



Pilot a joint European degree label





A strong political commitment and flagship of the Higher Education Package

Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe, 5 April 2022

*“Unlocking the full added value of alliances of HEIs such as the ‘European Universities’ calls for further support at European and, where appropriate, national level through a step-by-step approach. (...) these alliances should, where appropriate, be supported (...) in **implementing innovative joint educational programmes at all levels**, within a student-centred, research and innovation driven approach, **which could possibly award joint degrees based on European criteria co-created with Member States and relevant stakeholders, in accordance with the instruments of the Bologna Process.**”*

*“(...) **further steps** should be taken **to recognise the value of innovative transnational learning experiences** and to **increase the visibility, attractiveness and reputation**, both in Europe and beyond, of such **joint programmes provided by alliances of HEIs. Common criteria should be explored that could lead to a potential European label for joint programmes.** Later on, the possible design and delivery, on a **voluntary basis**, at national, regional or institutional level, of **joint degrees at all levels, based on these co-created European criteria, could be envisaged**, in accordance with the existing instruments of the Bologna Process. This process should occur in close cooperation with national authorities, alliances of HEIs and stakeholders.”*





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Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation, 5 April 2022

Recommendation to the Member States:

*“Encourage, where appropriate, and **make it easier for higher education institutions engaged in transnational cooperation to provide joint programmes and award joint degrees**, in accordance with the Bologna instruments. In this context, and **building on the results of the exploratory actions (...) examine and facilitate the delivery of a joint European degree label**. Later on, work could be undertaken towards a possible joint degree at all levels, based on co-created European criteria, to be delivered at national, regional or institutional level, in accordance with the National Qualifications Frameworks.”*

*“Enable higher education institutions (...) to test and implement suitable approaches and measures in relation to: a) **Admission and enrolment criteria (...)**; b) Defining the **languages of learning and teaching (...)**; c) The **share of online learning (...)**; the share of **student mobility (...)**; and the **share and organisation of internships, work-based learning activities, challenge based and inter-disciplinary approaches**; e) The rules for credit allocation and transfer, and transparency in grading, in accordance with the **European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) Users’ Guide**, as the **basis for transnational joint programmes, without additional rules or limitations; (...)** .”*

*“Strengthen mutual trust through external **quality assurance and accreditation of joint educational programmes** and other forms of joint educational offers developed by institutional transnational cooperation models, including ‘European Universities’ **in accordance with the European Standard and Guidelines (ESG)**.”*





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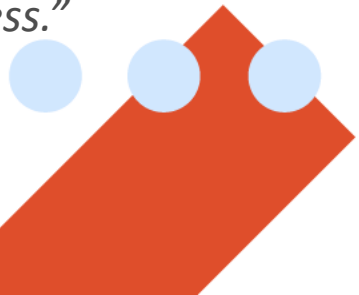
Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation, 5 April 2022

Recommendation to the Commission:

*“Examine the options and necessary steps - in close cooperation with Member States, higher education institutions, student organisations and stakeholders - **towards a possible joint degree based on a common set of co-created European criteria.** This degree, to be delivered **on a voluntary basis at national, regional or institutional level**, could attest learning outcomes achieved as part of transnational cooperation ‘combining studies in several EU countries’, offered for example within ‘European Universities’. It should be easy to issue, store, share, verify and authenticate, and recognised across the EU. **It will build on and boost the implementation of the Bologna instruments in the Member States.***

*a) **Pilot in 2022** the development and implementation under Erasmus+ of **European criteria for the award of a joint European degree label.** Such a label would be issued as a **complementary certificate to the qualifications** obtained by **students graduating from joint programmes** delivered in the context of transnational cooperation between several higher education institutions.*

*b) **Based on the results of this preparatory work**, report to the Council for further decision at each step towards **a possible joint degree based on co-created European criteria**, in accordance with the instruments of the Bologna Process.”*



A step by step approach: where are we now?

1/ Co-develop possible criteria for a label and publish a call for a pilot (2022)

These criteria annexed to the call are the working basis on which the pilot will build evidence and explore possible future optimisations.

2/ Test these criteria in selected pilots (2023)

The pilot will have for objectives to test the criteria on selected joint programmes proposed by alliances of higher education institutions.

There won't be an open call to apply for the label during the piloting phase.

Each selected pilot project will have for objectives to test the proposed criteria and make proposals.

3/ Analyse the results of the pilots (2024)

Results of the pilot will inform future possible developments towards a possible joint degree based on co-created European criteria.





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Eligibility criteria of submitted proposals

1 year projects conducted by Higher education institutions, as well as public or private organisations active in the fields of education and training

Proposals submitted by a **consortium of at least 2 higher education institutions from 2 different countries**

Partnerships bringing diversity in terms of **modes of cooperation** (such as European Universities alliances, Erasmus Mundus consortia, Marie Skłodowska-Curie consortia and other types of transnational alliances of higher education institutions), **geographical representativeness** and involving relevant national, regional and/or institutional public authorities, **is encouraged**.





