

Selection May 2009

# **EXPERT ASSESSMENT MANUAL**

for the assessment of proposals for  
**Erasmus Mundus Joint Master  
Courses (Action 1)**  
submitted under the  
**Erasmus Mundus programme**

Document prepared by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Unit P4

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## ANNEXES

### Information needed for assessment purposes

- A. Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 Programme Guide and Call for proposals 2009
- B. Application Form
- C. EC Decision N° 1298/2008

This information is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/doc1387\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/doc1387_en.htm)

### Additional information

- D. Examples of good practice based on the quality assessment of Erasmus Mundus activities so far.

# 1. Assessment and Selection Procedure

## 1.1. Introduction

The programme objective is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with Third Countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of Third Countries in the field of higher education.

Proposals for Joint Master Courses (Action 1) were submitted by 30 April 2009 under the Erasmus Mundus Programme Guide 2009-2013 and the Call for Proposals EAC 04/09 relating to the academic year 2010-2011. Selected Joint Masters Courses will thus start in the academic year 2010-2011.

## 1.2. Selection Procedure

Proposals are selected through a competitive system based on their academic quality and all candidates are subject to the same application rules. The evaluation of the applications submitted under this call will undergo a five-step selection procedure:

1. Administrative eligibility check of the submitted applications
2. Verification of the applicants and partners compliance with the Selection Criteria
3. Assessment of the applications following the Award Criteria
4. Review of the assessments by the Selection Board
5. Evaluation Committee

The administrative eligibility check and the verification of the compliance with the Selection Criteria (step 1 and 2) will be performed by the Agency and the Erasmus Mundus National Structures.

The quality assessment of each eligible application against a set of Award Criteria (step 3) will be performed by independent experts. As regards the role of the Selection Board (step 4) see below 1.5

## 1.3. Role of the Independent Experts

Independent academic experts have been appointed to assist the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (the "Agency") in the assessment of proposals for Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Courses.

This Manual describes the assessment process in practical detail and the tasks experts are invited to perform. It has been prepared on the basis of the Erasmus Mundus Programme Guide and Call for Proposals, the application form and the EC Programme Decision N° 1298/2008. Experts need to be familiar with these three documents in order to assess proposals.

The role of the independent experts is twofold:

- To provide the Agency and the Selection Board with an opinion on the proposals which have been submitted and,
- To give recommendations to the applicants. Experts should note that their comments and recommendations will be sent to the applicants as feedback (the experts' identity will, however, remain confidential), and experts are therefore requested to draft them with accuracy and care.

Each expert should read carefully each proposal attributed to him/her (including corresponding annexes) and assess these proposals against the set of award criteria listed in the EM Programme Guide and reported in section 4 of the present manual. They should record their individual assessments by using the online assessment tool (see section 5 and 6).

Experts perform assessments on a personal basis, not as representatives of their employer, their country or any other entity. They must be independent, impartial and objective, and are expected to behave in a professional manner throughout the assessment process.

Three experts with a longstanding experience in assessing European cooperation projects will be appointed as “lead experts”, in the following fields:

- hard sciences
- life sciences
- social sciences and humanities

Apart from assessing proposals themselves, they will also monitor progress of the individual assessments, participate in difficult consensus discussions to facilitate compromises (see 1.4.2 below), carry out third assessments (if necessary), chair the sectoral panel discussions, report back to the general panel of experts and assist the Selection Board as resource persons (see points 1.4 and 1.5 below for more details).

All the information made available to experts is to be treated as strictly confidential. No information on the proposals submitted or on the provisional results of the assessment or selection may be divulged to third parties.

**Experts may not photocopy anything without specific permission from the Agency. No documents or electronic data may be taken off the assessment premises. Any notes taken as a result of the experts' work must be deposited with the Agency at the end of the assessment process. Phone calls during the working day are not allowed in the reading and meeting rooms where the assessment takes place. Under no circumstances may experts contact an applicant on their own account.**

Experts should also check to see that they have no potential interest in any of the proposals they are invited to assess. Examples of conflict of interest are: the expert is involved in a contract or collaboration with the applicant; the expert was involved in the preparation of the proposal; the expert is personally related to the applicant (family/friend relations) or is related to the applicant's work (professional relations); the expert would benefit directly from the proposal being funded or not funded. If experts have a conflict of interest, or in case of doubt,

they have to inform one of the Agency's staff members without delay the day of the distribution of the proposals to assess, so that the proposals concerned can be allocated to another expert. **Experts will be requested to sign a declaration to certify absence of any conflict of interest with the proposal concerned for each individual assessment performed.**

#### 1.4. Assessment Procedure

All proposals will be assessed by two experts ("expert one" and "expert two"). The assessment will be performed at the Agency's premises and recorded on the online assessment tool.

The work and the performance of the experts will be monitored online daily by the staff of the Agency. The table below shows the key dates of the assessment procedure:

25/05 am	Briefing of external experts
25/05 to 02/06	Individual analysis by external experts
03/06 & 04/06	Consensus meetings and sectoral panels
05/06	General panel and de-briefing
19/06	<i>Selection Board meeting</i>

Each expert will be allocated a number of proposals to assess. Proposals will be allocated in a way to match the disciplines of the proposals with the experts' professional background and work experience.

The proposals will be assessed against a set of award criteria listed in the Programme Guide and Call for Proposals (see section 4 of the present manual). No other assessment criteria may be applied.

Experts are not obliged to visit web site referred to in the proposals. The necessary information must be present in the proposal if it is to be taken into account. Experts may visit web sites in order to verify the legitimacy of claims within the proposal, but they should not base their assessments on additional information found on a web site and not contained within the proposal.

##### 1.4.1. Individual Assessments

The assessment process must be completed within the period which has been communicated to the experts. The timing has been carefully planned and the timetable must be adhered to by all persons concerned.

During the individual assessment phase, experts are acting individually and independently. They do not discuss individual proposals with their fellow experts. The experts record their individual assessments by using the online assessment tool (see section 6).

The individual assessment will include

- ⇒ mandatory comments and recommendations to the applicant;
- ⇒ comments to the Agency, if applicable;
- ⇒ global recommendation on the proposal;
- ⇒ individual scores - from 0 to 5 - per issue addressed under each award criteria;

⇒ global score - from 0 to 100 - resulting from the sum of individual scores, weighted in accordance with the importance of the relevant award criteria

For more details see section 6 below.

