

# Administrative Guidelines

Version 1.0, June 20, 2023

An online version of this document is available at <http://versatile-erasmus-project.eu/>



## VERSATILE

VERSATILE  
Virtual Education Readiness Semester –  
Adaptive Toolbox for an International Learning Experience

KA226 Strategic Partnership  
2020-1-DE01-KA226-HE-005751

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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# Administrative Infrastructure and Support Services Guidelines - VERSATILE-Project

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# 1. Introduction

These Guidelines are the result of the experiences made in implementing the Erasmus Key Action 226 (Partnerships for Digital Education Readiness) project called VERSATILE: Virtual Education Readiness Semester: Adaptive Toolbox for an International Learning Experience.

The project ran for two years, from the summer of 2021 through the summer of 2023, and consisted of four partners: the University of Derby (UK), the University of Masaryk (Czech Republic), Tampere UAS (Finland) and Rhine-Waal UAS (Germany, lead partner).

The call sent out by the European Commission in the summer of 2020 was a direct result of the consequences of the Covid pandemic. The pandemic presented higher education institutions with the challenges of suddenly having to switch to online and hybrid teaching and dealing with the collapse of physical student and teaching mobility. To aid them in mastering these challenges, the VERSATILE project set out to create the necessary building blocks for a collaborative online semester abroad in the form of a guide to online teaching methods, a model curriculum of team-taught courses in the social sciences and guidelines for an administrative infrastructure. Its goal was to enable deeper collaboration between the project partners and provide other higher education institutions with guidelines to develop online collaborative learning and teaching environments.

Even though the Covid pandemic was the direct cause for the Erasmus call, the VERSATILE project from the outset also set additional goals in providing virtual exchange between international partners to those who would normally meet constraints in deciding in favor of physical mobility depending on family conditions, or students with physical disabilities, students from low income or non-academic backgrounds or international students already studying abroad. As such, the project not only sought to enhance digital readiness provoked by the pandemic but also looked beyond to enable higher education institutions to develop internationalization-at-home practices so that a wider range of students can develop vital future-focused skills, including intercultural engagement, digital literacy and collaborative working in international teams. The project also wanted to provide educators with opportunities to develop their online teaching methods and enlarge their teaching experience and skills through collaborative teaching with colleagues from different institutions. **The fact that the project focuses on students, teachers and university administrators alike, is one of its special features.** As these Guidelines will show, having project teams of academics and administrators collaborating on the same goals is an important starting point for making a virtual exchange project a success.

What also makes the project unique in relation to other virtual exchange projects is the fact that **it allows students to enroll in online courses at four institutions simultaneously, including their home university.** It is this cross-institutional or multilateral aspect of it that sets it apart from other Virtual Exchange Initiatives. As a form of Multilateral Virtual Exchange (MVE) it lets students profit from online study exchange to the fullest extent possible. It incorporates the advantages of virtual exchange compared to traditional in class exchange that by now are already well established, such as strengthening student inclusion in internationalization, lowering the carbon footprint of international exchange and enabling flexibility and innovation in teaching and learning in Higher Education. At the same time, it goes even further since it is the multilateral aspect of it that enhances these advantages and is able to provide greater, multifaceted intercultural experiences making it a unique opportunity for all those involved. Individual feedback from participants highlights the added value of MVEs as being more international and more intercultural than traditional (bilateral) exchange as well as an important means of deepening strategical partnerships and personal networks between institutions through the joint efforts of teachers, students and staff in making such projects a success.

The fact that MVEs are relatively rare, even after a surge of new projects funded during the Covid pandemic, may already indicate the downside of such a scenario. Multilateral exchange means additional legal restrictions cross cutting through several national borders with different administrations, a far more complex constellation of colleagues working at different, non-comparable organizational units, in faculties as well as administration, and generally a greater likelihood for intercultural miscommunication in organization, teaching and learning. The goal of these Guidelines is to provide more insight on how to deal with these challenges as well as concrete tools to be used in setting up future MVEs. As such, the Guidelines are meant to be of interest to anyone in higher education institutions involved in the organization and implementation of Multilateral Virtual Exchange, either in the administration, (student) support services or academic departments and basically cover the entire spectrum apart from academics, teaching formats and delivery.

