



**INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY
OF
COLLEGE OF APPLIED SCIENCES UŽICE**

Užice, July 2018

Pursuant to Article 121 of the Statute of the College of Applied Sciences Užice, at the session held on 2nd July 2018, the College Academic Council adopted the following

INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY OF COLLEGE OF APPLIED SCIENCES UŽICE

1. Introduction

The College of Applied Sciences Užice is a college with a decades-long tradition of providing higher education. In compliance with the Bologna Declaration and Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Serbia, our study programmes are aimed at achieving European standards in the fields of technology, informatics, management, tourism and health care.

Being a college of vocational studies, we are fully aware of the dynamics of the development of professional education, which exceeds traditional teaching methods and therefore, through the establishment of laboratories and cooperation with industrial partners, we seek to provide our students with opportunities of combining theoretical and practical knowledge and acquiring specific competencies that employers require nowadays.

We are also fully aware of the globalization process transcending national boundaries and making knowledge accessible to everyone, and we are ready for active participation in the implementation of higher education internationalisation.

2. Internationalisation – definition and importance

“Internationalisation at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (Knight, 2003, p. 2)¹. It improves the quality of education and research, from which both students and teachers benefit, and makes an effective contribution to the society.

Internationalisation is a two-fold process. On the one hand, it represents the increasing awareness and acknowledgement of foreign values, standards and achievements, and on the other hand it involves presenting one’s own achievements and system of values, as well as creating conditions for their recognition and acceptance abroad.

As an accredited higher education institution, the College of Applied Sciences Užice is devoted to achieving the goals of the Bologna Process and therefore to establishing and developing international cooperation. Our international cooperation is primarily directed to former Yugoslav republics, but also to other European countries and beyond.

3. Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives of the College of Applied Sciences Užice regarding higher education internationalisation are as follows:

3.1 Increasing the international mobility of staff

3.2 Increasing the international mobility of students

¹ Knight, J. (2003), *Updating the definition of internationalisation. International Higher Education*

3.3 Modernising study programmes and promoting ‘internationalisation at home’

3.4 Establishing strategic cooperation, partnerships, and capacity building

3.1 Increasing the international mobility of staff

The College of Applied Sciences Užice encourages and strongly supports the participation of academic and non-academic staff in international mobility programmes, observing the principles of transparency and equal treatment. To this end, they are provided with full administrative, legal, technical and language support and they are granted paid leave. Owing to flexible timetables, after a short-term leave, our teachers can easily make up the lost classes, whereas in case of long-term absences, the College will provide the appropriate substitution cover. The college shall regard staff mobility as a means of professional development and the indicators of internationalisation shall be included as the selection criteria for the appointment/reappointment of teachers.

Staff mobility brings many benefits not only to the individuals participating in mobility programmes, but to the institution as a whole as well. Gaining international experience, the employees build their competencies and improve their professional knowledge and knowledge of foreign languages. The exchange of good practices with teachers in higher education institutions abroad contributes to the modernization of teaching methods and study programmes. As to administrative staff, they learn how to support internationalisation in a highly professional manner.

Personal contacts of employees with their colleagues abroad can serve as a basis for establishing inter-institutional cooperation.

Furthermore, teachers with international experience are more willing to support student mobility, which is also one of our strategic objectives.

The College will try to attract a greater number of visiting lecturers and experts, providing them with the necessary administrative, legal, technical and language support both before and during the mobility period. In this way, the College will enrich its academic offer and improve its reputation in the region and beyond.

3.2 Increasing the international mobility of students

Through its participation in the Erasmus+ programme, the College will increase the international mobility of students for studies and professional development, observing the principles of transparency and equal treatment. Credit transfer, which shall be documented in Transcript of Records/Diploma Supplement, will facilitate the recognition of student achievements during the mobility and encourage more students to take part in mobility programmes. Through the participation in mobility programmes, students acquire international experience, develop intercultural awareness and improve their knowledge of foreign languages, thus enhancing their employability and ensuring competitiveness on the global labour market.

Both outbound and inbound students will be provided with the necessary administrative, legal, technical and language support. Before mobility, the College will organize free English courses, as well as courses in other European languages.

Given the fact that the instruction in all study programmes offered by our college is delivered in the Serbian language, we will seek to attract more students from the former Yugoslav republics. In cooperation with institutions delivering the Serbian language courses, we will organize online Serbian courses for international students.

Our employees and students are obliged to ensure full integration of inbound students into academic and social life.

3.3 Modernising study programmes and promoting 'internationalisation at home'

The aim of internationalisation is not to benefit only the minority of students and staff who will spend time abroad, but to focus on the integration of a global dimension in the design and content of curricula and teaching/learning processes in order to ensure that a majority of students, who do not participate in international mobility programmes, develop skills and acquire knowledge required in the globalised world. Therefore, the College of Applied Sciences Užice shall seek to ensure 'internationalisation at home' through the modernisation of the existing study programmes and accreditation of new ones, and through their harmonisation with the programmes offered by higher education institutions in other countries, as well as by bringing guest lecturers from abroad.

Both students and staff will be provided with the necessary support in order to improve their proficiency in foreign languages (English and other European languages), which is a prerequisite for taking part in the internationalisation of the College.

3.4 Establishing strategic cooperation, partnerships and capacity building

In order to build its own capacities and position itself according to its strengths in education, the College of Applied Sciences Užice shall strive to establish and strengthen the cooperation with developed European countries and their higher education institutions. In addition to the implementation of mobility programmes, the College will participate in joint projects and research activities with these institutions.

The College also seeks to establish and develop cooperation with industry and businesses with the aim of facilitating the integration of theoretical and practical education and developing specific competencies of students and therefore successfully respond to the demands of the labour market, scientific and technological development. By encouraging entrepreneurship through the development of students' entrepreneurial skills, the College will contribute to the reduction of the unemployment rate and the economic prosperity of the whole region, and the country as a whole.

4. Conclusion

In order to ensure the implementation of the strategy of internationalisation, the College shall further develop the international relations office by including competent staff, with clearly defined responsibilities. The periodical assessment of the process of internationalisation is also a must.

The Students' Parliament will take care that our students provide incoming students with the necessary support.

The College shall continue to promote its research capacity through the organisation of the international scientific conference 'Science and Higher Education in Function of Sustainable Development', as well as through the participation of its teachers at seminars and international conferences in the country and abroad.

 College Director
Prof. Ivana Petrović, PhD
