



Report IO 6

European Curricula Design Guide

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Title	European Curriculum Design Guide
Description	The report will outline the features of the different components of the most appropriate online e-learning platform in line with the identified needs of the project partners, as defined in task 4.1
Contents	<p>The Guide, based, on the research carried out in IO1, IO2 and IO3 will contain a toolkit for institutions and concrete recommendations on how to design study programmes in a mobility friendly way that encourages mobility embedded in curricula. The contents of the Guide will be tailored to the different contexts of European HEIs as defined in the mobility typology produced in IO3.</p> <p>The European Design Guide will target programme coordinators and faculty deans, containing also specific recommendations addressed to students, professors' regulatory bodies national Ministries and European authorities.</p>

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Executive Summary

Since 1987, Erasmus+ remains one of the EU flagships programmes, reaching 10 million participants supported in their life changing learning experience in 2018. After 33 years of implementation, Erasmus+ remains resilient, even in the 2020 challenging context, reaching 11.7 million participants supported at the end of the year. More particularly, in 2020, Key Action 1, the largest Erasmus+ action, received 48% of the Erasmus+ total budget and was mainly implemented by the National Agencies. The EU committed €1.80 billion under Heading 1 for Key Action 1 which represents an increase of 1, 6% compared to 2019¹.

And yet, only a relatively small number of students has been involved in student exchange. When the European benchmark of 20%, as set up in Bucharest in 2012, would be reached, this still leaves out 80% of the students.

This relatively low participation rate can be related to personal factors, but it is also due to organisational issues. Long term exchange for large numbers of students in the average curriculum is impossible to arrange, i.e., due to logistics (e. g. housing) and shortage of financial means (e.g., student grants). Another reason for low participation can be the curriculum itself.

When exchange is not an organic part of the curriculum, students nor staff 'feel' an academic need for it. In some countries, there is an increasing and formalised emphasis on learning outcomes, which sometimes complicates exchange mobility. A condition for increasing mobility numbers is that mobility becomes an integral part of a curricular framework.

Against this framework, the **European Curricula Design Guide** aims at developing concrete policy recommendations on how to design study programmes in a mobility-friendly way that encourages mobility to be embedded in curricula. To this end, this Guide will target programme coordinators and faculty deans, containing also specific recommendations addressed to students, professors' regulatory bodies national Ministries and European authorities.

¹ Erasmus+ Annual Report 2020 (European Commission, 2021) at 21.

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1. Internationalization of Higher Education Today: Practices and Approaches

There is no doubt that internationalization has come of age. No longer is it an *ad hoc* or marginalized part of the higher education landscape. University strategic plans, national policy statements, international declarations, and academic articles all indicate the centrality of internationalization in the world of higher education. The changing dynamics of internationalization are also contributing to the current state of turmoil in the higher education sector. During the last decade, there have been new actors, new rationales, new programs, new regulations, new risks and new challenges.

The international dimension of higher education is becoming increasingly important, and at the same time more complex.

While internationalization has become a formidable force for change, it has also dramatically transformed itself. The conceptualization of internationalization as having two interdependent pillars – ‘at home’ and ‘abroad’ – is evidence of this change. The international dimension of the curriculum has progressed from an area studies and foreign-language approach to the integration of international, global, intercultural, and comparative perspectives into the teaching and learning process and program content. A new emphasis on student learning outcomes which includes international and intercultural knowledge, skills, and values is also prevalent.

Despite this seemingly positive picture, several practices challenging and sometimes impeding meaningful internationalization in learning and teaching:

- (1) A clear, jointly developed and communicated understanding of internationalization and its importance to providing quality education is often lacking, even when internationalization is mentioned as a cornerstone in universities' strategy documents. This hinders the development of an internationalization community-of-practice and shared responsibilities in implementing internationalized education, even though such a community would be the basis for the success of any comprehensive and lasting internationalization.

