



Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

Erasmus Mundus & External Cooperation

ERASMUS MUNDUS 2009-2013 - ACTION 1 A

ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTERS COURSES

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR

STUDENT SELECTION & SCHOLARSHIP MANAGEMENT

This document is addressed to EMMC coordinators. It describes the basic elements and minimum requirements for the selection of EM students (section A), as well as for the management of EM scholarships (section B). It is meant to safeguard the application of EM rules as well as provide support and guidance in the actual scholarship management process.

Section A focuses on the student selection process, concerning both EM scholarship holders and students admitted to the EMMC without an EM scholarship. It presents a set of minimum requirements to be followed during this process as well as guidance on how best to manage the most crucial parts of the process. The minimum requirements are presented with a tick box which must be marked. In the last part of the section you are requested to confirm by signature that in your student selection process you have adhered to these requirements.

Section B provides information and guidance on how to proceed during the EM scholarship application process, and how to manage the EM scholarship attribution and monitoring in the EACEA Mobility Tool (EMT).

SECTION A. STUDENT SELECTION PROCEDURE

The Erasmus Mundus programme requires that an Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (EMMC) has a **JOINT application, eligibility, selection and admission criteria** for their students as well as for those scholars that apply for an EM mobility scholarship.

The selection procedure and criteria are to be **designed and agreed upon by all members of the consortium and are subject to the approval of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (the Agency)**.

This section presents a set of **minimum and mandatory** requirements to be followed during the student selection procedure. Please confirm the information by ticking the corresponding box(es). In case of multiple options, choose those applicable to your EMMC. For any other information, use the free text part at the bottom of each section.

The EMMC coordinator is requested to validate by signature and on behalf of the EMMC consortium that the procedures described in this document will be implemented during the five master course editions covered by the Framework Partnership Agreement. Any changes to the procedure will have to be reported to the Agency in the context of the EMMC periodic reporting obligations.

A.1 EM MASTER COURSE WEBSITE

Detailed information on the joint course content, on the students' enrolment procedure and on the EM scholarship application must be included on a EMMC dedicated website that addresses all the elements contained in the "Recommendations for an Erasmus Mundus Joint Programme Website" available under the following link:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/beneficiaries/documents/action1/website_recommendations.pdf

- a) The EMMC has a dedicated website (linked to the consortium partners' websites) that contains all the elements included in the above mentioned Recommendations.

A.2 STUDENT APPLICATIONS

*Information concerning the **application procedure, timetable** (deadline for application, estimated time for the notification of results, appeal deadline, etc.), **eligibility and selection criteria** must be **available to all potential applicants at the latest 3 months before the scholarship application deadline**.*

*Although consortia are free to define **different requirements, eligibility and/or selection criteria for the different mobility/specialisation tracks** they offer, these should be clearly indicated in the scholarship application documents. However, while the consortium can ask for the student's "preferred" mobility tracks (/host institutions), in order for instance to ensure a balanced distribution of students among the different partners, such **mobility preferences cannot play a role when selecting the scholarship candidates** nor when selecting a "reserve list" student in case of cancellations/drop-out from a "main list" student.*

- a) The EM student scholarship application form is published on the website and is:

- downloadable (and to be filled in by a word processing application)
- to be filled in online through an integrated application database
- b) Information relating to individuals (personal data) is collected and used in accordance with Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on "the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data"¹
- c) The application form contains **all** the data listed below

Personal co-ordinates of the candidate, year of birth, (European format) CV, proof of nationality² (copy of passport), certified (translated) copy of university diplomas, certified (translated) transcript of study results, (certified copy of) language test results, (if applicable) preferred mobility track, motivation letter, recommendation letters and references, description of the eligibility criteria for an EM scholarship³ and declaration from the candidate that these criteria are fulfilled, description of the selection criteria, procedure and timetable.
- d) The candidate is informed that if he/she is selected (proposed for a scholarship, put on the reserve list, or enrolled on a self paying basis) his data may be used for the purposes of evaluating the Erasmus Mundus Programme and will be made available to the Agency, the EM National Structures, the EU Delegations and the Erasmus Mundus Student and Alumni Association, acting as stakeholders of the programme

A.3 SUBMISSION, REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY CHECK OF STUDENT APPLICATIONS

It is the consortium's responsibility to ensure that all candidates proposed for an EM scholarship (on the main and on the reserve list), fulfil the EM scholarship holder's eligibility criteria.

- a) Student applications are submitted by (*multiple choice possible*):
 - post
 - e-mail
 - via an online application database
- b) The **eligibility check** on applications is performed by:
 - the coordinating institution only
 - the coordinating institution and some partner institutions
 - the whole consortium
- c) All applications are subject of an **acknowledgement of receipt**

¹ Guidelines on "Data Protection in the European Union" are available at the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/privacy/docs/guide/guide-ukingdom_en.pdf

² Candidates with multiple nationalities must decide at application stage under which ONE nationality they apply.