A final important characteristic of the project is the fact that it is a **small scale, bottom-up project** set up by partners who were already collaborating in internationalization, mainly in student and staff exchange, and that already started a first virtual exchange initiative in the 2020 winter semester, just after the outbreak of the Covid pandemic. This makes the project very different from any larger EU projects like those collaborating in the Erasmus European University Alliance projects that have a more top-down structure and function as 'large ice breakers' for future EU integration in the field of higher education and the necessary measures to make this possible as it was called during a DAAD information meeting.

Even as a 'small ice breaker' however, the VERSATILE project meant an important extension of the existing collaboration by setting up teams consisting of new collaborators and including additional teaching and administrative staff. For those wanting to use these Guidelines for any future projects of their own it is important to realize from the outset that trying to do something similar requires a lot of flexibility and a lot of energy and personal commitment from those involved. Of course, this will come to no surprise to those with more experience in the field and it should not hold back anyone with interest in pursuing the same goals. In fact, all team members pride themselves with the fact that we have been able to set up something meaningful and cover a lot of ground with only limited financial means. The funding received through the ERASMUS program only partly covered the actual number of working hours the project members put into it, as is common within the program. What remains to be an important advantage of implementing a project within the framework of ERASMUS however is that it legitimizes new initiatives in internationalization and may sometimes work as a fulcrum within the institution in order to push for pragmatic, flexible solutions, especially if it concerns a relatively small bottom-up initiative as was the case here.

These Guidelines provide more insight of the institutional and organizational context in which the project was organized, explain as best as possible which alternatives were envisaged and which ones were discarded and which administrative model was set up by the partners. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on issues that were not explicitly planned with when writing the ERASMUS application but turned out to be extremely important for the success of the project. These are subject that go beyond the mere legal, administrative issues and concern marketing and communication as well as larger organizational issues and IT and data protection related questions. What was also missing from the application were efforts regarding student support. Although student support is regarded as part of the administrations' responsibilities at most higher education institutions, it turned out to be important here to make it an explicit effort due to the nature of the MVE semester in which students learn and collaborate strictly online. These efforts came on top on the way the teachers organized their classes and used their own experience in the students' individual and social group learning processes.

In order to provide not only an insight into the administrative processes that laid the organizational groundwork for the implementation of the online semester but also to provide practical lessons learned, the guidelines also provide a set of recommendations for similar

future projects (Chapter 6). In the annexes, those interested in even more practical support will find more documentation and even draft documents that can be copied and used directly for similar projects.

## 1.1 Origin and Scope of the VERSATILE Project

As already mentioned in the introduction, the VERSATILE project originated among partners that were already working together. Since 2017 the so called The Hague Network started as a strategic partnership between The Hague University of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands), The University of Derby (United Kingdom), Francisco de Vitoria University (Spain), Masaryk University (Czech Republic), Tampere University of Applied Sciences (Finland), University of Cagliari (Italy) and Rhein-Waal University of Applied Sciences (Germany). The network is characterized by its diversity in larger and smaller institutions both as research as well as applied sciences universities, geographical position within Europe, location in urban and rural regions and higher education political, legal and financial frameworks, public and private.

During the first years of its existence, first student exchange agreements were signed and mobilities between partners grew. In this process and during regular partner meetings a close personal network of colleagues was established which formed the basis for a swift and pragmatic initiative for setting up a virtual exchange initiative directly after the start of the Covid pandemic. Seeking a substitute for a regular exchange semester, partners looked for existing, English language courses among their peers which resulted in a diverse set of social sciences, politics and communication courses offered online at partner institutions, but also at the home institution. Student evaluations were positive about the overall experience and the availability of courses at partner universities that were not offered at their home institution as well as the quality of the courses. Students were generally also positive about the online group interaction and collaboration within individual courses but missed an overall sense of community. They also were less positive about the additional administrative burden of having to apply and enroll at each institution where they wanted to take courses.

