# PROCEDURES FOR THE RECOGNITION OF CREDITS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FROM STUDENT MOBILITY

**ECIU University (2021)**

**Authors**
Lotta Kåvemark, Linköpings Universitet (SE)
Niall Power, Universidade de Aveiro (PT)

## Abstract

From the ECIU University pilot project application: "In order to assess the consistency of recognition procedures and processes within the alliance, a survey of those procedures and processes, based on *documentation providing proof of recognition*, is carried out and published. The survey development, as a process and as a product, serves to inform students, departmental mobility coordinators and decision-makers at various other levels of the organization regarding the recognition standards in place, and includes recommendations of good practices and norms to be proposed to the ECIU University Board." The results of the survey are provided for each of the ECIU member Universities and good practices are briefly highlighted. We note also that ECIU University has also developed a number of complimentary actions, including an Agreement on the recognition of all ECIU University short learning cycles and a report on institutional accreditation througouth the ECIU partnership.

## Contents

# Part A Good Practices and Complimentary Measures

**Good Practices**

The survey confirmed that all of the member Universities of the ECIU University alliance have clear procedures in place for ensuring the transparent recognition of ECTS credits earned abroad by students participating in exchange programmes. The arrangements are set out in regulations (national and/or institutional) and are published on the Institutional websites of all the partner institutions. All of the member Universities have administrative procedures in place to ensure that there is continuity and consistency, for all students, in registering ECTS credits earned abroad, either as a transfer of credits (honouring the terms of Learning Agreements is compuslory for all) or as a recognition of credits in a Diploma Supplement. These are the trusted "good practices" of the Erasmus University Charter (EUC) that all patner universities have signed and implemented.

**Recommendations to the ECIU Board**

1. The WP6 team recommends to the ECIU Board that the procedures for contractualizing ECTS credits in mobility contexts be carried out digitally by connecting the ECIU digital platform DxP with the European Student Card Initiative in the context of the development of the Euorpean Higher Education Area. This will mean that Erasmus+ exchanges carried out between ECIU Universities can be managed in articulation with the ECIU experience that DxP wishes to create for its users.

2. A second recommendation we would make is that ECIU works further on this report in the future towards developing a more cohesive set of standards and central procedures for the recognition of ECIU Credits through mobility, in particular ECTS credits earned by learners in Challenges and in Micromodules. When we refer to standards, we mean that information about the students and the institutions obligations and rights are announced in a transparet manner and that there is a clearly identified complaints procedure in place for students to seek redress for any problems they may encounter.

3. It is also recommended that ECIU University explores further the uses and boundaries of a broad multilateral arrangement on mobility and exchange that includes ERASMUS+ exchanges *and* other mobility arrangements (including those identified in WP6 Ouput 6.1_04: Guidelines on Mobility Windows) towards improving the agility of the organisation and recognition of mobility. An example of such a mechanism is the template of the Agreement on the Implementation of ECIU Minors, in annex to WP6 Output 6.1_04).

**Complimentary Measures by ECIU University – ECIU Recognition Accord**

In the pilot project phase 2019-2022, the ECIU University piloted the formats of challenges and micro-modules as an operational part of the development of new learning opportunities. In these pilots, one of the top priorities of students has been recognition of qualifications. A Recognition Accord was established as a response to this need, and to facilitate a common understanding of recognition among member institutions of the ECIU University.

The accord functions as one of the tools in the toolbox for quality assurance of ECIU Learning Opportunities, developed, in the Pilot Project by team of **Work Package 7 (Joint Structures)**

The proposed Recognition Accord is a result of a lengthy process to establish quality criteria for learning opportunities within ECIU, starting with mapping exercises and workshops in 2019 and 2020. A need to develop joint understanding and regulations for the recognition of such learning opportunities was identified. A working group under the leadership of WP 7.1 was established November 2021. The group should submit its proposal early 2022. The Recognition Accord is to be discussed in the Management Team of the ECIU University and also by the Vice-Rectors for Education.

