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## ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

Implementation of Erasmus at Tartu Health Care College after the award of ECHE, achievement goals, consistence with institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy.

Tartu Health Care College has been active in Erasmus mobilities from 2004 using mobilities for students and staff. The Programme allows us to achieve the following goals within our internationalization and modernization strategy.

1. A knowledge-based society that is free, innovative, with capability and ability to cope in the globalize world.
2. Develop a universal education level to which most of the population will aspire through traditional forms or lifelong learning. To increase the systems of research, development and innovation in higher education.
3. It is our interest to offer through quality education a top level in Health Science Education in the European space.
4. Become a centre of excellence in higher education that will attract staff and students from across Europe for study, training and research.

A core part of Tartu Health Care College's Internationalization and Modernization Strategy is mobility. The higher education institution has set objectives for internationalisation and assesses the attainment of these objectives regularly. The higher education institution has created an environment that encourages international mobility of students and teaching staff, supporting the development of learning, teaching and RDC activities, as well as the cultural openness of its members and Estonian society in general.

By the active Development Plan 2015-2020 our goal is to send abroad 5% of all our students per year. The aim is for them to gain experiences in study and training. For the period leading up to 2020 we had achieved 3.5% mobility. By the new Development Plan which will be activated 2021 our plan is even to increase mobility up to next level. Our target is possible as the students are highly motivated and interested in gaining experiences abroad. Most of our outgoing students use their mobility for training and it has always been supported and recognized by our college. Most important for our student's mobility is the provision of a supervisor at our partner institutions who is capable of communicating in English. With an increase demand for graduates in the common labour market we are sure that our students will take up this opportunity for training with our partner institutions.

Our interest for mobility has a dual role. We offer courses for incoming students in English and so it is our desire to increase mobility of outgoing and incoming students.

We have over 70 partners for Erasmus mobilities and 14 Nordplus currently, of which 75% of them are long term partners. In deciding with whom we become partners we take a review of their background, have team discussions looking at curricula and if possible send our staff to see the partner institution and its practice bases. The personal experiences of the staff are also taken into account in guiding how we select new partners. We must be sure that the practice of our students is supervised and that the communication is at least in the English Language. The most important issue how we chose partners is that we must have similar curricula and understanding how to educate in the same field and on the same level.

At the moment all our mobilities are in Europe specially neighbouring countries. In the current study year 25% of outgoing students went abroad to neighbouring countries: Latvia, Lithuania and Finland. We will continue and expand in the new 2020 – 2025 period incoming and outgoing mobility in Europe and are also ready to go outside of Europe. Already now we have many students and staff who are interested to go to gain experiences in third countries. Of course most of mobilities will be around Europe because we have

most similar curricula content and quality but any kind of experience is highly motivating – giving experiences to others instead of gaining them is always very positive and empowering.

We want to offer our college students and staff the opportunity to get experiences outside their home country because with the experience they are more valued workers in our education and health systems. Already now when we have used mobility possibilities since 2004 we can notice that the alumni, students and staff are more self-confident and highly valued in the labour market.

In a global competitive market the use of cooperation projects in teaching and training will give to college students, staff and international partners' possibilities to exchange knowledge, experience and learn from each other. Tartu Health Care College will continue participating in the cooperation projects as partner or promoter. The College is open to different proposals what are connected with college curricula.

College has two main targets in our development plan for 2015 – 2020. The first strategic objective is: To fulfil the Mission and Vision of the College in having a sufficient number of highly qualified personnel employed with the following features: professional, positional and specialist competence, high motivation and innovative ideas. Example one sub object is: Qualification of the teaching staff ensures the quality of higher education in the implementation of international studies, research and development in the European Higher Education Space and second is: Cohesion with the society is provided by the cooperation with the interested parties and key partners. The second Strategic objective is: The students of the College are knowledgeable in their selection of the profession/speciality, focused on life-long learning, dedicated to studies and development, and competitive in the labour market after graduation from the college. Example of one of the sub object is Competitiveness of the alumni in the European labour market is provided by the development of the curricula in international cooperation. We plan to have joint projects and activities (minimum 1 project on each curriculum every year), involving the interested parties and key partners, are participated by 10 - 15% of the students by the end of the period of the Development Plan. The new Development Plan 2021 – 2025 in under creation but the strategic role is similar and will emphasise importance of internationalisation by developing college learning and research.

The College has successfully implemented the Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning and Work Experience (VÕTA) procedure in the support of lifelong learning principles. In 2008 the College Research Board was established to coordinate and promote research activities at the College; the activity of the Research Board is based on appropriate procedures. Three research domains have been identified at the College: the process of studies, health, and the evidence/based development of the profession. In 2007, the Quality Manual was compiled that has been reviewed every two years and is accessible on the internet. In 2009 the quality management pilot project of HEIs, in 2011 successful participation in the competition for Public Sector Quality Award (position among the best three). Based on the assessors' feedback, analysis has been conducted and further activities planned. Based on International Accreditation Team Report decision that was made in 2020 Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (EKKA) evaluation board to give to Tartu Health Care College accreditation for seven years.

In 2004/05 the College joined the Erasmus programme that resulted in the increase of the number of students conducting their practical training abroad, and the number that resulted in the increase of the number of the partner schools' students performing their practical training in Estonia. The International Relation Specialist helps the students to find the suitable partner school abroad where the aims of practical training would be fulfilled. All the incoming students would complete their practical training in Estonia are assigned an individual peer tutor by the College, and the coordination of their training is supported by the Curriculum Coordinator. The incoming student is assigned a Supervising Teacher and a Clinical Supervisor.

Our development activities have been based on projects, the College being in the roles of the promoter or the partner of the national or international Project. Project work is mainly aimed at the development of the curricula and new training areas based on the employer needs and the sustainability of the application of the products.

In 2017–2018 one of the important activities at the college was the development of the competence centre within the HiT! (Educational investment in health care) project: the competence centre involves community services offered by the college, in-service training as well as research and development activities. The main idea underpinning the organisation of services offered by the competence centre is to provide different target groups (from toddlers to the elderly), who have various health problems, an opportunity to be cared for and

listened to by the students and their supervisors in the relevant field who may recommend a visit to the family doctor or a specialist doctor, if necessary (e.g. for diagnosis, laboratory testing etc.). The college offers a wide range of services through practical activities performed by the students; these activities are carried out within different subjects of the curriculum. The competence centre is a centre for experiential learning for the students, practising specialists and for the community in general. The vision of the competence centre is to be a high-quality experiential learning centre for the students, a lifelong learning centre for practising specialists and an experience-based opinion leader for the community in general.

Improving governance we involve all college personnel. College participates in 11 networks: for nurses, midwives, biomedical laboratory sciences, radiography, physiotherapy and environmental health. Participation gives us possibilities to find together funds for mutual projects to develop necessary knowledge. Head of Curriculum are responsible for all curricula members to work in the same direction to improve curricula governance. The International relations specialist collects all International information for improving curricula governance and funding.