#### ***1.4.2. Consensus Discussions and Consolidated Assessment***

Once the two individual assessments of the same proposal have been finalised, the two experts meet to discuss the proposal. Generally speaking, this consensus discussion serves the purpose of assuring that

⇒ the experts have a common understanding of all aspects of the proposal

⇒ their comments and scores provided to each individual award criteria are coherent

In order to prepare this consensus discussion, both experts are expected to read carefully each other's assessment in comparison with their own assessment. At the end of this preparatory phase, two different situations can occur

A) There is **no significant divergence** in scores and comments between the individual assessments. In this case both experts will endorse his/her assessment in the online assessment tool and "expert one" will be able to access a new "consolidated assessment" form that includes the two individual assessments. The two experts will then work together in order to draft a common assessment that includes the most relevant / appropriate elements of both individual assessments. They will also have to score this common assessment, taking into account their common comments and initial individual scores.

The consolidated assessment will be confirmed and endorsed - i.e. formally submitted in the online assessment tool, printed and signed by both experts – prior to the sectoral panel and prior to the general panel and debriefing session organised on the last day of the assessment exercise. On that day, all signed copies of the "consolidated assessment" sheet will be collected by the Agency staff monitoring the panel.

B) There is **a divergence of more than 20 points** between the final scores of the two individual assessments. In this case the consensus discussion will serve the purpose to clarify the discrepancies / differences between the two assessments and try to bring them closer to each other.

**If both experts agree on solving these differences and reducing the divergence between their scores**, they will have to do this in their individual assessment before submitting it and endorsing it in the online assessment tool. As from there the procedure described under A) above will apply.

**If no common agreement can be reached**, a third expert will be asked to perform an individual assessment of the proposal and the expert who has given the middle final score will act as "expert one" and will draft the "consolidated" assessment on behalf of the three experts who will be asked to endorse and sign the final "consolidated assessment" form in accordance with the procedure described under A) above.

For reasons of availability of experts, resources and time, third assessments should represent the rare exception to the rule.

**After the consensus discussion and the endorsement of the "consolidated assessment form, the comments, recommendations and scores can no longer be changed.**

While preparing their "consolidated assessment", experts should make sure that all their comments and recommendations are **clear, objective, transparent, detailed, instructive, complete** and in accordance with the scoring. They should also ensure that they are in line and do not include contradictions.

**Experts are reminded that their comments, recommendations and scoring will be communicated to the applicants with the selection results.**

### *1.4.3. Panel Discussions*

#### Sectoral Panel Discussions

The "top ranked" proposals will be discussed in the context of three sectoral panels (i.e. "hard sciences", "life sciences" and "social sciences and humanities ") chaired by the corresponding "lead expert". These panels include all the experts who have assessed the proposals in the thematic areas concerned

The purpose of these sectoral panel discussions is to ensure coherence and consistency across the expert assessments as well as to carry out an additional quality check of the proposals.

#### General Panel Discussion

The three lead experts will report back from the sectoral panel discussions to the general panel, composed by all experts. The general panel will concentrate on the top ranked proposals with the objective of:

- ⇒ comparing the relative merits of proposals with similar/identical scores;
- ⇒ elaborating arguments in favour or against ex-aequo proposals;
- ⇒ discussing individual or generic cases that may need to be brought to the attention of the Selection Board and may be used to define their final selection proposal (see below).

In the context of panel discussions, the experts can decide, if they consider it appropriate, to alter the final score of a proposal by 1 to 5 points maximum. Decisions to alter a proposal's score have to be documented in the minutes of the panel discussion. They are taken by a simple majority vote of the experts present.

The Agency will establish the final score of each proposal taking into account possible score changes following the panel discussions.

## **1.5. Selection Board**

The Selection Board is composed of twelve high standing personalities from the academic world who are representative of the diversity of higher education in the European Union and have a longstanding experience of higher education policy and its European dimension. Members of the Selection Board are proposed on a yearly basis by the Member States and selected by the Commission. The Selection Board advises the Agency on the selection of Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Courses with a view to ensuring the highest academic quality.

The Selection Board will meet shortly after the experts have assessed the proposals. A shortlist of proposals, ranked in accordance with the experts' assessments, will be submitted to the Selection Board which reviews the proposals on the basis of the experts' assessments and the transcript of records from the panel discussions.

Selection Board members will make a comparative assessment of the short-listed proposals by looking in particular at the consistency of the experts' assessments, the European added value of the proposals and their relevance in the light of the objectives of the programme and of the priorities (if any) indicated in the Programme Guide and Call for Proposals.

All three lead experts will participate in the Selection Board meeting to provide assistance to the Board members.

#### **1.6. Evaluation Committee**

On the basis of the outcome of the Selection Board meeting, an evaluation committee including staff members of the Commission and the Agency submits a list of proposals to the authorising officer of the Agency for funding. This list is based on:

- the relative quality of the proposal in comparison with the other proposals received;
- the budget available;
- the priorities (if any) indicated in the Call for Proposals.

## 2. Description of the Action

- *The description below consists of excerpt from the Programme Guide 2009-2013* -

Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (EMMCs) were launched during the first phase of the Programme(2004-2008) with the aim of supporting top-quality programmes at postgraduate level that could contribute to the increased visibility and attractiveness of the European higher education sector.

During the first phase of the Programme, each HEI consortium implementing an EMMC was awarded a five-year framework partnership agreement that provided guaranteed financial support for fiveconsecutive editions of the course as well as scholarships for the participation of Third-Country students and scholars in each EMMC edition. At the end of the first phase of the Programme, 103 EMMCs had been selected and around 7300 scholarships awarded to Third-Country students and scholars.

This Action, which has been the centrepiece of the first phase of the Programme, continues during its second phase and is reinforced by the following elements:

- the award of scholarships to European students enrolled in selected EMMCs;
- the possibility for Third-Country HEIs to be full members of EMMC consortia; although the role and level of involvement of these new partners may vary from one EMMC to another (in accordance with the needs and readiness of the consortium and the Third-Country partner concerned), they can also act as degree awarding institutions and play an active role in the design, delivery and evaluation of the EMMC;
- an increased focus on the EMMCs sustainability strategies with a view to ensuring the continuation of their cooperation activities beyond the EC funding period; in this context, special attention will be paid to this aspect in the assessment and selection of new EMMC proposals; moreover a progressive reduction in the number of Erasmus Mundus scholarships offered to EMMCs will be applied as from the fifth edition of the course.

The primary aim of EMMC is to develop structured and integrated cooperation in higher education, in order to design and implement common master programmes that lead to the award of mutually recognised joint, double or multiple doctorate degrees.

EMMC are designed and implemented by consortia of HEIs from Europe and any other parts of the world. Enrolled students will study in at least two of the countries represented in the consortium and will be awarded joint, double or multiple degrees on behalf of the consortium after the successful completion of their studies.