The Recognition accord was built on the Lisbon Recognition Convention, the Bologna 1999 declaration, with the ESG, the ECTS system, the EQF, and the European Approach to Micro-Credentials (2020). The European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes has also been used as a reference document in this process.

# PART B – Summaries of Recognition Procedures

- [Aalborg University, Denmark](#)

- [Dublin City University, Ireland](#)

- [Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania](#)

- [Linköping University, Sweden](#)

- [Tampere University, Finland](#)

- [Hamburg University of Technology, Germany](#)

- [University of Aveiro, Portugal](#)

- [Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain](#)

- [University of Stavanger, Norway](#)

- [Universita degli Studi di Trento, Italy](#)

- [Institut National des Sciences Appliquées de Toulouse, France](#)

- [University of Twente, The Netherlands](#)

# Aalborg University, Denmark

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Jesper Bjørn Gorm Poulsen/Birgitta S Madsen<br>Role at the Institution: Head of Educational Law/Head of International Office |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| The students who apply for a semester as exchange students outside of Denmark, need to apply for pre-approval of credit transfer. The pre-approval needs to be processed and approved by the relevant study board before the beginning of the semester.<br>Application deadlines:<br><ul><li>For the coming Autumn semester 1 April</li><li>For the coming Spring semester 1 October</li></ul>When the student arrives back at AAU, the documentation from the host university needs to be sent to the study board for final approval and an administrative colleague at the institute will make sure the credits are registered.<br>Main actors: the student, the study boards and an administrative person at the different institutes. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| 1. Aalborg University recognition procedure (DK)<br><br>2. The specific document the study Board uses when deciding on pre-approval of credit transfer. (EN)<br><br>3. Sample of the application form the student needs to use when applying for pre-approval of credit transfer at the study board – this form can vary slightly from one study board to another. This document is in English. (EN) |

**Dublin City University, Ireland**

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Vikki Doyle<br>Role at the Institution: International Mobility Coordinator |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| When Erasmus students go on study abroad, they will liaise with the Faculty Academic Coordinator regarding their modules and the required credits to ensure that they have sufficient credits to progress to their final year / next semester. When they return from their time abroad, they submit their transcript. This information is then assessed and brought by the Faculty to the Progression Board for the student to progress into the following year. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (In Annexes)* |
| 1. The Faculty Academic Coordinator presents the Transcript of Records earned by the student at the host institution to the Progression and Awards Board. |

# Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Kristina Ukvalbergienė<br>Role at the Institution: Director of Academic Affairs |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| The complete procedure is described in the Guidelines for the Recognition of Learning Outcomes approved by order No. A-372 of the Rector of Kaunas University of Technology of 1 September 2020. Chapter III 'Recognition of the learning outcomes without the approved content of studies' describes the procedure and the main actors involved. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| 1. Order No. A-372 of the Rector of Kaunas University of Technology of Technology. "Guidelines for the Recognition of Learning Outcomes" (EN) |

# Linköping University, Sweden

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: The four faculties as LiU through Lotta Kåvemark<br>Role at the Institution: International Coordinator |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| Completed course/module: The student takes contact with the study counsellor/program director or eqv. The student is responsible for attaching all information about what he/she wishes to get recognized in the current education: transcript of records, syllabus, course literature, work experience etc. All documents are reviewed and it´s decided if the course can be recognized in the program of studies. Study counsellor/ program director or eqv filles out the administrative forms for recognition of the course and makes formal decision about the recognition. Student receives the decision by e-mail. If the decision is positive, the Exams office will register the decision in the student administration system. If the decision is negative, the student can appeal the decision to The Higher Education Appeals Board. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| 1. Guidelines from UKÄ, the Swedish Higher Education Authority (SE) |

## Tampere University, Finland

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Mira Kauppinen<br>Role at the Institution: Specialist |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| Student needs to apply for the recognition in student information system, copy of transcript is needed. The process of counting the credits towards degree can take the form of inclusion, substitution or both. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
|     1. Tampere University Student's Handbook (Online) (EN)<br>       - Recognition of prior learning<br>       - Returning from student exchange |