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- (2) Internationalization as a comprehensive and purposeful approach is already successfully established in research, whereas internationalized learning and teaching is often reduced to mobility and language issues. It would be more fruitful to define it more broadly as an approach aiming to equip teachers and students with a mindset, skills and competences geared towards addressing global challenges and solutions, including measures to develop such a mindset through course content and teaching methods.
- (3) Many universities have initiatives and programmes developed to promote and foster and internationalize mobility experience. These are often initiated and carried out at the department, programme, or even individual level. Yet in many cases, concerted efforts to connect all existing activities are lacking. These may lead to internationalization activities being understood as a desirable addition to a university's, faculties, or programmes offer, rather than a fundamental aspect of fit-for-purpose education provided to every student, which has implications for both students and teachers.

Since international activities are often targeted at either domestic or international students, these two student populations remain disconnected, even though both would benefit from a common learning experience, e.g., through intercultural communication classes or a curriculum designed to equip all learners with transversal, global skills. In addition, students are rarely aware of their university's full range of internationalization activities.

Moreover, and equally important, where internationalization is not a comprehensive approach to education provision covering all aspects of university life and a mindset pervading an institution's learning and teaching culture, it risks remaining a niche project dependent on the efforts of a few individuals. At the same time, existing efforts by individual teachers to either offer an international learning experience to students (e.g., through their choice of topics or teaching methods, or through contact with international peers during the course) or to enhance their own competences, are not always acknowledged or supported by their supervisors.

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2. Embedded and Sustainable Internationalization

Mainstreaming efforts at the institutional level are needed to ensure an understanding of internationalized education as one geared towards enhanced, topical and fit-for-purpose student learning.

Internationalization should thus be established as a crosscutting element pervading institutional strategies and policies. This would help ensure its links with every domain of university life, and thus promote an understanding of internationalization as a key component of high-quality education. If this is not feasible or desirable due to context-dependent circumstances, institutional policies should be designed in a way that ensures clear and extensive communication to all internal and external stakeholders of the key value of internationalization to education provision.

In either case, the assumption that learning mobility fosters knowledge, skills, competences and experiences, including personal and social competences and cultural awareness, that are crucial for participating actively in society and the labour market, attaches a crucial importance to the development of a diversified institutional mobility policy.

This involves not only a robust approach to quality assurance, but also the exploration of combinations of existing mobility strategies based on credit mobility with more structured degree mobility models and the development and implementation of flexible short mobility programmes –including blended methodologies, when applicable–, thus contributing to removing obstacles to the mobility.

This goal-oriented, flexible and scalable mobility policy will additionally hinge upon enhancing staff as a key to the internationalization of the University of Alcalá. Through mobility schemes, lecturers and administrative staff have the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills, to be inspired with new ideas and,

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thus, to stimulate positive changes in Alcalá that will bring forth innovative teaching methods and will result in new joint modules, projects or collaborations².

3. The Case for Student Mobility

Against this background, therefore, **student mobility, in its multiplicity of forms, continues to be a high priority of internationalization and is the focus of this guide.** The growth in the number of mobile students from 1987 to in 2020 is staggering. If forecasts are correct, this number will double in another ten to fifteen years. Given this exponential growth, it is no wonder that student mobility is often seen as the 'face' of internationalization and at times is mistakenly used interchangeably with the term. Internationalization is more than student mobility.

This is particularly true Erasmus+. Since 1987, Erasmus+ remains one of the EU flagships programmes, reaching 10 million participants supported in their life changing learning experience in 2018. After 35 years of implementation, Erasmus+ remains resilient, even in the 2020 challenging context, reaching 11.7 million participants supported at the end of the year. More particularly, in 2020, Key Action 1, the largest Erasmus+ action, received 48% of the Erasmus+ total budget and was mainly implemented by the National Agencies. The EU committed €1.80 billion under Heading 1 for Key Action 1 which represents an increase of 1, 6% compared to 2019³.

