

## **Guidelines on how to use the Erasmus+ Learning Agreement for Studies**

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.

This template is applicable to Erasmus+ mobility for studies between EU Member States or third countries associated to the programme and third countries not associated to the Programme (KA171). Under the Erasmus+ programme 2021-2027, higher Education Institutions must ensure the usage of digital learning agreements. Until this becomes available for international mobility, 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, provided that all the minimum requirements listed in this document are made available. Further fields can be added, if needed (e.g. information on the coordinator of a consortium), and the format (e.g. font size and colours) can be adapted.

### **General information**

#### **Administrative data**

Before the mobility, it is necessary to fill in information on the student, the Sending and the Receiving Institutions in the general information table. The three parties have to agree on this section to be completed before the mobility. In case some administrative data is already available to the three parties the once-only principle can be applied, meaning there is no need to re-enter the data.

Following this, the student must select the type of mobility they plan to undertake and the estimated duration of their planned mobility. The student can select one of the following mobility types:

- **Semester(s):** The student should select this mobility type if they are applying to undertake a long-term study mobility abroad with a duration from 2 months to 12 months. The student also has the option to add a virtual component to their study mobility before, during or after. If the student uses this option, they must also select the virtual component as part of their mobility type.
- **Blended mobility with short-term physical mobility:** The student should select this mobility type if they are applying to undertake a short-term physical mobility abroad of 5-30 days by combining it with a compulsory virtual component.
- **Short-term doctoral mobility:** Doctoral Candidates should select this mobility type when they are applying to undertake a short-term physical mobility of 5-30 days. The Doctoral candidate also has the option to add a virtual component to their study mobility before, during or after. If the student uses this option, they must also select the virtual component as part of their mobility type.

In addition to selecting the mobility type, the learning agreement should also include the **indicative** start and end date of the agreed study programme that the student will carry out abroad. In the case of a study mobility abroad with a duration from 2 months to 12 months, the indicative month/year is sufficient. Most of the general information fields related to the student, Sending and Receiving

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Institutions and planned mobility will have to be reported in the Beneficiary Module by the beneficiary, once the internal selection procedures are completed and the mobility grants are awarded.

## Before the mobility

### Educational components (Tables A, B and C)

The Learning Agreement must include all the educational components to be carried out by the student at the Receiving Institution during their physical mobility (in Table A) or as virtual component of the mobility (in Table B) 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 C) upon successful completion of the study programme abroad. It is necessary to fill in Tables A, B (if applicable) and C thoroughly before the mobility. Additional rows and columns can be added as needed. However, the tables must be kept separated. 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. The aim is rather that a group of learning outcomes achieved abroad replaces a group of learning outcomes at the Sending Institution.

In countries belonging to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) an 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 (or equivalent units in countries outside the EHEA). In case the student follows additional educational components beyond those required for his/her degree programme, these additional credits (or equivalent) must also be listed in the study programme outlined in Table A.

In case of thesis research/doctoral work at the receiving institution, the component "Thesis research" or "Doctoral work" will be included in Table A. If no ECTS credits are provided by the receiving institution, it is sufficient to write "not applicable" in that column. The thesis/doctoral work and the associated workload in ECTS credits will be included in Table C, if relevant for the sending institution.

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), Table B 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, Table B 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 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. If no virtual component is foreseen, Table B could be either kept blank or removed (renaming of the tables will be needed).

The Sending Institution should indicate in Table C 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 C should correspond to the total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) contained in Table A and B. 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 a discrepancy in the total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) between Table A/B and Table C: the student has already

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accumulated the number of credits required for his/her degree and does not need some of the credits gained abroad.

## Practical examples of how to fill in the tables provided in the Learning Agreement

The student must include all the educational components to be carried out at the Receiving Institution during their physical mobility (in Table A) or as virtual component of the mobility (in Table B) i.e. information about the selected courses or modules as indicated in the course catalogue, laboratory or thesis work, participation in webinars, etc. The group of components can then be included in Table C as follows:

Table C Recognition at the Sending Institution (physical and virtual components, if applicable)				
Component code (if any)	Component title (as indicated in the course catalogue) or description of the study programme at the Sending Institution	Semester, if applicable [e.g. autumn/spring; term]	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be recognised by the Sending Institution	Automatic recognition*
	Course X	Autumn	6	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Module Y	Spring	10	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Laboratory Work	...	8	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Thesis research/Doctoral work	...	10	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Blended Intensive Programme X: online workshop and presentation	...	5	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Doctoral work: participation in webinar	...	"not applicable"	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>Total: 39</b>	
Provisions applying if the student does not complete successfully some educational components*: <i>[web link to the relevant information]</i>				

In table C, the check box "Yes" for Automatic Recognition means that the sending institutions confirms that 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 work or assessment of the student. The "No" check box means that 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 or Europass Mobility Document.

