



## **Ansbach University of Applied Sciences European Policy Statement (EPS) 2021-2027**

Ansbach University of Applied Sciences is as one of the smaller universities in Bavaria specialising in technology, economics and media studies. It provides a range of courses which are practice and application oriented.

Although the university sees itself as primarily a regional educational institute, it has, since its foundation, always focussed on internationalisation which is the prerequisite for success in a competitive global market. Currently, students and teachers can gain experience abroad at around 60 partner universities worldwide. The university offers four international joint degrees at bachelor and masters' level, two of which are part of the Erasmus + programme.

Europe is the focal point for the university's policies for internationalisation. A commitment to the principles of Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and active participation in the Erasmus+ programme are key features of Ansbach University's modernisation and internationalisation strategy. The university is committed to the goals of the European Renewal Agenda for Higher Education and to strengthening the European Education Area, to which the Erasmus + programme makes an important contribution.

The modernisation strategy (Chance 2030), the mission statement and internationalisation strategy, all endorse the basic principles of digital innovation, diversity and equal opportunities, social responsibility, sustainability and inclusion and undertake to implement them step by step both in teaching practice and in the administration of the university. A working group on internationalisation composed of representatives from all areas of the university, meets regularly to coordinate internationalisation measures and to generate new initiatives.

In its 2017 European Renewal Agenda for Higher Education, the European Commission set out a strategy to support member states in the provision of forward-looking and inclusive education. The Agenda outlines four areas of priority which will be supported by activities at EU level.

## **Measures to prevent a future mismatch between skills demand and supply and to promote excellence in skills training and development**

To meet the demand in Europe for employees with a broad range of skills, universities need to produce more highly qualified graduates especially in the fields of MINT and STE(A)M who have job-related expertise. Ansbach University offers study programmes in all these areas which are also designed to attract applicants from more marginalised groups. In addition to imparting state-of-the-art specialist knowledge, these programmes teach transversal skills and key competences, such as digital competence, self-reliance, critical thinking, media skills and the capacity for innovative problem-solving, irrespective of the discipline studied. Teaching is adapted to the needs of the students for example through online teaching and integrated learning (blended learning). Ansbach University has all the necessary technical resources at its disposal. Educational institutions are also expected to incorporate practical and vocational training and to facilitate international mobility. To this end, Ansbach is an active participant in the Erasmus+ programme and provides opportunities for student internships with a special focus on digital skills.

Ansbach University complies fully with the requirements set out in the European Agenda both through its range of career-oriented courses in fields where there is a perceived shortage in skilled employees and through the support measures highlighted above. By offering a high degree of practical experience and through its close ties to business companies, the university ensures that its graduates are equipped to fulfil the future demands of the economy and society.

## **Creating inclusive and connected Higher Education Systems**

Higher education has a responsibility to address social and democratic challenges by being accessible to people from all walks of life. Ansbach University has put in place measures to promote inclusion, and to support students from educationally disadvantaged and low-income groups, as well as a mentoring programme for disadvantaged students and barrier-free study options (technical and digital). By networking with other educational institutions and key regional stakeholders in civil society, the university aims to provide the labour market with graduates who are not only professionally trained and educated but also socially and socio-politically engaged.

## **Ensuring Higher Education Institutions contribute to innovation in other sectors of society**

The Commission considers that universities should develop an outward-looking culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. Ansbach University has excellent networking connections with companies in the region, many of which operate globally. Students are engaged in research projects which are directly aimed at advancing the economy and boosting production to help companies remain competitive. These realistic

projects and the abundance of external contacts at the university enable students to think both critically and creatively and to act in an entrepreneurial manner.

### **Promoting effective and efficient Higher Education Systems**

Ansbach University of Applied Science has built a strong network with many national and international universities and collaborates with numerous stakeholders in research and teaching. It uses European funding programmes to foster international exchange, research-based teaching, interdisciplinary education and practical innovations in the education system.

The Commission's paper, 'Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture', is intended to supplement the European Innovation Agenda and specifies a series of recommendations for educational institutions. By 2025, the aim is to create a Europe in which learning, study and research are not limited by borders and where it is considered the norm to spend time studying, learning or teaching in another member state and where it is also common to speak two languages in addition to one's mother tongue – a continent whose citizens are highly aware of their identity as Europeans and of Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity. In this paper education is regarded as being not only crucial to a resilient European economy but also as the basis for civic engagement which advocates common European values and thus promotes social stability and the preservation of democracy.

Ansbach University of Applied Sciences adheres to these principles by actively promoting and supporting stays abroad. The Language Centre offers a wide range of courses, allowing students to learn several foreign languages at the same time. In addition, Ansbach University encourages its students to become involved in the university's committees and engage with civil society beyond the university 'walls'.

Translation: Gillian Adam