

COMMITMENT TO THE ERASMUS CHARTER PRINCIPLES

Declaration

I, undersigned, declare that if my institution is awarded with an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, my institution will undertake to:

- Respect in full the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion set out in the Programme.
- Ensure equal and equitable access and opportunities to current and prospective participants from all backgrounds, paying particular attention to the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities.
- Ensure full automatic recognition of all credits (based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System – ECTS) gained for learning outcomes satisfactorily achieved during a period of study/training abroad, including during blended mobility.
- Charge no fees, in the case of credit mobility, to incoming mobile students for tuition, registration, examinations or access to laboratory and library facilities.
- Ensure the quality of the mobility activities and of the cooperation projects throughout the application and implementation phases.
- Implement the priorities of the Programme:
 - By undertaking the necessary steps to implement digital mobility management in line with the technical standards of the European Student Card Initiative.
 - By promoting environmentally friendly practices in all activities related to the Programme.
 - By encouraging the participation of individuals with fewer opportunities in the Programme.
 - By promoting civic engagement and encouraging students and staff to get involved as active citizens before, during and after their participation in a mobility or project.

WHEN PARTICIPATING IN MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

Before mobility

- Ensure that selection procedures for mobility activities are fair, transparent, coherent and documented.
- Publish and regularly update the course catalogue on the website of the Institution

well in advance of the mobility periods, so as to be transparent to all parties and allow mobile students to make well-informed choices about the courses they will follow.

- Publish and regularly update information on the grading system used and grade distribution tables for all study programmes. Ensure that students receive clear and transparent information on recognition and grade conversion procedures.
- Carry out mobility for the purpose of studying and teaching only within the framework of prior agreements between institutions. These agreements establish the respective roles and responsibilities of the different parties, as well as their commitment to shared quality criteria in the selection, preparation, reception, support and integration of mobile participants.
- Ensure that outgoing mobile participants are well prepared for their activities abroad, including blended mobility, by undertaking activities to achieve the necessary level of linguistic proficiency and develop their intercultural competences.
- Ensure that student and staff mobility is based on a learning agreement for students and a mobility agreement for staff validated in advance between the sending and receiving institutions or enterprises and the mobile participants.
- Provide active support to incoming mobile participants throughout the process of finding accommodation.
- Provide assistance related to obtaining visas, when required, for incoming and outgoing mobile participants.
- Provide assistance related to obtaining insurance, when required, for incoming and outgoing mobile participants.
- Ensure that students are aware of their rights and obligations as defined in the Erasmus Student Charter.

During mobility

- Ensure equal academic treatment and the quality of services for incoming students.
- Promote measures that ensure the safety of outgoing and incoming mobile participants.
- Integrate incoming mobile participants into the wider student community and in the Institution's everyday life. Encourage them to act as ambassadors of the programme and share their mobility experience.
- Provide appropriate mentoring and support arrangements for mobile participants, including for those pursuing blended mobility.

- Provide appropriate language support to incoming mobile participants.

After mobility

- Provide incoming mobile students and their sending institutions with transcripts of records containing a full, accurate and timely record of their achievements at the end of their mobility period.
- Ensure that all ECTS credits gained for learning outcomes satisfactorily achieved during a period of study/training abroad, including during blended mobility are fully and automatically recognised as agreed in the learning agreement and confirmed by the transcript of records/traineeship certificate. They shall be transferred without delay into the student's records, shall be counted towards the student's degree without any additional work or assessment of the student and shall be traceable in the student's transcript of records and the Diploma Supplement.
- Ensure the inclusion of satisfactorily completed study and/or traineeship mobility activities in the final record of student achievements (the Diploma Supplement).
- Encourage and support mobile participants upon return to act as ambassadors of the programme, promote the benefits of mobility and actively engage in building alumni communities.
- Ensure that staff is given recognition for their teaching and training activities undertaken during the mobility period, based on a mobility agreement and in line with the institutional strategy.

WHEN PARTICIPATING IN EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

- Ensure that cooperation activities contribute towards the fulfilment of the institutional strategy.
- Promote the opportunities offered by the cooperation projects and provide relevant support to staff and students interested in participating in these activities throughout the application and implementation phase.
- Ensure that cooperation activities lead to sustainable outcomes and that their impact benefits all partners.
- Encourage peer-learning activities and exploit the results of the projects in a way that will maximise their impact on individuals, other participating institutions and the wider academic community.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Ensure that the long-term institutional strategy and its relevance to the objectives and priorities of the Programme are described in the Erasmus Policy Statement.
- Ensure that the principles of the Charter are well communicated and are applied by

staff at all levels of the Institution.

- Make use of the “ECHE guidelines” and of the “ECHE self-assessment” to ensure the full implementation of the principles of this Charter.
- Regularly promote activities supported by the Programme, along with their results.
- Display this Charter and the related Erasmus Policy Statement prominently on the Institution's website and on all other relevant channels.

On behalf of the Institution, I acknowledge that the implementation of the Charter will be monitored by the Erasmus National Agencies and that a violation of the above principles and commitments may lead to its withdrawal by the European Commission.

On behalf of the institution, I commit to publishing the Erasmus Policy Statement on the institution website.

