

Canadian Institute of Technology

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

The University College “Canadian Institute of Technology” is a small university in the capital of Albania, Tirana. CIT was founded 14 years ago (2011) and since its very beginning it has always made internationalization one of its main priorities. This endeavour has led CIT to build a network of solid partnership with prestigious universities and research centres around the world.

Throughout the years it has increasingly widened its research and training fields, thus including new disciplines and it has continuously pursued high quality research and teaching activities. CIT is constantly working to develop its international scope, establishing and developing networks and partnerships that guarantee the opportunity of cooperation with regard to education, research and relations with industry.

During the last decade this goal has become a strategic priority of the University, which has committed itself to set up what is called internationalization at home, making its campuses international and encouraging the presence at CIT of foreign visiting professors and researchers, as well as students and staff from all over the world.

In order to make a CIT international, from the very beginning CIT offered programs only in English. The continuous and coherent effort aimed at enriching the educational offer and at giving students, academic and administrative staff good opportunities to study and work abroad, and grow in an international environment has always been a trademark of the Institution. CIT aims at attracting the most talented and deserving Albanian and international students and researchers, who are rewarded with a stimulating and enriching environment, able to combine the local features with the international dimension, based on strong European and international networks of cooperation and relationships.

CIT is strongly committed to carry out joint learning programmes (double/multiple degrees at all levels), joint research projects (inside and outside EU programmes) and other scientific and cultural activities to support the Albanian country and society in general. CIT offers various agreements which provide students with a unique opportunity to achieve credit recognition of their studies in two countries, after having spent at least two years in Albanian, and one year attending courses at a foreign university. One agreement for credit recognition is signed with Georgian College, Ontario Canada, and other two agreements are on the way to be signed with Conestoga University, Canada and George Brown University, Canada, as well CIT is under implementation and signing a new agreement for credit recognition with Cardiff Metropolitan University.

CIT participates in several projects of the European Commission covering various field of research and has recently achieved excellent results which aims at supporting staff and students to develop their skills and knowhow. As far as the international cooperation actions undertaken by the University is concerned, CIT is very active in projects inside the country.

For the signing of bilateral agreements, CIT considers as qualifying element the teaching and research quality level of the foreign partner university evaluated through the main international rankings, such as QS World University Ranking and Times Higher Education World University Rankings. New international cooperation agreements are therefore established only with foreign universities all over the world which have a good position in these rankings.

In the planning of international partnership inside EU and non-EU programmes, CIT carefully chooses its partners according to their international dimension and institutional reliability.

The main geographical areas in which CIT is expanding its cooperation are: Western Europe, North America, East Europe, South-East Asia, North Africa, Middle East.

For the implementation of its international cooperation strategy CIT can count on a central administrative department and on various decentralized offices which are in charge of organizing the mobility opportunities to students, researchers, teaching staff defined in specific agreements.

An academic Vice Rector's supervises the administrative implementation of the University's international cooperation strategy. For outgoing candidates' information on mobility opportunities is provided through a dedicated web portal, e-mails, brochures, department guides and information sessions. Face to face information and advice, including teaching methods and assessment at the hosting institution, is offered by academic tutors.

Incoming candidates have access to information on curricula and procedures directly from the web portal dedicated and at their arrival in Tirana are supported by a dedicated service for international guests. The International Office supports international students in all the administrative and informative aspects related to their enrolment at the University, their arrival and stay in Albania (visa, pre-arrival services, health insurance, stay permit, student card, library). An accommodation for all international students is available at the University's campus. Guided visits in town and excursions in the surroundings for all CIT international students are organized in order to become familiar with Tirana and to meet other international students.

CIT has had in the last few years a general increase in the number of enrollments and has registered a progressive decrease in the study drop out: it intends to maintain and improve these trends though dedicated measures in the guidance of the university choice and in the tutoring of the enrolled students.

CIT support students in need and students coming from vulnerable background.

As to academic mobility activities, CIT has developed instruments and procedures to assure full academic recognition of student performance and to prevent loss of progress. Cross-checking of data and documentation and a functional data management which speeds registration and transfer of ECTS credits, as well as the release of the Diploma Supplement, are reducing sources of delay.

