

Agreement on the Bachelor of Arts Project in Applied European Languages September 2019.

Preamble

Considering that the European Union needs flexible, mobile employees and entrepreneurs with excellent applied linguistic skills and intercultural knowledge;

Considering that the European Union is interested in promoting co-operation and mobility between universities, as attested by the Bologna process and the EU's exchange programmes;

Considering that universities of the European Union aim to produce responsible, informed and critical graduates;

Considering that there is a growing number of students with a partially international background and outlook for whom a degree with a strong European bias is a necessity if they wish to optimize their careers;

Considering that existing Bachelor programmes in applied language studies, despite their growing awareness of the importance of the European dimension, largely continue to educate for local markets, limiting stays abroad to an (optional) period of 3 or 4 months;

Considering that a prolonged stay abroad can dramatically increase linguistic skills and intercultural knowledge;

Taking into account the fact that the European Institutions encourage the design of integrated programmes and double degrees by consortia of higher education institutions;

Considering that a Bachelor programme leading to multiple certification also prepares graduates to be admitted to a wide range of Master programmes in different member states;

Relying on the success of the existing AEL programme and its precursors;

Considering that a jointly organized bachelor degree project contributes to the sharing of good practices with respect to curriculum design, the formulation of learning outcomes and the use of assessment criteria,

the signatories agree, subject to approval by the competent authorities in their universities and where applicable to approval by their accreditation organizations, to co-organize a bachelor degree project in accordance with the description below:

Art. 1 – Member universities

(1-1) The Bachelor of Arts project in Applied European Languages, hereinafter AEL, is constituted in close co-operation by:

- Technical University of Cologne (Technische Hochschule Köln), Germany
- University of Granada (Universidad de Granada), Spain
- University of Oviedo (Universidad de Oviedo), Spain
- Aix-Marseille University (Aix-Marseille Université), France
- University Toulouse Jean Jaurès (Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès), France
- Ghent University (Universiteit Gent), Belgium
- Kaunas University of Technology (Kauno Technologijos Universitetas), Lithuania
- University of Limerick, Ireland

(1-2) For each individual student one university will function as the home university i.e. the university where the student starts and finishes the degree programme (see Article 5).

Art. 2 – The AEL degree programme

(2-1) The signatories agree to each organize a programme at undergraduate level comprising 240 ECTS credits (i.e. equivalent to a full-time course of four academic years) leading to the learning outcomes specified in Article 4 of this agreement and structured according to the principles set out in Articles 5 and 6.

The programme shall be designed in such a way that it is constituted for about 50% by credits of an existing bachelor degree curriculum at the home university (hereinafter referred to as “the local bachelor degree”) and for about 50% by credits obtainable from partner universities in the AEL consortium.

(2-2) The programme shall be implemented by each participating university respecting its own local framework of regulations:

- Where-required, partner universities shall conclude separate agreements on granting double degrees with individual partners in the consortium.
- Partner universities whose regulations allow them to continue or create a double or multiple degree agreement with one or more partners, shall first award their local bachelor degree to the students upon successful completion of the 240 credit programme, after which the students may also obtain the degree(s) from partner universities.
- Partner universities whose regulations do not allow a double or multiple degree arrangement in the context of this programme, shall instead issue exchange certificates for the period of study at their university. A template shall be drawn up specifying the details that the certificates shall mention. The credits earned via exchange certificates shall be recognized towards the student’s 240 credit programme.

The following exchange and degree certificates may be issued by the participating universities to students from other universities who successfully complete 240 credits of the AEL programme:

- Technical University of Cologne (Technische Hochschule Köln), Germany: BA in Multilingual Communication
- University of Granada (Universidad de Granada), Spain: Grado en Traducción e Interpretación
- University of Oviedo (Universidad de Oviedo), Spain: AEL Exchange Certificate
- Aix-Marseille University (Aix-Marseille Université), France : Licence, Langues étrangères appliquées (English-German or English-Spanish); Maîtrise, Langues étrangères appliquées
- University Toulouse Jean Jaurès (Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès), France: AEL Exchange Certificate
- Ghent University (Universiteit Gent), Belgium: AEL Exchange Certificate
- Kaunas University of Technology (Kauno Technologijos Universitetas), Lithuania: BA of Humanities
- University of Limerick, Ireland: to be decided.

(2-3) While the individual universities remain free to use their own names for their local bachelor degrees, they shall all use the name “Applied European Languages” and/or the abbreviation “AEL” in their communication about the AEL programme.

(2-4) In addition to the degree certificate(s) and exchange certificates, graduates shall receive the usual transcripts of records and diploma supplement(s), in accordance with the guidelines of the

European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES. The home universities shall be responsible for supplying these diploma supplements.

Art. 3 – Administrative co-ordination

(3-1) Each of the partner universities shall appoint a local co-ordinator who will form part of the Joint Committee of the AEL programme.

