

# Erasmus Policy Statement

*ISVOUGA – Instituto Superior de Entre Douro e Vouga, an institution with 22 years of existence, was created by the Foundation Terras de Santa Maria da Feira, which includes its Town Hall, experts from the academic world and a set of prestigious regional companies that operate both nationally and internationally. As part of its mission, ISVOUGA, through its ministered courses, aims to establish and strengthen competencies likely to boost economic and social development of the country and, in particular, the region in which it operates. Aware of the centrality that the process of lifelong learning represents, ISVOUGA takes on, increasingly, a role of being a qualifying pole for distinct publics by promoting versatile and differentiated curricula, thus supporting and complementing the constant concern with the integration and mobility of graduates.*

*Applied research and the provision of relevant services to the community are other significant bases of ISVOUGA responsibilities, therefore ensuring innovation and social utility of all its activity.*

*ISVOUGA through its International Mobility Office (IMO) develops continuously actions to publicize and disclose international programs, namely the ERASMUS program, within the academic community by disseminating its European Internationalization Policy, through its internal and external communication mechanisms, creating external conditions needed for the implementation of internationalization strategies, reinforcing human and physical resources intended to that mission.*

*The IMO has sought new partnerships with leading and benchmark institutions through advertisements broadcasted by the National Agency, through information and contacts of ISVOUGA teachers, and own initiatives of the International Mobility Office and its National Universities contact network.*

*The selection of the partner institutions is based on the following requirements: areas of knowledge and training, classes taught in English; given aid and backing in what concerns information on the institution, lodging and integration of the students into the local culture.*

*In addition to the protocols with IES that belong to the Member States of the European Union, ISVOUGA has partnerships with institutions in Central America thus pursuing its goal of expansion and promotion of international cooperation in the areas of education, research, culture and society.*

*The main objectives of the mobility activities include the following:*

- Extend the scope of its international partnerships in the various areas of the courses it ministers, diversifying geographic regions and countries involved;*

- Provide, through the mobility of students, teachers and staff, an additional intellectual and cultural qualification associated to the development of important skills such as initiative, adaptability, flexibility and communication;
- Increase the higher education students' social base by promoting mechanisms to support mobility for socio economic stratum with fewer resources, thus enabling the number of participants;
- Fortify, through the signing of multilateral agreements, opportunities to qualify and diversify the institution offer of ministered courses, particularly at the level of 2nd study cycles;
- Strengthen research and innovation through the development of joint projects and initiatives, resulting from partnerships with leading institutions with which ISVOUGA has established bilateral agreements.
- Qualify and simplify the procedures for transfer of credits (ECTS), thereby contributing to greater compliance and generalization of academic mobility;
- Promote a culture of sharing experiences in order to learn and assimilate the best practices adopted in different geographical areas, for the same purposes;
- Optimize the administrative processes associated to the management of international exchanges, in what concerns methodologies and procedures.
- Continue the policy of social support to students in mobility: to the outgoing students exempt from tuition and to the incoming students lodging offer.

*In order to monitor systematically the implementation of bilateral agreements, the International Mobility Office provides constant contact via phone and email with the students and its peers of the host institution, performing after a student's return satisfaction evaluation questionnaires. Working visits between partners is also an important tool for measuring the success of partnerships.*

*The strategy ISVOUGA for institutional cooperation projects with HEIs lay in creating and developing bonds with local organizations (companies, public and private organizations, non-governmental organizations), hence promoting skills in entrepreneurship, innovation and employability.*

*The strategy will also sit in the promotion and awareness of the definition of universal principles in research (ethical values), internalization of gender and equal opportunities.*

*ISVOUGA participation in international cooperation projects has embodied the innovation and competitiveness of those involved, fostering collaboration between HEIs and organizing*

*forums involving a wide range of experts and students, in which, new skills and practices at the levels of multidisciplinary and team work have been shared and developed.*

*Regarding the methodologies of learning throughout life, ISVOUGA, continues to focus on diversifying them, particularly in the use of distance learning tools such as e-learning and b-learning.*

*After analysing the "Modernisation agenda" ISVOUGA intends to:*

- a) Increase the number of graduates, both national and international;*
- b) Enlarge the number of researchers;*
- c) Develop technical and transversal skills;*
- d) Promote equality of opportunity;*
- e) Increase partners involvement (advisory boards, companies, R&D centres) in the design and curriculum development;*
- f) Reduce school failure and the number of dropout students;*
- g) Educate graduates with better profiles suited to the needs of the labour market;*
- h) Raise employability;*
- i) Heighten the levels of satisfaction of internal and external stakeholders;*
- j) Eliminate existing negative stereotypes concerned to the participation in mobility;*
- k) Promote synergies between the labour market, teachers/researchers and ISVOUGA students;*
- l) Promote entrepreneurship;*
- m) Expand and increase the number of cooperation projects, namely locally, nationally and internationally;*
- n) Strengthen the pillars of the organization and its partners in terms of sustainability, diversity and inclusion.*