

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

1. The significance of ERASMUS program

The Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management in Warsaw provides education for youths in the scope of management of hotel premises. In order to meet the main goal of our Academy, we provide our students with high quality theoretical and practical knowledge and with knowledge of foreign languages. Therefore we employ highly qualified staff including academics and practitioners in tourism industry and we cooperate with the major tourism organizations in Poland: Polish Chamber of Tourism; Polish Hotels Chamber of Commerce, Polish Tourist Organization.

The participation in Erasmus's "Life-long learning" program in 2007-2013 will allow us to widen our educational offer for students. The tourist industry depends, more than any other, on international relations. An employee in the tourist industry has to be open to problems and needs of others, know and understand problems arising from cultural differences. Students' exchange will provide our students with practical knowledge of multicultural problems they will face with daily in their future work. Studies at foreign schools will enhance not only the theoretical knowledge of our students but will also help them gain independence and improve their language skills as well as their own personality. It will also be an opportunity to establish new international friendships. Right now, in order to perform these goals, the educational program of the Academy includes a possibility for students to take part in international tourism fairs, such as: TT Warsaw, Tour Salon in Poznań and ITB in Berlin, therefore the students have an opportunity to learn the latest trends in the contemporary international and European tourism.

We would like to start cooperation with other tourism schools, so our academics could also raise their qualifications from the content-related and didactical point of view. Already now we underline the importance of choosing the best employees who have to prove great knowledge in the field of tourist industry as well as continuous perfection of their skills. We try to create conditions enabling classes with audiovisual elements and we aim at introducing internet communication between students and their teachers.

2. Promotion of ERASMUS program

We plan to spread the information about Erasmus and the Charter we received through a series of meetings with students and by placing information on the web site and information boards of our Academy. During the inauguration of the academic year 2007/2008 (and further), the offer of Erasmus program shall be presented. We are preparing a special guide for our students that will include application rules for the participation in the program and the specimen of all necessary documents.

3. Discrimination and disabled students

The profile of our Academy forces acceptance of other cultures, beliefs, orientations, etc. Every day, our students meet foreigners – the hotel guests. The program of the studies prepares the students for such contacts. One of the subjects “Cultural differences in the contacts with foreigners” teaches how to understand and accept a culture different than Polish or European.

Our Academy is located in hotel premises, therefore we can ensure easy access to all physically disabled people (driveways, lifts).

4. Students' mobility

In order to allow the students to take part in the program we ensure their mobility and a system to transfer ECTS points. Our students can follow individual studies, which allow to adapt our program to the programs of partner schools. During studies at a foreign school, our thesis supervisors ensure individual consultations with their students. We are aiming at introducing “virtual Dean’s office” system, which will allow the students studying abroad to contact our Academy at any time. High level of language teaching is guaranteed by our cooperation with Linguae Mundi – Foreign Language Teaching Foundation. Within the concluded contract, the Foundation provides language classes for our students ended with an exam allowing our students to receive a certificate confirming their knowledge of a foreign language at one out of six levels of advance (according to the Common European Framework issued by the Council of Europe).

5. Students arriving to our Academy

Our school is rather small, therefore foreign students arriving to study here will not feel isolated (right now we have some foreign students). We have a possibility to treat every student almost individually. In case of accepting foreign students, we plan to: assign an individual counselor, provide all necessary help in accommodation and all other formalities, organize Polish Language course and cultural events, and adjust plans and programs of studies to their individual needs. All the classes take place in one building, which makes it easier to adapt to the new place and to contact the Academy's authorities, administration and academics as well as to assimilate in the students' environment. An additional facilitation is the easy access to the school from the center of Warsaw and from the train station and the airport. In the near future we are planning to develop the infrastructure of our school and to build our own students' house.

6. Internship

Owing to the founder of the Academy – the Polish Tourist Association “GROMADA” (celebrating in 2007 its 70 years of activity), every student has an assured place of internship in one of the hotels or travel agents. The internship is based on a detailed plan defined in the „Internship rules” containing the minimum time of the internship and the scope of tasks to be performed by the student. In spring, all GROMADA's premises present their needs for internship students for the summer holiday period. They also precise the conditions of accommodation and requirements for students. Considering the above, the students are distributed for internship. We do our best to allow the students coming from outside of Warsaw to have their internship close to their place of residence (if they wish).

In order to ensure the reliability of the internship in all GROMADA's premises where our students work, we have a special internship counselor, who has a permanent contact with his internship assistant. The internship counselor receives the internship plan and the placement of a given person. During the internship, the Academy has a right to control its course and quality.

Apart from the internships in GROMADA premises, we enable our students to have their internships abroad. Recently, we have been cooperating with entities in Greece,

Germany and Italy. Foreign internship can be performed, among others, in the GROMADA premises in Berlin. Students leasing for foreign internships can count on all kind of help from the school (including adjusting their exams dates to the arrival/departure) and a permanent contact with the school while staying abroad. The possibility of sending students to internships within ERASMUS program, the students with high grades, who, otherwise, could not afford a foreign internship, will have a great opportunity to raise their professional qualifications and to improve their knowledge of the language.

Owing to the possibility of placing the students in GROMADA's premises, we can be an interesting organizer of internships for foreign students. Apart from the internships, we can also ensure Polish language and culture classes.