

## **ASPETE's Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS) EUC Application 2008**

- a) Please describe clearly your institution's strategy, objectives and priorities for its Erasmus activities (mobility, multilateral projects and thematic networks, etc) and any other actions in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme.
- b) Please also provide information on the following points:
  - What specific actions are planned to give visibility to Erasmus activities and what type of publicity will be given to the Erasmus University Charter and the EPS?
  - What kind of arrangements, if any, does the Institution ensure to comply with non-discrimination objectives (e.g. actions related to gender equality, integration of disabled students and staff, enhancement of social and economic cohesion and combating of xenophobia and racism)?

ASPETE was founded in 2002, as the successor of SELETE, a Technical & Vocational Teacher Training Institute of long tradition and academic excellence established in 1959. Since its establishment, ASPETE has incorporated policies and strategies acknowledging the changing landscape of Higher Education in Europe, accepting the principles of the Bologna Declaration and recognizing the increasing importance of transnational cooperation. It has already adopted the ECTS for all its degree programmes, intends to introduce the DS in the near future\*, and is actively involved in the implementation of joint postgraduate programmes with HE institutions abroad (eg. "MA in Education" with Roehampton University, London, UK). Having embraced the aims of L.L.P., widely communicated among its staff and students, and having made preparatory contacts with potential partners, ASPETE is now ready to invest in strategies and moves that will promote its European orientation and become an active member of the Erasmus thriving community. One such strategy is to initiate student mobility activities of high quality. The pursuit of knowledge, internationalization of curricula, promotion and sharing of research interests, establishment and/or reinforcement of academic links, participation in thematic networks, are also high on ASPETE's agenda. Priorities are a) to promote the Erasmus mobility programme to staff and students, facilitating academic co-operation and encouraging dissemination of good practices in delivering quality teaching and learning in Europe, b) to provide students with education and training that will enhance their learning and communication skills, personal advancement and employability prospects, enabling them to cope with the challenges of internalization and the growth of pedagogical and technological knowledge, c) to support the development and implementation of research projects with existing international partners building on prior co-operations, d) to encourage staff to actively participate in the LLP initiatives, including those for the development of joint degrees and curricula. ASPETE aspires to meet and to couple the above priorities through the initiation of specific institutional structures, committees and support services.

All Erasmus activities including ASPETE's EPS and EUC will be prominently publicized on ASPETE's website and promotional handbooks. Erasmus information will be disseminated both at institutional and departmental level, and will be promoted during conferences departmental meetings, students and faculty meetings, induction days and pre-placement seminars, and mutual exchange or preparatory visits.

ASPETE is committed to an equal opportunity policy for both its staff and students. Individuals are treated on the basis of appropriate merits and abilities and are given equal opportunities

within the institution. ASPETE seeks to eliminate discrimination, particularly on the grounds of colour, gender, sex, ethnic origin, age, disability, religion and socio-economic background, not only to ensure compliance with equality and diversity legislation, but because discrimination within any organization, educational or not is unacceptable. Within this framework, lectures against xenophobia and racism are integrated in existing curricula, and diversity issues are discussed in teaching practice tutorials. Social and economic cohesion is enhanced by a number of measures including free health care, assistance with accommodation, full-board at ASPETE's restaurant, free laboratory, library and internet access, distribution of textbooks and confidential counseling. Corollary to the institution's commitment to an equal opportunities policy is the ongoing modernization of ASPETE's campus to facilitate individuals with a disability (ramps, elevators, sign language).

\* As from June 2008, all ASPETE's graduates receive a DS both in Greek and in English, automatically and free of charge.

#### Quality of academic mobility activities:

- What kind of specific measures are implemented in the institution to ensure highest quality in academic mobility activities?
- Details should be provided in particular on: recognition and credit systems, the provision of information on curricula, information and counseling of outgoing students, tutoring and integration of incoming students, provision of student services (in particular accommodation), preparatory and refresher language course, facilitation and acknowledgment of staff mobility.

Information, support, and acknowledgment are key issues in ensuring high quality in academic mobility activities. Each academic department of ASPETE will have an Erasmus departmental coordinator who will be charged with promoting the academic advantages of Erasmus programme to students and staff, and with providing information on the opportunities and conditions of mobility activities, in cooperation with the Erasmus team of the Institution's International Relations Office. Related information will be published on ASPETE's website. Preparatory and refresher language courses held by the institution for students and staff, as well as EU funded Intensive Language Courses will also be promoted.

Departmental coordinators will constitute the Exchange Programmes Steering Committee, who will monitor the approval and allocation of placements, staff responsibilities, programme requirements, placement/credit recognition, support services, and language preparation. Support to incoming students will include induction days, accommodation to the Students Residence Hall in ASPETE's Campus or low-rent housing elsewhere, free language tutorials, free library and internet access, professional guidance and counseling by ASPETE's Services, assistance with paper work, cultural and sport activities, free health care, and full-board at ASPETE's restaurant. Outgoing students will be fully briefed prior to departure and provided with the necessary info. All student mobility periods for studies will be formally recognized based on a Learning Agreement (LA), stipulating the academic expectations of the student and the ASPETE's commitment to ECTS (credit/work load allocation and curriculum information per course and department is publicized on its website). Staff mobility, taken to enhance personal and departmental advancement, will be encouraged and acknowledged both at departmental and institutional level. At the end of their placement, staff and students will submit a report, enabling retrospective evaluation.

Quality of student placement activities:

- What kind of specific measures are implemented to ensure high quality in students placements? Give details on how the work-programme and the placement agreement are prepared and implemented. Please describe the practical arrangements agreed between the parties. Please specify also the monitoring and evaluation of the placement period as well as its recognition in the curriculum.

Work placement is mandatory to all undergraduate students of ASPETE. Hence, it is a key feature of the mission statement of all its Departments. Work placement abroad is considered to give an even greater opportunity for final year students to gain valuable experience in an area relevant to their studies, in a multi-cultural environment that will also enhance their communication and cooperation skills and employability. High quality in this case can be ensured by strict procedures regarding the quality, approval and allocation of placements, and a close cooperation between ASPETE and the placement provider.

ASPETE's Departments, in cooperation with the Liaison and Placements Office (GD), will provide thorough guidance on opportunities and conditions for mobility through seminars, and linguistic preparation classes. Applicants will be selected on the basis of pre-set criteria (transcripts, CV, foreign languages, motivation). Successful matching between demand and offer will be made via the GD's Data Base System. Tailor-made programmes will then be developed and endorsed by all parties involved. A formal agreement will be drawn up between the student, ASPETE, and provider to enable the placement to start. Practical arrangements (cultural and placement orientation, transport and accommodation assistance, work permit if necessary, social security insurance, health and safety information) will be dealt with by ASPETE, in cooperation with the provider. Continuous monitoring and evaluation methods agreed upon (regular contact between parties, alerting of problems, student self-assessment forms, progress diaries by the placement supervisor) will allow necessary adjustments. Students and provider will be obliged to submit a final report to ensure all objectives have been met. Data thus collected will also allow retrospective evaluation of placement outcomes and aims. Full recognition of the placement through ECT S will be given by ASPETE.