For the VERSATILE project some of the partners of the network, the University of Derby (UoD), Masaryk University (MUNI), Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK), and Rhein-Waal University of Applied Sciences (HSRW) applied for ERASMUS funding in order to develop the initiative into a more structured and sustainable project and:

1. to create viable alternatives to physical student mobility during the pandemic,
2. beyond the pandemic to enable higher education institutions to offer new internationalization-at-home possibilities to students who face mobility barriers,
3. to aid educators in developing their online teaching skills, and
4. to provide new ways in which educators can internationally exchange knowledge and methods.

One of the main differences between the The Hague Network initiative and the VERSATILE project is that is that the latter contains a full semester of courses that are specifically designed for the purpose of Virtual Exchange and team taught by professors from partner universities. Instead of taking a selection of existing online and English taught courses, the VERSATILE online semester focuses on the joint topic of: “European Scenarios in Business, Politics and Societal Change for the Next Decennium”. Each institution has the lead in developing and team-teaching two courses of the online semester. This way, there is clarity on whom is responsible for academic and organizational responsibilities in developing and delivering the courses, while at the same time fostering cross-institutional collaboration and the development of best practices.

From an administrative point of view, one of the major issues that arose from the The Hague initiative was that students needed to apply and enroll at each individual institution. With the VERSATILE project, partners sought to improve on this by looking for alternatives and setting up a joint procedure. In part, these Guidelines are the result of that effort.

## 1.2 Institutional Background of Team Members in the Administrative WP

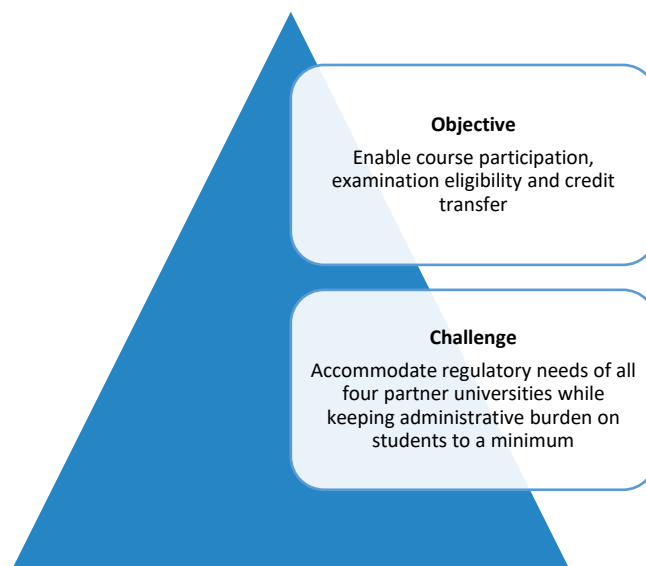
Given the fact that the project was set up as a follow up to a small scale, bottom-up initiative, it did not seek to set up a completely new overall organizational and administrative structure on an inter-institutional level. Rather, an existing, largely informal collaboration was a given and sought to develop a more sustainable structure. To that purpose partners sought to actively involve administrators from each institution and have them work together on a designated working package.

Even within this context of partners working together who have already collaborated in the past, one of the important lessons learned is to get a better understanding of which team members come from which part of their home institution and what their organizational context looks like. All of this aside from differences in national higher education law, finances and cultural differences. As stated earlier, the partner institutions involved in this project are very diverse and so will any future international collaboration for setting up MVEs by other institutions. Within the administrative group working on the VERSATILE project some had direct access to student administration, while others did not and therefore had to involve additional colleagues at their home institution. Some of the working group members were part of the academic department and had more experience with teaching and student need apart from strict administrative issues. Given the broad spectrum of activities set up by the administrative working group, from setting up a streamlined student registration and enrollment procedure to organizing student social events during the online semester, the diverse background of the personal set-up of the working group was an advantage.

In **Annex1** we created a template for an organizational chart that gives an overview of the main characteristics of the institutions' national higher education system, the university's main characteristics and specifically pin point within those institutions which team member is working in what position and what the organizational context of this position looks like. The identification of the cross-institutional set-up of working groups is an important step in the organization and management of an MVE project since it enables a better understanding of what to expect from partners an individual level, make the best use of the capabilities and experience available or look for additional personnel support among partners (see also Chapter 4).