Legal representative of the institution

Stefan Willför, Vice Rector, Åbo 11.5.2020

Signature of the legal representative

In the following sections of the application form, you will need to explain how your institution will fulfil the ECHE principles if the Charter is awarded. You are encouraged to consult the [ECHE Guidelines](#) for support in completing this application.

Please note that your Erasmus+ National Agency will monitor your Erasmus Policy Statement and your answers to the questions given in the application. The Erasmus+ National Agency reserves the right to request more information on your activities and propose supplementary measures, for the purposes of monitoring and implementing the Charter principles by your institution.

1. Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)

1.1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff	x
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Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices	x
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Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities	x
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Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees	x
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Partnerships for Innovation	x
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Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation:	x
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1.2 Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the goal of building a European Education Area¹ and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Swedish:

Vid Åbo Akademi är Erasmus+ programmet det största utbytesprogrammet och därmed också det viktigaste. Därtill erbjuds personalen möjligheter att delta i KA2 och KA3 projekt. Ett studentutbyte ger studerande ytterligare en dimension i studierna i form av viktiga vänskapsband och nätverk med människor från andra delar av världen. De som väljer att göra praktik har oftast som målsättning att förbättra sina möjligheter inför sin framtida arbetskarriär. Studenternas möjligheter att placera sig på den framtida allt globalare arbetsmarknaden torde förbättras tack vare de kulturella, språkliga och personliga fördelar de erhåller under både student- och praktikantutbyten.

Lärare ges under sina utbyten möjligheter att bl.a. fördjupa relationerna med samarbetspartner, träna på att undervisa på främmande språk och i en annan kulturell miljö samt diskutera framtida samarbetsprojekt. Personalen ges möjligheter att vid andra universitet, företag eller organisationer förkovra sig i sitt eget yrke eller lära sig helt nya saker som behövs för att kunna utveckla det egna arbetet. Kurserna hittas oftast via IMotion. Det är ytterst viktigt att personalen också får sin internationella dimension i arbetet, det ökar förståelsen inte bara för det egna arbetet och sammanhangen, utan även för all annan utbytes- och internationaliseringsverksamhet.

Åbo Akademi vill erbjuda alla sina studerande och sin personal en möjlighet att ta del av och tillgodogöra sig internationella erfarenheter. Målsättningen är att förse de utexaminerade studenterna med en kapacitet att möta en global arbetsmarknad, förse dem med nödvändiga kunskaper, kompetens och anpassningsförmåga att arbeta som aktiva samhällsaktörer i olika nationella och kulturella miljöer med ett globalt ansvar. Kunskaper i språk och en stark språklig identitet ska vara en central del av utbildningen.

Erasmussamarbetet har utvecklat ett långvarigt samarbete och bilaterala avtal med universitet från olika delar av Europa baserat på hur de passar in på universitetets undervisnings- och forskningsprofil. Avtalen är lämpade både för studerande och forskare samt eftersträvar ett ömsesidigt och balanserat utbyte över tid. Erasmusavtalen baserar sig

¹ For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website: https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

på nära kontakter mellan professorer och personal vid de olika ämnena och med kollegor vid partneruniversitet. De flesta av avtalen och kontakterna har funnits en längre tid och samarbetet är idag baserat på en solid bas. Framför allt har samarbetet med andra Coimbra grupps universitet resulterat i flera andra Erasmusprojekt och fortsätter göra det.

I Åbo Akademi, det havsnära bildningsuniversitetet strategi 2021-2030, står det att vi ska satsa på det strategiska samarbetet med nordiska partner. Det innefattas ett ökat antal joint & double degrees, en utökad samarbetsyta för arbetslivsrelevans och praktikplatser inom utbildningarna samt fler gemensamma forskningsansökningar och sampublikationer.

Universitetet ska också satsa på forskningsgenomslag i Norden och i Östersjöregionen. Vid Åbo Akademi ska campus och lärmiljöer vara inbjudande, tillgängliga, gränsöverskridande och öppna mötesplatser för vetenskapliga samtal, kreativitet och samverkan. Campus ska bidra till att utveckla universitetets unika pedagogiska form och locka studerande, lärare och forskare med olika erfarenheter från när och fjärran.

Åbo Akademi ska präglas av en livskraftig och nydanande synergi mellan forskning och utbildning. Forskningen ska genomgående anknytas till utbildningen för att garantera att varje utbildning har en mångsidig vetenskaplig kunskapsbas. Likaså ska utbildningen knytas till forskningen för att ge forskningen en pedagogisk och samhällelig kontext. Utbildningen ska bidra till bildning och till en bred vetenskaplig läskunnighet, skapa förutsättningar för ett kontinuerligt lärande samt aktivt bidra till att förverkliga FN:s hållbarhetsmål.

Åbo Akademi ska vara en internationell arbetsplats som erkänner och använder sig av kunskapen och förmågorna hos medarbetarna och de studerande: en öppen miljö där alla kan känna stolthet över kvaliteten i de pedagogiska och vetenskapliga samtalen. Åbo Akademi ska präglas av globalt ansvarstagande och ett gott ledarskap, smidiga processer och fungerande stödsystem för verksamheten och för allas välbefinnande. Vid Åbo Akademi ska jämlikhet, jämställdhet, delaktighet, hälsa, karriärvägar, flexibilitet och ansvar utgöra självklara aspekter av den dynamiska studie- och arbetsmiljön.