(3-2) Each year an annual meeting of the Joint Committee shall be organised by one of the partner universities. They shall take this task in turns deciding at the end of each meeting who will be the organiser of the next meeting.

(3-3) The local co-ordinator of each university will liaise with the other co-ordinators and shall be responsible for the smooth functioning of the AEL programme at his/her university.

(3-4) Under no circumstances shall the Joint Committee formed by the local co-ordinators propose rules that contravene any of the regulations in force at the partner universities. Any proposal that requires approval by the partners' authorities shall be submitted by the local co-ordinator to the appropriate bodies at his or her university.

Art. 4 – Objectives

The AEL programme shall aim at achieving the following learning outcomes:

- An excellent command of the mother tongue and two other languages, to level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- An excellent knowledge of the culture and institutions of the main countries where the two foreign languages are spoken and in particular of the countries where the languages have been studied.
- A good knowledge of applied subjects. Partners shall be free to offer either one or both of two alternative streams of applied subjects:
STREAM 1 BUSINESS: the subjects in this stream shall deal with topics such as economics, business administration, law, European Institutions
STREAM 2 OPEN: the subjects in this stream can vary but shall have an applied nature; examples include: acquisition or perfection of an additional language, advanced translation skills, interpreting skills, language technology, applied communication management etc. Partners shall decide whether they leave their own students a choice between the two streams or not and they shall make clear which streams they can offer to incoming students.
- Academic and research skills as required for admission to postgraduate study.
- For those not having English as their mother tongue and not taking English as one of their main subjects of study: a good working knowledge of English (B2 or near-B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

The graduates of AEL are intended to pursue careers in businesses and organizations, as employees or as self-employed entrepreneurs, or as translators and/or interpreters. On completion of the AEL degree programme the students shall be qualified to apply for or take up postgraduate studies.

Art. 5 – Structure of the degree programme

(5-1) The degree programme shall consist of four programme units of 60 credits each. Students shall attend the first programme unit at their home university, the second at a partner university and the third at another partner university which shall be different from the partner university attended in the second programme unit. For the final 60 credits, the students shall return to their home university.

(5-2) In principle, each partner can exchange students with any other partners in the AEL consortium as long as all the parties involved agree. However, each partner shall be free to restrict exchanges to specific partners only.

Art. 6 - Curriculum and credit structure

(6-1) The AEL curriculum shall consist of three major components:

Component 1: Study of Foreign Language 1, including linguistic study, language practice, translation and area studies.

Component 2: Study of Foreign Language 2, including linguistic study, language practice, translation and area studies.

Component 3: Applied Subjects, either of the Business stream or of the Open stream.

Further subjects (like Supplementary English) may be agreed between partners on the basis of the student's language combination and specific needs or interests.

(6-2) The programme units offered by each partner university to each individual student (cf. article 5) shall always reflect the above course structure.

(6-3) For each of the three components, the total number of credits may be spread unevenly across the four programme units. However, by the end of the fourth programme unit the student should have completed a minimum of 60 ECTS credits for Component 1, a minimum of 60 ECTS credits for Component 2 and a minimum of 30 credits for Component 3.

(6-4) Students shall attain level B2 for at least one of the two foreign languages (Components 1 and 2) after the second programme unit; they shall attain level B2 for both languages after the third programme unit. They shall attain level C1 for both languages after the fourth programme unit.

Art. 7 - Teaching methodology

(7-1) The courses combine theoretical and practical approaches to the subjects studied. Classes can combine contact courses with coursework and projects. Work placements are also allowed but shall be subject to prior approval of the Joint Committee and relevant university authorities. Courses shall be at a level that guarantees the development of academic and research skills.

(7-2) In accordance with EHEA/ECTS requirements, course descriptions specifying learning outcomes, the contents and methods used and the methods of assessment, shall be available to all students via the partners' websites and/or learning environments.

Art. 8 – Rules of assessment

(8-1) At each stage of the programme, the students shall be subject to the regulations of the university at which they are studying. This shall also apply to rules of assessment and exam regulations, including rules for re-sits and, where appropriate, for Degree Classes, within the limits specified in (8-2) below.

(8-2) AEL students shall have the right to as many re-sits per subject they have failed as local regulations allow.

Students of the second and third AEL years who also fail the re-sit(s) may instead take a different, additional subject in a subsequent year of their programme, provided that both universities agree. Where regulations allow it, the credits gained in a subsequent year may be recognized by the previous university and counted towards the 60 credits that may be necessary to obtain the degree certificate of that university.

Where regulations allow the previous university to grant credits after the student has left the university, a student who has obtained fewer than 60 ECTS credits at the end of a programme unit may be permitted to proceed to the next destination on condition of re-taking the subject(s) failed at the previous university, in which case the rules and procedure shall be as follows:

- The university whose subject(s) the students has failed will remain the evaluating institution.
- Examination papers corresponding to the failed subject(s) will be sent to the new host institution by the evaluating institution;
- The host institution will organize the examinations in compliance with the regulations in force in the evaluating institution.

