

## ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

### International (EU and non-EU) strategy

Algebra University College is the flagship of largest private educational organization in Republic of Croatia and the region (Algebra group), present today in more than 20 cities across Croatia. Founded in 1998, we currently have more than 110 full-time employees and more than 400 associated experts and higher educational faculties employed also in industry. Annually, we educate around 20.000 students through various seminars and short educational programs in adult education, while in higher education we enrol more than 300 new students each year. The quality of Algebra has been recognized by our students as well as by all major software manufacturers and has been attested by the implementation of the ISO 9001:2000 certification which was introduced back in 2004. Our main campus is located in the heart of Croatian capital Zagreb, while adult education and training programs are conducted also in: Osijek, Pula, Rijeka, Zadar, Split, Varaždin and Dubrovnik, as well as in more than ten other smaller cities. We currently offer almost thousand shorter educational programs (up to 2 weeks), some 50 accredited longer adult educational programs and 10 accredited higher educational study programs. Many of our programs are authorized by world software and equipment manufacturers such as: Microsoft, Cisco, Oracle, Red Hat, VMware, Adobe, Autodesk, EC-Council, (ISC)<sup>2</sup> and others. We are academic and/or educational partner of all stated vendors, for most of them the only one in Croatia.

As a private HEI, funded mostly by our students' tuition fees, we are quite aware of the importance of continuous development and we know that, in the dynamic market conditions, every halt or slowdown of growth and development really means a reversal in comparison with the constantly developing environment. We also know that our competitive advantage, the key of our survival as a private education supplier can only come from internationally comparable quality and the high values we give in return for the tuition.

Our mission is to create opportunities for Croatian and international students to acquire excellent skills and knowledge and build globally competitive careers in digital technologies. We are aware of our responsibility within the community and we therefore actively promote educational excellence in digital technologies in order to encourage economic growth and development of Croatian economy. In our teaching and research, we strive to create value system coherent to values in which we strongly believe:

- high value received for the cost of service
- top quality of education
- operational and organizational excellence
- constant contribution to development of society in which we live

As we are fully aware of the issues raised by the process of globalization, one of the main goals of our development strategy is to achieve the EU quality standards in HE and to approach the EHEA. Therefore in 2008 and 2009 we signed the first contracts on academic partnership with technology companies (Microsoft, Oracle, Cisco, SUN, IBM) who made it possible for the teachers, students and the employees to access the official teaching materials and software licences for the company's products. We currently provide best-assessed professional higher educational study program in the Republic of Croatia according to the quality evaluation results obtained through regular re-accreditation conducted by the Agency for Science and Higher Education. We completed our re-accreditation procedure back in September 2012 with excellent marks and positive accreditation recommendation. Even after re-

accreditation process has been completed in 2017 for the all other Croatian Universities of Applied Sciences, we have still been evaluated as best professional higher educational institution.

Nowadays we hold ERASMUS+ University Charter for the period 2014 – 2020, providing exceptional experience of studying and living abroad to our and incoming international students. Currently we have signed more than 70 Erasmus bilateral agreements with various foreign universities and additional more than 40 cooperation agreements and MOUs and have positive response due to the NVAO assessment as well as National Agency (ASHE) reaccreditation and internal quality assurance system, positioning us as the best professional HEI in Croatia. Out of Europe, we have signed agreements with HEI from Indonesia, Korea and China, while we closely cooperate with professors from Business School of Indiana on our MBA study program. Based on strategic cooperation agreement between Algebra University College and Griffith College Dublin, we enabled our present and future computer engineering and multimedia students to make use of student mobility and study at two locations with the possibility of obtaining Croatian and Irish undergraduate diplomas in the field of computer engineering. This is a way of studying that implements all benefits of the Bologna process through student mobility which is very widespread abroad. When choosing a new partner we pick partners and countries according to analysis of students wish and the fact which countries and courses are they mostly attracted to. Regarding short cycle programs, we provide our international students quality and efficiency of teaching, great programs, great teachers and the best experience in Croatia during their stay. Students can participate in winter or summer courses apart from studying at Algebra University College. Students are provided with the opportunity to meet outstanding and ambitious colleagues from all over the world, visit some of Croatia's world famous landmarks and explore the rich historical and cultural heritage of our country. In addition, students will also have the opportunity to experience unforgettable moments at quirky museums, beautiful nature as well as incredible festivals and events.

In respect to international cooperation, our first priority is mobility of students, both for study and work placement, and mobility of teaching and other staff. The mobility of students is aimed at raising their skills and knowledge level and offering them the experience of studying or skills training in other cultural and educational environments. Student placements are of great importance in professional education, especially in the education of computer professionals, whose study curriculum requires a large proportion of skills training in industrial environments. This experience would enhance their flexibility and competitiveness at the European labor market. The mobility of teaching and non-teaching staff is aimed at improving the quality of study and teaching processes, at exchange of good practices, and at improving the Institution's organization. The second priority is a multilateral cooperation between HE institutions, specifically the curricula development projects and joined study programs. The aims are to constantly improve the existing study curricula to be recognized in other similar HEI's, and to develop integrated study programs that would enable us to issue a recognized degree – both at bachelor's and master's levels or at shorter continuing education for professionals. Therefore, from March 2018 all our Master study programs will be held in English both for domestic and international students while for Bachelor programs we offer groups of subjects for each field of study.

### **Strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme**

The objectives we want to accomplish through international cooperation activities make a part of a broader set of objectives of the development of a relevant and successful educational institution, laid down in our Development Strategy and implicitly contained in our Vision. We aim to become the first choice for Croatian and international students interested in building careers in digital technologies

through development of excellence in all areas of our work: infrastructure, staff, applied research, cooperation with the industry and internationalization. The University College described international cooperation within the Strategic objectives with specific focus on international cooperation projects. We are members of the most renowned academic IT initiatives, providing additional value to our students and testifying quality of our work and dedication towards excellence. We are part of following academic partnerships: Microsoft Developer Network Academic Alliance (MSDN AA), IBM Academic, CISCO Networking Academy, Microsoft IT Academy, Oracle Academic Initiative, EMC Academic Alliance, RedHat Academy, VMware Academic Program (VMAP) and Tableau Academic Program.

Expected impact of the participation in the Programme on the modernisation agenda of the University College Algebra is:

- Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs
- Improving the quality and relevance of higher education
- Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation
- Making the knowledge triangle work: Linking higher education, research and Business for excellence and regional development
- Improving governance and funding

All together should improve outcomes of teaching and learning and we aim to manage it through continuous reflection and awareness of development of mentioned goals.



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Dean