## 2. Module Hosting Possibilities - Three Models for an Administrative Structure

In previous MVE semesters that partners organized, the student administration was done at each different institution (see previous chapter). This makes sense since higher education is organized on a national level and there is no overarching (European) administrative structure that can be used as an alternative. However, one of the goals partners set for this project is to explore alternative administrative models that would make a multilateral VE semester easier to organize among partners and reduce the administrative burden on the students and as such more accessible.



### 2.1 Model 1 - Integrate all VERSATILE courses into Each Partner University's Curriculum

The advantage of a model in which all participating institutions incorporate all the courses that are jointly offered in the curriculum would be that there would be no additional administrative burden neither on the institutions nor on the participating students. Students could stay enrolled at their home institution and receive credits. Partners could agree among themselves who would teach which courses and could even take turns or opt for team teaching, while all administrative formalities would then run through the students' home institution. In other words, student would not need to be enrolled at any of the partner institutions.

It is however clear from the outset that the organization of such a model would mostly still be very extensive since it needs the 'institutionalization' of the entire online semester in place at all participating institutions. The amount of work going in the organizational set up of this model would be extensive before it can start, after which the organizational and administrative burden would only be minimal. This model is comparable to setting up not just a double degree among partners, that guarantees a mutual recognition of study credits, but a joint degree with shared responsibility for the curriculum. This model would probably also



require a top-down approach involving the university leadership enhance the complexity of the process in getting the online semester started.

Finally, one consideration for opting for the model would be the extent to which it would still be perceived as a true international semester. Students for example would only receive a transcript of records issued by their home institution and would not have any official relation to one of the international partner institutions.

### Institutional, legal (national) and organizational challenges at partner institutions

#### TAMK:

The curriculum process is demanding and structured at TAMK, so integrating all VERSATILE courses into TAMK curricula would hardly be realistic in the short term. Students at TAMK are allowed to take only 5-15 ECTS credits of elective courses depending on their own degree program, which limits the possibilities to incorporate this model. It is not recommended to exceed the number of credits. Students can choose elective courses freely. If VE modules were placed in the curriculum of each degree program, it might be confusing for students.

#### MUNI:

At MUNI, students face limitations when it comes to taking elective courses, which restricts their ability to implement this model. Their options are constrained to a predetermined list of electives, and they are not permitted to exceed a certain number of credit points through additional electives, either at their home institution or elsewhere. Moreover, degree programs require a fixed number of electives for students to choose from, which means that introducing a VE semester and altering the elective options would be impossible. However, there is an option to take courses and add them to the list, but that would depend on each department throughout the university.

#### UoD:

At UoD the standard credit value is 10 ECTS, so the development of the curriculum in Derby has resulted in a number of derogations from Academic Regulations. All programs at Derby are validated and there are few opportunities to extend VERSATILE courses at scale into the wider curriculum. The University's Joint Honours Scheme, which does offer some flexibility in terms of credit accumulation is currently closing. However, if the VERSATILE courses were specifically validated into a program, this could be operationalized.

#### HSRW:

Students in Germany are only allowed to take a limited number of elective courses which limits the possibilities to incorporate this model. They are allowed to choose from a set number of elective courses and are not allowed to take additional credit points through a larger number of electives, either at their home institution or elsewhere.

The requirement of having a set number of electives for students to choose from per degree program also means that changing the electives and incorporating a MVE semester would require a re-accreditation of the program by the recognized agency which is generally a long and costly procedure and would need to be implemented for each participating institution on the national level.

## 2.2 Model 2 - All Exchange Students Enroll at One University

Different from the first, this model allows for students from partner institutions to be enrolled as incoming or guest students, except for those at the hosting institution who remain to be enrolled as regular students. It is usually used for (online) student exchange between multiple partners that do not offer a single semester like the VERSATILE project but offer a multi-semester exchange using a ring structure, like the new ERASMUS Blended International Programmes (BIP) that require the participation of at least 3 institutions as well as part of the program to be organized in person. Here, one of the partners hosts all students for one semester after which another partner takes over. This has the great advantage of not having to set up a joint procedure and reduces the administrative burden on the students as well since the only need to register to one partner institution at a time the same way as is the case with traditional bilateral exchange between two international partners. The home institution would thus nominate their outgoing students to the partner institution for the relevant semester. The partner institution is responsible for the administrative and supportive follow up and enrolls the students as incoming exchange students and vice versa. However, a ring structure also means that in case there are four partners involved like in the VERSATILE project, students would at least need four consecutive semesters in order to finish the program because courses are only offered by one partner (including the home institution) per semester at a time.