³ Nationality and residence, 12 months rule, application to a maximum 3 EM Joint Programmes, non EMMC scholarship holder previously, etc.

d) The eligibility check covers **all** the aspects listed below
Respect of application deadline, completeness of the application file, eligibility of the candidate in relation to the EM criteria.

e) The **eligibility decision** on student applications is taken by:
- the coordinator/partner institution(s) that performed the check
- an "Eligibility Committee"
(if different from the Selection Committee, specify composition under g) below)

f) Ineligible applicants are:
- informed immediately after the eligibility check
- provided with the reasons of ineligibility
- provided with information on the appeal procedure⁴

g) Other information on this section (if relevant)

A.4 QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS

The assessment of candidates applications is performed in accordance with joint selection criteria agreed among the consortium partners and involves the partner institutions as well as external bodies (if applicable).

a) Each eligible EM Scholarship application will be assessed by:
- one assessor
- two assessors
- more than two assessors

b) The assessor(s) is/are member(s) of *(multiple choice possible)*:
- the coordinating institution only
- some of the partner institutions
- all partner institutions
- organisations that are not full partners of the consortium
(if other actors are involved, specify below)

c) Assessor(s) involved in the assessment of applications sign(s) a "Non conflict of Interest" declaration

⁴ The purpose of the appeal is to verify that the procedure has been applied correctly and in accordance with the principles communicated to the candidate and that no error has been made while processing the candidate's application.

d) The quality assessment is based on **all** the criteria listed below

Very good/outstanding study results (= academic excellence) in the relevant study areas, academic potential, level of language skills, motivation, recommendations, work experience and professional qualifications (if applicable), results of interviews(if applicable).

e) Other information on this section (if relevant)

A.5 STUDENT SELECTION

*The selection exercise must result in an **absolute ranking list of candidates in decreasing order of merits.***

*Please note that **there should be a maximum of two different ranking lists** (one for Category A and another for Category B candidates). The only exception to this requirement applies to joint programmes that have different admission (/selection) criteria in accordance with the different mobility/specialisation tracks offered. In these cases, these different tracks should be clearly identified and each candidate should be linked to the track(s) of his/her choice.*

- a) The selection decision is based **only** on the ranking list
- b) The **selection decision** includes the Main and Reserve list of selected students under each of the two categories of scholarships.
- c) The two Reserve lists reflect the absolute ranking order of scholarship candidates
- d) The minutes of the "Selection Committee" meeting are signed by **all its** members
- e) **All** members of the "Selection Committee" sign a "Non conflict of interest" declaration
- f) Please provide a description of the "Selection Committee" composition (origin and function of the members)

g) Other information on this section (if relevant)

h) Non-selected students⁵ are:

- informed immediately after the selection committee
- informed about the rejection reasons

⁵ "Non selected students" are eligible students who do not fulfil the consortium selection criteria and who would not be enrolled in the EMMC even on a self paying basis

- provided with information on the appeal procedure

Non selected candidates should be informed immediately without waiting for the formal scholarship selection notification from the Agency.

It is the consortium's responsibility to **ensure that all the candidates proposed for an EM scholarship have the necessary academic (/linguistic) expertise to actively follow the joint programme and have serious chances to conclude their EMMC study period successfully.**

In the event that EM scholarships have been offered to students who did not have the required (/minimal) academic (/linguistic) knowledge at recruitment stage, the Agency may decide to request the full reimbursement of the scholarship amounts concerned.

At the end of the students' selection and at the latest by the scholarship application deadline specified by the Agency, the data of all selected (mains and reserve lists) and non selected students will have to be recorded in the EACEA Mobility Tool (EMT) in accordance with the instructions and requirements specified in the EMT User Manual (<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/mobility/>).

See **SECTION B** for further information on how to proceed in order to create and manage the main, reserve and non selected lists of scholarship candidates.

A.6 INFORMATION TO THE APPLICANTS

Following the formal award notification by the Agency (within 60 days of the scholarship application deadline), consortia must immediately inform all those applicants who have not been informed yet about the result of their application.

While it is recommended to pre-inform the main and reserve list students immediately after the Selection Committee decision (in order to allow them to get prepared well in time and to avoid that the candidates apply to other fellowship schemes), this information must specify that the official fellowship confirmation will only be given after EACEA's notification to the consortium (i.e. around the second half of April following the fellowship application deadline).