**An EMMC must:**

- ...consist of HEIs from **three different eligible applicant countries**<sup>1</sup>, at least one of which must be an EU Member State;
- ...last **minimum one and maximum two academic years** and must therefore carry between 60 and 120 ECTS credits at master level;
- ...**be fully developed at the time of the application** and be ready to run for at least five consecutive editions as of the academic year following the application year (e.g. an EMMC application submitted in April of year “n - 1” must be able to start the first edition of the joint course as from August/September of year “n”);
- ...**involve European and Third-Country students** and reserve every year a certain number of places for Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders; this number will vary from one year to another and will be communicated to selected EMMC consortia in the autumn of the year preceding the academic year concerned<sup>2</sup>;
- ...start at the earliest on the first of August of “year n” and end at the latest by the end of October of “year n + 1” (60 ECTS courses) or “n + 2” (120 ECTS courses); the end date includes the communication of the student's final results;
- ...have **joint student application, selection, admission and examination criteria**; the students' selection procedure and criteria designed by the consortium will have to be approved by the Agency prior to issuing the first specific grant agreement; the students' application procedure and deadline should be designed in such a way that it provides the students will all the necessary information well in advance and with enough time to prepare and submit his/her application (i.e. in principle 4 months before the deadline);
- ...**agree whether or not to establish tuition fees**, in accordance with its members' national legislation. When tuition fees are established, EMMC consortia should ensure that these fees are transparent and clear to applicant students; different fee amounts can be charged to European and Third-Country students. In setting tuition fees, consortia should bear in mind the maximum contribution to the EMMC participation costs included in the scholarship. If the tuition fees established by the consortium are higher than this amount, the consortium should grant the Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders a fee waiver for any fee amount in excess of this maximum contribution;
- ...ensure that all partner HEIs are in a position to be a **hosting institution** for EMMC students;
- ...be designed in a way that allows students to carry out a period of study in **at least two of the countries represented in the consortium**<sup>3</sup>; each of these mandatory mobility periods must include a volume of study/research or equivalent (e.g. field work, laboratory activities, work placement or thesis research, etc.) corresponding to at least:
  - 15 ECTS credits or one trimester for Third-Country HEIs or
  - 20 ECTS for one year EMMCs and 30 ECTS for EMMCs of a longer duration in the case of European HEIs;
- ...without prejudice to the language of instruction, provide for the use of **at least two European languages** spoken in the countries where the higher education institutions involved in the EMMC are situated and, as appropriate, offer language preparation and

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<sup>1</sup> In order for a project submitted by a country not member of the EU to be eligible under Action 1, an agreement (or a Memorandum of Understanding or an EEA Joint Committee Decision) establishing the participation of this country in the Erasmus Mundus programme should be in force by the date of the selection decision (October of the year preceding the first edition of the EMMC/EMJD). Should this not be the case, organisations from the country concerned will be considered as Third-Country organisations entitled to participate in projects but not to submit or coordinate them.

<sup>2</sup> As an indication, the number of students scholarships will most probably vary between 7 and 17 scholarships per edition depending on the "seniority" of the EMMC

<sup>3</sup> The study programme and mobility tracks must be designed in a way that allows Third-Country students to complete the totality of their EMMC studies in Europe.

- assistance for students, in particular by means of courses organised by the institutions in question;
- ...guarantee the award on behalf of the consortium of **joint, double or multiple degree(s)** to all successful students<sup>4</sup>; programmes resulting in the award of joint degrees will be promoted; this(/these) degree(s) must be fully recognised by the relevant authorities of the countries concerned. This eligibility condition must be fulfilled at the latest at the time of enrolment of the first Erasmus Mundus students<sup>5</sup>; failure to do so may lead to the cancellation of the Erasmus Mundus funding;
  - ...have put in place an **insurance scheme** that guarantees that students are adequately covered in case of accident, injury, illness, etc. while participating in the EMMC;
  - ...implement the necessary measures to assist Category A students and Third-Country scholars in obtaining their required **visa and residence permits**;
  - ...develop a common and clear **promotion and visibility strategy** for the course including, in particular, a dedicated EMMC website referring explicitly to the Erasmus Mundus Programme and providing all necessary information about the course from the academic, financial and administrative points of view;
  - ...be based on an **EMMC Agreement** signed by the appropriate governing body of the partner HEIs and covering the most relevant aspects of the course implementation, financing and monitoring;
  - ...offer the necessary **facilities to students** (e.g. international office, housing, coaching, assistance with visas, etc.), including where necessary services for family members of grantees and grantees with special needs.

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<sup>4</sup> Double or multiple degrees are defined as two or more national diplomas issued officially by two or more institutions involved in an integrated study programme. A joint degree is defined as a single diploma issued by at least two of the institutions offering an integrated study programme.

<sup>5</sup> Applicants are advised to contact their Erasmus Mundus National Structure for a model of the proof, applicable to the relevant national contexts, which must be submitted.

### 3. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

During the administrative eligibility check, it will be verified that:

- the submission deadline has been respected.
- the application form satisfies all the criteria mentioned in the application form.
- the application procedures mentioned under section 3.1 and specific EMMC eligibility criteria mentioned under section 4.2 of the Programme Guide are respected.

**Following the administrative check, the Agency will inform applicants having submitted proposals not in compliance with the eligible criteria. All the eligible proposals as well as these proposals for which the eligibility status is still pending, will be assessed by the experts.**

**The selection criteria** are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partner of the partnership

Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the automatic rejection of the proposal on that **sole** basis.

Please, notice that in order to check the eligibility of the participating partners' university from the non EU countries, EC Delegations in the countries concerned will be consulted.

## 4. Award Criteria

### ACTION 1 - ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT MASTERS (EMMCs)

- Excerpt from the Programme Guide 2009-2013 –

The selection of EMMCs will be a competitive process organised by the Agency and based on the assessment of the quality of the proposal from the academic and organisational points of view. This assessment will be based on the **following 5 award criteria**:

Criteria	Weight
1. <i>Academic quality - Course content</i>	25%
2. <i>Course integration</i>	25%
3. <i>Course management, visibility and sustainability measures</i>	20%
4. <i>Students' facilities and follow-up</i>	15%
5. <i>Quality assurance and evaluation</i>	15%

#### ***Academic quality - course content (25% of the final mark)***

Under this award criterion applicants will have to present the objectives of their EMMC proposal from an academic point of view and its possible contribution to the excellence, innovation and competitiveness of the European Higher Education sector.