The European Commission encourages institutions also to embed **mobility windows** in their curricula. Where all credits in Table A and B are automatically recognised as forming part of the programme at the Sending Institution, typically in the case of **mobility windows**, Table C is **simplified** and reduced to one single line, as described below:

Table C Recognition at the Sending Institution (physical and virtual components, if applicable)				
Component code (if any)	Component title (as indicated in the course catalogue) or description of the study programme at the Sending Institution	Semester, if applicable [e.g. autumn/spring; term]	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be recognised by the Sending Institution	Automatic recognition*
	Mobility Window	Autumn	30	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>Total: 30</b>	
Provisions applying if the student does not complete successfully some educational components*: <i>[web link to the relevant information]</i>				

If an educational component covers both physical and virtual periods of the mobility, its description might differ and therefore be inserted separately in Tables A and B. However, each title should remain the same and the ECTS to be awarded should be inserted only once either in Table A or B.

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, by providing a web link in the relevant data field.

### **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. The Sending Institution is responsible for providing support to its selected candidates so that they can have the recommended language skills at the start of the study period.

The level of language competence in the main language of instruction, which the student already has or agrees to acquire by the start of the study period, has to be reported in the box provided for that purpose in the Learning Agreement for Studies or, alternatively, in the grant agreement.

In case the level of the selected student is below the recommended one when signing the Learning Agreement (or grant agreement), the Sending Institution and the student should agree that he/she will reach the recommended level by the start of the mobility. They should also discuss and decide the type of support to be provided to the student by the Sending or Receiving Institution. **The Erasmus+ Online Language Support (OLS)** has been designed to assist Erasmus+ students in improving their knowledge of the main language of instruction, before and during their stay abroad, to ensure a better quality of learning mobility.

For mobility of 14 days or more, the student must carry out an OLS language assessment in the language of mobility, if available on OLS, before the mobility, except for native speakers and in duly justified cases. The completion of the OLS assessment before departure is a pre-requisite for the mobility. This assessment will be taken after the student is selected, before signing the Learning Agreement or, alternatively, the grant agreement. All mobility participants have the opportunity to follow courses in the language(s) of their choice, available on the OLS platform.

### **Signing the Learning Agreement**

All parties must sign the Learning Agreement before the start of the mobility. 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 or institutional regulations.

## **During the mobility**

### **Exceptional Changes to the Study Programme (Table A2, B2 and C2)**

Changes to the study programme should be exceptional, as the three parties have already agreed on a group of educational components that will be taken abroad, based on the course catalogue that the Receiving Institution has committed to publish well in advance of the mobility period and to update

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regularly. Any party can signal the need for changes to the study programme and the student can initiate the changes within five weeks after the start of each semester. These changes should be agreed by all parties as soon as possible, within two-weeks following the request.

In case of changes due to an extension of the duration of the mobility, a request can be made by the student at the latest one month before the foreseen end date.

All changes should be indicated in Tables A2, B2 and C2 (when applicable), while Tables A, B and C should not be modified. All Tables (A, B, C, A2, B2 and C2) should be kept together in all communications. In case of changes, please choose the appropriate reason from the drop-down list.

### Confirming the Changes

All parties must approve the changes to the Learning Agreement. The European Commission would like to limit the use of paper for exchanging documents and it is therefore accepted to exchange information electronically, e.g. via email, scanned or digital signatures, etc. without the need of a paper signature. However, if national legislations or institutional regulations require paper signatures, a signature box should be added where needed.

## After the mobility

### Transcript of Records at the Receiving Institution (Table D)

After the mobility, the Receiving Institution should send a Transcript of Records to the student and to the Sending Institution within a period stipulated in the Digital Inter-Institutional Agreement (normally within five weeks after publication/proclamation of the student's results at the Receiving Institution). It can be provided electronically or through any other means accessible to the student and the Sending Institution. The Transcript of Records from the Receiving Institution should refer to the educational components agreed in Table A, and where applicable B, as well as in Tables A2 and B2 where applicable. Grade distribution information should be included (web link or annex).

The actual start and end dates of the study period should 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, a welcoming event organised by the Receiving Institution, an information session for students with fewer opportunities, a language and intercultural course organised either by the Receiving Institution or other organisations (if the Sending Institution considers it relevant for the mobility).

The **end date** of the study period is the last day the student had to be present at the Receiving Institution, not his actual date of departure. This is, for example, the end of exams period, courses or mandatory sitting period.

### Transcript of Records and Recognition at the Sending Institution (Table E)

Following the receipt of the Transcript of Records from the Receiving Institution, the Sending Institution should recognise automatically the student's academic outcomes successfully completed at the Receiving Institution. The Sending Institution should fully recognise the total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) contained in Table C (and if applicable, B, B2 and C2).

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Where applicable, the Sending Institution will convert the grades received by the student abroad, taking into account the grade distribution information from the Receiving Institution (see the methodology described in the [ECTS Users' Guide](#)). The European Commission encourages institutions to use the [EGRACONS](#) tool for this purpose.

The Sending Institution will provide a Transcript of Records (Table E) to the student or record the results in a database or any other means accessible to the student, normally within five weeks after having received the transcript of the Receiving Institution. The student will be able to report on the recognition by the Sending Institution via the on-line EU survey or a complementary online survey.

**Diploma Supplement:** The information contained in the Transcript of Records from the Receiving Institution should also be included in the [Diploma Supplement](#) produced by the Sending Institution (at least for Sending Institutions located in EU Member States or associated third countries) with the exact titles of the components that the student has followed abroad.