
Mobility project for higher education students and staff

1. Before Mobility

A: Accreditation of participating organisations

Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) provides the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities a higher education institution (HEI) may carry out within the Programme. The award of an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is a pre-requisite for all HEIs located in a Programme Country and willing to participate in learning mobility of individuals and/or cooperation for innovation and good practices under the Programme. For HEIs located in Partner Countries, the ECHE is not required, and the quality framework will be established through inter-institutional agreements (see below) between HEIs.

A call for proposals for the award of the ECHE is launched by the Executive Agency in Brussels on an annual basis. If awarded, the Charter is valid for the entire duration of the Programme. The conditions for applying to receive an ECHE are described in the website of the Executive Agency at: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-charter-higher-education-monitoring-guide_en

HEIs must respect all the provisions of the ECHE during the implementation of the project. Their compliance will be monitored by the National Agency, which will base their monitoring strategy on the [ECHE Monitoring Guide](#), a new manual that aims to provide a set of agreed guidelines and examples of good practice in the area of ECHE compliance monitoring and enhancement. Higher education institutions applying for and participating in Erasmus+ projects are advised to consult this guide for information on priority areas of ECHE compliance, as well as on available tools, guidelines and web-links.

Violation of any of the ECHEs principles and commitments may lead to its withdrawal by the European Commission.

Consortium accreditation

A higher education national mobility consortium can support any of the four eligible mobility activities within a higher education mobility project.

The purpose of mobility consortia is to facilitate the organisation of mobility activities and to offer added value in terms of quality of activities compared to what each individual sending higher education institutions would be able to deliver alone. The member organisations of a national mobility consortium may pool or share services related to the organisation of mobility. Joint

activities may include joint administrative, contractual and financial management of mobility, joint selection and/or preparation and mentoring of participants as well as, where relevant, a centralised point for finding enterprises and for matchmaking enterprises and participants. The national mobility consortium can also act as a facilitator for incoming student and staff trainees. This includes finding a receiving organisation in the region where the mobility consortium partners are located and providing assistance in case of need.

The consortium coordinator, possibly together with other/intermediary organisations, can play an active role in fostering contacts with enterprises and finding opportunities for traineeships and training places for staff, in promoting these activities and providing information, etc.

The consortium coordinator is invited to coordinate with consortia of other countries to increase the availability and quality of traineeships and to support Erasmus+ student traineeships.

Each sending HEI remains responsible for the quality, the contents and the recognition of the mobility periods. Each member of the consortium is required to sign an agreement with the consortium coordinator to specify the roles and responsibilities and the administrative and financial arrangements; the modalities of cooperation shall specify matters like the mechanisms for preparation, quality assurance and follow-up of mobility periods. Furthermore, each sending HEI is responsible for signing inter-institutional agreements (see following section) with HEIs that receive their students and staff.

The national mobility consortium can only get funding if it was awarded a consortium accreditation. If the assessment of the national mobility consortium is not successful, the consortium will have to reapply for the accreditation and for funding in the following year.

Compliance with the consortium accreditation shall be subject to the monitoring by the National Agency. Any major problems (e.g. misuse of funds, non-respect of obligations and weaknesses in the financial capacity) or any violation by the consortium of its commitments may lead to the withdrawal of the accreditation by the National Agency. The National Agency shall require the consortium coordinator to notify the National Agency without delay of any change in the composition, situation or status of the consortium which might necessitate changes to or withdrawal of the accreditation.

B: Inter-institutional agreement

Student mobility for studies and staff mobility for teaching between HEIs shall take place as part of an inter-institutional agreement between HEIs. The templates are available at https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/inter-institutional-agreement_en.

Inter-institutional agreements can be signed by two or more HEIs.

This inter-institutional agreement, in the case of mobility between Programme Countries and Partner Countries, lays out the general principles that are adhered to in an ECHE and ensures that both or all sides will commit to implementing them.

The inter-institutional agreement may also be extended to cover student mobility for traineeships and/or staff mobility for training, relying on their partner institutions' knowledge of enterprises to identify receiving enterprises/organisations abroad.