Though physical mobility for learners -and staff- remains the flagship activity of Erasmus+, the new programme for 2021-2027 has introduced more flexible mobility formats and duration, with the idea of offering even more opportunities to study or carry out a traineeship in Europe and beyond. In higher education, blended intensive programmes not just combine online learning and teamwork with short-term physical mobility abroad; they also

All these instruments facilitate the development of a diversified institutional mobility policy for the curriculum, which is goal-oriented, flexible, and scalable, and this European Curricula Design Guide aims at setting the stage for the

² See the glossary of terms, appended to the present report.

³ Erasmus+ Annual Report 2020 (European Commission, 2021) at 21.

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introduction of those instruments, and their corresponding funding schemes to support them, in the strategies for internationalization of Higher Education in the European context.

As such, the content of the Guide all connects well with the European Education Area⁴ and its implications on higher education policy, including the creation of a European space of learning which benefits all learners, academics and other education staff who can move freely to study across the European Union, and the promotion of automatic mutual recognition of higher education outcomes of learning periods abroad.

Equally important, the Guide addresses new challenges in education, and may serve as a tool to enhance digital transitions and fostering innovation, paving the way for the digital transformation of our education in line with the new Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027)⁵.

The European Curricula Design Guide blends also with the European strategy for universities⁶, in objectives such as examining options and necessary steps towards a joint European degree, in particular the development of European criteria for the award of a European Degree label. More generally, this Guide shares current aims at building bridges for effective European Higher Education cooperation⁷.

This analysis is as urgent as ever. A mapping exercise undertaken during the implementation should allowed Higher education Institutions to have a much needed clear understanding of the state of play of student mobility structures across Europe. At any event, it should the first step for any serious analysis of the possibility offer to such institution. Unsurprisingly, despite the experience acquired

⁴ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025, COM/2020/625 final, 30.09.2020.

⁵ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 Resetting Education and Training for the Digital Age, COM/2020/624 final, 30.09.2020.

⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a European strategy for Universities, COM (2022) 16 final, 18.01.2022.

⁷ See, generally, Proposal for a Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation, COM (2022) 17 final, 18.01.2022

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the results of such a study would sound as familiar in the 2020s as they were in the 1990s, namely:

1. That **the level of funding available for mobilities**, especially in the Erasmus+ programme, continues to be perceived as insufficient by many students and staff members in Europe.
2. That **Personal reasons remain another important obstacle**, some of which might possibly be tackled in some respects, notably as far as problems of workload and recognition are concerned
3. That the goal of making mobility windows a general practice in higher education, so-called **blended mobility seems the most promising approach**.
4. That **here is a need for more incentives to motivate increasing numbers of students**: an international distance learning experience, as well as short programmes such as intensive training programmes, summer schools or study trips abroad clearly function as pull-factors likely to trigger more physical mobility.
5. That **joint and double degree programmes with mandatory mobility provide manifest benefit in terms of career perspectives**.
6. That **there is a need for augmented staff incentives in terms of recognition of personal involvement**, both to choose a staff mobility experience likely to trigger more student mobilities in turn, and to develop educational programmes that make mobility the norm⁸.

Unsurprisingly, similar results might be reached when looking at the actual implementation of internationalization strategies in higher education having studying mobility at its core. In a survey conducted on the Institutional, structural and academic barriers to international student mobility the results hardly differed from what is increasingly common ground and knowledge on this field:

Therefore, in a report prepared out of a survey of staff in higher education institutions signalled that the respondents consider that:

⁸ See Desk research on the literature about mobility in the European Higher Education Area, developed within the implementation of the NORM project.

