

Annex 1: Guidelines

The purpose of the Learning Agreement is to provide a transparent and efficient preparation of the study period abroad and to ensure that the student will receive recognition in his/her degree for the educational components successfully completed abroad.

It is recommended to use this template. However, if higher education institutions already have an IT system in place to produce the Learning Agreement or the Transcript of Records, they can continue using it. What is important is that all the information requested in this template is provided, no matter in which format (e.g. font size and colours can be modified), provided that it respects certain requirements outlined in the sections below.

How to use the Learning Agreement:

Before the mobility, it is necessary to fill in page 1 with information on the student, the sending and the receiving institutions and the three parties have to agree on the section to be completed before the mobility.

On page 1, most of the information related to the student, sending and receiving organisations will have to be encoded in the Mobility Tool+ (for Capacity Building projects, in the EACEA Mobility Tool). Institutions can decide to add more information (e.g. additional contact person in the coordinating institution of a consortium) or to request less in case some of the information is already provided in other documents internal to the institution. However, it should at least include the names of the two institutions, and names and contact details of the student and persons of contact in both the sending and receiving institutions.

The tables to be completed **during the mobility** (tables Abis and Bbis) should only be used if it is necessary to introduce changes to the original mobility programme. These tables and the section before mobility (tables A and B) should always be kept together in all communications.

After the mobility, the receiving institution should send a Transcript of Records to the student and the sending institution (table C). Finally the sending institution should issue a Transcript of Records (table D) to the student or record the results in a database accessible to the student.

PROPOSED MOBILITY PROGRAMME

The proposed mobility programme includes the indicative start and end months of the agreed study programme that the student will carry out abroad.

The Learning Agreement must include **all the educational components to be carried out by the student** at the receiving institution (in table A) and it must contain as well the group of educational components that will be replaced in his/her degree by the sending institution (in table B) upon successful completion of the study programme abroad. It is necessary to fill in tables A and B thoroughly before the mobility. Additional rows can be added as needed to tables A and B. Additional columns can also be added, for example, to specify the study cycle-level of the educational component. The presentation of this document may also be adapted by the institutions according to their specific needs. However, **in every case, the two tables A and B must be kept separated**, i.e. they cannot be merged. The objective is to make clear that **there needs to be no one to one correspondence** (neither in terms of content nor in terms of credits) between the courses followed abroad and the ones replaced at the sending institutions. The aim is rather that a group of learning outcomes achieved abroad replaces a group of learning outcomes at the sending institution, without having a one to one correspondence between particular modules or courses.

A normal academic year of full-time study is normally made up of educational components totalling 60 ECTS credits. It is recommended that for mobility periods shorter than a full academic year, the educational components selected should equate to a roughly proportionate number of credits. In case the student follows additional educational components beyond those required for his/her degree programme, these additional credits must also be listed in the study programme outlined in table A.

Where all credits in Table A are recognised as forming part of the programme at the sending institution without any further conditions being applied, Table B may be completed with a reference to the mobility window¹¹. When mobility windows are embedded in the curriculum, it will be enough to fill in table B with a single line as described below:

| Recognition at Sending Institution | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Table C Before the mobility | Component code (if any) | Component title (as indicated in the course catalogue) at the receiving institution | Semester [e.g. autumn / spring / term] | Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) for the group of educational components in the student's degree that would normally be completed at the sending institution and which will be replaced by the study abroad |
| | | Mobility window | ... | Total: 30 |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Otherwise, the group of components will be included in Table B as follows:

| Table C Before the mobility | <i>Recognition at Sending Institution</i> | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | Component code (if any) | Component title (as indicated in the course catalogue) at the receiving institution | Semester [e.g. autumn / spring / term] | Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) for the group of educational components in the student's degree that would normally be completed at the sending institution and which will be replaced by the study abroad |
| | | <i>Course x</i> | ... | 10 |
| | | <i>Module y</i> | ... | 10 |
| | | <i>Laboratory work</i> | ... | 10 |
| | | | | Total: 30 |

The sending institution must fully recognise the number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) contained in table A if there are no changes to the study programme abroad and the student successfully completes it. Any exception to this rule should be clearly stated in an annex of the Learning Agreement and agreed by all parties. Example of justification for non-recognition: the student has already accumulated the number of credits required for his/her degree and does not need some of the credits gained abroad.

Since the recognition will be granted to a group of components and it does not need to be based on a one to one correspondence between single educational components, the sending institution must foresee which provisions will apply if the student does not successfully complete some of the educational components from his study programme abroad. A web link towards these provisions should be provided in the Learning Agreement.

In all cases, the student will report via the on-line EU survey on the full recognition by the sending institution of his/her credits achieved abroad based on what has been agreed in Table B (or table B bis in case of changes during the mobility) and its possible annexes.

A recommended level in the main language of instruction has been agreed between the sending and receiving institutions in their inter-institutional agreement. The sending HEI is responsible for providing support to its nominated candidates so that they can have the recommended language skills at the start of the study period.

