Guidelines on how to use the 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 Programme Countries (KA103) and to Erasmus+ mobility for studies between Programme and Partner Countries (KA107).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.

BEFORE THE MOBILITY

Administrative data

Before the mobility, it is necessary to fill in page 1 with information on the student, the Sending and the Receiving Institutions. 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, there is no need to repeat it in this template.

On page 1, most of the information related to the student, Sending and Receiving Institutions will have to be encoded in the Mobility Tool+.

Educational components (Tables A and B)

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

The Learning Agreement must include all the educational components to be carried out by the student at the Receiving Institution (in Table A) and it must contain as well the group of educational components that will be replaced in his/her degree by the Sending Institution (in Table B) upon successful completion of the study programme abroad. It is necessary to fill in Tables A and B thoroughly before the mobility. Additional rows and columns can be added as needed. However, the two Tables A and B 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 B, if relevant for the sending institution.

The Sending Institution should indicate in Table B 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 B should correspond to the total number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) contained in Table A. 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 and Table B: the student has already accumulated the number of credits required for his/her degree and does not need some of the credits gained abroad.

The group of components can be included in Table B as follows:

	Recognition at the Sending Institution			
Table B Before the mobility	**Component co** (if any)	**Component title at the Sending Institution** (as indicated in the course catalogue)	**Semester**	**Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be recognised the Sending Institution**
		Course X	*…*	*10*
		Module Y	*…*	*10*
		Laboratory Work	*…*	*10*
		Thesis research/Doctoral work		*10 or "Not applicable"*
				Total: 40 (or *30 if not applicable for Thesis research)*

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

	Recognition at the Sending Institution			
Table B Before the mobility	**Component co** (if any)	**Component title at the Sending Institution** (as indicated in the course catalogue)	**Semester**	**Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be recognised the Sending Institution**
		Mobility window	*…*	**Total:** *30*

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.

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 Linguistic 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 between Programme Countries, and for the languages covered by the OLS, the student must carry out an OLS language assessment before the mobility, and a final assessment at the end of the mobility, except for native speakers and in duly justified cases (e.g. special needs students).

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.

Based on the results of the OLS assessment, the Sending Institution may allocate an OLS language course to the students who wish to improve their language competences. Mobility participants with a level B2 or higher at the first language assessment in their main language of instruction have the opportunity to follow an OLS language course either in that language or in the local language of the country, provided it is available in the OLS. It is up to the Sending Institution to indicate this choice directly in the OLS.

More opportunities for participants following the OLS language courses (OLS Live Coaching: MOOCs, Forum and Tutoring sessions) are available at http://erasmusplusols.eu.

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

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 regularly.

Any party can request changes to the study programme 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 and B2, while Tables A and B should not be modified. All Tables (A, B, A2 and B2) should be kept together in all communications. Changes to the study programme abroad should be listed in Table A2. Please refer to endnote 12 to indicate the reason for change.

For example:

Table A2 During the mobility	**Exceptional changes to Table A** (to be approved by e-mail or signature by the student, the responsible person in the Sending Institution and the responsible person in the Receiving Institution)					
	Component code (if any)	**Component title at the Receiving Institution** (as indicated in the course catalogue)	**Deleted component** [tick if applicable]	**Added component** [tick if applicable]	**Reason for change**[ii]	**Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent)**
		XXX	☒	☐	Choose an item.	*5*
		YYY	☐	☒	Choose an item.	*8*

Table B2 should be completed only if the changes described in Table A2 affect the group of educational components agreed in Table B.

Changes of the Responsible person(s)

In case of changes of the responsible person(s), the information below should be inserted by the Sending or Receiving Institution, where applicable.

Changes of the Responsible person(s)	Name	Email	Position
New Responsible person at the Sending Institution			
New Responsible person at the Receiving Institution			

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 C)

After the mobility, the Receiving Institution should send a Transcript of Records (Table C) to the student and to the Sending Institution within a period stipulated in the 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 (Table C) should refer to the educational components agreed in Table A and, where applicable, in Table A2. 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 special needs, 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[iii] at the Sending Institution (Table D)

Following the receipt of the Transcript of Records from the Receiving Institution, the Sending Institution should recognise 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

B (and, if applicable, B2) and count them towards the student's degree, without the need for the student to take any further courses or exams.

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 (for higher education institutions from Programme Countries, see the methodology described in the ECTS Users' Guide[iv]). The European Commission encourages institutions to use the EGRACONS[v] tool for this purpose.

The Sending Institution will provide a Transcript of Records (Table D) 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 Programme Countries), with the exact titles of the components that the student has followed abroad.

Steps to fill in the Learning Agreement for Studies

Before the mobility

If modifications are needed:

A party requests changes within 5 weeks after the start of each semester. Agreement by the three parties has to be reached within 2 weeks after the request.

Request for extension of the duration has to

During the mobility

foreseen end date.

An agreement by the three parties on the changes is possible via email/digital signatures.

After the mobility

The Receiving Institution provides a Transcript of Records to the student and Sending Institution normally within 5 weeks after publication of the results.

The Sending Institution recognises the activities successfully completed by the student during the mobility, counts them towards the student's the degree and registers them in the student's Transcript of Records normally within 5 weeks.

[i] **Mobility window**: a period of time reserved for student credit mobility that is embedded into the curriculum of a study programme.

[ii] **Reasons for exceptional changes to study programme abroad (choose an item number from the table below):**

Reasons for deleting a component	***Reason for adding a component***
1. Previously selected educational component is not available at the Receiving Institution 2. Component is in a different language than previously specified in the course catalogue 3. Timetable conflict 4. Other (please specify)	5. Substituting a deleted component 6. Extending the mobility period 7. Other (please specify)

[iii] **Recognition**: all the credits (or equivalent units) that the student has earned during the mobility and that were specified in the final version of the Learning Agreement as counting towards his/her degree (Table B and, if applicable, B2 of the official template) are recognised by the Sending Institution and count towards the student's degree without the need to take any further courses or exams.

[iv] **ECTS Users' Guide**: http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/ects_en.htm

[v] **EGRACONS Grade Conversion Tool:** https://tool.egracons.eu/