English:

The Erasmus programme is the largest and most important exchange programme at Åbo Akademi University. The staff have the opportunity to participate in KA2 and KA3 projects. Student exchanges provides students with an additional dimension within their studies, in terms of important friendships and networks with people from all over the world, not to mention the invaluable experience that they gain. Those choosing to do internships, often aim at improving their opportunities for a future career. The students' possibilities to place themselves on the global labour market in the future should improve thanks to cultural, linguistic and personal benefits they achieve through both student and trainee exchanges.

During the exchanges, the teachers are offered the opportunity to among other things, deepen their relationships and cooperation with their partners, learning to teach in a foreign language in a different cultural environment and discussing future cooperation projects. The staff are given the opportunity to learn and improve skills needed in their work, as well as adopt best practices from other universities, enterprises or organisations, and implement them in their daily work. They mostly find the training courses through the database IMotion. It is very important that our personnel also have the opportunity to experience an international dimension at work, as it increases the understanding, not only for the own work, but for all other exchanges and internationalization activities within Åbo Akademi University.

Åbo Akademi University wants to offer all of its students and personnel the possibility to take part and assimilate in international experiences. The goal is to provide the graduate students the capacity to meet the global labour market, provide them with the necessary knowledge, competence and adaptability to work actively in different national and cultural environments with a global responsibility. Knowledge in languages and a strong linguistic identity are an important part of the education.

The Erasmus cooperation has developed a long-standing cooperation and bilateral agreements with universities from different parts of Europe based on how they fit the University's teaching and research profile. The agreements must be appropriate for both students and researchers, and seek to achieve a reciprocal and balanced exchange over time. The Erasmus agreements are based on close contacts between the professors and staff at the different departments, with colleagues at the partner universities. Most of the agreements and relationships have lasted for a very long time and the cooperation today is built on a solid foundation. Above all, the partnerships with the other Coimbra Group universities, have led to several other Erasmus projects and continue doing so.

Åbo Akademi University, the Swedish-speaking university, Strategy 2021–2030, states that we are going to invest in strategic collaboration with our Nordic partners, which includes an increased number of joint & double degrees. It also includes an enhanced co-operative platform for working life relevancy and practical training within the degree programmes and a higher number of joint research applications and joint publications. The university will also invest in enhanced research impact in the Nordic countries and within the Baltic Sea region.

At Åbo Akademi University, the campuses and learning environments will be attractive, accessible, boundary breaking with open meeting points to facilitate scientific discourse, creativity and collaboration. The campuses will contribute to developing the unique pedagogical form of the university while attracting students, teachers and researchers with different backgrounds and experiences from near and far.

Åbo Akademi University will be characterised by dynamic and innovative synergies between research and education. Research will be consistently linked with education in order to ensure that each study programme is based on versatile scientific knowledge. Correspondingly, education will be linked with research in order to provide research with an educational and societal context. The education will provide broad general learning and scientific literacy, create a foundation for lifelong learning and contribute to the implementation of the UN sustainable development goals.

Åbo Akademi University will be an international workplace that recognises and utilises the knowledge and competences of the staff and students; an open environment where everyone can feel proud of the high standard of pedagogical and scientific discourse. Åbo Akademi University will be characterised by global responsibility and good leadership, smooth processes and well-functioning support systems for the activities of the university and the well-being of all individuals. Within Åbo Akademi University, equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, health, career paths, flexibility and responsibility are self-evident aspects of the dynamic environment for studies and work.

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Swedish:

Erasmus student-, praktikant-, lärar- och personalutbyten inom KA1 är de viktigaste och även kvantitativt de största inom Åbo Akademis utbytesverksamhet. Internationella utbyten uppmuntras i Åbo Akademis nya strategi. Universitetet har en centraliserad enhet för Internationella ärenden. Erasmus Institutional Coordinator ansvarar för IIA, utresande studerande, lärar- och personalutbyten, budgeten, projektansökningar och rapportering. Två

koordinatorer har ansvar för processandet av ansökningar av inkommande studerande. Alla processer görs i nära samarbete med ämneskoordinatorerna. Studenttutorer välkomnar studerande när de anländer och håller kontakt med dem under deras tid i Finland. De akademiska koordinatorerna godkänner studieplaner för både utresande och inkommande studerande och de är också ansvariga för tillgodoräkningen. En person vid Arbetsforum ansvarar för praktikanterna. Bland andra ges följande service åt de inkommande studerandena; informationsmaterial som är tillgänglig före och vid ankomst, kurskatalog, studieorienteringsvecka, språkkurser, sociala evenemang, studenttutorer, boende, studenthälsovård, Studentkårs och ESN aktiviteter, social integrering och akademisk handledning av ämneskoordinatorer. För de utresande studerandena erbjuds; informationstillfällen om möjligheter till student- och praktikantutbyten under det akademiska året, informationsmaterial, handledning vid ansökningsskedet, stöd vid val av kurser och tillgodoräkning av ämneskoordinatorerna, kick-off tillfällen före utbytet och välkommen hemtillställning. Universitetet uppmuntrar lärar- och personalutbyten. Ansökan, bokningar och rapporteringsprocedurer har gjorts så klara och enkla som möjligt för att uppmuntra personalen till mobilitetsperioder. De delar även sina erfarenheter med kollegor och genom universitetsbloggar. Information skickas till personalen i början av det akademiska året och upprepas under årets gång och det är löpande ansökningstid. Målsättningen är att göra lärar- och personalutbyten så flexibla som möjligt.