For mobility between Programme Countries, and for the languages covered by the Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support (OLS), the student must carry out the OLS language assessment before and at the end of the mobility period, except for native speakers. The completion of the online assessment before departure is a pre-requisite for the mobility, except in duly justified cases. This assessment will be taken after the student is selected, but before signing the Learning Agreement or, alternatively, the grant agreement, whenever agreed with the sending institution.

The OLS has been designed to assist Erasmus+ students in improving their knowledge of the language in which they will study before and during their stay abroad, to ensure a better quality of learning mobility.

For all mobilities, in case the level of the student before the mobility is below the recommended one, the sending HEI and the student commit that he/she will reach the recommended level by the start of the mobility, with the support to be provided by the sending or receiving institution (either with courses that can be funded by the Organisational Support grant or with the Erasmus+ OLS language courses, where applicable).

The level of language competence that the student already has or agrees to acquire by the start of the study period has to be reported in the Learning Agreement in the box indicated below or, alternatively, in the grant agreement. The student commits to reach this reported level in the main language of instruction by the start of the study period.

| |
|---|
| The level of language competence in _____ [the main language of instruction] that the student already has or agrees to acquire by the start of the study period is: A1 <input type="checkbox"/> A2 <input type="checkbox"/> B1 <input type="checkbox"/> B2 <input type="checkbox"/> C1 <input type="checkbox"/> C2 <input type="checkbox"/> Native speaker <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---|

All the students who took the assessment with the Erasmus+ OLS before the mobility will also take a final assessment at the end of the mobility. More opportunities are available with OLS. Please visit <http://erasmusplusols.eu>

All parties must **sign the Learning Agreement**; however, it is not compulsory to circulate papers with original signatures, scanned copies of signatures or digital signatures may be accepted, depending on the national legislation.

CHANGES TO THE ORIGINAL LEARNING AGREEMENT

The section to be completed during the mobility (Tables Abis and Bbis) is **needed only if changes have to be introduced into the original Learning Agreement**. In that case, the section to be completed before the mobility (Tables A and B) should be kept unchanged and changes should be described in this section.

Changes to the mobility **study programme** should be exceptional, as the three parties have already agreed on a group of educational components that will be taken abroad, in the light of the course catalogue that the receiving institution

has committed to publish well in advance of the mobility periods and to update regularly. However, introducing changes might be unavoidable due to, for example, timetable conflicts.

Other reasons for a change can be the request for **an extension of the duration** of the mobility programme abroad. Such a request can be made by the student at the latest one month before the foreseen end date.

These **changes to the mobility study programme should be agreed by all parties within four to seven weeks** (after the start of each semester). Any party can request changes within the first two to five-week period after regular classes/educational components have started for a given semester. The exact deadline has to be decided by the institutions. The shorter the planned mobility period, the shorter should be the window for changes. All these changes have to be agreed by the three parties within a two-week period following the request. In case of changes due to an extension of the duration of the mobility period, changes should be made as timely as possible as well.

Changes to the study programme abroad should be listed in table Abis and, once they are agreed by all parties, the sending institution commits to fully recognise the number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) as presented in table Bbis. Any exception to this rule should be documented in an annex of the Learning Agreement and agreed by all parties. The total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) indicated in table Abis should refer solely to the ECTS credits (or equivalent) inserted/removed in this table, and not to the total of ECTS (or equivalent) credits referring to table A. For example:

| Exceptional changes (to be approved by e-mail or signature by the student, the responsible person in the sending institution and the responsible person in the receiving institution) | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| Table Abis During the mobility | Component code (if any) | Component title (as indicated in the course catalogue) at the receiving institution | Deleted component [tick if applicable] | Added component [tick if applicable] | Reason for change | Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be awarded by the receiving institution upon successful completion of the component |
| | | XXX | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A3 | 5 |
| | | YYY | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | B1 | 8 |

Only if the changes described in table Abis affect the group of educational components in the student's degree (table B) that will be replaced at the sending institution upon successful completion of the study programme abroad, Table Bbis should be used. Additional rows and columns can be added as needed to tables Abis and Bbis.

| Exceptional changes (to be approved by e-mail or signature by the student and the responsible person in the sending institution) | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| Table Bbis During the mobility | Component code (if any) | Component title (as indicated in the course catalogue) at the sending institution | Deleted component [tick if applicable] | Added component [tick if applicable] | Reason for change | Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) for the group of educational components in the student's degree that would normally be completed at the sending institution and which will be replaced by the study abroad |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

In case of changes in the responsible person(s), the information below should be inserted. Additional rows and columns can be added.

| Changes in the responsible person(s), if needed | Name | Function | Phone number | Email |
|---|------|----------|--------------|-------|
| New responsible person at the Sending Institution | | | | |
| New responsible person at the Receiving Institution | | | | |

All parties must confirm that the proposed amendments to the Learning Agreement are approved. For this specific section, original or scanned signatures are not mandatory and an approval by email may be enough. The procedure has to be decided by the sending institution, depending on the national legislation.