The Agency cannot be made responsible for the communication made by the consortium to scholarship applicants prior to the official grant award notification.

a) All applicants are notified by:

- post

- e-mail

b) For the students placed on **EM reserve list**, the notification includes:

- the results of the quality assessment

- Information regarding the management / use of the reserve list

- the procedure to follow for an appeal to the selection decision

c) For the **EM students proposed for a scholarship**, the notification includes:

- the official EACEA letter of approval
- a model of the Student Agreement
- Student guidelines/handbook with practical information on the EMMC
- The scholarship amount

A.7 ARCHIVING OF STUDENT APPLICATIONS

a) **All** selected applications are archived (min. 3 years):

- in paper form
- electronically

b) The archived applications include:

- The eligibility assessment(s) for all applications
- The quality assessment(s) for eligible applications
- The Eligibility and Selection Committees' minutes

A.8 DECLARATION

I declare on behalf of the EMMC consortium that students will be selected in a manner respecting principles of transparency and equal treatment and in accordance with the above mentioned requirements.

Name of the EMMC Coordinator:

Date:

Signature:

SECTION B. SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION AND MANAGEMENT

B.1 CREATION OF THE SCHOLARSHIP CANDIDATES LISTS

At the latest by the Agency's scholarship application deadline, all data related to the student scholarship applicants will have to be encoded in the EACEA Mobility Tool (EMT) following the instructions contained in the corresponding User Manual.

On the day of the above mentioned deadline, the database will be closed and it will not be possible to include new data or to update the existing one anymore.

In order to prepare their lists of scholarship candidates, consortia should follow the following approach:

- a) On the basis of their absolute ranking list(s) of candidates, consortia must start including the students in the **main list** following the order of merits.
 - Candidates must be separated in two different lists corresponding to the two categories of EM student scholarships (students eligible for a specific window must be included under the Category A list).
 - If the main list already includes two students with the same nationality, the following students with the same nationality must be placed on the reserve list or if eligible, on an available window list⁶.
 - Please note that **if a consortium cannot use all the scholarships offered in one of the available categories (because of insufficient eligible applicants), it cannot use the remaining scholarships for students falling under another category.**
- b) The order of the students in the **reserve list** must correspond to the order of the students in the absolute ranking list. Please note that
 - There is one reserve list for Category A (including the specific "Windows") and another one for Category B candidates;
 - If the joint programme includes different admission and selection criteria in accordance with the specialisation/mobility track, these must be clearly specified in the minutes of the selection committee meeting as well as in the absolute ranking list, in order for the Agency to authorise the replacement of main list candidates by a reserve list ones in cases of withdrawals or drop outs.
- c) Contrary to the main and reserve list, the data on the "**non selected list**" does not need to provide all the details on the candidates but only their nationality and gender. This information can be grouped and recorded in the EMT in batches (e.g. 22 Chinese females, 15 Colombian males, etc.)

The "non selected list" includes all the candidates who do not fulfil neither the EM scholarship eligibility criteria, nor the joint programme admission requirements (i.e. student who would not be admitted in the programme even on a self paying basis).

⁶ This rule applies "per Category" and the geographical windows are considered separate categories. This means that a consortium can include, for instance, two Turkish candidates on its main list for category A, another one in the "Western Balkans & Turkey" window, and another two-should they have resided more than 12 months in Europe during the last 5 years - under category B.

In addition to these EM student scholarship lists, prior to the beginning and during the implementation of the EMMC, consortia will have to keep track of the:

- **"non scholarship holders" students' list:** This list available in the EMT will have to include all the students who have enrolled in the EMMC without an EM scholarship. If a "reserve list" student decides to enrol in the master course on a self paying basis, he will have to be moved in the EMT from the "reserve list" to the "non scholarship holders" list (the EMT will indicate the previous status, i.e registration on the reserve list of the student, in a history log file). Only those self paying students, that have been (initially) listed on the EM reserve list can profit from EM fellowship in the event of EM fellowship cancellation or Drop-out.

Contrary to the main and reserve lists that will be closed by the scholarship application deadline, the "non scholarship holders list" will remain open for inclusion of new names until the end of October of the academic year concerned, in order to allow consortia to recruit and enrol students up to the beginning of the EMMC edition.

- **Scholar scholarship holders' main list⁷ :** In accordance with the programme requirements, consortia are free to determine their own scholars' selection procedure and calendar.

The scholar scholarship data do not need to be introduced in the EMT by a given deadline but can be introduced at any time during the EMMC implementation in accordance with the specific selection calendar agreed upon by the consortium.

B.2 INFORMING THE SCHOLARSHIP CANDIDATES

By the third week of April at the latest, after the Agency has performed its eligibility check and defined the individual EMMC grant proposals, all consortia will be informed of the result of their scholarship application and be in a position to communicate the relevant information to its scholarship candidates.

