

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

World Maritime University (WMU) is a postgraduate maritime university established within the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a specialised agency of the United Nations. WMU, as the global centre of excellence recognized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the United Nations General Assembly, plays a significant role in maritime and ocean education, research, capacity-building and economic development while promoting the roles of women in the maritime and ocean sectors worldwide.

WMU has offered the degree of Master of Science since 1983. The programme has been designed to offer professional integrated education specifically for the international maritime and oceans community. Its structure has been carefully developed to offer interdisciplinary breadth, areas of deeper study and a firm foundation for the students' research work. The Doctor of Philosophy degree has been offered since 2003 and it has been designed to offer professional education in research, specifically for the international maritime and oceans community. Each approved research topic is established firmly within a Research Priority Area in the maritime and oceans sectors, and the framework of international Conventions and agreements by which it is governed.

As one of the United Nations educational institutions, WMU is intrinsically an international HEI, with staff from five continents, and students and alumni from more than 170 countries and territories. The Master of Science programme is delivered in China by WMU collaboration with Shanghai Maritime University and Dalian Maritime University. Since Maritime and Ocean sectors have truly international nature, WMU builds capacity and serves the global community of maritime professionals. The WMU alumni consisting of 5,392 graduates reflects the global population of the maritime industry.

Being a truly worldwide and international community (organisation), WMU continually works toward the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda and the related Goals (UN SDGs). Active participation in project activities, the scope and diversity of research activities prompt WMU's interest in deepening the related processes, enabling new researchers, exchange of good practices and ideas.

Research activities at WMU are also of international scope. WMU has coordinated and participated in numerous research and development activities in the framework of both European and international projects. As of 2021, WMU runs 31 research/consultancy projects. Indicatively, the following projects are worth mentioning: in H2020, Cyber Preparedness Actions for a holistic approach and awareness raising in the MARitime logistics supply chain (CYBER-MAR) - 2019-2022, Strengthening synergies between Aviation and maritime in the area of human Factors towards achieving a more Efficient and resilient MODE of transportation (SAFEMODE) - 2019-2022. In Interreg South Baltic Programme - Marine Spatial Planning Instruments for Sustainable Marine Governance (SEAPLANSPEACE) - 2018-2020. As EUROPEAID, MARENDIA --"Support to the Maritime Transport Sector in Africa", Development of port database interchange mechanism, marine environment protection and emergency response performance.

With almost 40 years of delivering postgraduate education and professional development training, WMU has educated a cadre of public and private sector leaders and senior practitioners operating in the maritime and ocean sector. The alumni constitute a unique, formidable and growing network of leaders and practitioners who help to connect maritime and ocean research at the University with practical insights, national, regional and international perspectives and to translate the results of research into high-impact decisions, agenda setting and policy implementation and evaluation. Thus, viewing its activities, WMU would like to express its interest in participating actively and responsibly in these Erasmus + activities:

- Creating, sustaining and enhancing the value of human capital knowledge, skills and competences by encouraging participation in mobility projects where students and staff benefit themselves, the organization, education and science, and the community (both within and outside the organization).
- Raising awareness of studies and their value by encouraging initiatives in various fields of research.
- Ensuring the quality of studies and research through new forms, methods, programmes and other instruments, including the development of joint programs, the implementation of short intense courses, the combining of several HEI intellectual, research and human resources to solve certain problems, etc.

All WMU students come from the regions that are considered as developing countries, providing these students with different background and fewer opportunities with quality studies and other educational services. Although, WMU acknowledges that maintenance and enhancement the international nature of the university whilst growing partnerships and building capacity in Europe is key to the university due to lack of significant representation of students from economically developed countries.

The above actions are the basis for WMU to achieve higher results and partnerships:

- accumulated expert base and experience, knowledge and competencies;
- extremely valuable research and project activities;
- mastered and properly implemented ECTS system;
- internationalization of studies and low threshold of language barriers;
- administrative capacity and experience in international partnerships and project management;
- the willingness of the organization and its community to participate in Erasmus+ programme activities;
- digitization processes that have taken place in administrative actions and organization of studies;
- the organization's efforts to continue modernization, excellence and leadership activities.

WMU recognizes the potential of Erasmus+ Programme in achieving WMU institutional strategy by providing unique possibilities of cooperation and development in:

- mobility of individuals (students and staff) allowing to share knowledge and good practices between faculty and staff (KA1);
- creating staff development initiatives and schemes (mechanisms); attracting more students from developed countries (KA1, KA2);
- exploring possibilities for designing transdisciplinary programmes, short intensive programmes, joint modules, and/or joint/double degrees across disciplinary boundaries, by collaborating with other higher education institutions and utilising recent digital possibilities (KA2, KA3);
- enhancing capacity building and research via project collaborations (KA2, KA3).

WMU also welcomes the opportunity to strengthen and improve its governance models, practices and policies, learning from like-minded institutions initiated through the Erasmus+ Programme. These partnerships will also give our students and researchers the chance to develop new opportunities to secure funding for research and mobility purposes.

WMU believes that participation in the Erasmus+ programme could expand the scope and awareness of the HEI and studies and other activities performed by the WMU by attracting new students, staff, professionals and other researchers. The concentration of such human capital would significantly improve the quality of studies, create more favourable conditions for setting and achieving higher results, new goals and opportunities.

Participation in Erasmus + projects would be an essential tool to increase institutional and research capacities, pool resources of several HEIs and achieve significant qualitative and quantitative results. Participation in Erasmus + projects will help WMU achieve long-term goals and indicators set in the WMU strategic documents:

- Empower and develop diverse management levels for better management of curriculum development, delivery and assessment.
- Make programmes solution-oriented/problem-solving focused (some of these problems may be drawn from external stakeholders e.g., industry) leading to higher-order cognitive and affective skills in learners.
- Introduce high-level executive education.
- Build strategic partnerships to
- maximize important input into the University's academic programmes and enhance their effects and impact,
- diversify and make more impactful the University's output and presence in different regions and countries,
- Ensure all programmes address the issue of sustainability and global goals in this respect with a critical thinking and problem-solving approach.
- Establish and maintain an effective, valid and authentic model of assessing the achievement of learning outcomes.
- Excel at all accreditation and external verification processes.

- Direct curriculum development, delivery and assessment towards “flexible, collaborative, project/challenge-based and cross-disciplinary teaching and learning, allowing students to play an active role in the design of their educational experience”.
- Embed an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum development.
- Establish engaging research relations with other universities that lead to curriculum input in WMU programmes (PhD and MSc).
- Attract high quality students from both developing and developed countries.

With WMU becoming part of ECHE, the University expects to implement at least 2 Erasmus+ programme projects per year (1 - mobility project, 1 - cooperation or other strategic project). Mobility projects would involve students and staff (at least 14 in both target groups). Cooperation and other strategic projects would cover WMU-relevant research topics, implementing joint projects - developing joint programs, strengthening research capacities, building strategic alliances, etc.

WMU plans to be actively involved in and support the search for partner HEIs on an ongoing basis. WMU is a relatively small organization and expects to form partnerships with at least 5 relative HEIs in areas of strategic interest. An annual evaluation of the experience of the Erasmus+ program would review these strategic objectives and increase them as necessary to respond to global change.

This WMU Erasmus Policy Statement was adopted 12 April 2022.