Erasmus Policy Statement

Accademia Italiana, Arte, Moda, Design

Participation in Erasmus+

Accademia Italiana, Arte, Moda, Design was founded in 1984. It is a private design institution with two campuses in Florence and Rome, Italy.

Accademia Italiana is a private institution and is part of the Italian Higher Education in Art, Music and Dance Education (AFAM), and therefore authorized by the Ministry to issue Higher Education qualifications in the field of Art, Music and Dance. Accademia Italiana obtained the authorization from the Ministry of Education and University (MUR) to award First Level and Second Level Academic Diplomas in 2013.

Internationalization is a trademark of the Accademia Italiana since its foundation. All the courses are offered bilingually in Italian and in English. All the teaching faculty and staff are bilingual.

On average 30% of the students enrolled at the Accademia Italiana are foreigners coming from more than 40 different countries from all over the world. Since 2004, the Accademia Italiana organizes on-campus US Study Abroad Semester Programmes for numerous US universities.

Mobility of students, teaching faculty and administrative staff is prioritized to enhance the quality of the Accademia Italiana education offer, to boost effective partnership relations management through cooperation projects, professional training and to improve the institution's research projects and programmes.

The use of the European Credit Transfer System *(ECTS)* system will provide transparency and clarification of the students' qualifications.

Since 2020, the Accademia Italiana, is part of AD Education, a French network of Higher Education Schools specialised in the field of design, digital, communication, culture, luxury and audio-visuals, with 15 schools and 47 campuses in 4 European countries: France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

The aim of the Accademia Italiana is committed to improve overall mobility and international partnerships by adhering to the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and to further support the EU Modernisation and Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education.

Accademia Italiana will participate in all three Key Actions of the Erasmus+ through the following activities:

Overall Organisation.

Accademia Italiana has already an international department in place. The International Office staff are all bilingual, with many of them speaking other languages. Accademia Italiana will further strengthen this department by hiring new staff dedicated to Erasmus+ and train existing staff in delivering support to Erasmus+ students and staff.

Departments will play a key role in designing and implementing the internationalisation strategy. Departments manage the bulk of research and education driven activities and interact directly with partner companies and stakeholders in the civil society. Each Department will coordinate and promote mobility partnerships as well as research and strategic partnership agreements with relevant universities and institutions in each field.

<u>Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning Mobility of Individuals</u>.

Accademia Italiana will design and implement new services for enhancing incoming and outgoing mobility for international students, teaching and administrative staff.

The International Office will support students who want to study abroad as well as those who want to apply for internships though its network of companies and partner universities through smart mobility as well as through blended mobility programmes.

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Learning Mobility will be carried out in Europe, starting from its own group (AD Education) and its other existing partners, as well as outside Europe in partner countries. Accademia Italiana will work to build a strong network with universities of excellence in the field of applied arts not only to boost student mobility but also to exchange teaching approaches, design methodologies, study modules and ultimately improving curricula integration and share didactic methods. For this aim, staff mobility will be highly encouraged.

Students will be involved in all the steps of this process. The Students' Council in each campus will participate in designing the Erasmus+ Development Plan and all students applying for the Erasmus+ Mobility Programme will be encouraged to take part in Erasmus associations and networks.

Accademia Italiana alumni will also be involved in this activity, especially those who are now living and working abroad and will mentor students before and during their Erasmus+ experience.

Blended Mobility will also be encouraged, especially to support inclusivity for students with fewer opportunities, to reduce the negative impact of mobility on the environment as well as to innovate the research and didactic approaches.

Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among Organisations and Institutions.

This action is particularly important to Accademia Italiana in order to improve curricula through strategic partnerships with other institutions in the sector but also to enhance research activities on transversal thematic areas that need a multidisciplinary approach and international cooperation such as: **Sustainability and Circular Economy**, **Diversity and Inclusion** through the applied arts.

Accademia Italiana will design partnerships to apply for grants to create new cooperation models with other institutions delivering complimentary courses and programmes to its own. These programmes will also support the institution and its partners in implementing more inclusive approaches to teaching while fostering civic engagement through the promotion of extracurricular activities and research projects.

Accademia Italiana would also like to apply for **Alliances for Innovation** to boost its curricula on the transversal themes described above and to strengthen its research capacity through meaningful partnerships.

Sense of initiative and entrepreneurial attitudes of students and staff are also key elements of the Accademia Italiana teaching methodology and one of the main transversal competences embedded in all the teaching programmes. The institution is already following its alumni with their start-up entrepreneurial careers, that with this programme will be able to establish a pre-incubator to support them by offering collaboration opportunities with companies and relevant stakeholders in its network in order to create innovative business and increase research activities. Erasmus+ could further strengthen this programme with international collaboration and partnership opportunities.

Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to Policy Development and Cooperation

Accademia Italiana participation into Erasmus KA3 Support to Policy Development and Cooperation will contribute mainly to foster policy dialogue among policy makers, education stakeholders, practitioners and the private sector on the importance of including sustainability, circular economy, diversity and inclusion as mainstream themes in all applied arts curricula and subjects such as Fashion Design, Interior Design, Product Design, Jewellery Design, Graphic & Communications Design as well as Photography & New Media.

Accademia Italiana would like to partner with relevant international stakeholders to support policy development as well as identifying and disseminating existing good practices in these fields across Europe.

Strategy, objectives and impact

As stated above, internationalisation is an absolute priority and already a trademark of Accademia Italiana. Developing cooperation with partners in other countries by adhering to Erasmus+ through the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is therefore crucial to realise our strategic objectives and contribute to the EU Modernisation and Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education.

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The Accademia Italiana modernisation and internationalisation strategy can be summarised in five main **objectives** linked to the three main Key Actions:

1. Improve the **quality and relevance of the Accademia Italiana educational offer** by enhancing internationalisation through mobility of students and staff and cross-border collaboration (KA1)

2. Improve **equity and inclusion in higher education** by increasing participation and inclusivity through outreach programmes and projects, more inclusive admission policies and practices, provide financial assistance to minimise entry barriers, progression and mobility (KA1)

3. **Strengthening employability of higher education students** by creating links with the labour market in the most relevant sectors and increasing partnership with companies and strategic stakeholders while improving students' **key competences**. (KA1 and KA2)

4. **Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship** by increasing students' and teachers' sense of initiative, supporting entrepreneurial experiences linked with research activities and increasing **civic engagement and participation** in local communities and society overall (KA2 and KA3)

5. Supporting the advancement of knowledge through **rigorous and relevant research** and **improve competencies and skills of teachers and staff** (KA2 and KA3).

Foreseen impact for each objective and relevant indicators with KPIs:

1. Improve the **quality and relevance of the Accademia Italiana educational offer**

We strongly believe that supporting cross-border mobility of students and teaching staff within the Union could contribute to achieve the EU target of 40% of young people to attain a higher education qualification by attracting more students and reducing dropouts. Accademia Italiana has already low dropout rates. We believe we could reduce them ever further through the provision of mobility opportunities and an improved educational offer.

Mobility activities will also be addressed to administrative and teaching staff: this will further develop their skills and knowledge of their specific teaching subjects but also it will be an occasion to improve teaching programmes and embed mobility schemes in the study plans.

2. Improve **equity and inclusion in Higher education**

Access to education is key for Accademia Italiana. This is why we would like to further improve the number of exchange students with the purpose to make Accademia Italiana even more multicultural, multilingual while facilitating a transnational environment. To this end, in spite of a policy towards student recruitment aimed to seek for excellence we intend to fulfil our social mission towards disadvantaged social classes and students from groups with fewer opportunities, also with a foreign background. In line with national requirements the institution deploys dedicated services for students with special needs such as: specific scholarships for students and families with fewer financial opportunities; supporting foreign students with their visa applications and all related paperwork; offering fair housing services as well as supporting students with a disability through special teaching schemes.

To reach this goal we see Blended Mobility as key to support the institution in its mission. Blended mobility schemes will give students with fewer opportunities the option for more flexible schemes with shorter periods abroad while IT technologies will still facilitate a collaborative environment and quality content.

3. **Strengthening employability of higher education students**

Accademia Italiana proactively delivers employment-related skills that enable its graduates to meet labour market opportunities. International mobility schemes will further support students to improve these competences by also highlighting to prospective employers transferable skills and competences typically associated with this experiences such as cross-cultural communication, learning to learn and language skills.

Through blended mobility activities students and teachers will also make innovative use of new information

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and communication technologies that will enrich teaching and learning experiences.

4. **Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship**

Innovation and entrepreneurship are key elements of Accademia Italiana's teaching methods and programmes that apply transversally to all our courses. Joining Erasmus+ strengthen the links between the institution, companies and innovation stakeholders. Accademia Italiana would like to partner with relevant stakeholders to support its project to set-up a pre-incubator for start-ups born within the institution, develop students' entrepreneurial skills through relevant mentoring schemes, linking with national and international entrepreneurs, managers and consultants.

5. Supporting the advancement of knowledge through **rigorous and relevant research**

For tertiary education institutions innovation comes mainly from relevant research activities. Accademia Italiana is already part of Cumulus Association, the leading global association of art and design education and research. Thanks to Erasmus+ we aim to strengthen our research capacity by partnering with other relevant universities and academies and enlarging our network with the private and non-profit sector as well as with relevant policy makers.

Signature of Legal Representative	Stamp

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