Canadian Institute of Technology supports physical and blended mobility of higher education students in any study field and cycle (short cycle, bachelor, master). Students can either study abroad at a partner higher education institution or carry out a traineeship in an enterprise, a research institute, a laboratory, an organization or any other relevant workplace abroad. Students can also combine a study period abroad with a traineeship, further enhancing the learning outcomes and development of transversal skills.

Canadian Institute of Technology supports higher education academic and administrative staff in professional development activities abroad. CIT also stimulates and promotes the dual education system through engaging corporate and enterprise experts in student teaching and training programs. Described approaches may include teaching and training activities such as job shadowing, observation periods, and training courses.

For CIT inclusion and diversity shall be achieved by ensuring access to students and staff mobility in the easiest possible way that is in line with the principles of the ECHE. CIT (International Relation and Projects Office) will ensure equal and equitable access and opportunities to current and prospective participants regardless of their background. That means the program shall ensure the inclusion of participants with fewer opportunities, such as participants with physical, mental and health-related conditions, students with children, employed students or professional athletes, and students underrepresented by any other criteria. Said that it is essential to ensure internal candidate selection, nomination and assessment procedures that holistically address selection criteria based on equality, inclusion, merit and motivation for each candidate.

CIT aligns its policies with the broader definition established by the Erasmus+ program, which identifies individuals facing obstacles due to economic, social, cultural, geographical, health-related issues, or other forms of discrimination. This includes students with disabilities, those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and individuals living in remote areas.

CIT implements internal selection procedures that prioritize equity and inclusion. These processes evaluate applicants based on merit and motivation while considering their unique circumstances and challenges. This approach ensures that candidates from underrepresented groups are given fair opportunities to participate.

The institution emphasizes creating accessible environments for all participants. This includes ensuring that mobility activities are designed inclusively and that there are no fees for incoming mobile students regarding tuition or access to facilities.

CIT provides tailored support measures to assist participants with specific needs. This includes offering guidance throughout the application process and ensuring that all necessary resources are available for successful participation in mobility program.

CIT engages in training initiatives aimed at enhancing the capabilities of project coordinators and staff regarding inclusion and diversity issues. This training helps improve project management skills and encourages the development of inclusive practices within mobility projects.

To assess the effectiveness of inclusion efforts, CIT actively monitors participation rates among individuals with fewer opportunities and evaluates the impact of its initiatives on social involvement.

At CIT recognition of ECTS credits for Erasmus+ mobilities is a structured process designed to ensure that students can seamlessly transfer academic credits earned during their study abroad experiences back to their home institutions. This recognition is crucial for enhancing student mobility across Europe and beyond.

All credits gained during the study period abroad, as stipulated in the Learning Agreement and confirmed by the Transcript of Records, should be transferred without delay and counted towards the student's degree. This is known as the "ECTS Golden Rule" and is essential for facilitating mobility without additional assessments or requirements upon return to the home institution.

Before embarking on their mobility, students must establish a Learning Agreement that outlines the courses they plan to take at the host institution. This agreement serves as a formal contract between the sending and receiving institutions regarding which courses will be recognized.

To facilitate recognition, students need to submit several documents, including:

- Transcript of Records: Issued by the host institution at the end of the mobility period, detailing the courses taken and grades received.
- Recognition Agreement: A document confirming that all parties agree on which subjects will be recognized after successful completion

CIT has developed transparent recognition processes that are accessible to students. This includes publishing guidelines online and providing support through dedicated offices or coordinators who can assist with any issues during the mobility period.

ECTS recognition for Erasmus+ mobilities is designed to support student mobility by ensuring that academic credits earned abroad are recognized effectively at home institutions. By adhering to established guidelines and fostering transparency, universities can facilitate a smoother transition for students participating in international exchanges.

CIT counts on a substantial number of active projects and partnerships within the three Key Actions and Jean Monnet activities. The University intends to continue and expand its participation in Erasmus initiatives.

CIT reasserts its strong commitment to participate in the actions of the Erasmus+ programme. Mobility is facilitated in all its types and aspects: physical and virtual, long-, short- and micro-term, for the various activities and in all areas of the academic community.

CIT considers mobility in its broadest sense, including virtual mobility and international experiences carried out "at home", which are, incidentally, environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.