C: Mobility Tool+

At the earliest once the participants are selected, the beneficiary organisation must encode general information regarding the participant and the type of mobility activity s/he will carry out (e.g. participant name, destination, duration of the mobility, etc.) into Mobility Tool+. The beneficiary organisation is also responsible for updating the Mobility Tool+ at least once a month during the lifetime of the mobility project with any new information regarding the participants and the mobility activities.

For mobility projects between Programme and Partner Countries, it will be necessary to identify the Partner Country HEIs within Mobility Tool+ via a PIC. If the Partner Country HEI does not already have a PIC based on prior participation in EU programmes, then they should register for one via the Participant Portal and communicate it to the beneficiary.

Mobility Tool+ will support the beneficiary in the management of the Erasmus+ mobility activities. Beneficiaries will be able to generate prefilled reports from Mobility Tool+ based on the information they have provided. Mobility Tool+ will also generate reports to be filled in by the participants in mobility activities.

D: Conditions of participation of students

Selection

Students apply to their HEI who carries out the selection of participants in the mobility action. The selection of students - as well as the procedure for awarding them a grant - must be fair, transparent, coherent and documented and shall be made available to all parties involved in the selection process.

The HEI shall take the necessary measures to prevent any conflict of interest with regard to persons who may be invited to take part in the selection bodies or process of students' selection.

The selection criteria - such as for example: the academic performance of the candidate, the previous mobility experiences, the motivation, the previous experience in the receiving country (i.e. return to country of origin) etc. - shall be made public. For students from Partner Countries, the first criterion for selecting students will be academic merit, but with equivalent academic level, preference should be assigned to students from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds (including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants).

Lower priority will be given to those who have already participated in mobility actions in the same study cycle under the LLP-Erasmus Programme, Erasmus Mundus Programme or Erasmus+ Programme. In the case of Erasmus Mundus Master Courses and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, previous participation is only taken into account for scholarship holders.

Once students are selected, they should receive from their sending institution the Erasmus+ Student Charter, setting out the student's rights and obligations with respect to her/his period of study or traineeship abroad, and explaining the different steps to be undertaken before, during and after mobility.

Agreement with the student

Prior to their departure, each selected student must sign an agreement which includes also a "learning agreement" setting out the programme of studies and/or traineeship to be followed, as agreed by the student, the sending and the receiving organisation. The template is available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/higher-education/quality-framework_en.htm. This learning agreement defines the target learning outcomes for the learning period abroad and specifies the formal recognition provisions. The agreement also specifies the location of the study period and/or traineeship. In this learning agreement, the sending institution and the student should also agree on the language level (main language of instruction or workplace) to be reached by the student by the start of the study/traineeships period, in line with the recommended level specified in the inter-institutional agreement between sending and receiving institutions (or in line with the enterprise expectations in case of traineeships). Where applicable, the sending institution and the student will agree on the best suited linguistic support to be provided, so that the student can reach the agreed level (see next paragraph on online service for linguistic support).

Grant for students

Students may receive a "student grant" to contribute to the increased costs that the mobility period abroad generates. Such grant may consist of one or both of the following:

- an EU grant, calculated per month and paid as a unit cost (see the "funding rules" section in Part B of this Guide); and/or
- a national, regional and local grant provided by a public or private donor, or loan scheme.

Students with a zero-grant from EU funds are allowed (both for study and traineeship mobility), i.e. students who fulfil all Erasmus student eligibility criteria and benefit from all advantages of being an Erasmus student without receiving an EU mobility grant. The rules stated in this Programme Guide, except those relating to the allocation of grants, also apply to such students with a zero-grant from EU funds. The number of students with a zero-grant from EU funds for the entire mobility period counts in the statistics for the performance indicator used to allocate the EU budget between the countries.

Students taking part in a higher education mobility project supported by the Erasmus+ Programme - whether or not they receive an Erasmus+ EU grant for their participation - are exempted from paying fees for tuition, registration, examinations and access to laboratory and library facilities at the receiving institution.

However, small fees may be charged for costs such as insurance, student unions and the use of miscellaneous material such as photocopies, laboratory products, on the same basis as these are charged to local students. Outbound students shall not be liable to any additional fees or charges in connection with the organisation or administration of their mobility period.

