

## **D:Erasmus Policy Statement**

D1:

Luis Manuel Garcia Urrea Foundation is a private school of 120 students who study in Higher Level Courses of Education. It is in the Zaragoza's center, Spain 5th city with 700,000 inhabitants. It shares facilities with a school where Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary, Medium and other Higher Training Courses are taught.

We are a newly established private school and we have no direct experience in the development of internationalization tasks, but since we share facilities and management with the other centre which has participated in the Erasmus project, we possess the “know how” so we don't start from scratch. We have the support of our other centre which is based on Montessori methodology, worldwide implemented, other Montessori centers with which seek to create partnerships to make the Workplace Training of our students and to exchange our teachers.

The centre sees internationalization as a cross curricular process, it develops it improving language level, recognizing training in other countries, adapting the curricula to the needs detected in the other EU institutions, supporting students that go to another countries with regard to cultural differences, helping them how to look after themselves, with the accommodation, sharing experiences with students who have gone abroad, announcing the Erasmus program through the center's website, briefings, meetings with Erasmus students, articles.

The Spanish education system requires the Higher and Medium Training Courses to carry out a subject of Workplace Training (FCT) performing a business practice under the supervision of a tutor from the company and another one from the school. It is necessary to obtain the degree. Luis Manuel Garcia Urrea Foundation wants to offer its students the opportunity to make such practices in the EU, granting full recognition of those practices, through the Erasmus program, to increase employment and opportunities for their students. In the corresponding law of the different courses, the equivalence in ECTS credits of each subject, the contents and duration of the course are determined.

We want to reach collaboration agreements with other EU Montessori centers taking advantage of the usage of the same methodology for other ways to apply it in other cultures. Our intention is to grow by collaborating with more centers to increase the number of students that make their practice in the EU. These agreements would help us with student tutoring, in finding accommodation and resolution of problems. We will seek other schools working in English as its communication language whether or not they are English-speaking countries.

The Erasmus coordinator communicates the functions that students should perform in the WT, following the curricula, to the future collaborating centers, reaching agreements that will be signed with student and center later. From then on, there is ongoing collaboration between a tutor from the other school and ours (Erasmus coordinator). Most of the communication takes place via e-mail. Each two weeks there is formal communication with a form that the other center must fill in with the work done by the student. There is formal communication with the student at least once a week. At the end the student must submit a report on the functions made in the collaborator center and a final assessment from that center. This final form is included in the agreement signed with the center. If everything is correct the WT is passed. We review the adequacy of the collaborator company with these reports.

During the first year the Erasmus coordinator informs about the characteristics of the Erasmus program. He highlights the importance of language to access an Erasmus mobility and the time it takes to be formed. Level tests are proposed to know the level if you do not have certificate and the objective will be to reach the B2 level. Students can improve their language proficiency through courses and online tools offered by the center.

In these initial discussions they are informed of the selection process. It takes into account issues such as: student's marks, language level, personal profile, level of maturity and motivation letter.

To ensure that students understand the functions to be performed in the WT they are explained individually what functions they are. It is previously revised if the student has all he needs for his mobility (health care, insurance, accommodation, transportation and transfers, knowledge of the culture of the destination country).

During the stay the student has a permanent phone number of contact in severe cases, apart from the normal channels.

After the stay, visibility will be given to the student's experience: through articles on the web in the center, meetings to motivate future students. Documentation will be given which advises on how to act in the city of stay, accommodation options, transportation, sightseeing...

D2:

Being a newly established institution, we have not had the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus project before. But taking into account that we share facilities and staff with other educational institution that has actually worked with several European projects (Erasmus, Leonardo, Comenius, teachers and students exchanges with other institutions in other countries) we can benefit from the knowledge and experience of the partner school and thus, not starting from scratch. The development of the Montessori methodology and the fact that the Spanish Association of Montessori Schools' vice-president is also Luis Manuel Garcia Urrea Foundation's director, put us in a position in which we can develop internationalization processes with other European Montessori schools. If possible, with other institutions that can also implement Erasmus Projects. So that there is an exchange of students for internships in both directions, in their schools and ours. Teachers could also make exchanges in order to meet other cultures and other ways of implementing the Montessori methodology.

D3: Objectives that will be met through participation in European programs.

An educational institution should not be isolated from the rest of the world. The life of a school has to be accessible to families, have a similar identity to its city and its country and, be open to the EU. We cannot be close-minded but be part of the unity represented by Europe instead. We need to interact with other ways of working, different customs and languages. This exchange should be something enriching that helps us see new perspectives when developing our work to help students overcome the current economic crisis. Thanks to the participation of the Luis Manuel García Urrea Foundation in the Erasmus program, we aim, according to the priorities of the Agenda for Modernization, achieve the following targets in the following years:

1. Improve the level of foreign languages, especially English, in order to become a bilingual school so that the language does not become a barrier to the free movement of our students in the EU. Expand the number of companies and students available to do their internship in the EU, getting closer to the program target of 20%. This would mean greater self-esteem of our students and greater hope of exiting a crisis environment. We want to reduce dropout and increase employment in an economy increasingly globalized.
2. We will collect our students' experiences after mobilities and the companies' suggestions to ensure that internships and educational processes can become as effective as possible. The institution will collect in its Quality Management System, all the certifications and processes related to the Erasmus program.
3. We are involved in a process of greater internationalization of both students and teachers and administrators. This process is fulfilled by participating in European programs, developing mobility processes with other educational institutions, and providing opportunities for teachers to work in the UK for one-year period. In the bilingual immersion process we are going through, we are encouraging our teachers to improve their English within the institution resources and facilitating external help. We want to involve teachers to learn new teaching techniques. We welcome foreign teachers and we also want to open ourselves to foreign schools to collaborate.
4. Our collaboration with partner companies obliges us to adapt our curricula to the current educational reality. We listen to our students after their national and international internships to adapt our knowledge, and promote the use of new tools to facilitate teaching.
5. We want to obtain a stable structure to facilitate the mobilities and make them more affordable for our students. We want to get extra financial resources to provide students with less economic resources, access to the Erasmus Program on equal opportunities: with support from institutions close to the school, from parents' associations, and from the partner company which could subsidize certain expenses.