It will address aspects such as:

- The needs analysis, academic quality and added value of the integrated study programme compared with courses that already exist in the same field at national and international level;
- The adequacy of the partnerships to the objectives of the programme in terms of capacity, expertise and experience and notably, the quality of the teaching staff involved in the delivery of the EMMC;
- The quality and relevance of the learning outcomes, acquired competences and professional outcomes in the perspective of the students' future academic and/or professional career;
- The extent to which the EMMC integrates work placements and/or research activities in the field (where appropriate), the way it interrelates with the professional / economic sector concerned and, if applicable, the role of associated members in this respect;
- The way the proposed EMMC structure (including its students/scholars' mobility mechanisms) is instrumental to the academic and professional objectives of the course;
- If relevant, the level and appropriateness of Third-Country partner(s) contribution to the EMMC content and strategic objective.

#### ***Course integration (25% of the final mark)***

The Course Integration criterion will focus on issues related to the way the EMMC will be implemented in and across the partner institutions for what concerns the delivery of the course itself as well as the students' selection, admission, examination and results recognition mechanisms.

It will address aspects such as:

- The extent to which the Masters Course is truly integrated (i.e. has been jointly developed by the consortium partners on the basis of new or pre-existing modules<sup>6</sup>) and its study programme fully recognised by all the participating HEIs; if relevant, particular attention will have to be paid to the level and quality of integration of the Third-Country partner HEIs;
- The common standards, criteria and procedures proposed by the consortium for the application, selection, admission and examination of European and Third-Country students;
- The financial arrangements among the partner institutions, notably as regards the contribution of the Commission to the programme. If applicable, this includes the way Third-Country and European students' fees and other participation costs have been calculated and will be distributed among the participating institutions;
- The extent to which ECTS or other compatible mechanisms (including the “grading scale”) are used;
- The type of degree(s) awarded and, if applicable, the measures taken by the consortium to deliver joint degrees; programmes resulting in the award of joint degrees will be promoted;
- The delivery of a Diploma Supplement, if possible jointly issued on behalf of the consortium, to successful students in order to improve international transparency and facilitate the academic and professional recognition of qualifications.

***Course management, visibility and sustainability measures (20% of the final mark)***

This criterion will focus on the way the consortium intends to manage the EMMC in order to ensure its efficient and effective implementation.

It will address aspects such as:

- The quality of the cooperation mechanisms within the consortium (degree of institutionalisation, existence of an EMMC agreement, regular meetings, clearly defined and active role of all partners, established feed-back system, participation of external actors in the supervisory boards, etc.);
- The appropriateness of the financial and human resources dedicated by the consortium to the EMMC implementation;
- The nature and quality of the strategy and concrete measures proposed to ensure the appropriate visibility and worldwide promotion of the EMMC and reach out to potentially interested Third Country students/scholars;
- The existence of a concrete sustainability plan involving all partner HEIs but also, if relevant, other public and/or private organisations in the countries concerned; if applicable, the role of the associated members in this respect;
- The existence of complementary funding sources for the implementation of the EMMC and, if applicable, the availability of additional (full or partial) scholarships to participating students.

***Students' facilities and follow-up (15% of the final mark)***

Particular attention will be paid under this criterion to the services and facilities offered to enrolled students as well as to the way applicant consortia intend to ensure an efficient participation of these students in the EMMC activities.

It will address aspects such as:

- The existence of a Student Agreement clearly defining the mutual rights, obligations and responsibilities of the student and the consortium for what concerns the academic, financial and administrative aspects of the student's participation in the EMMC;
- The nature and quality of the services provided to host students/scholars (e.g. existence of an “international office” with adequate opening hours and linguistic coverage, housing facilities, coaching, assistance with visas, etc.). As regards EM scholarship holders in particular, this should

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<sup>6</sup> Parallel and independently delivered study programmes in the participating HEIs are not considered an integrated course.

notably include the insurance scheme proposed to cover the students during their EMMC studies and, if applicable, the services available to grantees with family or with special needs;

- The EMMC language policy and its level of integration in the course; the linguistic facilities offered to visiting students (e.g. training facilities, mentoring, local language learning, etc.);
- The arrangements to facilitate networking among EMMC students (e.g. possibilities for students from successive cohorts to meet and exchange experiences; creation of an EMMC alumni associations in close collaboration with the general Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association<sup>7</sup>, etc.).

### ***Quality Assurance and evaluation (15% of the final mark)***

Under this criterion applicant EMMCs will have to describe the quality assurance and evaluation strategy envisaged by the consortium in order to ensure an efficient monitoring of the course (from both the content and administrative points of view) and its regular improvement during the five years of implementation. Applicants and beneficiaries are invited to consult the EMMC Quality Handbook produced during the first phase of the programme and available on the Erasmus Mundus website. They will also have to refer to the concrete measures taken by the consortium to allow balanced gender participation as well as the participation of disadvantaged students/scholars to the joint course.

This criterion will address aspects such as:

- The nature of the internal evaluation (by the institutions themselves, through student/scholar feedback systems, etc.) and external quality assurance (by e.g. national, international or professional bodies) mechanisms proposed;
- If applicable, the extent to which associated members are involved in the course monitoring and its expected evolution in content and structure;
- The concrete measures taken by the consortium to allow balanced gender participation among the students and to facilitate access to the course to disadvantaged students/scholars and students/scholars with disabilities or special needs.

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<sup>7</sup> For more information please consult the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association website: <http://www.em-a.eu/>

## 5. Assessment against award criteria (On-line Assessment Form)

Proposal number:	XXXXXX-EM-1-2009-1-XX-ERA MUNDUS-EMMC
Proposal title:	
Coordinator:	
Applicant organisation:	

### A.1 Academic quality - Course content (25% of the max. score)

Under this award criterion applicants will have to present the objectives of their EMMC proposal from an academic point of view and its possible contribution to the excellence, innovation and competitiveness of the European Higher Education sector.

Award Criteria	Score	Max
A.1.1 the <b>needs analysis</b> (including in socio-economic terms) of the joint programme taking into account the current state of the art in the field(s) concerned;		5
A.1.2 the <b>objectives</b> of the EMMC and its possible contribution to European university excellence and European competitiveness; its <b>added value</b> compared with courses that already exist in the same field at national and international level;		5
A.1.3 the <b>academic quality</b> (including the quality of the teaching staff) and <b>structure</b> of the EMMC and in particular the appropriateness and added value of the mandatory mobility periods for the students; if applicable, the added value of the <b>third-country organisations</b> to the EMMC objectives and content;		5
A.1.4 the quality and relevance of the <b>learning outcomes</b> , acquired competencies and professional outcomes in the perspective of the students' future academic and/or professional careers;		5
A.1.5 the joint programme <b>interaction with the professional (economic/scientific/cultural) sectors</b> concerned and, if applicable, the role of associated members in this respect; if applicable, reference should be made to work placements arrangements and/or research activities in the field;		5
Comments:		
<b>Total: Academic quality - Course content (25%)</b>		<b>25</b>

## A.2 Course integration (25% of the max. score)

The Course Integration criterion will focus on issues related to the way the EMMC will be implemented in and across the partner institutions for what concerns the delivery of the course itself as well as the students' selection, admission, examination and results recognition mechanisms.