In order to make this model work for the VERSATILE project all courses would need to be offered by one partner and students would only receive credits from this partner for that particular semester. Another difficulty would be how to make the VE semester interesting for the students at the home institution since the fact that they would not leave their home institution for an abroad study experience would not be offset by anything else than an additional online course offered by their own institution, but offered by teachers from other universities for those courses that are organized and taught by the partner institutions. In other words: in this scenario a cross institutional VE semester would not so much be characterized by an exchange of students as by an exchange of teachers.

If students can take all the courses offered by all partners at one institution in a single semester and different courses are taught by different teachers from the involved partners, then those teachers need to be somehow related to the coordinating institution that officially offers the courses and issues credit to the students. How this is done may be different at different universities and may include outsourcing of teaching activities, giving working contracts to teachers to teach the projects' courses, enlisting them as guest teachers through existing teaching exchange mechanisms or as visiting fellows. The first thing that comes to mind in the EU context here is using the ERASMUS Key Action 131 program for individual teaching mobilities (STT), although this would require those teachers to visit the host university in person (and do the online teaching from there) since this is a requirement for the Erasmus mobility grant. During that time, teachers will be unavailable at their home institution unless teaching hours are blocked and the courses are condensed to a very short time period.

In the end, all partners would somehow be jointly responsible to coordinate the teaching and hiring those teachers, which can only work on a national level within the framework of national laws and regulations for university employers and employees. As a consequence, the project would run into even considerably larger legal and administrative hurdles as is the case with student exchange and student administration.

## Institutional, legal (national) and organizational challenges at partner institutions

For all partners, this option runs into the problems that in order to be able to offer courses, they have to be in integral part of an officially accredited program. Partners do have a varying level of elective courses or projects. However, the number of electives that are part of the curriculum is limited (see 2.2) and so the curriculum does not offer the flexibility to offer a number of courses for a full semester. Another difficulty would be that even though theoretically one institution could act as host if the courses are available, teaching would still in part be done by professors from partners.

Partners offer different possibilities for international visiting scholars to work at a department have organizational support through IT and library access, working station and so on. Mostly, they are formally unpaid temporary employees. This regulation however would be the only way for guest professors to teach the courses of the VERSATILE project and have access to organizational support from the university, but the regulations however may not allow visiting scholars to take over teaching responsibilities. This more or leaves the possibilities for teaching exchange as the only realistic option that would allow an administrative structure that is manageable, but unfortunately unfit to the purposes here.

## 2.3 Model 3 – Exchange Students Enroll at Each Partner University

Given the difficulties of the above scenarios as well as the absence of a cross-institutional European level structure to exchange students between institutions, having them enroll at each institution where they want to gain credits is the only realistic option. It should be no surprise that for any MVE project this is still the rule even within the context of EU project. For example, the Erasmus European University Alliance project EDUC (European Digital UniverCity) that MUNI is part of and that also offers VE and study abroad options at several institutions during one semester also still requires participating students to enroll at each partner university.

In the absence of a truly transnational alternative (even in case of any mutually accredited cross border joint degrees that are extremely rare and will not be discussed here) the advantage for students remains that they will officially have studied in several countries at several institutions and will receive transcript of records of these universities as proof of that. What remains are specific challenges on the institutional level of participating institutions concerning virtual exchange, student administration and credit transfer and recognition on the academic level.

## Institutional, legal (national) and organizational challenges at partner institutions

In this scenario, the biggest obstacle to partners is the fact that for regular exchange programs, students are required to submit all necessary documents and a learning agreement through an established exchange system that is coordinated between administration and academic staff in different ways (see also organizational chart) at the

home institution. A multilateral VE exchange would run parallel to these established procedures, causing additional burden on the administration.