# Hamburg University of Technology, Germany

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Elvira Wilberg<br>Role at the Institution: Director International Office and Institutional Erasmus + Coordinator |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |

A. Regular Erasmus exchanges

Works with Digital Learning Agreements as it is compulsory for Erasmus
• International Office provides the digital platform
• Students lists both, the subjects to be taken at the host institution and the subjects to be replaced at the home institution.
• Departmental coordinators check the lists, eventually ask for amendments then sign virtually
• Data package sent to host institution via EWP
• In case that host institution is not connected, same data are sent via email
• Host institution agrees or denies. Eventually same steps to be repeated until agreement is there
• DLA changes possible during mobility, same procedures as above
• As automatic recognition is compulsory the exam office is only informed about successfully completed subjects using a service list. Courses are registered into the local system by the exam office.

B. A special procedure for ECIU challenges:

All TU students have to do one Module of 6 credits in non-technical subjects This could be subdivided in several smaller units. There is a special catalogue with possible Non-Technical-subjects for Master students, where the following ECIU options are included as templates for recognition:
Join Mini Challenges of the ECIU University (3 credit points)
Join Nano Challenges of the ECIU University (1 credit point)
Join Standard Challenges of the ECIU University (6 credit points)

Process:
• Students register for one for more of the above options during normal course registration periods
• Students participate in challenge
• Results registered by the examiner in the exam platform
• There is no documentation of the content

C. Where none of the above models A or B applies there is a last option, which may be usedfor any study achievements taken outside of the university itself:

• Student receives certificate or credits from other institution
• Student applies for recognition at his exam board. There is no specific form, just a letter or Email and submission of the external certificate
• Decision of the exam board
• Exam office registers result provided decision of exam board is potitive
• Open for Bachelor and Master students

| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
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| A. As only digital data packages are exchanged there are no documents that could be sent. But the results correspond to the former Erasmus Learning Agreements as used and known all over European universities.<br><br>B. No forms, only online registrations<br><br>C. No forms |

## University of Aveiro, Portugal

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Sofia Bruckmann / Niall Power<br>Role at the Institution: Head of International Office / ECIU Local Ambassador |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| a) An internal document called "Contrato Pedagógico" (Learning Contract) celebrated and signed between the student and the Academic Adviser (the ECTS Departmental Coordinator), in which, prior to the mobility, and at the time of changes to the original ECTS Learning Agreement, both parties" agree to a plan of equivalences, whereby the block of course units, listed in the right hand column, to be taken by these student tin the host country ("instituição anfitriã") will be considered as substituting and equivalent block of course units at the Universidade de Aveiro, listed in the left-hand column.<br><br>b) The internal request by the ECTS Departmental Coordinator to the Director of Academic Affairs to include the block of course units, successfully completed by the student abroad, in the student's academic record.<br><br>c) The proof that a) and b) have been fulfilled by the University is provided in the "CERTIDÂO") (i.e. the current transcript of records), where the agreed equivalence plan is fulfilled and can be easily detected by the annotation "ER" in the right-hand column of the transcript. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| 1. Fully documented sample student file is annexed, including all the key documents. |

# Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain

| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
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| Name and Surname: Isabel Boncompte<br>Role at the Institution: Exchanges Programmes Coordinator |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| At UAB, recognition of credits is managed by faculties and schools following UAB academic regulations based in national regulation.  There are different ways of recognition of credits:<br><br>- Recognizing the ECTS included in the exchange students' Learning agreements: Passed ECTS are validated to study programme compulsory and elective subjects according to learning agreement and transcript of records.<br><br>- Recognizing extracurricular courses, such as the courses of Languages, Culture, Volunteering and more: Students can get elective ECTS by passing these types of activities.<br><br>- Recognizing activities in the European Diploma Supplement: Other activities, as extracurricular traineeships: Students don't get ECTS but a mention in the Diploma Supplement is included |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| 1.  National Reglations on Transfer of Credits |