Award Criteria	Score	Max
A.2.1 the extent to which the joint programme is <b>truly integrated</b> (i.e. based on a jointly developed curriculum or composed of modules developed and delivered separately but fully recognised by all the consortium partners) and <b>fully recognised</b> (please refer to section 4.2.2 of the Programme Guide and provide, for each of the degree awarding organisations, a description of the degree recognition/accreditation process and, if applicable, a date by which this process should be concluded);		5
A.2.2 the type of <b>degree(s) awarded</b> and, if applicable, the measure taken or envisaged by the consortium to deliver a fully accredited and recognised <b>joint degree</b> (i.e. recognition/accreditation process in the countries concerned and date by which this process should be concluded);		5
A.2.3 the extent to which <b>ECTS mechanisms</b> (including the “grading scale”) or other built-in mechanisms for the recognition of study periods based on or compatible with the ECTS are fully used;		5
A.2.4 the extent to which the <b>Diploma Supplement</b> will be used and issued on behalf of the consortium (if possible, under the form of a Joint Diploma Supplement);		5
A.2.5 the common standards and mechanisms developed by the consortium for the <b>application, selection, admission and examination of students</b> (European and Third-Country); the extent to which these mechanisms are transparent, fair and objective; the provisions to take into account the equity issues, exploring alternative ways of recruitment and considering the Life Long Learning requirements;		5
A.2.6 The way <b>tuition fees and other participations costs</b> in the joint programme have been calculated (for Third-Country students and European students) and how they will be distributed among the participating institutions;		5
Comments:		
<b>Total: Course integration (25%)</b>		<b>30</b>

### **A.3** Course Management, visibility and sustainability measures (20% of the max. score)

This criterion will focus on the way the consortium intends to manage the EMMC in order to ensure its efficient and effective implementation.

<b>Award Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Max</b>
A.3.1 the nature and quality of the <b>cooperation mechanisms</b> established within the consortium (including the degree of institutionalisation, existence of an “EMMC agreement” between the partner, clearly defined and active role of all partners, established feed-back system, participation of external actors to the supervision boards, etc.);		5
A.3.2 the way the <b>scholarship scheme</b> will be managed among the partners and in particular the financial management of individual grants;		5
A.3.3 the level and quality of <b>human, financial and other types of support</b> provided by the consortium partners to the content-related and administrative aspects of the joint programme;		5
A.3.4 the nature and quality of the <b>course promotion measures</b> taken by the consortium to ensure the appropriate visibility of the EMMC and reach out to potentially interested candidates (students and scholars);		5
A.3.5 the consortium <b>development and sustainability plan</b> designed to ensure the proper implementation and continuity of the joint programme beyond Community funding (including implementation timeline, enrolment projections, mid- and long-term potential benefits for the institutions involved, etc.); the way this plan involves not only the consortium members but also other public and/or private organisations in the countries concerned (and in particular associated members);		5
A.3.6 the sources and extent of <b>complementary funding provided to the scholarship scheme</b> (through additional part of full scholarships and, if applicable, the provision of funds to top up the difference between the joint programme fees and the maximum programme contribution to these fees;		5
Comments:		
<b>Total: Course Management, visibility and sustainability measures (20%)</b>		<b>30</b>

### **A.4** Students' services and facilities (15% of the max. score)

Particular attention will be paid under this criterion to the services and facilities offered to enrolled students as well as to the way applicant consortia intend to ensure an efficient participation of these students in the EMMC activities.

Award Criteria	Score	Max
A.4.1 the nature and quality of the <b>services</b> provided by the consortium to host students / scholars (e.g. existence of an “international office”, housing facilities, coaching, activities aimed at social integration and networking, assistance with visas for third-country students/scholars); the extent to which specific services are available for grantees with a family or with special needs		5
A.4.2 the nature and coverage extent of the <b>insurance scheme</b> in place to appropriately cover the EM students against health issues and accidents;		5
A.4.3 the way the linguistic aspects of students’ mobility have been addressed (e.g. training facilities, mentorship, local language learning, etc.) and the specific <b>language policy</b> in place in the joint programme (e.g. integration, availability, costs coverage, recognition of the language courses in the joint programme); the way the consortium intends to meet the objective to offer students the possibility to use at least two different European language;		5
A.4.4 the nature and comprehensiveness of the <b>Student Agreement</b> defining the joint course implementation rules and mechanisms as well as the mutual rights, obligations and responsibilities of the two parties for what concerns the academic, administrative and financial aspects of the student’s participation in the joint programme;		5
A.4.5 the measures taken to facilitate <b>networking</b> among the Erasmus Mundus students and between these students and other students from the partner institutions;		5
Comments:		

<b>Total: Students’ services and facilities (15%)</b>		<b>25</b>
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#### **A.5** Quality Assurance and evaluation (15% of the max. score)

Under this criterion applicant EMMCs will have to describe the quality assurance and evaluation strategy envisaged by the consortium in order to ensure an efficient monitoring of the course (from both the content and administrative points of view) and its regular improvement during the five years of implementation.

Award Criteria	Score	Max
A.5.1 the nature of the <b>internal evaluation</b> (by the institutions themselves, through student/scholars feed-back systems, etc.)		5
A.5.2 the nature and extent of the <b>external quality assurance</b> (by e.g. national, international or professional bodies) envisaged; including, if applicable, the extent to which <b>associated members</b> are participating in this evaluation exercise (for what concerns both content and structure of the EMMC);		5
A.5.3 the concrete measure taken by the EMMC consortium to ensure a <b>balanced gender participation</b> and the course, access to		5

<b>disadvantaged students</b> and to students/scholars with disabilities or special needs;		
Comments:		

<b>Total: Quality Assurance and evaluation (15% )</b>		<b>15</b>
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The total score of the assessment will be automatically calculated on the basis of specific formula taking into account each relative weight of each criterion. The total score will be a figure between 0 and 100.

<b>Total:</b>		<b>100</b>
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## **6. Using the online assessment tool**

### **6.1. General remarks**

Specific instructions on the way to use the online assessment tool will be provided to the experts in the context of the briefing meeting organised at the beginning of the assessment period.

Experts should not forget to print, sign and date the final version of their:

- ⇒ "individual assessment" form after the consensus discussion and prior to the preparation of the "consolidated assessment";
- ⇒ "consolidated assessment" form.

The signed assessments must be handed over to the Agency representatives prior to the general panel.

### **6.2. Assessment Summary**

Each criterion has a relative weight which is marked on the summary table. The total score of the assessment will be calculated on the basis of specific formula taking into account the relative weight of each criterion. The total score will be a figure between 0 and 100.