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1. **mobility is mostly hampered** by factors such as **Academic barriers** (e.g., expected difficulties in credit recognition, poor matching between the courses of the host university and my home university subjects, incompatibility of academic calendars);
2. **Similarly, language barriers** (e.g., the problem of studying in a different language) **proved to be a relevant factor**
3. Equally important, **uncertainty about the impact of mobility abroad in students' academic formation** (e.g., uncertainty on education abroad and on education system abroad, uncertainty about how mobility might unnecessarily prolong my studies) places a crucial role.
4. In this context, **the possibility that mobility abroad can prolong studies at the home university, and the lack of study programs in English at the partner institution** are the most relevant academic and structural barriers for international mobility.
5. But those are not the only **relevant academic and structural barriers identified in the report**: next to them it identified **uncertainty or lack of information on courses and syllabus at the partner institution, poor matching between the courses/subjects of the partner institution and those offered by my institution, as well as expected difficulties in credit recognition between the partner institution and my institution**⁹.

If the focus shifts to student perceptions the analysis of the available data gives similar results. To them the possibility that mobility abroad can prolong studies at the home university is the most relevant institutional, structural and academic barrier to international mobility. Indeed, relevant academic and structural barriers students generally identified are:

1. **Difficulties in credit recognition** between the host institution and the home University;
2. **Complex procedures** to apply for mobility;

⁹ See Report on a survey on the obstacles that hampered study mobility in Higher Education institutions, mostly connected with mobility schemes under the Erasmus+ Programme.





3. **Uncertainty or lack of information on courses and syllabus at the host Institution and,**
4. **Poor matching between the courses/subjects of the host university and those offered by the home university**

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4.

a. **Part 1: Partnership analysis: The role of inter-institutional agreements**

The first step to improve the quality of your mobility-enabling partnerships is to clearly define what such partnerships mean within your organization. While Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) cooperate with other institutions in different forms, e.g. research cooperation, meetings during conferences, personal cooperation between academics etc., a partnership enabling mobility is traditionally supported by an inter-institutional agreement encompassing mobility flows of students and/or staff.

For Erasmus mobilities, the European Commission provides an inter-institutional agreement template³, which contains (a) information about the partners and (b) information about the mobilities enabled through the agreement. Furthermore, it contains (c) practical information about the institutions, such as recommended language skills, additional requirements for the mobilities, the academic calendar and information about visas, insurances and housing.

The section (b) of the Erasmus+ agreements contains cooperation conditions referring to subject area and study cycle. Some institutions set up one agreement with a specific partner containing mobility flows for many different study fields while others set up separate agreements with the same partner per subject area. This affects the definition of what an agreement is and should be taken into account when creating an overview. Higher Education institutions also set up agreements outside the Erasmus framework that usually also include specific clauses on sending and receiving exchange students (and/or staff), which often follow the same principle

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Indicator	Description
Performance of incoming students	this indicator combines the study load and study success of incoming exchange students to the partner. Study load refers to the number of credits taken per semester. Study success is the ratio between the number of credits taken and the number of credits successfully completed.
Performance of outgoing students	This indicator combines the study load and study success of outgoing exchange students to the partner. Study load refers to the number of credits taken per semester. Study success is the ratio between the number of credits taken and the number of credits successfully completed
Support and facilities at the host institution	This indicator combines four elements extracted from the Erasmus+ participant reports: the level of satisfaction with support arrangements provided by the receiving partner institution; the level of satisfaction with how the receiving institution dealt with questions, complaints or problems; the level of satisfaction with assistance in finding accommodation; and how the student facilities were rated. Support questions count for 80% of the final score, the one on facilities for 20%.
Academic quality	The indicator is the result of the appreciation of students about teaching methods, the quality of the content of the courses they attended and the learning support they received at the host institution. The information comes from the participant report from incoming students.
Course catalogue information	The availability of good quality information to prepare a learning agreement can make the learning agreement process a lot less cumbersome. This indicator refers to the information in the course catalogue at the receiving partner institution. It is based on the feedback from incoming students in the Erasmus+ participant reports. Students indicate whether the course catalogue was: up to date (+4); available in time (+3); complete (+2) and/or published on the website (+1).