Intresset bland vår akademiska personal att delta inte bara i KA1, utan även i KA2 och KA3 projekt, har ökat under de senaste åren. En av Erasmus Joint Master Degrees, *EACH, Excellence in Analytical Chemistry*, har varit framgångsrikt i flera år. Vi är också stolta över att få koordinera ett KA103 Policy Reformprojekt som går under namnet *Linguistically Sensitive Teaching in all Classrooms (LISTIac)*. Under de senaste åren har universitetet fått inviter att delta i projektansökningar för att etablera European University Alliances. Men, än så länge, har vi varit tvungna att avböja inviterna pga att universitetet är litet i sin storlek och därmed rädslan för att ett så stort projekt kunde bli en för stor börda. Hur som helst, Åbo Akademi kan komma att ställa sig till förfogande som en associerad partner i ett lämpligt projekt. Projektdeltagande bör vara baserat på hållbarhet eller leda till ett hållbart samarbete. Allra helst bör flera anställda och studerande vara involverade i projekten för att bygga upp en naturlig säkerhet.

English:

The Erasmus student, trainee, teacher and staff exchanges within KA1 are the most important and the largest part from the quantitative perspective, within the exchange activities at Åbo Akademi University. The new strategy of Åbo Akademi University encourages international mobility. The University has a centralised International Affairs office. The Erasmus institutional Coordinator is responsible for the IIAs, outgoing students, teacher and staff exchanges, budgeting, applying for funding and reporting. Two coordinators are responsible for processing the applications of incoming students, as well as providing welcome services and study advisory. All the processes are done in close cooperation with the departmental coordinators. Student tutors welcome the students upon arrival and keep in touch with them throughout their stay in Finland. Academic coordinators approve the study plans made by the incoming and outgoing students and they are also responsible for the credit transfer. At the career services one person is in charge of the traineeships. Among other things, the following services are offered to the incoming students; Information material available before and upon arrival, course catalogue, a survival guide, orientation week, language courses, social events, student tutors, housing, student health care services, student union and ESN activities, social integration, mentoring by departmental coordinators. For the outgoing students the following services are offered; information sessions about exchange study possibilities and traineeships throughout the academic year, information material, guidance when applying for a mobility period abroad, mentoring concerning the course selection and credit transfer by departmental coordinators, pre-departure information sessions, and welcome back home events. The university supports and promotes teaching and staff mobility. The application, travel arrangements and reporting procedures are made as clear and as simple as possible in order to encourage the staff to participate in a mobility period. Information is sent to the staff in the beginning of the new academic year and repeated during the year, as there is no application

deadline, in order to promote flexibility of mobility within the institution. The aim is to make the staff mobility as flexible and easy as possible to encourage international cooperation. Once our staff return from their mobility period, they are encouraged to share their mobility experiences with their colleagues via university blogs. The sharing of international experiences is encouraged to inspire all staff to utilise their access to staff mobility and reiterate the importance of meeting international colleagues face to face.

The interest among the academic staff at our university to participate in, not only KA1 projects, but also in KA2 and even KA3 projects, have increased over the past years. One of the Erasmus Joint Master Degrees, *EACH, Excellence in Analytical Chemistry*, has been a success for several years now. We are also proud of coordinating a KA103 Policy Reform project called *Linguistically Sensitive Teaching in all Classrooms (LISTIac)*. During the recent years, our university has also received invitations to participate in project applications for establishing European University Alliances. However, so far, we have sadly had to decline these invitations due to the small size of our university and thus the fear that such a big project would be more of a burden. In any case, Åbo Akademi University is open to participate in a suitable project as an associated partner. The project participation will have to be based on sustainability or lead to a sustainable cooperation. Preferably, several staff members or students should be involved in the projects in order to build in a natural back-up.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Swedish:

Under den nya ramprogramperioden kommer Åbo Akademi att fortsätta med student-, praktikant-, lärar- och personalutbytet inom Erasmusprogrammet såsom tidigare. För tillfället orsakar dock Covid-19 pandemin en del osäkerhet. Vår målsättning är att minska en aning på samarbetsavtalen och behålla de samarbetspartners som verkligen är av intresse för både våra studerande och vår personal samt för våra samarbetspartners. I gengäld ska vi försöka utöka samarbetet angående antal utbytesplatser med partnererna. Vi kommer att följa tidtabellen för de olika momenten i European Student Card initiative, med början med IIA och nomineringar och antagningar 2022 och studieprestationerna 2023. Förhoppningsvis är det mesta ihopkopplat med SoleMove och våra nationella system i god tid. Blended Mobility är också troligtvis en ny del av programmet som kommer att fungera väl under de kommande åren. Våra studerande tvingades snabbt övergå till den formen av undervisning redan våren 2020.

