

UNIVERSITY OF CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY AND METALLURGY (UCTM)

ERASMUS CODE: BG SOFIA20

Erasmus Charter for higher education- Ref. Ares(2021)1515304 - 26/02/2021

Erasmus+ Programme (2021-2027)

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

Erasmus activities included in UCTM'S EPS

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff

Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Partnerships for Innovation

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation

Erasmus Policy statement: strategy

UCTM's incentives for participating in the Erasmus Programme. Role of the Erasmus Programme into the institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy.

The University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy (UCTM) offers undergraduate and graduate courses in the field of Organic and Inorganic Chemical Technologies, Chemical Engineering, Metallurgy, Material Science, Biotechnology and Biomedical Engineering, Control Engineering and Informatics, Ecology and Sustainable Development, Industrial Safety and Industrial Management. The internationalisation of education and research at UCTM is an important part of the Institutional Development Strategy and has been proved by the coordination of 6 Erasmus+ KA103 and 3 KA107 projects as well as by an active participation in 3 Erasmus+ granted CBHE projects from 2014 to 2020. The internationalisation of UCTM activities were strongly stimulated by the University participation in 12 granted Erasmus Mundus Action 2 consortia for the period 2008 – 2018 year. All these projects outcomes contributed considerably to the quality and modernisation of education at UCTM, by supporting the development and implementation of courses taught in global languages, application of new teaching methodologies as well as the development and implementation of procedures and documents for recognition of study periods in countries with different grade and credit systems. The participation of UCTM in the new cycle of Erasmus programme will sustain already available Erasmus+ and Erasmus Mundus outcomes and will provide conditions for

participation in other sub –programmes like European University, Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree, Partnerships for innovation and Erasmusplus KA3.

The objectives of UCTM participation in the new Erasmus cycle will be:

1. Stimulation of outgoing and incoming academic mobility by extending the ERASMUS partnerships to EU Universities, industry and eligible third countries, full recognition of study and training periods abroad of outgoing students and providing set of documents for full recognition of study and training periods of incoming students;
2. Development and Implementation of joint degrees and courses according to the Bologna process standards, aimed at upgrading the quality and relevance of education provided at UCTM and having a better response to the EU and BG labor market demands ;
3. Implementation of effective and efficient teaching contents and methods, closely related to the development of strong digital skills and distance learning aimed at creating flexible professional competencies equivalent to the needs of the labor market;
4. Wide application of new approaches to Erasmus management and administration such as Erasmus without paper, Student Card, Mobility tool , regular updates of study course catalog, appropriate use of all available informational channels for better visibility and dissemination, etc.
- 5 Creating conditions for inclusive education bearing in mind limitations imposed by the specific laboratory works at UCTM with hazardous substances and parameters (high pressure and temperatures) as well as the availability of educational pre-requisites for migrants and refugees;

In this way UCTM Erasmusplus objectives will respond to the European Education Area specific goals of Higher education – Mobility Cooperation, Effective and Efficiency, Bologna Process, Quality and Relevance, Higher Education for refugees and migrants.

The expected contribution of Erasmusplus participation towards modernisation of UCTM can be:

- Acquiring specific knowledge and skills by learning and teaching in different educational environment;
- Creation of a wider personal horizon of thinking and acting and acquiring a sense of a common European Citizenship;
- Increasing the National and EU employability levels of graduates due to their international study, practical and social experience as well as their upgraded digital skills ;
- Modernization of University management and administrative services;
- Increasing of UCTM professional efficiency, integrity and sustainability by enhancing its social commitment and visibility.

Implementation of the Erasmus actions in practice at UCTM. Contribution of UCTM’s participation in these actions to achieving the objectives of the institutional strategy.

UCTM intends to participate in Erasmus plus actions as follows:

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

UCTM participation in this action will be executed via regular submission of projects for academic mobility between programme countries (KA103) and between programme and partner countries (KA107). For this purpose the University will stimulate signing interinstitutional agreements covering all its area of studies. Additionally a full course catalogue will be available on the University web site which will facilitate either planning or the execution of Erasmus plus mobility as well. Digitalisation of Erasmus administration and Student card application will be applied in order to create conditions for the implementation of Erasmus Without Paper. University will develop (according to the latest Erasmusplus standards) and implement all documents necessary for student and staff mobility planning, execution, reporting and the appropriate academic recognition.