In addition, the entitlement to any grant or loan awarded to students to study in their sending institution must be maintained during the period abroad.

In the case of traineeships, if the receiving enterprise/organisation grants the student an allowance or any kind of remuneration, it is compatible with the Erasmus+ EU grant.

A mobility period is compatible with a part-time job and, if the student receives an Erasmus+ EU grant, it is compatible as well with the revenue that the student would receive as long as he or she carries the activities foreseen in the agreed mobility programme.

Students taking part in a higher education mobility project (either studying or doing a traineeship abroad) cannot be at the same time beneficiaries of an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree scholarship, and vice versa.

Students that receive an Erasmus+ EU grant will fully or partially reimburse the EU grant if they do not comply with the terms of the grant agreement (unless they were prevented from completing their planned activities abroad due to a case of force majeure). They may be asked to partially or fully reimburse the EU grant received if they fail to complete and submit the final online report.

Online linguistic support

By signing the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, HEIs commit to provide all the necessary support to participants in mobility activities in terms of linguistic preparation. In this regard, an online linguistic support will be gradually implemented in the course of the Programme for all mobility activities between Programme Countries lasting two months and longer. Such online support is made available by the European Commission to selected students, with a view to assess their competence in the language they will use to study or carry out their traineeships abroad.

This tool will also offer them, where necessary, the possibility to improve the knowledge of the language before and/or during the mobility period. Participants with a level of at least B2 in the main language of instruction or work may choose to follow an OLS course in the language of the receiving country, if available. The provision of linguistic support shall be based on mutual trust between sending and receiving institutions. The recommended level of language competence is stated in the Inter-institutional agreements and the Learning agreements, and thus agreed upon by the three parties. With Erasmus+, sending HEIs commit themselves to ensure that their outgoing students have the requested language level, and such mutual agreement should be sufficient.

Sending higher education institutions are responsible for providing their students with the most appropriate linguistic support, be it through OLS or any other approach that can be funded through the organisational support, to ensure that their students get the recommended level agreed with the receiving institution by the start of the mobility. Therefore, sending HEIs are not required to send the results of the OLS language assessment to the receiving institutions. It is up to the students to decide whether they agree to disclose the results of their OLS language assessment to the receiving institution or not.

The online linguistic support will be provided as follows:

- National Agencies allocate online licences to higher education institutions according to general criteria specified by the European Commission;
- once selected by their higher education institution all students (except native speakers and in duly justified cases) benefiting from the online service must carry out an online test to assess their competences in the main language they will use for studying or doing the traineeship abroad. This is a pre-requisite before leaving on mobility. The results of this test will be communicated to the student and to the sending HEI. This will allow the sending HEI to quantify the number of students that will potentially need an online language course;
- based on the number of online licences available for language courses, HEIs will distribute

licences according to student needs. The students will assume the responsibility of following the online course, as described and agreed in the grant agreement;

- at the end of the mobility period, the student will carry out a second assessment to measure the progress made in the language. The results will be communicated to the student and to the sending HEI.

Further details are made available on the websites of the European Commission and National Agencies.

For all other types of mobility, or if the Commission's online service is not available for a given language, higher education institutions may provide other types of linguistic support to students, to be funded under the "organisational support" grant.

E: Conditions of participation of staff

Selection

Staff taking part in a higher education mobility project must be selected by their sending HEI in a fair and transparent way. Prior to their departure, they must have agreed on a mobility programme with the sending and receiving institutions/enterprise.

The selection of teachers and HEI staff shall be carried out by the HEI. The selection and grant award procedure must be fair, transparent, coherent and documented and shall be made available to all parties involved in the selection process. The selection criteria (for example priority given to staff going abroad for the first time, limitation on the possible number of mobility activities per staff member during a given time period, etc.) shall be made public.

The HEI shall take the necessary measures to prevent any conflict of interest with regard to persons who may be invited to take part in the selection bodies or selection process of individual beneficiaries.

In the case of a mobility of staff from an enterprise to an HEI, it shall be arranged by an invitation of the institution to the staff member of the enterprise; the grant is managed by the receiving HEI or, in the case of mobility between Programme and Partner Countries, the beneficiary.