Resultaten i EU Surveys under de senaste åren har visat att vi gör saker rätt, vi får höga nöjdhetsprocenter på så gott som samtliga frågor. Det vi måste förbättra är våra

kurskataloger. Trots att vi har kursinformationen tillgänglig vid det akademiska årets start har studerande inte varit nöjda med tidpunkten för den, ej heller med dess tillförlitlighet. Universitetet har ändrat systemet för kursinformationen och det har funnits problem under övergångsperioden. Nu när det nya systemet är i bruk kommer situationen att bli bättre under de närmaste åren.

Åbo Akademi eftersträvar att erbjuda attraktiv och effektiv undervisning på engelska för både inkommande internationella studerande och för inhemska studerande. En större integrering eftersträvas. Kurser på engelska bör erbjudas inom större programhelheter och erbjudas på en sådan nivå att inkommande utbytesstuderande kan delta i dem. Det innebär att fler kurser på engelska bör erbjudas på kandidatnivå.

Intresset bland vår akademiska personal att delta inte bara i KA1, utan även i KA2 och KA3 projekt, har ökat under de senaste åren och kommer troligen att öka ännu mer. Samarbeten baserar sig vanligtvis på tidigare kontakter och projektsamarbeten och lyckas därför riktigt bra.

Åbo Akademi informerar om utbytesmöjligheter till de inhemska studerandena under det akademiska året, med focus på mer information på hösten innan den interna ansökningsperioden inleds. Antalet utresande utbytesstuderande har minskat under de senaste åren, inte bara vid Åbo Akademi, utan i Finland generellt. För att få bukt med minskningen, har Internationella ärenden vid Åbo Akademi gjort en aktiv insats genom att diskutera med samtliga ämnen angående vilka terminer som bäst lämpar sig för mobilitetsperioder i de olika studieprogrammen. Förhoppningen är att Åbo Akademi ska kunna hänvisa till lämpliga utbyteterminer så att studerande redan då de inleder sina studier, vet när de kan åka på utbyten. På så sätt kan studerande planera sina utbyten bättre och i god tid. Åbo Akademi ställer sig också optimistiskt till "Blended mobility" och hoppas att programinslaget kan leda till ett ökat intresse för utbytesstudier.

English:

During the new framework programme period Åbo Akademi University will continue as before with student, trainee, teacher and staff exchanges. However, the Covid-19 pandemic is causing an uncertainty for the moment. Our goal is to reduce the number of cooperation agreements to an extent and keep the cooperation partners that are of interest to our students and staff, as well as for our cooperation partners. In return, we will try to expand the number of exchange places with these partners. We will follow the timetable set for the European Student Card Initiative, starting with the IIAs and the sending and receiving of student nominations and acceptances will follow in 2022, and finally exchanging transcripts of records in 2023. Blended Mobility is also probably going to be a part of the programme, which will work well during the coming years. Our students have had to adapt the form of education already in spring 2020.

The results in the EU Surveys during the past years show that we are doing the right things; we receive high percentages of satisfaction in most of the questions. However, we must improve our online course catalogues. Even though the course information is available at the beginning of the academic year, the students have not been satisfied with the timetable, nor with the reliability of the content. The university has changed the system of delivering course information and in the transition period, there has been some problems and challenges. Now, that the new system is up and running, the situation will be better in the coming years.

Åbo Akademi University strives to offer more attractive and effective education in English for

incoming international students, as well as for domestic students. In fact, there was a record amount of students applying to Åbo Akademi University in spring 2020 and therefore greater integration is called for. Courses in English should be offered within larger and more appropriate course packages, and offered at such levels that our incoming exchange students can participate in them. This requires that more courses in English would also be provided at bachelor's level. With fewer yet more focused cooperation agreements, we are positive that a wider variety of courses available in English at bachelor level will be easier to achieve, as we will be able to target certain specific departments, which have key cooperation's.

The interest among the academic staff at our university to participate in, not only KA1 projects, but also in KA2 and even KA3 projects, have increased during the past years and will most probably increase even more. The cooperation is usually based on earlier contacts and project cooperation and is therefore successful.

Åbo Akademi University promotes mobility opportunities to its domestic students throughout the academic year, focusing on extra promotion in the Autumn semester just before the internal application period. Outbound domestic mobility has seen a decrease over the recent years, not only at Åbo Akademi University, but also throughout Finland. In order to reverse this decrease, the international team at Åbo Akademi University is now making an active effort to discuss with all departments in order to understand and plan optimal mobility periods for all domestic students depending on their specific degree studies. This is done with the hope that having clear mobility periods from the beginning of their studies, will increase and improve the students' ability to plan their mobility periods in advance. Åbo Akademi University also hopes that the blended mobility programme will also help this situation.

Please explain the measures taken in your institution to respect the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion of students and staff. Describe how your institution ensures full and equitable access to participants from all backgrounds, paying particular attention to the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities.