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Objectives

- **Exploring and testing the relevance of the criteria** for establishing a label which acknowledges the European and transnational experiences in a joint transnational programme leading to a higher education qualification at all levels (European Qualification Frameworks – EQF – (level 6, 7, 8) and the feasibility of their use;
- **Exploring and recommending possible optimisation** of the proposed set of criteria in view of maximizing the attractiveness and potential impact of such a joint European degree label;
- **Elaborating proposals**, in cooperation with the relevant national, regional and/or institutional authorities, aiming to facilitate the development and implementation of joint degrees in Europe. This would **include proposing an approach that could be commonly agreed on for the delivery of joint degrees based on co-created European criteria by European countries at all education levels**. These proposals should take into account the existing instruments developed by the Bologna Process, such as e.g. the European approach for quality assurance of joint programmes, and reflect on the potential need for updating these tools.



Publication of the call for proposals:	15 June 2022
Deadline to submit a proposal:	6 October 2022
Results and start of the activities:	early 2023
Duration:	1 year





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The criteria to be tested

2 sets of criteria: mandatory requirements and optional, non-mandatory criteria





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Mandatory requirements: 1/2

Higher education institutions involved:

The joint programme is jointly designed and delivered by at least 2 higher education institutions from at least 2 different EU Member States. (EQF 6, 7, 8)

Transnational joint degree delivery:

- The joint programme leads to the award of a joint degree. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- Dissertations are co-evaluated by supervisors or a committee with members from at least 2 different institutions located in 2 different countries. (EQF 8)

Transparency of the learning outcomes:

- The joint programme is described in ECTS. (EQF 6, 7)
- A joint Diploma Supplement is issued to the student at the end of the joint study programme. (EQF 6, 7)

Quality assurance arrangements:

Internal and external QA is conducted in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The programme, the study field or the institutions are accredited/evaluated by an EQAR-registered agency.

If external quality assurance is required at programme level in the countries involved, the transnational programme should be accredited/evaluated preferably using the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EA). (EQF 6,7,8)

Joint policies for the joint programme:

The higher education institutions involved have joint policies for admission, selection, supervision, monitoring, assessment and recognition procedures for the joint study programme. (EQF 6, 7, 8)

Transnational campus – access to services:

The joint programme provides enrolled students, regardless of their location, with seamless and free access to the participating HEI's services such as e.g. IT services, shared infrastructure and facilities, (online) library services, faculty development and support, academic guidance and psychological counselling, career advice/mentoring, alumni systems. (EQF 6, 7, 8)





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Mandatory requirements: 2/2

Flexible and embedded student mobility arrangements:

- The joint programme includes at least 1 period of student physical mobility at another partner institution of at least 30 ECTS. (EQF 6, 7)
- The joint programme includes a total of at least 6 months of physical mobility at another partner institution (including secondment). In addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes opportunities for doctoral candidates to participate in one or more of these activities at another partner institution: teaching activities, international events, international conferences, joint research scientific projects between partner institutions, joint research publications with researchers from partner institutions. (EQF 8)

Multilingualism:

- During the joint programme, each student is exposed to at least 2 different EU official languages, language classes excluded. Exposure to EU official languages can take place in active and/or passive use of language(s), at any level in teaching and/or learning activities, examinations, research activities, professional or civic engagement activities and during mobility periods, including by going on mobility to a country where a different EU official language is predominantly used in daily life. (EQF 6, 7, 8)

Innovative learning approaches:

The joint programme includes embedded interdisciplinary and/or intersectoral components using student-centred and/or challenged-based approaches. (EQF 6,7,8)

Graduate outcomes:

The joint programme has a system to monitor graduate outcomes. This system can be at the level of the programme or institutional level(s). If possible, the content is aligned to the survey content of EUROGRADUATE. (EQF 6, 7, 8)

Inclusiveness and sustainability:

- The joint programme commits to wide participation through socially and geographically inclusive admission through tailored measures for all categories of disadvantaged students. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- The joint programme commits to respect the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and commits to the principles of the MSCA Green Charter. (EQF 8)





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Optional criteria: not mandatory but are encouraged to be tested.

- In addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes **additional formats of transnational learning activities** with partner higher education institutions (e.g. online or blended, in the format of regular or intensive courses, summer/winter schools). (EQF 6, 7)
- The joint programme offers the possibility to take **language classes** so as to enhance the command of multiple European languages. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- The joint programme supports **future labour market needs** and/or includes **cooperation with** businesses and sectors in its curriculum. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- The joint programme provides opportunities for **international professional internships/work-based learning** recognised through the award of ECTS. (EQF 6, 7)
- The joint programme includes a **career development plan** devised with the candidate and/or **exposure to the non-academic sector** (such as internships, seminars, networking). (EQF 8)
- The joint programme includes components and actions related to **environmental sustainability** and implements measures to minimise the environmental footprint of its activities. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- The joint programme includes components and actions related to the development of high level **digital skills** of students, it offers high quality digital education content, as well as assessment of student skills. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- The joint programme offers the possibility for students to participate in activities promoting **democratic values and addressing societal needs** of the local community(ies), including volunteering, and to receive ECTS for it. (EQF 6, 7, 8)
- The higher education institutions offering the joint study programme conducts **joint promotion and awareness-raising activities** to ensure visibility of the joint programme and provide the necessary information about it for students and other relevant stakeholders such as future employers. (EQF 6, 7, 8)





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Next steps:

Read the call on the Funding & Tenders opportunities portal:

[European policy experimentation in higher education \(ERASMUS-EDU-2022-POL-EXP-HE\)](#)

Information session for applicants:

28 June, 10:30-12:30

Deadline to submit a proposal:

6 October 2022



Thank you

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