### **6.3. Recommendation**

Experts should indicate their selection recommendation by ticking the appropriate box.

Each proposal must be either "highly recommended", "recommended" or "not recommended".

Although the selection recommendation must be in accordance with the total score given to the proposal, it is not an automatic (/mathematical) reflection of the total score in the fact that it can be used to either reinforce the funding recommendation on a proposal that did not score very high, or on the contrary express some reservations on a proposal despite of its very high score. In these cases, the experts are invited to justify the recommendation in the "Comments to the Agency" section (see 8.5 below).

### **6.4. Comments and Recommendations to the applicants**

In their consolidated form experts should write their comments for each criteria, justifying the score and their recommendations to the applicant.

The experts' comments and recommendations should give the necessary information to the Agency, the Selection Board and the applicant to understand the experts' opinion. In case of unsuccessful proposals, the comments and recommendations should also help the applicant to prepare a new proposal.

Experts should remember that **this part of their assessments along with the final score will be sent to the applicants exactly as they have written it.** Experts should make sure that all their comments and recommendations are explicit, transparent, detailed, instructive, complete and in accordance with the scoring and the selection recommendation.

Comments should consist of judgements and not of simple summaries of the proposal and should be helpful to applicants. They should be tailored to the assessment of each proposal and therefore not be based on a copy-paste approach from one assessment to another.

In order for the experts' comments to be as instructive and complete as possible, **the amount of text to be written per award criteria should be of about 15-20 lines.**

Comments and recommendations should relate to the experts' assessment of the strengths, weaknesses and potential of the proposal, relative to the award criteria. All aspects of the proposal, relative to the award criteria, should be commented on.

## **6.5 Additional comments to the Agency**

In addition to the comments and recommendations that will be communicated to the applicant in the context of the selection results notification letter, the online assessment tool contains also a specific comments section in which **the experts will be able to bring to the attention of the Agency, sectoral or general panels and/or Selection Board only** issues or aspects of the application that may be used during the selection process or the monitoring of the project, once approved.

## **6.7. Assessment of the proposal against the award criteria**

Experts should assess each proposal attributed to him/her (including corresponding annexes) against the set of award criteria listed in the assessment tool.

Award criteria are also described in the excerpt of the Programme Guide included in section 4 "Award Criteria" of the present manual. This information might also be useful to experts to understand the full meaning and dimension of criteria.

Experts should indicate their score for each of the items / questions included in each of the criteria. The following scores can be given: 0, 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4, 4.5, 5. It is not envisaged to give any other score (i.e. neither 0.5, nor other decimals than .5).

The scores must be justified and the comments should be consistent with the scores given for each item under the criterion.

## **6.8. Guidance on scores**

When attributing a score to the various criteria, the experts should apply the following guidelines:

<b>Score</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
0 – the proposal fails to address the issue under	A score of <b>0</b> should be given for a criterion if the information detailed in the Call for Proposals would

examination or cannot be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information	reasonably have been expected by the expert and is not present in the proposal. The specific information missing should be entered in the comments' section. <b>It is anticipated that the score of 0.5 will not be given.</b>
1 – poor	A score of <b>1.0</b> or <b>1.5</b> should be awarded if the proposal is of poor quality for the criterion in question. This may be because information is incomplete in the view of the expert, not clear or not convincing. Assessment comments for proposals in this category should indicate the areas where the proposal is lacking or is of poor quality and could be improved if subsequently re-submitted.
2 – fair	A score of <b>2.0</b> or <b>2.5</b> should be awarded where the content of the criterion in question is at a level consistent with that routinely produced by the universities across Europe. There may be some strong and relevant points within the proposal, but there may also be weaknesses and in particular there may be no specific details brought out which singles out the proposal from others. Assessment comments for proposals awarded scores in this range should indicate the areas where the proposal could be improved if subsequently re-submitted.
3 – good	Scores of <b>3.0</b> or <b>3.5</b> should reflect that the proposal demonstrates overall good features with regard to the award criterion in question (even though it may contain some notable weaknesses) or does not contain features that set it apart from many other good proposals being assessed.
4 – very good	Scores of <b>4.0</b> or <b>4.5</b> should reflect that the proposal has identifiable features which demonstrate that the proposal is of a high quality with regard to the award criterion in question. There should be features that set the proposal apart from other good quality proposals within the assessment.
5 – excellent	In general, experts should not use the score of <b>5</b> unless they feel that the content of the proposal could not be improved. In cases where a score of 5 is awarded, the expert should feel confident that there would be a high level of consensus from all experts.

# ANNEXE

## Document D

### EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

The examples/actions provided below are based on the findings of a recent Erasmus Mundus courses quality assessment exercise that was coordinated by the DG EAC and in which the Agency participated (! These examples do not by any means replace the wording and content of the award criteria, and only provide information on good practices as identified in the course of EM implementation so far). The quality assessment exercise concentrated on the identification of good practices within a sample of Erasmus Mundus courses with the aim of creating tools and guidelines that can assist the courses to reach higher standards of quality also assist potential applicants to prepare a high quality application.

#### A. Facilities, Logistics and Finance

##### 1. When Students Apply to the Course

Why should students from third countries **apply** for an Erasmus Mundus Course in Europe? What can courses do to **persuade** them and to **support** their applications in the face of international competition for excellent students?

##### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Start the applications process early to capture the attention of the best students
- ✓ Make good quality documentation available in formats suited to the students
- ✓ Communicate the selection criteria clearly
- ✓ Provide interactive support to applicants during the application and recruitment process
- ✓ Communicate decisions on applications in a clear and timely manner
- ✓ Maintain an accessible and updated Web site that effectively communicates the Course information to students around the World, regardless of the bandwidth of their Internet connection

##### 2. Verifying Student Qualifications

Do the **qualifications** claimed by the student confirm that they have the right background education to match them to the Course and that their **skill-set** will prepare them well for the academic work they will undertake?

##### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Use international research networks to develop innovative ways of verifying the qualifications of students
- ✓ Build institutional procedures for the accreditation for foreign education

✓ Focus strongly on competences and practical experience as a means of adding contextual richness to the statement of formal qualifications

### **3. When Third Country Students Travel to Europe**

What should be done in helping third country students to **obtain visas** quickly and effectively, to **plan travel and accommodation** and to be advised of **local culture** at their destination, so that they arrive at the University ready to study?

#### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Ensure that the travel (mobility) support process starts as soon as a student is recruited
- ✓ Use the knowledge gained from Alumni and from the of former students to provide advice services for students
- ✓ Provide students with individualised integrated support for travel, accommodation and for living and working in a new cultural environment
- ✓ Ensure that students are provided with advice and support for their families, providing them with effective mechanisms to communicate with families in their home countries, and directing them to the necessary facilities and support services if their families are travelling with them to Europe
- ✓ Provide detailed assistance with visa handling
- ✓ Ensure that suitable accommodation is available to students
- ✓ Build support structures to facilitate cultural adjustment

### **4. Introducing Students to European Academic Practice**

How can a diverse community of third country students be provided with an **induction programme** that trains them into the **academic practices** of a European University?

#### Possible actions:

- ✓ Provide a clear induction process through briefings and through documentation that is readily available to students before arrival
- ✓ Ensure that the induction process has clear mechanisms in place to capture the views of and learn from students – current and past
- ✓ Make the induction process culturally sensitive enough to deal with the social and cultural needs of the students
- ✓ Ensure that the induction process prepares the diverse students for the learning environment
- ✓ Provide opportunities for intercultural learning so that students and staff enrich their learning and teaching skills by experiencing academic practices from other countries
- ✓ Implement student agreements that state clearly the rights and the obligations of students and staff when participating in the Course

### **5. When Students Move Between Partner Institutions**

How can students **move from one institution to another**, so that they assimilate rapidly to the new local environment and experience a **seamless transition in their learning**?

Possible actions:

- ✓ Assist students coherently in making the necessary transitions from institution to institution, from the provision of accommodation to ensuring the sufficient stability of the learning environment to support their learning
- ✓ Provide well-informed assistance with visa handing for students
- ✓ Provide students with good quality and timely information about the institutions they are to visit and the particular local issues that will affect them
- ✓ Ensure that the experiences of current and past students, on the inter-institutional movement process, have been recovered and embedded in the information provided to new students
- ✓ Avoid unnecessary student travel by ensuring that students who fail examinations at one institution are able to re-take the examination whilst at another institution

## **6. Placements and Internships**

How can **internships and placements** be a key attractor that motivates students to apply to the course, both **enriching the learning experience** of the students and to prepare them for real-world working environments?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Use a structured process for obtaining placements or internships
- ✓ Make the placement/internship system flexible and diverse so that the academic needs of the students are satisfied
- ✓ Create or structure the existing placement/internship vetting system
- ✓ Capture, structure, and learn from student feedback on placement/internship
- ✓ Ensure that the balance of placement options across participating institutions is fair and appropriate

## **7. Student Finances**

How can the Course ensure that the **finance is allocated according to academic priorities**, that students do not experience **financial hardship**, and help students to avoid confusion regarding **local regulations**?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Allocate the finance transparently and efficiently across the institutions so that the money is linked to the delivery of the Course objectives
- ✓ During the recruitment and induction processes, inform and support students in areas of finance and financial management

- ✓ Be aware of and provide interventions for, any particular issues such as insurances (health or others required by national legislation) and local residency regulations, that might be confronted by students
- ✓ Organise in advance the financial distribution mechanisms among partners,
- ✓ Prepare the banking facilities/arrangements for the third-country students before arrival,
- ✓ Ensure that the insurance scheme is comprehensive enough

### **8. Communicating and consulting with students**

What processes and procedures are needed to ensure that there is consistent communication and consultation that is coherent across the consortium?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Implement efficient systems to support to learning and student-based Course evaluation
- ✓ Create opportunities for dialogue with students, and value the perception of students about the usefulness of information systems, with equal weight to that of teaching staff
- ✓ The information system in place is “fit for purpose” and regularly reviewed, it is timely, accurate and regularly updated
- ✓ Consult students regularly about the effectiveness of the support provided to them

### **9. Benefiting from Alumni**

How can past students remain embedded in the development of the Course and how can their experience be recovered so that current students can benefit?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Put a system in place to build, and manage, a sustainable alumni association for graduates of the Courses
- ✓ Ensure that the alumni association in place is active and is “fit for purpose”. For example, providing facilities for career advice and dealing with "post-course" issues are in place as part of Course administration

## **B. Quality of Leadership and Institutions**

### **1. The highest quality academic staff**

How can we recruit the best staff from across the consortium to teach on the Erasmus Mundus Course?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Secure the highest quality staff from the relevant disciplines across the institutions
- ✓ Build an Erasmus Mundus academic quality cluster with research as well as teaching and administration credentials

### **2. Creating a Strong Course "Brand"**

How can the Course identity be created and marketed, so that excellent third country students work with excellent academics, in creating a definable educational brand that host institutions value strategically?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Make Erasmus Mundus a brand that attracts exceptional students, who are attracted by the prospect of studying at high quality institutions, with high quality staff, on a course with relevant and robust content
- ✓ Ensure that the host institutions see Erasmus Mundus as an opportunity to build their own academic quality by bringing in the brightest and best qualified students
- ✓ Maximise the utility of the course Web site in creating a strong course brand,
- ✓ Engage relevant professional bodies, and international associations in the constitution of a brand name for the course

**3. Securing and Institutional Commitment**

How can the Course ensure that there is institutional commitment for sustainability, and that this commitment is clearly articulated across the consortium?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Ensure that the Course has wide recognition at institutional level and is fully embedded into university structures
- ✓ Ensure that the Course fits within an institutional strategy that values its international reach and educational objectives
- ✓ There is long-term buy-in for Erasmus Mundus by the people who matter in the participating host institutions
- ✓ Identify senior players in key academic positions, who can take on a role as champions for Erasmus Mundus

**4. Institutional commitment to international teaching and research**

How can the course deliver the highest quality of learning and teaching to third country students?

Possible Actions:

- ✓ Welcome students as important international members bringing with them an additional contribution to the life of the institutions
- ✓ Provide an appropriate institutional level commitment in place to ensure that Erasmus Mundus students can expect high standards of support

**5. Continuity and leadership**

How can academic leadership be secured to take forward the development of the course and how do the institutions identify and reward teaching excellence, as well as research excellence?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Be sensitive to the opportunity costs experienced by those academics who commit significant time and energy to ensuring the success of the course
- ✓ Offer institutional recognition for the "teaching intensive" contribution of those academics who commit significant time to Erasmus Mundus

## **6. Succession Strategies**

How can staff turnover be mitigated across the consortium so that the continuity of the course is maintained?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Maintain a robust approach to ensuring the long run sustainability of the consortium that recognises the need for leadership and key staff changes over time
- ✓ Develop strategies to accommodate short-term leadership changes as well as more fundamental issues for leadership succession

## **7. Financial Sustainability**

How can the future sustainability of the course be achieved?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Develop creative approaches to long-run finance, including considering the prospect of a cessation of Erasmus Mundus funding
- ✓ Use contacts such as Alumni, Local and Regional Organisations (Grants and Foundations), Business and Industry (Private Capital), to supplement the Erasmus Mundus finance that it receives

# **C. Quality of Teaching and Learning**

## **1. Designing an Excellent Curriculum**

How can the curriculum be designed and constructed so that it forms an integrated programme? And, how can the Course progression, and Course materials, be designed consistently so that students experience continuity in their learning experience?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Document and agree a clear academic design that underpins the entire curriculum
- ✓ Show how the curriculum can be characterised as an integrated whole with clear links between Course elements wherever taught
- ✓ Plan the sequencing of the modules and of learning support activities to be consistent with the design
- ✓ Show how the Course progression clearly underpins student progression to achieve the best learning outcomes

- ✓ Ensure that Course materials show that academic content is consistent with contemporary knowledge in the relevant disciplines
- ✓ Update reading lists and other core learning materials consistently across the course

## **2. Communicating Course Objectives and Outcomes**

How can the Course objectives be defined in a way that achieves an integrated Course, yet respects the institutional priorities of each partner?