In the strategy for Åbo Akademi University 2021-2030 it is written that "Åbo Akademi University endeavours to enhance diversity, inclusion, equality and sustainability". Furthermore, it states "Within Åbo Akademi University, equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, health, career paths, flexibility and responsibility are self-evident aspects of the dynamic environment for studies and work". <https://www.abo.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AAU-strategy-2020.pdf>

In accordance with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, this means a number of things. The university commits to offer possibilities to participate in exchange activities within the Erasmus programme to both students and personnel and also to allocate stipends in a fair, clear and documented way. During the past years, we have been able finance everybody that wished to participate in student, traineeship, and teacher and staff mobility periods since the budget has allowed us to do so.

Everybody has the opportunity to participate in mobility activities, no matter their background (economic, social, cultural, geographical or health). We have traditions of sending students with a variety of different physical restrictions on exchange. We have also sent more mature students and students with small children on exchange. We offer the same opportunities for incoming students, providing special equipment during teaching and examinations as well as easy accessibility to all university buildings. Wherever possible, Åbo Akademi University tries to arrange the teaching so that it is suitable for people with special needs, regarding both physical accessibility, psychological challenges, social accessibility and dyslectic difficulties. Åbo Akademi University also offers support in matters regarding learning, study techniques, time management, stress management, reading and writing difficulties as well as other special needs. Special library Celia produces and distributes literature in accessible formats, such as talking books and braille books, together with public libraries and publishers. In addition to fiction and non-fiction, Celia also produces and distributes textbooks in accessible formats to all educational levels. There is a study coordinator handling the arrangements based on the background information given by the student. Information can be found at <https://www.abo.fi/en/study/already-in-2/plan-your-studies/accessability/>

Internationalisation at home is offered to all students automatically thanks to the international based curriculum of courses as well as the integration of both exchange students and international master program students in the regular classes. Vice versa, the incoming students reported in the EU-Survey 2018 that 89 % of them had a good or very good level of integration in the everyday life at Åbo Akademi University. (87 % on national level).

Åbo Akademi University has used the ECTS principles since the pilot phase and has succeeded well. All credits gained during an exchange period are recognized, the marks are transferred and the exchanges are mentioned in the Diploma Supplement. Online course catalogues are available for students, both for them studying in Swedish and in English and are continuously updated. Students coming to the university as exchange students pay no tuition fees. Students who have spent their exchange at our university will receive a transcript of records some (5) weeks after the exchange period. Incoming students are well integrated at our university thanks to the orientation courses, buddy system, student organization activities, academic coordinators and the familiar atmosphere at the departments. Incoming

students also have the same rights and access to support as all domestic students including health care services and student discounts.

We will also offer possibilities to participate in blended mobility in the coming framework programme and the new mobility will be recognised the same way as the traditional mobility. Online education has been delivered already for some time. During the Covid-19 outbreak spring 2020, this way of studying and teaching was the everyday life for all students and teachers, also including incoming exchange students. Due to the EU-Survey results from 2018 as many as 91 % of the incoming exchange students were rather or very satisfied with the quality of teaching methods at Åbo Akademi University (81 % on national level)

Information for outgoing students can be found at: <https://www.abo.fi/studerautomlands>

Information for incoming students can be found at: <https://www.abo.fi/exchange>

Information for teachers and personnel can be found at the intranet.

Please explain what measures your institution will put in place to implement the European Student Card Initiative, and promote the use of the programme's Erasmus+ mobile App to students. Please refer to the timeline indicated on the European Student Card Initiative website².

Åbo Akademi University will follow the timetable set for the European Student Card Initiative and implement the different modules. The same applies for Erasmus Without Paper. The first parts, inter-institutional agreements and online learning agreements will be in use at the latest by year 2021. The Erasmus Institutional Coordinator has been testing the IIA model via the Dashboard in March 2020 and it has been working rather well. Some suggestions of improvements have been sent through the Finnish National Agency. The Erasmus App may also be used, however, in order for the students to have as much benefit from the app as possible, it should be further developed.

Sending and receiving student nominations and acceptances will follow in 2022 and finally exchange transcripts of records (Emrex) 2023. The intention is to connect some parts, where possible, with the already existing software used at the university. Åbo Akademi University uses the 3rd party mobility software provider called SoleNovo and thus the program SoleMove. Our hope is that all necessary parts will be connected in order to also suit the programs used on a national level. Both students and administrators, and to some extent the academic coordinators, are working with the software. The digital skills are secured thanks to guides and training sessions. Moreover, SoleMove has a Yammer channel where all coordinators may post their questions, ideas and tips for all the users to benefit from.

² https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-student-card-initiative_en

Please explain how your institutions will implement and promote environmentally friendly practices in the context of the Erasmus+ programme.

The Åbo Akademi University strategy for 2021-30 says the following: Åbo Akademi University plays a significant role in international research and education for the benefit of a sound and sustainable living environment, especially within the shared Baltic Sea region. Åbo Akademi University carries out research and education to advance an inclusive and open society. The research contributes to resolving social challenges and meeting the sustainable development goals set by the United Nations. The education brings up ethically responsible citizens, researchers and professionals with appreciation for the shared living conditions of human beings, animals and nature. The currently existing research profiles are:

1. Solutions for Health
2. Technologies for a Sustainable Future
3. The Sea
4. Minority Research

Åbo Akademi University invests in strongly reduced environmental loading as well as the development of general awareness of environmental issues and responsible ways of working, with due consideration of the environmental loading caused by the activities.