(8-3) Conversion tables shall be applied based on the statistical distribution of grades published by each university for each degree programme in accordance with the method described in the ECTS guide available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/grade-distribution_en.htm

Art. 9 – Selection of students and student flows

(9-1) Admission to the programme depends on the criteria, rules and procedures established at the home university, without intervention from any of the partner universities. Once a student has been admitted to the programme he/she shall, after having completed 60 ECTS, automatically be admitted to the next level of study at the next university. Admission to the third and fourth AEL years may also be conditionally granted when fewer than 60 ECTS credits have been obtained, under the circumstances explained in (8-2).

(9-2) In selecting students for the AEL programme, partners shall strive to choose students with excellent academic potential.

(9-3) The partners shall inform each other regularly, and at least once a year, of the number of students that they intend to send and of their planned itineraries. A uniform format shall be agreed for sharing this information.

Art. 10 – Enrolment, examination and graduation fees

(10-1) Students enrol at their home university for the full duration of the programme and pay fees to that home university during the full duration of the programme. Students also enrol at the partner universities where they study as part of the degree programme but are exempt from enrolment fees in these universities during the duration of their studies.

Wherever possible, reciprocity shall be aimed at with respect to the numbers of students exchanged.

(10-2) For national funding purposes, students will be regarded as admitted as full degree-seeking students at the home institution only.

(10-3) Students may exceptionally have to pay fees in connection with re-sits where the host university regulations require it. This requirement will be agreed upon in writing bilaterally between the universities affected in each case and students will be clearly informed in advance.

(10-4) Where applicable legislation requires it, a fee shall be payable in order to receive the degree certificate.

Art. 11– Financial plan

In the event that the consortium is able to attract funding for the AEL project through subsidies or sponsorships (other than the normal grants awarded by education authorities to individual universities), these funds shall be redistributed as agreed by the Joint Committee during the Annual Meeting. The following are among the costs that would be eligible for compensation through funds obtained by the consortium:

- costs related to the organization of the annual meeting
- costs for bilateral or multilateral meetings to negotiate aspects of co-operation between partner universities
- costs incurred for the exchange of external examiners between universities
- costs incurred while applying for funding
- financial compensation for inequalities in numbers of exchanged students.

If the consortium does not generate any income, the Joint Committee will propose how the expenses mentioned will be met, subject to the agreement of the institutional authorities.

Art. 12 – Quality assurance

(12-1) The AEL programme shall be subject to the internal and external quality reviews that are customary at each partner university. Where possible, QA documents will be shared.

(12-2) Quality assurance of the degree programme shall respect the standards of the individual universities as well as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area: https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf).

(12-3) Any significant changes to the AEL academic itinerary and recognition of studies shall be agreed by the Joint Committee and submitted to the relevant university authorities for approval.

(12-4) Where appropriate, partner universities shall be encouraged to agree on an exchange of external examiners for key subjects, thus contributing to unified standards of assessment.

(12-5) Every fourth annual meeting the Joint Committee shall make a general assessment of the quality of the programme as a whole. Key criteria will be: whether the AEL programme as it is run in practice adequately fulfils the objectives stated in Article 4; whether student numbers are at an acceptable level; whether the programme has remained coherent; whether the programme still has the backing of the authorities at each partner university. If it is agreed that the assessment is favourable, the Joint Committee at the Annual Meeting shall decide by simple majority to propose the renewal of the present agreement automatically for another four years. If the assessment is not favourable, the Joint Committee shall decide by simple majority whether the problems concern details that may be corrected without the need for a new agreement; or whether the present agreement should be replaced or annulled. In the latter case all registered students shall have the right to complete their course of study.

Art. 13- Mobility liability

Students and staff who are involved in geographical mobility within the framework of this partnership are required to be in good standing with respect to:

- administrative authorisation to enter and reside in the territory of the host institution (in particular, visa and residence permits);
- social security coverage and more particularly health insurance;
- repatriation insurance;
- civil liability.

Art. 14 – Partners’ obligations not stated elsewhere

(14-1) Partner universities undertake to supply as best they can all the information needed at all stages of the co-operation.

(14-2) Partner universities undertake to be co-operative in the organization of quality assessment of the programme.

(14-3) Partner universities agree to ensure, as best they can, the smooth organization of the programme, including the timely communication of exam marks (transcript of records). In particular, they shall inform each other of

- (a) the approximate dates of semesters and exam periods at their university or department
- (b) the agreed deadlines by which they guarantee the communication of marks, also including the agreed deadlines for the communication of the marks of re-sits.