RECOGNITION OUTCOMES

The receiving institution commits to provide the sending institution and the student with a **Transcript of Records** within a period stipulated in the inter-institutional agreement and normally not longer than five weeks after publication/proclamation of the student's results at the receiving institution. It can be provided electronically or with other means accessible to the student.

The Transcript of Records from the receiving institution will contain at least the minimum information requested in this Learning Agreement template. Table C (or the representation that the institution makes of it) will include all the educational components agreed in table A and, if there were changes to the study programme abroad, in table Abis. In addition, grade distribution information should be included in the Transcript of Records or attached to it (a web link where this information can be found is enough). The actual start and end dates of the study period will be included according to the following definitions:

- The **start date** of the study period is the first day the student has been present at the receiving institution. 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; this may include attending language courses organised or provided by other organisations than the receiving institution if the sending institution considers it as a relevant part of the mobility period abroad.

- The **end date** of the study period is the last day the student has been present at the receiving institution and not his actual date of departure. This is, for example, the end of exams period, courses or mandatory sitting period.

Following the receipt of the Transcript of Records from the receiving institution, the sending institution commits to provide to the student a Transcript of Records, without further requirements from the student, and normally within five weeks, or record the results in a database or other means accessible to the student.

The sending institution's Transcript of Records must include at least the information listed in table D (the recognition outcomes) and attach the receiving institution's Transcript of Record.

In case of mobility windows, table D may be completed as follows:

| <i>Recognition Outcomes at Sending Institution</i> | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Start and end dates of the study period: from [day/month/year] till [day/month/year]</i> | | | | |
| Table D After the mobility | Component code (if any) | Title of recognised component (as indicated in the course catalogue) at the sending institution | Number of ECTS credits | Sending Institution Grade (if applicable) |
| | | <i>Mobility window</i> | <i>Total: 30</i> | <i>.....</i> |

Where applicable, the sending institution will translate the grades received by the student abroad, taking into account the grade distribution information from the receiving institution (for higher education institutions from Programme Countries, see the methodology described in the ECTS Users' Guide). In addition, all the educational components will appear as well in the student's Diploma Supplement (not applicable to mobility from Partner Countries). The exact titles from the receiving institution will also be included in the Transcript of Records that is attached to the Diploma Supplement.

Steps to fill in the Learning Agreement for Studies

Before the mobility

Provide mobility programme

If modifications are needed

Commitment of the three parties with

A party requests changes in the first **2 to 5-week** period after the start of regular classes/ educational components (after the start of

During the mobility

foreseen end date.

Agreement by email by the three parties within a **2-week period** after the request.
N.B.: *Changes to be agreed within 4 to 7 weeks after the start date of the studies.*

After the mobility

Receiving institution provides **Transcript of Records** to student and sending institution in period stipulated in IIA (normally **max. 5 weeks** after results).

Sending institution provides the **Transcript of Records** to the student **within 5 weeks**.

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- ¹ **Nationality:** Country to which the person belongs administratively and that issues the ID card and/or passport.
- ² **Study cycle:** Short cycle (EQF level 5) / bachelor or equivalent first cycle (EQF level 6) / master or equivalent second cycle (EQF level 7) / doctorate or equivalent third cycle (EQF level 8).
- ³ The [ISCED-F 2013 search tool](http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/isced-f_en.htm) available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/isced-f_en.htm should be used to find the ISCED 2013 detailed field of education and training that is closest to the subject of the degree to be awarded to the student by the sending institution.
- ⁴ **Erasmus code:** a unique identifier that every higher education institution that has been awarded with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) receives. It is only applicable to higher education institutions located in Programme Countries.
- ⁵ **Country code:** ISO 3166-2 country codes available at: <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#search>
- ⁶ **Contact person:** person who provides a link for administrative information and who, depending on the structure of the higher education institution, may be the departmental coordinator or will work at the international relations office or equivalent body within the institution.
- ⁷ An "**educational component**" is 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.
- ⁸ **Course catalogue:** a detailed, user-friendly and up-to-date information on the institution's learning environment that should be available to students before entering 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 people to contact, with information about how, when and where to contact them.
- ⁹ **ECTS credits (or equivalent):** in countries where the "ECTS" system is not in place, in particular for institutions located in Partner Countries not participating in the Bologna process, "ECTS" needs to be replaced in the relevant tables by the name of the equivalent system that is used, and a web link to an explanation to the system should be added.
- ¹⁰ **Responsible person in the sending institution:** an academic who has the authority to approve the mobility programme of outbound students (Learning Agreement), to exceptionally amend it when it is needed, as well as to guarantee full recognition of such programme on behalf of the responsible academic body.
- ¹¹ **Mobility window:** a period of time reserved for international student credit mobility that is embedded into the curriculum of a study programme.