Before mobility UCTM will organise information and selection of outgoing students and staff by its existing procedures aimed at reaching the highest possible level of planned mobility numbers and covering different study areas, academic and non-academic partners, states and regions. Erasmus Mundus Action 2 outcomes will be used for stimulating KA107 mobility. Additionally staff members will be encouraged to establish new connections so that a better geographical distribution can be reached. For attracting incoming students and staff from Programme and Partner countries, measures will be taken for increasing the number of courses taught in global languages and their modernisation due to the necessity of student digital skills upgrading and wider application of the distance learning. Individual approach to minority group for their inclusion in Erasmusplus mobility will be applied in order to evaluate and adapt participants to the specific work conditions at UCTM.

During mobility UCTM will organise accommodation and adaptation (including social and cultural events) with the active participation of the host departments and the University branch of ESN. According to the Erasmusplus rules incoming students shall not pay any tuition fee. Incoming students and staff will have a free accesses to the University study, laboratory, information, sport and social facilities. Additionally UCTM will regularly organise free Bulgarian language courses. At the end of mobility incoming students will receive transcripts of records with obtained ECTS marks and credits. In order to ensure the quality of outgoing mobility regular communication with the host organisations and monitoring visits will be organised.

After the end of outgoing mobility UCTM will have to: -Recognise the student study /training period abroad applying the existing procedures -Organise appropriate events and publications for dissemination and valorisation of outgoing mobility outcomes.

Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2)- Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Participation in Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of good practices

UCTM has been an active participant in 3 granted CBHE projects proving its capacity in structural (PAWER CBHE project) and joint activities (RENES and MarMOOC projects) The experience and outcomes of these projects will be used either for project proposals coordinated by UCTM or for an active partnerships in other proposals as well. Special attention will be given to the capacity building in the field of HE quality and accreditation, study periods recognition, grades conversion as well as study fields like Environmental Protection, Industrial Safety, Informatics, STEM. These activities will give additional options for increasing the Erasmus mobility, preparation and implementation of new courses and teaching materials and will facilitate the mutual recognition of study/training periods abroad.

Participation in Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Being a partner in a successful European University project will be one of the main targets of UCTM Erasmusplus activity. European University project participation will cover all above mentioned objectives of UCTM participation in the programme and will contribute considerably to all UCTM modernisation goals.

Participation in Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

UCTM has a reach experience from its participation in 12 granted University consortia within the former EU programmes Erasmus Mundus External Window and Erasmus Mundus Action 2. More than 20 students from Egypt, Uzbekistan, Tunisia, Tajikistan, Yemen, Serbia, Kosovo and Bhutan have been awarded with Master degree in Biotechnology, Industrial Management, Informatics, Chemical Engineering and Technology, Materials Science and Environmental Protection proving the capacity of UCTM to provide these courses with high quality and using English. On the other side UCTM offers Master degree curricula taught in German, French and English that every year attract Erasmus incoming students from Spain, France, Germany and Turkey. These curricula should be a base for the active participation in project proposals and activities under Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees.

Participation in Partnerships for Innovation

National and European employability of graduates is an important indicator for the quality of education provided. Bearing in mind the importance of University-business cooperation regarding the demands of the labour market and the graduates' employability, UCTM Erasmus activities under Partnerships for Innovation can have an important contribution by preparing and participating in projects under Knowledge Alliance Action. UCTM intends participation in proposals covering the following activities: -Boosting innovation in higher education, business and in the broader socio-economic environment by jointly developing and implementing new learning and teaching methods (like new multidisciplinary curricula, learner-centred and real problem-based teaching and learning) and organising continuing educational programmes and activities with and within companies; - Developing entrepreneurial mind-set and skills by creating schemes of transversal skills learning and application throughout higher education programmes developed in cooperation with enterprises aiming at strengthening employability, creativity and new professional paths and introducing entrepreneurship education in any discipline to provide students, researchers, staff and educators with the knowledge, skills and motivation to engage in entrepreneurial activities in a variety of settings;

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Support to policy development and cooperation

UCTM will participate as a project partner in proposals connected to the to European policy tools, covering the following topics:

- Transparency tools (skills and qualifications), to facilitate transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications, as well as the transfer of credits, foster quality assurance, support skills management and guidance. This Action will also include networks providing support for the implementation of those tools;
- Dedicated higher education tools – support to the Bologna Process or to the external dimension of higher education; the national teams of Higher Education Reform Experts in neighbourhood and enlargement, as well as Russia and Central Asia.