Where the Erasmus programme is concerned, Åbo Akademi University will do its utmost to implement digital mobility management in accordance to the European Student Card Initiative. Furthermore, we have already implemented environmentally friendly solutions by not printing and sending material but having most documentation on-line. The exchange applications for incoming and outgoing students are also completely online; no papers are distributed or required for the application process.

Blended mobility may be a possibility for the students who do not wish to physically spend a longer time abroad. Students are also made aware of the possibilities to travel by ferry and train to their exchange destination. Would there be a cooperation between the Coimbra Group (and eventually the Erasmus programme) and EURail in the future, it would make the possibilities even smoother for the students. Our vision is to be the gateway to the other Nordic countries and the entire Baltic Sea region, which is close enough to make it possible. The students are also offered studies in "Sustainability studies".

Please explain how you will promote civic engagement and active citizenship amongst your outgoing and incoming students before, after and during mobility.

The focus in the study programmes at Åbo Akademi University is on the students' learning. While gaining broad competence and ability to think independently and reflectively, they also possess scientific literacy in fields outside of their own, and eagerly assume new knowledge at a high level. They are provided with skills for active engagement in the ever-changing future. (Strategy 2021-2030).

The exchange students are active students. While they are abroad, they engage themselves in learning more about the host country, about the different cultures of their new international friends and they create valuable networks for the future. They write feedback reports with tips and ideas for the future exchange students, and act as ambassadors, abroad when representing their own universities, but also when they return and tell other students about

their experiences. Outgoing exchange students who have returned home are welcome to present their experiences in events like orientation weeks and so called “new start” days, where Åbo Akademi University promotes mobility periods to its new degree students. They work as student buddies/tutors helping incoming exchange students and arranging different activities for them. All this is encouraged by the staff at Åbo Akademi University.

Incoming students and trainees are also integrated in the university society; they have student buddies and tutors from the very beginning, before their arrival to Finland, guiding them through the initial phase. The departments at the university are rather small and have a familiar atmosphere where everybody is welcomed, among both local students and staff. A Welcome Dinner hosted by the Rector of Åbo Akademi University is the official welcoming for all exchange and new international degree students and it serves simultaneously as a welcome home dinner for those students who have returned to Åbo Akademi University from their exchange studies. An invitation is also extended to international coordinators at the different departments as well as those teachers that teach in English. Before the dinner, usually a couple of students and staff hold short presentations of their mobility experiences. The dinner is usually held at the end of September and is a perfect way for people to meet and mingle.

The Friendship Programme offers the international visitors (students, teachers, researchers) and local families a chance for mutual cultural exchange and unforgettable experiences. With a friend from the local community, it is possible to learn more about Finnish culture and everyday life. All activities within the Friendship Programme are voluntary. It is up to the international visitor and his/her friend to decide what they want to do together and how often they meet. The participants of the programme are Finnish people and families living in Åbo/Turku or the neighbouring areas. The friends can be of different ages ranging from students to retired people.

Erasmus in Schools (EiS) is the flagship project of ESN and the main activity within the education cause of SocialErasmus. The project aims to promote mobility at an early age. The Finnish sections organise visits to elementary and secondary schools so that our exchange students can be involved in a wide range of activities that include country and culture presentations, language sessions and mobility promoting activities. Erasmus in Schools is a nationwide project aimed at all Erasmus students interested in visiting local schools during their stay in Finland. This project offers a great opportunity for exchange students to get to know the Finnish culture and school life better, as well as share their experiences, promote their own home country and encourage Finnish students to study abroad. Erasmus students can visit Finnish comprehensive schools (grades 1-9) and upper secondary schools.

Each academic year some incoming exchange students also act as “assistant teachers” in the language courses organized by the Language Centre at Åbo Akademi University. The students usually assist in English, French, Spanish and German language courses.

Among other things, the following services are offered to the incoming students; Information material available on-line before and upon arrival, course catalogue, orientation week, language courses, social events, student tutors, housing, student health care services, student union and ESN activities, social integration, mentoring by departmental coordinators. For the outgoing students the following services are offered; information sessions about exchange study possibilities and traineeships throughout the academic year, information material, guidance when applying for a mobility period abroad, mentoring concerning the course selection and credit transfer by departmental coordinators, pre-departure information sessions, service during the exchange and welcome back events.

All incoming exchange students are offered a student tutor, a fellow student at Åbo Akademi University, to help with practical matters when settling in and as a contact during the

exchange period. The tutors will usually be in contact with incoming exchange students 3-4 weeks before arrival. The tutors work on a voluntary basis and have been trained for their task. Each tutor leads a group of 3-6 exchange students, and the group meets often at the beginning of the semester and at regular intervals during the stay. The assistance of a fellow student is invaluable, in particular at the beginning of the study period. The orientation programme is mandatory for all incoming exchange students at Åbo Akademi University. The orientation programme gives the students useful information about the university, the studies, student services, as well as some cultural insights. During the orientation course the students register at the university, register for courses, meet the tutors and all the other exchange students.

Please demonstrate your commitment to implement full automatic recognition in your Higher Education Institution.

