission documents on time. Incoming students receive a wide support – finding accommodation, planning logistics, registering the right of residence, Estonian language and culture subject that runs through semester. Enrolment, exams, library, gym, using laboratories and other services are free of charge obviously. The Academy's students who have Erasmus experience act as their tutors. For a quick communication, they have the Facebook group, where the Student Council members and tutors are present as well. Course catalogue that contains aviation subjects and according syllabi for 40-60 ECTS is ready almost 6 months prior the upcoming semester. Incoming students can choose all courses from the catalogue, however their selection is compared with previous knowledge (based on transcript of records) to avoid getting in troubles with too difficult subjects. Incoming students are invited to our events to support their integration. Both the teachers and Erasmus+ Coordinator monitor their progress regularly. Within 4 weeks after the mobility, Erasmus+ Coordinator issues the Confirmation Letter and Transcript of Records that explain the ECTS principles and grading scheme (in addition to web page). Qualitative feedback to exchange semester comes directly from students and quantitative feedback from Mobility Tool.

Staff mobility: Application period for the staff mobility is open all the time. Both the teaching and administrative staff get support with managing mobility thoroughly. So far, all applications have received positive answer. In case mobility costs reach over the scholarship limit, the Academy covers these from its' own funds. The same policy applies to incoming experts. Staff mobility is a normal part of regular workload and organised in a way that it fits into the regular schedule without troubles.

Students and staff learning mobility requires good and mutually beneficial partnerships that base on trust and quality. By today, the Academy has 20 **inter-institutional agreements** with

respected HEIs all around Europe. We see that during the new programme period our cooperation area may reach outside the Europe as well. Erasmus+ Coordinator is responsible for initiating, signing, renewing and implementing inter-institutional agreements as well as for setting the shared quality requirements specific to the planned exchanges (e.g. mobility numbers per academic year, recommended language levels, information on grading systems, visa, insurance and housing as well as additional requirements, if applicable, like selection criteria for the nomination of students and staff or measures for preparing, receiving and integrating participants), respective time frames and necessary contacts. Both the students and staff members can make proposals for establishing new agreements. Proposals formulate to agreements in case the area of teaching matches, other HEI is an accredited Charter holder and benefits from cooperation are obvious for both sides.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Our hopes for developing internationalisation in the era of the new Erasmus+ Programme are high and base on our Development Plan and Strategy of International Cooperation. We foresee that following aspects will have the main impact: increased proportion of students who have mobility experience; stable proportion of incoming exchange students every year; increased proportion of staff with mobility experience; deepened cooperation with strategically important partner HEIs; continuing improvement of top-quality course catalogue, providing e-support for subject courses and development of new English-taught curricula that can be followed mutually by degree and exchange students. Up-to-date support mechanisms for incoming students must be guaranteed and they shall feel safe and welcome here.

Acquiring international academic experience must become a normal part of regular studies, because this facilitates fostering European values, establishing common cultural space, increasing civil activity and of course improving language skills. We believe that mobility grows mobility – the more students take part in international exchange, the more likely mobility would become a tradition. Inclusion of students with fewer opportunities to the process of internationalisation will be possible thanks to several forms of gaining international experience as well as support from EU, Estonian Government and the Academy.

Here is the selection of quantitative goals, highly supported by Erasmus+ Programme:

- All students must have an opportunity to participate in academic mobility and every year at least 10% of students shall take part in different forms of mobility;
- At least 7% of the Academy's student population are incoming students;
- At least 75% of our staff members carrying out teaching have a mobility experience;
- Every year at least 15% of our staff members carrying out teaching are foreign lecturers and specialists;
- The minimum number of inter-institutional agreements is 20;
- English-taught courses are up-to-date and new ones created continuously, whereas at least 90% of these shall have an e-learning support;
- The feedback given by incoming students to their exchange studies at the Academy scores 4.0 as a minimum.

Thanks to the new Erasmus+ Programme the visibility of the Academy shall increase even more. We will develop continuously study-, support- as well as research and development processes on a purpose of meeting nowadays quality standards, at the same time contributing in establishing European Education Area and supporting our cooperation partners' internationalisation processes.