Envisaged impact of the participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on UCTM

The impact of planned Erasmus activities related to the UCTM Erasmus programme objectives can be described with their qualitative and quantitative indicators as follows:

Objective 1 Stimulation of outgoing and incoming academic mobility by extending the ERASMUS partnerships to EU Universities, industry and eligible third countries, full recognition of study/traineeship periods abroad of outgoing students and providing set of documents for full recognition of mobility periods of incoming students;

Quantitative indicators:

- number of mobile students (~40 per year) and staff (~30 per year);
- allocated budget use (~90%);
- number of interinstitutional agreements (approximately 80 for Programme countries and 20 for Partner Countries);
- quantitative indicators from Mobility tool (average approval in the final reports at least 75%);
- 1University annual Erasmus information meeting (every October);
- 1 BG language course for foreigners (every academic year);
- 1 Erasmus chapter on the University website;

- 1 Course catalog in English (updated yearly);
- 4 Sets of outgoing mobility documents for students and staff (updated yearly);
- 1 UCTM-ESN facebook site for direct communication with students;
- 1 University procedure for study abroad recognition.

Qualitative indicators;

- better professional preparation of students;
- improvement of available courses and teaching methods;
- new contacts of the academic staff with a potential for initiating of new joint educational and research projects;
- new personal experience of living, studying and teaching abroad;
- personal sense of belonging to the European culture and traditions.

Objective 2: Development and Implementation of joint degrees and courses according to the Bologna process standards, aimed at upgrading the quality and relevance of education provided at UCTM and a better response to the EU and BG labor market demands ;

Quantitative indicators:

- number of new and updated lecture courses in globally spoken languages (~3 per year);
- new KA2 CBHE projects (at least 1 structural and 2 joint projects (up to the end of Erasmus new cycle);
- participation at least in 1 approved project for European University (up to the end of Erasmus new cycle);
- participation atleast in 1 Erasmus Mundus Joint Degree project (up to the end of Erasmus new cycle);
- atleast in 1 Knowledge Alliance project (up to the end of Erasmus new cycle); -atleast in 1 Erasmus KA3 project. (up to the end of Erasmus new cycle);

Qualitative indicators

- increased number of students admitted to the programmes taught in English, French and German;
- joint developmet and implementation of procedures and documents for ECTS allocation, grade conversion, periods of study and degrees recognition;
- stimulation of the academic exchange with Partner countries;
- improvement of available courses and teaching methods;
- new contacts of the academic staff with a potential for initiating of new joint educational and research projects;
- new personal experience of living studying and teaching abroad.

Objective 3 Implementation of effective and efficient teaching contents and methods, closely related to the development of strong digital skills and distance learning aimed at creating flexible professional competencies for a better respond to the needs of the labor market;

Quantitative indicators:

- number of new/updated courses for developing specific digital skills (at least 3 per year);

- number of new/updated courses for distance learning , including those in English ,German and French (at least 3 per year);
- number of the local and international students registered to the new/adapted courses.

Qualitative indicators:

- feedback from students at the end of a new/adapted course;
- student exam results;
- feedback from employers (collected yearly for the needs of UCTM ranking);
- results from the regular (every 4 years for Bulgaria) programme accreditation.

Objective 4 Wide application of new approaches to Erasmus management and administration such as Erasmus without paper, Student Card. Mobility tool , regular updates of study course catalog, appropriate use of all available informational channels for better visibility and dissemination, etc.

Quantitative indicators:

- 1 Course catalog in English (updated yearly);
- 1 procedure for Student Card obtaining;
- 1 procedure for Erasmus Without paper administration;
- University annual Erasmus information meeting (every October);
- 1 BG lanuage course for foreigners (every academic year);
- 1 Erasmus chapter on the University website;
- 1 UCTM-ESN facebook site for direct communication with students; Qualitative indicators;
- faster mobility preparation;
- lower bureaucracy;
- flexibility in solving of different problems before, during and after mobility;
- better visibility of procdures and documents;
- better information flow;
- faster and easier outcomes dissemination due to the digitalisation.

Objective 5 Creatiing conditions for inclusive education bearing in mind limitations imposed by the specific laboratory works at UCTM with hazardous substances and parameters (high pressure and tempertures) as well as availability of educational pre-requisites for migrants and refugees;

Quantitative indicators:

- 1 procedure for admission of international students with special needs;
- 1 procedure for preliminary study recognition (pre-requisits) of migrants and refugees.

Qualitative indicators:

- better social inclusion;
- higher level of employment of people with special needs.

In this way UCTM Erasmusplus objectives will respond to the European Education Area specific goals of Higher education – Mobility Cooperation, Effective and Efficiency, Bologna Process, Quality and Relevance, Higher Education for refugees and migrants.