- If a consortium wishes to inform its "main list" candidates in advance of the Agency's formal notification - in order, for instance, to provide them with more time for preparing their arrival in Europe and, more specifically, obtaining their visa - it will have to do so under its own responsibility, ensuring to avoid any misunderstanding on the enforceability of its notification if, at the end of the selection process, some of the students concerned were not offered a scholarship.
- In its notification to the candidates who have been offered a scholarship, the consortium must provide detailed information on all the necessary elements to enrol in the joint programme on time. For third country scholarship holders this concerns most particularly the visa requirements but also all other cultural, logistic, administrative, linguistic, etc. elements required to ensure an efficient starting of their joint programme activities. The notification must also specify the exact amount of the scholarship, the different elements composing this amount and the way it will be paid to the student during the joint programme.

⁷ Because scholars are selected all along the EMMC implementation period there is no need to include them in a reserve list. As soon as the selection decision has been taken by the consortium and the scholar has confirmed his/her acceptance of the scholarship, he/she can be included in the main list.

- It is recommended to include in the scholarship notification a deadline by which the students must confirm their acceptance of the scholarship and, for third country students, a request for confirmation, that they have launched the necessary procedures for obtaining their visa for the first European host country. This may reduce the risks of late withdrawals and allow for the replacement of withdrawn candidates well in time before the beginning of the course.
- The notification should also specify the academic/linguistic levels of competence expected from the students prior and during the joint programme, in order to receive and continue receiving the scholarship payments.

Despite of the quality of their student's selection procedures, consortia may be confronted with cases in which the student's actual capacity, skills and/or levels of competence in some crucial areas (linguistic, academic, psychological, etc.) will not allow him/her to participate in the joint programme with serious chances of graduation at the end of it.

In order to address these types of situations, consortia must put in place in the early days of the programme specific evaluation tests that will allow them assessing the student's capacity to efficiently follow the joint programme.

The results of these tests will allow the consortium and the student concerned to reinforce individual teaching and learning strategies in order to correct weaknesses in the student academic (/linguistic) levels of competence, and increase his/her chances of success at the end of the programme.

However, if, after having been given a chance to re-sit, the student's performance is still far below the consortium's minimal performance requirements, the scholarship offer must be withdrawn.

The nature, calendar, expected performance results and consequences in case of failure of these evaluation and performance tests must be communicated to the students prior to their enrolment in the course and specified in the student agreement that they will have to sign with the consortium at the time of the enrolment.

B.3 MANAGEMENT OF THE RESERVE LIST

The replacement of a "main list" student by a "reserve list" one can only be implemented after formal approval by the Agency.

As a result, consortia must avoid sending formal scholarship offers to reserve list students before the Agency has formally accepted the corresponding replacements.

Request to replace a "main list" student by a "reserve list" one have to be introduced in the EMT in accordance with the procedure described in the relevant section of the User Manual.

When a main list student withdraws, the EM programme requires that he/she is replaced by the first eligible candidate on the reserve list. In this particular case, the eligibility criterion concerns the nationality of the reserve list candidate and the rule concerning the presence of a maximum of two nationals from the same country among the scholarship holders for a given category. If this is the case (i.e. there are already two other students with the same nationality

on the main list), the consortium will have to take the next eligible candidate respecting its own ranking list⁸.

Three exceptions can be accepted to the above mentioned rule.

- a) the first one corresponds to cases where the academic or linguistic background of the first eligible candidate on the reserve list does not correspond to the consortium requirements for the particular mobility/specialization track concerned and it is not possible to reallocate the student under another track. This exception can only be granted to those consortia that have defined different application requirements in accordance with their mobility/specializations tracks and that have clearly identified their main list and reserve list students in accordance with these tracks;
- b) the second one results from timing issues when the scholarship withdrawal occurs shortly before the actual beginning of the joint programme making it impossible for some third country nationals to obtain their visa in time, with no possibility for the student to catch up or to follow the initial stages of the programme through *e-learning* methods. In this case the consortium can propose another candidate but it will have to demonstrate that those who are better ranked will not be able to join the programme in time;
- c) the third exception applies to scholarship withdrawals or drop out that occur once the joint programme has already started. In this case the consortium must propose in priority a reserve list student enrolled in the joint programme on a self paying basis. If more than one student are in this situation, the consortium will have to justify its choice to the Agency prior to informing the student concerned. Please note that it is only under these circumstances that a Category A or B scholarship can be offered to a student appearing on the reserve list of the other category.

⁸ In very particular circumstances, where there are no candidates of other nationalities available on the reserve list, the Agency can make an exception to the geographical balance rule. Requests for such exceptions must be clearly justified and are not automatically granted.