

LITHUANIAN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU) identifies itself an internationally open university that continues to maintain a special orientation towards European cooperation, based on strong motivation for international collaboration among its students and staff. The LSMU development strategy matches the actions of the Programme. These actions support the implementation of university's strategic objectives through mobility activities for students and staff, cooperation while implementing innovations and good practices in educational processes, and successful participation in the national reform of higher education. At the same time, LSMU activities under the framework of Programme contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy. The measures to improve the international development at LSMU are described in the 'Strategic Development 2011-2016 Guidelines of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences' approved by the LSMU Board on 4 May 2011. Among all values, the strategy of study development is based on the European humanistic and democratic traditions; compatibility with the common European area of higher education; ambitions for continuous education and professional development; and principles of assurance of quality in higher education. The provisions of the Magna Charta of the European Universities and the European Higher Education Area as well as other modern principles of international and academic society are recognized at LSMU. Within the general strategic objective for the development of education, internationalisation is linked to three specific tasks: 1) to increase the number of degree and exchange international students in all study programmes; 2) to promote academic exchanges in order to increase the number of incoming persons; 3) to ensure funding for the execution of bilateral agreements. Results and indicators for progress monitoring have been defined in the Plan of Implementation, an annex to the Strategic Guidelines. The development of lifelong learning activities has been foreseen as one of tasks for the implementation of the strategic objective. A task of successful integration into the common European Research Area has been raised for research. The University strives for the effective processes of management and control by increasing the efficiency of activities and improving utilisation of material and human resources as well as effective use of financial resources.

The majority of incoming and outgoing students are students from the EU countries. However, students from the third countries are welcomed and encouraged to join LSMU for academic exchange as well. For the cooperation, LSMU gives the top priority to the neighbouring countries and those in the region of Central and Southeast Asia, with which LSMU actively cooperates in educational activities as well as national and international programmes and projects.

LSMU participates in Erasmus activities and sends students to the institutions under the framework of signed bilateral agreements. The international students of all three cycle programmes are provided with favourable conditions for partial studying and performing training at LSMU. Moreover, LSMU students are encouraged to study and do traineeships at partner institutions, thus assuring mutual benefit for both cooperating institutions. While choosing overseas institutions for the future cooperation, the main attention is given to the compatibility of study programme and learning outcomes, and possibilities of credit transfer using ECTS by considering the results and experience from previous cooperation.

The academic staff at LSMU participates in teaching activities at overseas universities by sharing good practice and own experience as well as by gaining it from partner institutions. Valuable 'know-hows' from partner institutions are transferred to the modernization processes in LSMU. The staff is encouraged for training mobility to developed countries and modern universities in order to master their good practice and models of successful activities. The academic personnel at LSMU is encouraged to teach at the universities of third countries and thus to initiate the transfer of LSMU 'know-how' and contribute to positive structural changes in target universities. The University welcomes staff from enterprises abroad for teaching activities. These activities are valued because of importance of real life cases in the education process as well as possibilities of giving wider access to international experience for LSMU students. Individuals from successful institutions and preferably having teaching experience are selected for this mobility. The topics of their lectures are an integral part of the subjects at LSMU and match the aims of a certain programme.

LSMU has been engaged in the execution of joint master degree programmes at the national level and is planning to initiate and join initiatives for joint international master programmes under the framework of Programme. Experiences gained at the national level will be utilized when joining international projects.

2. Experience gained in the previous international projects will be used in the implementation of projects under the Programme. LSMU is planning to join multilateral projects carried out by higher education institutions, which are oriented towards partnership between higher education and social partners as primary consumers of the result, with an aim to modernize higher education and educate highly skilled specialists for job market. By utilizing experience gained in the Central Asia region and results of internal structural changes, LSMU is planning to initiate and join the projects aimed to modernize higher education systems in the third countries.

3. Both participation in educational projects and execution of Programme's activities in mobility actions will have a positive impact on the quality of studies. Therefore, it is expected that more national students will enter less popular study programmes. Graduates will be employed in sectors where the lack of educated competent personnel has been foreseen during the last period (e.g. sector of public health, animal husbandry, etc.). Financial resources allocated to the programme will provide talented, but lacking financial resources, students with the possibilities of becoming internationally mobile for studies or placements and gaining valuable experience and competences required in the global job market. The number of students wishing to stay at the university and to pursue a career in science will increase due to increased possibilities of internationalisation. Due to measures aiming to integrate higher education and business, some of them will continue a career related to scientific research in business companies resulting in a better link between higher education and business.

Staff training visits to enterprises as well as visiting lecturers from business will facilitate a dialog between business and LSMU education and research. Therefore, the quality of studies as well as correspondence of learning outcomes to demands in the job market will improve. Learning outcomes will better fit the demands of global job market. The programme will provide possibilities for students from the third countries to join the LSMU academic community under the framework of academic exchange and therefore will increase the popularity of studies and will contribute to the attraction of best international students to full degree programmes. Programme

will increase the possibilities of continuous development of competences of LSMU staff providing both financial resources and system for international mobility. Lecturers from enterprises will increase the quality of teaching process in the areas where local academic staff is less competent or lacks 'real life' experience.

The international mobility of students and staff is one of the top priorities at LSMU. Mobility is considered as a demanded part of studies and teaching. The compatibility of internal university procedures to the principles of international academic mobility will improve. Students are always awarded credits for studies or placements abroad when these match learning outcomes; the credits are recorded in a diploma supplement. Teaching and training abroad is recognized as a part of work for staff and academic personnel. Teaching in a partner institution or training activities abroad are the desirable activities for academic staff and personnel and is positively evaluated during periodic staff evaluations.

LSMU strives to create the innovative learning environment through the implementation of problem-based learning and interactive IT measures in the study process and its management. Mobility activities for academic staff as well as multilateral educational projects will serve as sources of ideas and innovations in the implementation of modern educational methods.