

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

Participation in Erasmus+

School Center Škofja Loka (SCSL) is a public educational institution with a long tradition of vocational and technical education, as its beginnings date back to 1889, when a craft school was established in Škofja Loka (Gorenjska, Slovenia). SCSL educates and trains both students and adults in various technical fields and to various professional levels.

- Links: <https://www.scsl.si/>, <https://scsl.si/about-center-eng/>

Within the SCSL, there are three independent schools:

- Higher Vocational College of Mechanical and Wood Engineering (HVC) – applying for Erasmus ECHE certificate 2021-2027
- Secondary Vocational and Technical School of Mechanical Engineering
- Secondary School of Wood Engineering

SCSL also has a Business-to-Business education center (MIC – Medpodjetniški in izobraževalni center).

In 2021, SCSL received the highest national award for quality, so-called Apple of Quality Award for the best Erasmus+ project in the field of vocational education and training.

- Links: <https://scsl.si/about-center-eng/>, <https://www.scsl.si/2021/12/07/jabolko-kakovosti-2021-za-sc-skofja-loka/>, <https://www.cmepius.si/objave/znani-so-nagrajenci-za-jabolka-kakovosti-zlati-kabel-in-evropske-nagrado-za-inovativno-poucevanje-2021/?hilite=%C5%A1kofja+loka>

The Higher Vocational College of Mechanical and Wood Engineering (HVC) was founded in 2004 and is a member of the Association of Slovene Higher Vocational Colleges (Association HVC),

- Links: <https://www.skupnost-vss.si/en/about-us/association-hvc/>

The Higher Vocational College of Mechanical and Wood Engineering is a small college but is accredited by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Slovenia for the implementation of two study programs. We offer two-year programmes for becoming an engineer of mechanical engineering or an engineer of wood engineering. Each academic year the school invites applications for 70 places for full-time students and 70 places for open school students.

In 2014, the Higher Vocational College of Mechanical and Wood Engineering became the holder of the ERASMUS CHARTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION 2014–2020.

One of the main goals of our new strategy is to re-obtain the ERASMUS CHARTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION to be able to continue with EU co-financing of students' practical training mobility as well as the mobility of employees.

In the frame of Erasmus+, we wish among all:

- to continue to provide equal opportunities for all our students and staff to join the Erasmus+ program
- to enable our students to study and our lecturers to teach abroad in cooperation with colleges in Europe and worldwide,
- to give our students the opportunity to complete practical training programs abroad,
- to enable our lecturers to complete professional training in cooperation with modern, innovative companies in Europe and worldwide,
- to invite foreign students to study at our college and to complete practical training programs in Slovenian companies,
- to invite foreign lecturers and companies' representatives to share examples of good practice and thus enable students who cannot take part in mobility to take advantage of the knowledge and experience offered by guest experts,
- to take part in modernising and developing college programs,
- to become a member of various educational and research organisations and institutions in the fields of mechanical engineering and woodworking with aim to develop new, innovative knowledge, and to deal with technological and other problems related to the development of various technologies in different scientific and economical fields with the transfer of this knowledge and innovations into practice,
- with development and research projects in cooperation with other educational and research institutions at home and abroad, to be a part of European and global development teams in the field of mechanical and wood engineering.

Strategy

By acknowledging the need for permanent modernisation and internationalisation, our college wishes to further contribute and participate in the Erasmus+ programme.

VISION OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGE OF MECHANICAL AND WOOD ENGINEERING:

We want to be a successful, high-quality, and modern educational organization, recognizable at home and abroad. With professional and friendly staff, modern equipment, and methods of education, we want to achieve a high level of educational services and satisfaction of our participants in education. By developing partnerships, we want to contribute to the development of teachers and participants into strong, confident personalities who will cope with life situations and challenges. We strive for the most successful cooperation with the economy, local communities, and partners.

MISSION OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGE OF MECHANICAL AND WOOD ENGINEERING:

Given the challenges of the environment, we offer quality educational services and responsibly carry out education and training. We ensure that the needs for education of young people and adults are met at the level of vocational, professional, and higher

education, we promote lifelong learning and cooperate with the economy and local communities.

VALUES OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGE OF MECHANICAL AND WOOD ENGINEERING:

We promote all the positive values that enrich the interpersonal relationships between students, employees, parents, employers, and the environment in which we live. With responsibility for the future, we want to promote professionalism, quality, collegiality, creativity, and responsibility.

Our strategy is therefore to provide individual mobility to students and lecturers who could obtain internationally comparable knowledge, competences, skills, and experience in their professional areas, meet new cultures, meet new friends, and enrich their knowledge of foreign languages. Consequently, they will be able to adapt to constant changes in their professional areas and be active citizens in the EU and globally. Our vision is to become the best higher vocational college in the region which educates competent, innovative, and confident engineers that will be competitive in the European and global labour market. It is of utmost importance that as many participants are included in the study process as possible as it is the best way to ensure development achievements, implementation in practice, and promotion of lifelong learning, permanent development, international cooperation, importance of development-oriented institutions and industry.

We will search for our partners among educational, research and economic institutions which have in their business and institutional strategies goals and aims focused on development, multidisciplinary cooperation and the transfer of new knowledge and innovations, which support international cooperation and integration of different institutions into associations, which encourage global technological, social and cultural development and enable life-long education and personal growth to everybody regardless of their nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation, to individuals who might be different in any way.