Please describe the concrete steps you will take to ensure the full automatic recognition of all credits gained for learning outcomes achieved during a mobility period abroad/ a blended mobility, according to the Council Recommendation on Automatic Mutual Recognition³.

The outgoing exchange or trainee students make learning or training agreements before their departure together with their academic coordinator at the department or at the faculty in case of a multi-disciplinary study plan. The content of the learning agreement consists of courses corresponding to 30 ects/semester. The minimum a student is allowed to study corresponds to 20 ects/semester. However, during the past years the average credits/semester has exceeded 30 ects/semester, which is a very good result. Training agreements usually consist of fewer credits. The learning agreement is sent to the host university. Changes in the learning agreement are discussed with the academic coordinator. When the students return and receive their Transcript of Records, all the courses are transferred, including the credits and marks, into the home university's study register. The host university's name is mentioned for each course studied abroad. The exchange is mentioned in the degree diploma and in the Diploma supplement. The recognition is 100 % in case the students follow the given instructions. The same procedure will be adopted for the Blended mobility. The procedures are described at <https://www.abo.fi/studerautomlands>.

The incoming exchange students must complete a "Transcript Request" at the end of their exchange period in order to receive an official transcript of records of the studies completed during the exchange. All coursework must be handed in before departure from Åbo Akademi University in order to ensure that all courses will be recorded in the transcript. Courses can only be recorded whilst the student is registered at the university. The registration for the autumn will be in force until 31 December, and the registration for the spring or the academic year will be in force until 31 July. It can take between 3-8 weeks to get the transcript depending on when the courses have been completed and how they have been registered. The original transcript is sent in the postal mail to the student's home address, in addition a scanned copy of the transcript is sent to the student, and to the coordinator named in the exchange application to ÅAU.

³ The text of the Council Recommendation on Automatic Mutual Recognition may be found at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1568891859235&uri=CELEX:32018H1210\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1568891859235&uri=CELEX:32018H1210(01))

Please describe your institution's measures to support, promote and recognise staff mobility:

The strategy of Åbo Akademi University states that the university invests in increased internationalisation and competence development for employees in all fields. The internal information concerning the application, travel arrangements, implementation and reporting is made as clear and as smooth as possible. The staff also share their mobility experiences with their colleagues through various methods for example, in the university blogs. Information about teacher and staff exchange is sent in the beginning of each academic year directly to the departments and through the Staff newsletter and is repeated during the year. Information is made visible on the intranet, furthermore information meetings are held at departments when needed. The aim is to make the staff mobility as flexible as possible. The Rector's welcome dinner (taking place every autumn) for new incoming exchange students, international master program students, returning exchange students, staff and students tutors starts with some short speeches about exchange experiences, and the teachers and staff have also contributed during this event. The participation of former exchange students, new international students and staff who have completed a mobility period is considered a very valuable and clear signal to students of the importance of everyone taking part in internationalisation, as well as our staff who also complete regular international trainings to boost their competence. An active effort is made to keep staff and personnel updated about any cooperation/staff days held at our partner universities. The university newsletters and news channels are used to communicate quickly and effectively to everybody at Åbo Akademi University about mobility news, updates and deadlines.

Please provide the web link where you will host the Erasmus Policy statement in the future. Please reflect on how you plan to regularly promote the activities supported by the Programme.

The staff at the International office will continue to inform on all parts of the Erasmus programme as we have done before. Our national programme agency arranges informative webinars and seminars concerning the application procedures for those who want to participate in projects within the KA2 and KA3 and help with the applications is also given at the university. The grant writers at Åbo Akademi University sometimes also assist the staff with the application proposals.

The strategy of Åbo Akademi University promises "to invest in increasing the proportion of externally funded projects: projects with funding from the EU, Nordforsk, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and ERC (European Research Council); engagement in European research networks and national Centres of Excellence and other spear head research initiatives". Sufficient resources shall be allocated to support project participation and there will be administrative and financial management support.

The participation in the Erasmus programme is promoted through the Internet, Social media

channels, Instagram stories written by students, blogs written by staff, newsletters and information sessions on different levels and for different audiences.

The ECHE Self-Assessment result overview shows that our own percentage was in general higher than the country average in all the questions. This is true except for “Your institution provide all of the information and support for incoming Erasmus+ participants to enable them to prepare for and make the most of their exchange”. The problem during the recent years has been the course information. Incoming exchange students have not been satisfied with the information available in the course information. The university has changed whole course database as well as the study guide connected to it and in the transition period, there has been some problems and challenges as we also remodelled the processes related to curriculum planning. Now, once the new system is running, the situation will be better in the coming years.

The Erasmus Policy Statement will be controlled from time to time and be updated when needed. The EPS will be published

in Swedish at <https://www.abo.fi/studera-hos-oss/ak-utomlands/aka-pa-utbyte/vart-kan-jag-aka/europa/>

and in English at <https://www.abo.fi/en-study-study-abroad-exchange-students-partner-universities/>

Please describe how you will ensure that the principles of this Charter will be well communicated and applied by staff at all levels of the institution.

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education will be published at the same Internet pages as mentioned in the previous question. They will be easy to access, for both domestic and international students and staff. References may be done to both the ECHE and the EPS in different project applications.