# University of Stavanger, Norway

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Trym N. Holbek<br>Role at the Institution: Project manager for ECIU University at UiS |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| The basic required documents in the procedure are:<br>ECTS Learning Agreement (LA)<br>ECTS Transcript of Records (ToR)<br><br>The recognition process takes by means of the following process:<br><br>Upon having selected the exchange destination, the student will apply for pre-approval of learning outcomes planned through an online document in the institutional student desk portal. This portal is used for all formal communication between students and their faculties/international office as well as for other purposes as well. The online form is then channeled digitally directly to the correct faculty where normally the head of studies / study programme head signs the same agreement. In case of Erasmus+ exchange the OLA Online Learning Agreement is employed.<br>Changes to the planned learning agreement can be made and will be followed up through digital communication.<br><br>After the mobility period, the student will use the enclosed Transcript of Records from the host institution as a basis for applying to the faculty/department for formal recognition of the learning achieved, again through the digital student desk system. The student adviser in charge of the student information system will then record the recognized ECTS credits in the student's educational plan for integration into the degree. The role of the central International office is minimal with regards to the process of recognition of ECTS credits from a host institution, as this is considered the responsibility of the faculty/department.<br><br>However, general guidance regarding expectations for full-time studies and information about the destination and their credit system is taken care of by the central office. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| <ul><li>Documents for outgoing Erasmus+ students</li><li>Pre-departure approval for students</li><li>Final approval for recognition for students</li></ul>*Note*:<br>Formal recognition of the learning achieved is processed through the digital student desk system |

## Universita degli Studi di Trento, Italy

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Francesca Briani<br>Role at the Institution: Referent for Erasmus+ K131 Programme |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |

**Learning Agreement for study filling out**
As established by ECTS rules, the first stage for recognition is filling out the Learning Agreement for studies: the choice of the examinations at the Host Institution and the exams passed at UniTrento. In doing this, UniTrento students receive support by the **Erasmus Destination Coordinator**. Furthermore, the students can use the list of the examinations (and proper recognition done) taken by former students previously at each institution

**Credits transfer**
All the passed exams taken at the Host University and correctly added to the Learning Agreement in the on-line registration system Esse3 (and changes, if any) and included in the Transcript of Records are recognized and transferred to the student's UniTrento Career.

**Steps for the credits transfer**
- ✓ The student fills in the Credits Transfer Form according to the Grade Conversion Table (internally created by matching the grading systems of UniTrento and the Host Institutions) and the official Transcript of Records and sends it to **the International Mobility Office**.
- ✓ Once the form has been checked and approved by the International Mobility Office, the student can send it to the **Erasmus Destination Coordinator** for his/her approval.
- ✓ The final recognition of the teaching activities carried out abroad will be approved by the **Departmental Erasmus Coordinator**, who is responsible for each credit transfer procedure and can decide upon each case.

**Rules for the Credits transfer form**
- ✓ If the number of credits is less than the credits of the course of the student's study plan, the student can merge more exams to cover the credits of the UniTrento exam. In this case the courses have to be similar (=same Area of teaching).
- ✓ If the student has exceeding credits, they can use them as:
  - o electives
  - o integration of other exams
  - o compulsory internship
  - o extra credits.
- ✓ In case of missing credits and for a maximum of 3 credits out of the total, it will be possible to request the integration ex officio, subject to the authorization of the Erasmus Destination Coordinator. If the number of credits to be integrated is more than 3, it will be necessary to take a supplementary exam (equal to the number of missing credits) when returning to Trento.
- ✓ The marks received abroad will be transferred to the Italian University Grade system according to the Grade Conversion Table. If the student combines more exams taken at the Host University to replace one exam within the UniTrento study plan, the final mark will be calculated according to the weighted average of the Italian marks already converted.
- ✓ The exams will be transferred as extra credits only if:
  - o the student has already completed his/her Study Plan

- o the student took the exam for his/her personal interest
- o the exam is a language/culture related course.
- ✓ Once the student submits the Credits Transfer Form to the International Mobility Office, the exams will be transferred to their UniTrento Career on Esse3 according to the Study Plan.