Mobility agreement

The selection of the HEI's staff will be made by the sending institution on the basis of a draft mobility programme submitted by the staff member after consultation with the receiving institution/enterprise. Prior to departure, the final mobility programme shall be formally agreed by both the sending institution/enterprise and the receiving institution/enterprise (by exchange of letters or electronic messages).

Both the sending institution/enterprise and receiving institution/enterprise shall be responsible for the quality of the mobility period abroad.

Grant for staff

The financial rules for the two types of staff mobility are the same. The grant is a contribution to the travel and subsistence costs for a period of teaching or training abroad (see the "funding rules" section in Part B of this Guide).

Mobility with a zero-grant from EU funds is allowed for higher education staff.

2. During Mobility

Interruption of students' mobility

When a mobility period of a student is interrupted, for example because there is a gap between the end of a language course and the start of the actual study/traineeship, the number of days of interruption shall be encoded in Mobility Tool+ and the grant amount adapted accordingly.

For traineeship between Programme Countries, the period of mobility abroad may be interrupted by the enterprise holidays if the enterprise is closed during this period. The grant is maintained during this period. The closure period does not count towards the minimum duration of a traineeship period but it will count towards the maximum of 12 months per each cycle of study for which the same student may receive grants for mobility periods.

Prolongation of students' mobility

A prolongation of an on-going mobility period may be agreed between the sending and the receiving organisations subject to the following:

- the request for prolongation of the mobility period must be introduced at the latest one month before the end of the mobility period initially planned;
- if the request is accepted by all parties, the grant agreement must be amended and all the arrangements related to the prolongation of the duration must be completed;
- if the student receives an Erasmus+ grant, the sending institution may either amend the grant amount to take into account the longer duration, or reach an agreement with the student that the additional days are considered "zero-grant from EU funds" period;
- the actual start and end dates of the mobility period shall be included in the receiving institution's Transcript of Records or in the student's Traineeship Certificate according to the following definitions:
 - the start date should be the first day that the student needs to be present at the receiving organisation (for example, this could be the start date of the first course/first day at work, a welcoming event organised by the receiving institution, or language and intercultural courses);
 - the end date should be the last day the student needs to be present at the receiving organisation (for example, this could be the last day of the exam period/course/work/mandatory sitting period).
- the actual duration defined as indicated above is the period to be indicated by the HEIs in their final reports and is the maximum number of months to be covered through the EU grant. When the prolongation of the student's mobility is considered as "zero-grant from EU funds" days, these days shall be deducted from the total duration of the mobility period to calculate the final grant amount;

- the additional period must follow immediately after the on-going mobility period. There can be no gaps (holidays and university/enterprise closures are not considered "gaps") unless duly justified and approved by the National Agency.

3. After Mobility

A: Recognition of learning outcomes

At the end of the period abroad, the receiving institution/enterprise must provide the student and his HEI with a transcript of records or traineeship certificate ('transcript of work') confirming the results of the agreed programme.

The follow-up to the mobility period includes formal recognition, by the sending institution, of the credits awarded abroad for formal learning of newly acquired competences (using ECTS credits or an equivalent system) including for traineeships, where applicable, and the documentation of outcomes resulting from non-formal and informal learning outside the classroom or workplace (using the Diploma Supplement). However this does not apply for traineeships carried out by recent graduate students.

The results of language assessment and online language courses will be reported centrally but will not provide any formal qualification.

As regards staff mobility, the sending institutions should ensure that the learning outcomes of participating staff are properly recognised, disseminated and widely used within the institution.

B: Reporting

At the end of the period abroad, all students and staff who have undertaken a mobility activity are required to complete and submit a final report. For mobility activities lasting two months or more, the report also includes a qualitative evaluation of the linguistic support received during the mobility period.

Those students and staff who fail to submit the report may be required by their sending HEI to partially or fully reimburse the EU grant received. Reimbursement shall not be requested when a student or staff member has been prevented from completing her/his planned activities abroad due to a case of force majeure. Such cases shall be reported by the beneficiary and be subject to the written acceptance by the NA.