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Exchange of mobility documents	The exchange of mobility documents indicator assesses whether the Learning Agreement was signed by the host institution (25% of the final score) and whether the transcript of records was received in time (25% of the final score). For this indicator it is also taken into account whether a grading table is available in the Egracons tool (50% of the final score)
Involvement	The indicator tells us something about the involvement of faculties/departments (defined using the ISCED broad fields of study) and the different programmes (as defined by the ISCED narrow fields of study) as indicated in the existing agreements with partner institutions.
Educational collaboration	Educational collaboration combines project funded by Education programmes (such as Erasmus +) and double/joint/multiple degree programmes and graduates in those programmes.

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Part 2: Mobility type analysis

The next logical step is to create an overview of your current mobility-enabling partnerships at institutional level.

If you are interested in improving your Erasmus partnerships, and the student mobility flows within it, you will need to understand the format in which you store information about your Erasmus partnerships

Mobility type:	Description
Semester(s)	A study period abroad lasting at least one academic term/trimester or 2 months to 12 months
Blended mobility	Any mobility can be carried out as a "blended mobility" by combining the study period abroad with on virtual component at the receiving institution before, during or after the physical mobility to further enhance the learning outcomes.
Short description of a virtual component	An indication of whether the virtual component is an online course(s), embedded in an course(s) selected at the receiving institution, embedded in a blended intensive programme and/or other type of online activity at the receiving institution along with component title(s) or short description of the online activity.
Blended mobility with short term physical mobility	If a long-term physical mobility is not suitable, the student may undertake a study period abroad lasting between 5 days and 30 days and combined with a compulsory virtual component to facilitate an online learning exchange and/or teamwork.
Short-term doctoral mobility	A study period abroad lasting between 5 days and 30 days. An optional virtual component to facilitate an online learning exchange and/or teamwork can be added to further enhance the learning outcomes.

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Part 3: Educational Components: Preparation of future learning agreements

Mobility type:	Description
Semester(s)	<p>The Learning Agreement must include all the educational components to be carried out by the student at the Receiving Institution and it must contain the group of educational components as well that will be replaced in his/her degree by the Sending Institution upon successful completion of the study programme abroad. Though the objective is to make clear that there is no need to have one-to-one correspondence between the components followed abroad and the ones replaced at the Sending Institution, and the aim of the Commission is rather that a group of learning outcomes achieved abroad replaces a group of learning outcomes at the Sending Institution, the reality often differs.</p> <p>The Sending Institution should indicate in Table B the group of educational components counting towards the student's degree that would normally be completed at the Sending Institution and which will be replaced by the Study Programme at the Receiving Institution. The total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) in Table B should correspond to the total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) contained in Table A. Any exception to this rule should be clearly stated in an annex of the Learning Agreement and agreed by all parties.</p>
Semester (s) with an optional virtual component	<p>If the student has chosen to add a virtual component offered by the receiving institution to their study mobility that will award ECTS credits (or equivalent), it should also be included in the Learning Agreement. The purpose is to give the student the possibility to enhance further the learning outcomes of the mobility period abroad by complementing the physical component with online learning, training or teamwork. When relevant, the agreement must include a title or description of the educational component in addition to a short description of the nature of the virtual component e.g. online course, online cultural preparation with other exchange students or</p>

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	online training with a teacher. In the same table, the sending institution will indicate how the ECTS credits (or equivalent) of the added virtual component will be recognised i.e. either confirm automatic recognition or justify the reason for awarding an alternative recognition.
Blended mobility with short-term physical mobility	If the student is taking part in a short-term physical mobility combined with a mandatory virtual component, the student and the sending and receiving institutions will describe the study programme and recognition of the learning outcomes using only the simplified mobility programme and recognition table which will appear when this mobility type is selected. This applies to both students organising their short-term mobilities individually and students taking part in Blended Intensive Programmes organised by groups of higher education institutions. The table will include the title of the Blended Intensive Programme or the title or description of the educational component organized for the individual student. In addition, a short description of the nature of the virtual component should be included e.g. online learning exchange and teamwork, online learning as part of a course offered in a blended learning format, online training or academic assignment with a supervisor in the receiving institution. In the same table, the sending institution will indicate how the ECTS credits (or equivalent) of the blended mobility with short-term physical component will be recognised i.e. either confirm automatic recognition or justify the reason for awarding an alternative recognition.
Short description of a virtual component	An indication of whether the virtual component is an online course(s), embedded in an course(s) selected at the receiving institution, embedded in a blended intensive programme and/or other type of online activity at the receiving institution along with component title(s) or short description of the online activity.
Short-term doctoral mobility	If the doctoral candidate is taking part in a short-term physical mobility, the doctoral candidate and the sending and receiving institutions will describe the study programme and recognition of the learning outcomes using only the simplified