A common format shall be drawn up that all partners shall use to communicate this information, which they shall update annually.

Art. 15 – New partners

Universities wishing to join the AEL project may apply at any time, preferably at the invitation of one of the existing AEL partners. The Joint Committee at the Annual Meeting shall decide by simple majority on their eligibility for admission to the consortium. They shall become members after their university has accepted all the articles of present agreement by means of a protocol signed by the new partner and all the existing partners.

Art. 16 – Equal Opportunities

Partner universities shall be responsible for ensuring that its procedures for, and interactions with, AEL students conform to the Equal Opportunities Policies of the partner institutions.

Art. 17. – Intellectual Property Rights

The parties agree that the copyright in any teaching and learning materials developed for common use under this agreement, if any, shall be owned by the originating partner or its staff in accordance with each party's policy on such matters. Following completion of the materials, each party shall grant (or procure to be granted) to the other a non-exclusive, non-transferable licence to use such material for teaching purposes within the programme but prohibiting the licensing or selling of the materials to any third party or from making copies of the materials except insofar as is reasonably necessary for the operation of the programme.

Art 18. – Use of Name and Logos

Agreement must be obtained in advance for the use of a partner's name and/or logo by the other institution in any printed or electronic publicity and promotional material.

Art 19. – Data Protection

Partner universities shall ensure that all student records and personal data relating to students enrolled on the programme are processed in accordance with current Data Protection legislation and in particular, but without limitation, are held securely and confidentially. Partner universities shall further ensure that no such data is used or disclosed for any purpose other than so far as is necessary in connection with the administration of the programme.

Art. 20 – Termination of contract

(20-1) Withdrawal clause. Partner universities wishing to cancel the present agreement shall notify the Joint Committee (see Article 3) nine months before the end of an academic year. In this event all registered students will have the right to complete their course of study.

(20-2) Human rights clause. The present agreement may be terminated by any of the parties in case of clear and convincing evidence that one of the partner institutions is involved in a serious violation of human rights. The party wishing to terminate the agreement will give notice of this intention to the partner institution with whom they have an issue, allowing the partner institution due time to respond to the allegations. In the absence of a satisfactory reply or in the absence of a reply in due time, the party seeking to terminate the agreement will reiterate its intention of doing

so. The agreement will cease to have any effects between the complaining party and the other parties in this agreement from the moment that such second notice is given.

Art. 21 – Jurisdiction in the case of disputes

Where a disagreement has not been resolved by mutual consultation, each party may refer the matter for final resolution to a court of appropriate jurisdiction. Where this is standard practice, legal proceedings may first be brought before an arbitration court. Disputes shall be settled by a court of law where the defendant has his/her place of residence.

Art. 22 – Scope and duration of the agreement

(22-1) The present agreement supersedes and replaces any previous agreement or protocol of adherence concerning the AEL programme without prejudice to other existing agreements on co-operation and/or double degrees between the signatories.

(22-2) The present agreement will remain in force until and including academic year 2022/2023. Thereafter it may be renewed once in its present form on mutual written agreement of the partner universities for a further four years.

(22-3) The present agreement shall take effect from 1 September 2019. AEL activities between the then AEL members that took place in 2018/19 are covered by the previous AEL agreement and are recognized as valid in the present agreement.

(22-4) The first of September will be the annual deadline for exchanging the up-to-date information on intended student flows and on crucial dates in the academic calendar, as specified in Articles (9-3) and (14-3) above.

Technical University of Cologne / Technische Hochschule Köln	Aix-Marseille University / Aix-Marseille Université
(Place and Date)	(Place and Date)
(Signature)	(Signature)
(Representative's name)	(Representative's name)
(Representative's function within the university)	(Representative's function within the university)

<p>University of Granada / Universidad de Granada</p> <p>(Place and Date)</p> <p>(Signature)</p> <p>(Representative's name)</p> <p>(Representative's function within the university)</p>	<p>University of Oviedo / Universidad de Oviedo</p> <p>(Place and Date)</p> <p>(Signature)</p> <p>(Representative's name)</p> <p>(Representative's function within the university)</p>
<p>Ghent University / Universiteit Gent</p> <p>(Place and Date)</p> <p>(Signature)</p> <p>(Representative's name)</p> <p>Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy</p> <p>-----</p> <p>(Place and Date)</p> <p>(Signature)</p> <p>(Representative's name)</p> <p>Rector/Vice-Chancellor</p>	<p>University Toulouse Jean Jaurès / Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès</p> <p>(Place and Date)</p> <p>(Signature)</p> <p>(Representative's name)</p> <p>(Representative's function within the university)</p>

Kaunas University of Technology / Kauno Technologijos Universitetas	University of Limerick, Ireland
(Place and Date)	(Place and Date)
(Signature)	(Signature)
(Representative's name)	(Representative's name)
(Representative's function within the university)	(Representative's function within the university)