**Credits transfer for language courses**
The language courses attended abroad during the mobility period can be recognized as part of the student's career, as long as they are included in the Learning Agreement and certified in the Transcript of Records/other official certificate issued by the Partners, in two ways:
- ✓ as language exam included in the study plan, provided that the exam taken abroad has the same level or higher than the one included in the study plan and has a number of credits at least equal to the one required by the study plan
- ✓ extra credits.

Language and local culture courses cannot be recognized as compulsory or electives.

**Internship (combined with study) recognition**
The compulsory internship can be recognized with exams taken at the Partner University (not language or local culture related courses) as long as they are consistent with the student's course of study for a number of credits at least equal to those required for the internship by the study plan.

**Credits transfer for Master Thesis research**
The Master Thesis Research can be recognized as completed during the Erasmus exchange according to the following conditions:
- ✓ a significant part of the Master Thesis Research and writing of the final paper must be completed abroad under the supervision of the UniTrento supervisor and the Partner University
- ✓ the student must graduate by the Autumn graduation session (October max.)

The Master Thesis Research can be recognized in the record book by considering the credits of the Final Examination/Master Thesis.

**IN CASE OF TRAINEESHIP**

**Learning Agreement for traineeship filling out**
As established by ECTS rules, the first stage for recognition is the Learning Agreement for traineeship filling out. The document in Trento is approved by the **Responsible Person for Traineeship within every study course.**

**Credit transfer**
The student has to submit the Traineeship Certificate, duly filled in and signed, to the **International Mobility Office**. Once the student has submitted all the documents, the International Mobility office transfers the credits to their career. Only if the internship is part of the student's Study Plan, it can be recognized.

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*Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)*

1. UniTrento Educational Regulation/Regolamento didattico di Ateneo (art. 23)

2. Guidelines for International Mobility/Linee guida della Mobilità Internazionale for Department of Economics and Business.

# Institut National des Sciences Appliquées de Toulouse, France

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Name and Surname: Karen Miller<br>Role at the Institution: International Cooperation Officer |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| The student has a predefined and signed educational program (equivalence 30-30). If the student succeeds in all the subjects, in the end of the year, the jury then allows him to gain the credits and pass to the next year or access to the diploma. If the student partially succeeds, the credits validated are capitalized but the student must be able to compensate:<br>- Either immediately by returning a work in the form of exam or project and only when the number of missing credits is low<br>- Or it is validated by compensation, the jury making its decision in a sovereign manner<br>- Or the student must repeat an additional year and validate the missing credits upon obtaining the diploma or moving on to the next year. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| 1. Règlement des études 2022/2023 |

## University of Twente, The Netherlands

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| *Who was responsible for providing this information?* |
| Home Institution:       University of Twente<br>Name and Surname:    Miranda Bönhke |
| *Summary description of the procedure and main actors* |
| The student is awarded ECTS credits for each assignment they pass. The programme assigns fixed numbers of hours to each assignment, project report or exam. According to the the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) each educational programme or group of programmes has an examination board. The examination board is the body that determines whether a student has fulfilled the requirements with regard to knowledge, insight and skills based on the resepective faculty's Education and Examination regulation. Each programme has an Education and Examination Regulation (EER, in Dutch: OER) which regulates the rights and obligations of students with respect to education, tests and examinations. The EER contains all information about your programme. Every year all programmes will renew their EER. The student may find the EER on the website of their educational programme. |
| *Key documents in recognition procedure (in Annexes)* |
| Exemplary for the above, the faculty Behavioural, Management and Social Science of the University of Twente: https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/education/regulations/ |

# Part C – Annexes
(See attached files)