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	<p>mobility programme and recognition table which will appear when this mobility type is selected. The table will include the title or description of the educational component organised for the doctoral candidate e.g. participation in a seminar, workshop, thesis work or intensive course. To enhance the synergies with Horizon Europe, doctoral mobilities can also take place in the context of Horizon Europe funded research projects. If the doctoral candidate decided to add a virtual component to their mobility, a short description of the nature of the virtual component should be included in Table C e.g. online learning exchange and teamwork, participation in an online seminar or webinar, online course etc.</p>
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Glossary of terms

Blended mobility: Combination of physical mobility and a virtual component, facilitating collaborative online learning exchange/teamwork.

Blended mobility with short term physical mobility: If a long-term physical mobility is not suitable, the student may undertake a study period abroad lasting between 5 days and 30 days and combined with a compulsory virtual component to facilitate an online learning exchange and/or teamwork.

Blended Intensive Programme: These are short, intensive programmes that use innovative ways of learning and teaching, including the use of online cooperation. The programmes may include challenge-based learning where transnational and transdisciplinary teams work together to tackle challenges for example those linked to the United Nations' sustainable development goals or other societal challenges identified by regions, cities or companies. The intensive programme should have added value compared to existing courses or trainings offered by the participating higher education institutions and can be multiannual. By enabling new and more flexible mobility formats that combine physical mobility with a virtual part, blended intensive programmes aim at reaching all types of students from all backgrounds, study fields and cycles.

Certificate: In the context of Erasmus+, this is a document which is issued to any person who has completed a learning activity in the field of education. It certifies the attendance and, where applicable, the learning outcomes of the participant in the activity.

Course catalogue: Detailed, user-friendly, and up-to-date information on the institution's learning environment that should be available to students before the mobility period and throughout their studies to enable them to make the right choices and use their time most efficiently. The information concerns, for example, the qualifications offered, the learning, teaching and assessment procedures, the level of programmes, the individual educational components, and the learning resources. The Course Catalogue should include the names of

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people to contact, with information about how, when, and where to contact them.

Credit: A set of learning outcomes of an individual which have been assessed and which can be accumulated towards a qualification or transferred to other learning programmes or qualifications.

Credit mobility: A limited period of study or traineeship abroad set within on-going studies at a home institution - for the purpose of gaining credits. After the mobility phase, students return to their home institution to complete their studies.

Degree mobility: A period of study abroad aimed at acquiring a full degree or certificate in the destination country/ies.

Diploma Supplement: An annex to the official qualification documentation, which is designed to provide more detailed information on the studies completed according to an agreed format, which is internationally recognized; a document accompanying a higher education diploma, providing a standardized description of the nature, level, context, content, and status of the studies completed by its holder. It is produced by higher education institutions according to standards agreed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. In the context of an international joint study programme, it is recommended to deliver a "joint diploma supplement" covering the entire programme and endorsed by all the degree awarding universities.

Doctoral mobility: To better meet the diverse learning and training needs of doctoral candidates and to ensure equal opportunities with those that have the status of higher education staff, doctoral candidates and recent graduates ('post-docs') can undertake short-term or long-term physical study or traineeship mobility periods abroad. Adding a virtual component to the physical mobility is encouraged.