Objectives

In accordance with Erasmus Charter principles, our college has set five main objectives:

1. Improving the assurance and monitoring of quality of higher education at our college
2. Increasing the mobility of higher education students and staff under KA1 not compromising quality
3. Strengthening quality through exchange of practices and cross-border cooperation by participating in European and international cooperation projects under KA2
4. Contributing to identifying and disseminating good practices at local, national, and European levels under KA3
5. Implementing digital mobility management in line with technical standards.

1. Improving the assurance and monitoring of quality of higher education at our college in accordance with Erasmus+ guidelines by emphasising the importance of non-discrimination, transparency, and inclusion

Quality assurance is of great importance at our college and school centre. Our goal is to improve quality assurance of higher education at our college in accordance with Erasmus Charter guidelines by specifically emphasising the importance of non-discrimination, transparency, and inclusion.

As a result, in 2018 we decided to go even further and decided to implement ISO standard 9001:2015 for the scope of higher vocational education. Since then, we have been audited each year and have successfully fulfilled the requirements of the ISO standard and have maintained the Quality Management System at the highest possible level.

We are constantly looking for ways to ensure equal and equitable access and opportunities to ingoing and outgoing participants from all backgrounds, the mobility of students and lecturers and their integration with institutions and enterprises in other European and non-European countries means acquiring vital life and work experience and all necessary skills.

2. Increasing the mobility of higher education students and staff under KA1 not compromising quality

Individual mobility of students and staff with the aim of study completion, teaching or training and cooperation in research and other projects with aim of introducing research achievements and innovations into educational process and practice, will enable all the participants direct insight and an opportunity of benchmarking educational programs and achieved/required competences.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, the interest in mobility of students and staff decreased. Actions to be taken for improving the situation:

- promotion of mobility of students and employees in cooperation with the Association HVC

- individual counselling and discussion with students and employees on the importance of learning mobility.
- organisation of events, workshops, student mobility for the purpose of practical training and staff mobility for the purpose of teaching and learning student

3. strengthening quality through exchange of practices and cross-border cooperation by participating in European and international cooperation projects under KA2

International cooperation and integration in the European and world network of colleges is our priority due to fast development of mechanical and wood engineering, practically oriented educational programs, good cooperation with internationally acknowledged companies, and integration in their development work.

Due to economic connections and fast technological and scientific research, we would like to cooperate with other countries globally, especially with partners specialised in the development of mechanical engineering and woodworking projects in their regions.

4. Contributing to identifying and disseminating good practices at local, national, and European levels under KA3

Individual mobility of students and staff with the aim of study completion, teaching or training and cooperation in research and other projects with aim of introducing research achievements and innovations into educational process and practice, will enable all the participants direct insight and an opportunity of benchmarking educational programs and achieved/required competences.

We will search for our partners among educational, research and economic institutions which have in their business and institutional strategies goals and aims focused on development, multidisciplinary cooperation and the transfer of new knowledge and innovations, which support international cooperation and integration of different institutions into associations, which encourage global technological, social and cultural development and enable life-long education and personal growth to everybody regardless of their nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation, to individuals who might be different in any way.

A good example is the cooperation of our college in an international project called "VACIDE – vocational action competence in digital environments" that pursued goals with the focus on the manufacturing industry. The good practices of this project are now being disseminating at all levels.

- Links: <https://www.vacide.eu/>, <https://www.vacide.eu/partners/>, <https://www.vacide.eu/description-of-the-project/>, <http://www.scs1.si/tag/vacide/>

5. Implementing digital mobility management in line with technical standards

Information and communication technologies (ICT) has drastically changed how we work, communicate, learn, and live. We want to embrace and take advantage of the

possibilities offered by digital mobility management and close the gaps in our digital transformation strategy.

Impact

All stakeholders (our students, lecturers, teachers /full-time, part-time, contract based/, a researchers) will be able to study and train in educational, research and development oriented economic institutions in Europe and worldwide. They will be motivated for continuing the study and acquiring a degree in their specialist areas by knowing the latest trends and technological development and by school methodology of encouraging and recognition of mobility achievements.

All these activities will allow the stakeholders to achieve higher educational standards and personal goals at a higher, internationally comparable level. The functioning of international educational networks will enable real-time, permanently oriented modernization of educational programs, developmental and research work, as it will be an integral part of ongoing exchange of ideas, good practices, and the latest research results.

By monitoring development trends, analysing achieved results in realized projects and cooperation with development oriented and technologically developed internationally established companies, we will continue to create our data base, which is useful in search for new partner organizations in and outside EU, planning new activities, and setting new goals. Thus, we can introduce changes in the study process and cooperate in the modernization of educational programs. With setting goals in various international activities, including Erasmus+ programs, we can achieve synergic effects of reciprocal activity in different fields, greater efficiency of utilization of financial resources.

Indicators

The key indicators for the period 2022-2027 to measure the targets and impact of participation in the Erasmus+ Programme are:

- Achieving 10% student mobility action plan under KA1 by 2027.
- Achieving 60% staff mobility action plan under KA1 by 2027.
- Having at least one active KA2 and/or KA3 as a leading or project partner every academic year, by signing Erasmus+ cooperation contracts with companies and institutions in our neighbouring countries (Austria, Italy, Hungary, Croatia), in other EU countries, and non-EU countries, especially south-eastern EU countries.
- Organising one (1) international annual event called Erasmus+ day, taking place in May/June every academic year.
- Organising two (2) international workshops for inbound/outbound students and staff in the field of mechanical and wood engineering every academic year.
- Introducing paperless communications by 2027.

Last updated: 3 May 2022