### **Possible Actions:**

- ✓ Set out and clearly document the objectives for the Course
- ✓ Communicate the Course objectives and expected outcomes to teachers and learners
- ✓ Teaching and learning activities are appropriately aligned with course objectives and learning outcomes

## **3. Consistent Assessment Methods**

How can the different academic practices at partner sites be resolved so that the students are provided with consistency in their workload across institutions and so that their work will be assessed consistently throughout their period of study?

### **Possible Actions:**

- ✓ Show how the assessment weightings given to Course elements are carefully adjusted to the balance of the overall curriculum
- ✓ Communicate the marking, assessment, and feedback criteria to students
- ✓ Show how the assessment criteria meet the objectives of ECTS
- ✓ Justify how assessment weightings take workloads and Course progression properly into account
- ✓ Document how the assessment weightings are designed to take account of the different backgrounds of the students
- ✓ Plan a review process for Course weightings to ensure continuous improvement of the Course
- ✓ Provide transparent information to students about assessment and examination loads, marking methods, and timetable

## **4. Formal Course Review**

What arrangements need to be in place to ensure that the Course benefits from institutional review and independent external review, in a way that takes into account the diversity of institutional practices?

### **Possible Actions:**

- ✓ Design the curriculum so that it is sufficiently flexible to allow for a reasonable degree of institutional difference in the participating universities

- ✓ Plan for inevitable variations in staff availabilities over time
- ✓ Plan flexibility in the curriculum and the staff structure to cope with the unexpected
- ✓ Implement a regular system of independent external review of assessment and quality control
- ✓ Encourage and support opportunities for student review of the course design, involving both current and former students

## **5. Ethical Standards**

How will students be prepared for the ethical standards and cultural practices they will experience at the European Universities?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Provide students with a written code of ethics which they sign and agree to comply with them
- ✓ The code has clear mechanisms for the communication of ethical problems, with a confidential and transparent process being used to evaluate and resolve the problems
- ✓ The code is responsive to the range of cultural and religious practices of Third Country students

## **6. Developing Learning Skills**

How will students be prepared for the learning standards and practices they will experience at the European universities and what processes and facilities are available to them to cope with the languages spoken at each partner site?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Provide students with initial training in learning skills, including writing styles, plagiarism prevention, and presentation techniques.
- ✓ Provide students with a suitable range of bibliographic management tools to help them effectively structure their lecture material and readings
- ✓ Language training is provided in an appropriate form to support both learning and cultural adjustment.

## **D. Joined-up Practice and Integration**

### **1. Selecting Students**

How can the student selection process be undertaken in a way that involves all the consortium members, but also operates efficiently and effectively?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Involve all consortium members in the student selection process
- ✓ Take into account the different circumstances the students will encounter from host to host
- ✓ Make the selection process transparent so that students can quickly match themselves to a Course

## **2. Consortium Information System**

How can we design and implement a course-wide information system that manages student information effectively and securely and that makes teaching and learning information accessible to all the students regardless of their location?

### **Possible Actions:**

- ✓ Use a secure Intranet facility with a robust content management system for the structuring and storing of student information
- ✓ Enter and store student information (from personal details to Course selection, assessment and examination marks) efficiently and securely
- ✓ Be transparent with students about the information that is stored on the system, with relevant assurances under freedom of information rules, that they can view and validate personal information
- ✓ Make available a teaching Intranet so that students can access teaching materials in an integrated manner, regardless of their geographical location

## **3. Policy for Course Fees**

How can the finance from student fees be allocated across the consortium so that the money is invested according to academic objectives? How can the fee policy accommodate different national and institutional policies across the consortium?

### **Possible Actions:**

- ✓ Set Course fees through a formal consortium policy
- ✓ Allocate Course fees per student across the institution so that academic objectives are met
- ✓ Agree a formal pan-institutional policy regarding the distribution of Course fees to cover management overheads and academic activities

## **4. Division of Labour across the Consortium**

How can all members of the consortium reach acceptance on the division of labour in a way that meets all the academic objectives?

### **Possible Actions:**

- ✓ Agree and document the process by which tasks within the division of labour are allocated and can be reviewed
- ✓ Document the division of labour between institutions, in the context of clear effectiveness and efficiency criteria

## **5. A Consortium-Wide Quality Assessment Process**

How should staff internally review their course and how can structured student feedback on the Course be obtained in a way that clearly communicates the outcomes to those who contributed to the consultation process?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Use information provided by each partner institution to regularly review the quality of the Course content and the teaching of the Course
- ✓ Use the information to ensure that the Course modules are normally delivered by the best available teachers across the consortium
- ✓ Obtain feedback from students at all partner sites and review, harmonise and act upon the outcomes at the consortium level

## **6. Managing the Consortium**

How can we implement performance expectation and performance management across the consortium, in a way that respects the authority of each Institution and each Department?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Ensure that individuals in the consortium have significant prior experience of working together, through formal collaborative structures, joint research and teaching
- ✓ Define criteria for the expected performance levels of members and clearly state expectations for potential new partners
- ✓ Agree a management hierarchy and a level of in-built trust that allows Programme Coordinators to have widely delegated operational responsibility
- ✓ Develop and implement a formal consortium agreement that records the agreed procedures and practices in the management of the Course
- ✓ Agree protocols for communication and conflict resolution as devices to build and sustain trust

## **7. Develop a clear policy for awarding the Master Degree**

How can the national and institutional policies regarding Master degrees be resolved so that students are awarded an identifiable Erasmus Mundus Master degree?

### Possible Actions:

- ✓ Set out clearly, in the consortium agreement, the ways in which the Erasmus Mundus Master Degree will be awarded
- ✓ Provide full transcripts of student achievement in a format that can be accepted by institutions back in their home countries