Double degree/multiple degree: (At least) two separate degree certificates awarded to a student upon successful completion of a joint programme. A double degree is a specific type of multiple degree. Each degree must be signed by the competent authority of the institution concerned and recognized officially in the countries where the different awarding institutions are located.

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Digital competence: Involves the confident, critical, and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking.

ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System): A learner-centered system for credit accumulation and transfer, based on the transparency of learning, teaching and assessment processes. Its objective is to facilitate planning, delivery and evaluation of study programmes and learner mobility through the recognition of qualifications and periods of learning. A system that helps to design, describe, and deliver study programmes and award higher education qualifications. The use of ECTS, in conjunction with outcomes-based qualifications frameworks, makes study programmes and qualifications more transparent and facilitates the recognition of qualifications.

Educational Component: A self-contained and formal structured learning experience that features learning outcomes, credits and forms of assessment. Examples of educational components are: a course, module, seminar, laboratory work, practical work, preparation/research for a thesis, mobility window or free electives.

European Qualifications Framework (EQF): A common European reference tool that serves as a translation device between different education and training systems and their levels. It aims to improve the transparency, comparability, and portability of qualifications across Europe, promoting workers' and learners' mobility and facilitating their lifelong learning, as defined in the 2008/C 111/01 Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council.

ESCO (multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations): Identifies and categorizes skills and competences, qualifications, and occupations relevant for the EU labor market and education and training, in 25 European languages. The system provides occupational profiles showing the relationships between occupations, skills, competences, and

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qualifications. ESCO has been developed in an open IT format and can be used by anyone free of charge.

Grade conversion: grades obtained abroad by exchange students that need to be converted to the grading scale of the home institution for inclusion in the home Transcript of Record. Grades also refer to individual marks obtained for course units or modules as they are listed in the Learning Agreement and the Transcript of Records. Typically, it is the smallest unit to which (ECTS) credits are officially allocated.

Inter-institutional Agreements: Inter-institutional agreements can be signed between two or more higher education institutions (HEIs). They set the framework conditions for the student and staff mobilities which take place between institutions funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

Joint degree: Single degree certificate awarded to a student upon successful completion of a joint programme. The joint degree must be signed by the competent authorities of two or more of the participating institutions jointly and recognized officially in the countries where those participating institutions are located.

Joint programmes: Higher education (study or research) programmes jointly designed, delivered, and fully recognized by two or more higher education institutions. Joint programmes can be implemented at any higher education cycle, i.e. bachelor, master or doctorate or even short cycle. Joint programmes can be national (i.e. when all universities involved are from the same country) or transnational/international (i.e. when at least two different countries are represented among the higher education institutions involved).

Informal learning: Learning resulting from daily activities and experiences which is not organized or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support; it may be unintentional from the learner's perspective.

Language competence: A recommended level in the main language of instruction has been agreed between the Sending and Receiving Institutions in their Inter-Institutional Agreement.

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International: In the context of Erasmus+, relates to any action involving at least one EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme and at least one third country not associated to the Programme.

Learning agreement: The purpose of the Learning Agreement is to provide a transparent and efficient preparation of the exchange to make sure that students receive recognition for the activities successfully completed abroad. The Learning Agreement sets out the programme of the studies or the traineeship to be followed abroad. It must be approved by the student, the sending and the receiving institution, organization or enterprise before the start of the exchange. The Learning Agreement should include all the learning outcomes the student is expected to acquire during the exchange. All parties signing it commit to complying with all the agreed arrangements, thereby ensuring that the student will receive the recognition for the studies or traineeship carried out abroad without any further recognition requirements.

Learning mobility: Means moving physically to a country other than the country of residence, possibly combined with a period of virtual participation, to undertake study, training or non-formal or informal learning. It may take the form of traineeships, apprenticeships, youth exchanges, teaching, or participation in a professional development activity, and may include preparatory activities, such as training in the host language, as well as sending, receiving and follow-up activities.

Learning outcomes: Statements of what a learner knows, understands, and can do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

Mobility/Learning agreement: An agreement between the sending and receiving organization and the participating individuals, defining the aims and content of the mobility period to ensure its relevance and quality. It can also be used as a basis for recognition of the period abroad by the receiving organization.

MOOC: Stands for "Massive Open Online Course," a type of course that is completely delivered online, is open to be accessed by anyone without cost,

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entry qualifications or other restrictions; participant numbers are often high. These courses can have in-person components, e.g., encouraging local participant meetings, and formal assessment, but tend to use peer review, self-assessment, and automated grading. There are many variations of MOOCs, focused on specific sectors, target groups (e.g. vocational focus, teachers, etc.) or teaching methods. MOOCs funded under Erasmus+ have to be open to all and both the participation and a certificate or badge of completion are free of charge for participants. The open access requirement for educational resources applies also to MOOCs and other complete courses.

Non-formal learning: Learning which takes place outside formal education and training through planned activities in terms of learning objectives and learning time and where some form of learning support is present.

Participants in Erasmus+ project activities: Erasmus+ participants are those individuals who are fully involved in a project and who may receive part of the European Union grant intended to cover their costs of participation (notably travel and subsistence).

Peer Learning: A reciprocal learning activity, which is mutually beneficial and involves the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience between the participants. Peer learning practices enable to interact with other participants, their peers, and participate in activities where they can learn from each other and meet educational, professional and/or personal development goals.

Preparatory Visit: Visits to the country of the receiving organization prior to the start of mobility activities to prepare and ensure high quality of those activities. Examples include tasks to facilitate administrative arrangements and build trust and understanding between organizations involved.

Qualification: A formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

Recognition of outcomes: All credits gained abroad– as agreed in the Learning Agreement and confirmed by the Transcript of Records – will be transferred without delay and counted towards the students' degree without any additional

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work or assessment of the student. This is signaled in the learning agreement by the "Yes" check box. If the "No" check box is selected, a clear justification needs to be provided and an indication on what other type of formal recognition will be applied e.g. registration in the students' diploma supplement.

Student mobility: In the context of credit mobility, student mobility consists in a study period abroad at a partner higher education institution. The study period abroad must be part of the student's study programme to complete a degree at any study cycle. A study period abroad may include a traineeship period as well. Such a combination creates synergies between the academic and professional experience abroad. Student mobility can be carried out in any study field and cycle (short cycle/bachelor/master/doctoral). To ensure high-quality mobility activities with maximum impact on the students, the mobility activity must be compatible with the student's degree-related learning and personal development needs.

Short-term doctoral mobility: A study period abroad lasting between 5 days and 30 days. An optional virtual component to facilitate an online learning exchange and/or teamwork can be added to further enhance the learning outcomes.

Study cycle:

Study visit: A trip where the participant gets to know and study another organization or institution, its practices, and systems. It enables the participant to have a learning experience based on direct contact and on observation of the host organization's methods and practices.

Transcript of records:

Transversal (soft; life) skills: Include the ability to think critically, be curious and creative, to take initiative, to solve problems and work collaboratively, to be able to communicate efficiently in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment, to be able to adapt to context and to cope with stress and uncertainty. These skills are part of the key competences.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning: A process of confirmation by an authorized body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured

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against a relevant standard and consists of the following four distinct phases: 1) Identification through dialogue of particular experiences of an individual; 2) Documentation to make visible the individual's experiences; 3) A formal assessment of these experiences; and 4) Certification of the results of the assessment which may lead to a partial or full qualification

Virtual component: The virtual component might be an online course(s), embedded in an course(s) selected at the receiving institution, embedded in a blended intensive programme and/or other type of online activity at the receiving institution along with component title(s) or short description of the online activity.

Virtual Exchange: Online people-to-people activities that promote intercultural dialogue and soft skills development.

Virtual learning: Acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competences using information and communication technology tools that allow participants to have a meaningful transnational or international learning experience.

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