For Rhine-Waal University the main obstacle in this scenario are the so called 'semester contributions'. Public universities do not charge tuition fees but only so called semester contributions twice a year of around 300,- Euros. These contributions, specifically not called 'fees', form a system of student solidarity support and pay for student housing and cafeterias (through a separate organization called the German 'Studentenwerk' or student works), student unions and other representation as well as a ticket for free public transportation within the federal state the university is. At the start of the VERSATILE project the state of North Rhine-Westphalia did not make an exception for online teaching in charging these semester contributions.

HSRW however was able to use the VERSATILE project as an example that that shows why the state government should exempt students who study online from the semester contributions since these students largely do not profit from the existing system. The only federal state allowing this was Baden-Württemberg where there was already legislation from the state government in place for students who study online or for a limited time during the semester being exempted from the semester contribution.

Even though a system based on student solidarity in which they pay a contribution in order to support services that allow all students to take part in higher education is in itself very well justified and interesting in its own right given the unique approach it takes, it becomes particularly problematic in international exchange and even more so in VE. Practically speaking, when a German university wants to offer online courses in collaboration with other institutions internationally, students will refrain from taking part since the semester contributions form a serious negative incentive compared to universities from other countries.

At the start of the project HSRW informed the responsible Studentenwerk in Düsseldorf and requested an exemption for students taking part in the VERSATILE project. The request was taken seriously and discussed in a board meeting in the spring of 2022 but denied on the grounds that it would set an example in undermining the underlying solidarity of the system. In October 2022 the State Ministry of Culture and Education informed the universities that they were allowed to make an exception for online and short term students and incorporate these in their rules and regulations until a new state law would incorporate the exemption. This new possibility however came too late to be incorporated in the VERSATILE online semester administration since making the necessary legal and administrative change at HSRW internally would take several months to implement.

## 2.4 Resulting Model for the VERSATILE Semester and Multilateral Exchange Agreement

In order to offset the administrative burden on the end of the students, the project created an administrative infrastructure first making an inventory of administrative procedures of each partner institution and setting up a joint administrative procedure for the nomination, registration and enrollment of students by means of a central registration portal. This will enable students to use the portal as a one stop shop registration to all courses at all partners. The portal will be hosted by one coordinating institution that will collect and

distribute the information received through the platform so that the actual enrolment of the students can subsequently be done in the back office by the administration of the respective institutions. For the VERSATILE project HSRW will act as coordinating administrative institution, but of course this could be varied among partners for future projects.

It will be clear that this approach is not really a common administrative structure but rather an effort by partners to lift the additional administrative burden from the students to the institutions' administration and enhance the attractiveness of the online semester. The willingness of universities to invest in the additional capacities need for coordinating separate administrative student administrations is however crucial to the success of the project and, unfortunately, without a feasible alternative for the time being. Such an alternative would need to come from the possibility to share students' information and by doing so set up a transnational structure. Within the EU there is a clear willingness to do so, which can be seen for example by EU funded initiatives such as the development of a European student ID or the current Key Action 3 call for applications that would look for the possibilities to use existing European legal possibilities to do exactly this. It is however realistic to expect that it will take some time before universities will have a shared administrative framework that is practicable enough to replace the national systems.

The next step after determining which model to go by for the project is to set up the legal framework for the exchange. To this end partners set up a multilateral exchange agreement (see template in **Annex 2**) that allows all partners to sign one single agreement and agree on the goals and activities of the exchange as well as the legal framework. For future projects that plan an ongoing MVE over the years, partners could choose to add one more clause to the template provided here, by determining how to rotate the role of coordinating partner for the administrative infrastructure.

In the end, partners in the VERSATILE project however chose not to use the multilateral agreement but opt for cross-bilateral exchange agreements among partners in order to make student exchange possible. The reason for this was the lack of agreement on the clause XII 'Jurisdiction' stipulating the country which country's jurisdiction will prevail "to settle any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with this Agreement or its subject matter or formation". Alternatively, the clause could be taken out of the agreement, which would make even more sense in case a MVE is planned to continue over the years and coordinated in turn by different partners.

In any case, having exchange agreements in place is a necessary requirement since they form the legal basis to enroll exchange students without their application as degree-seeking students at that particular institution and full fulfilment of the eligibility to study in that particular county.

## 2.5 Summary and Conclusions

As part of the project, partners took to deliberate on different possible models for a joint administrative infrastructure. Since alternative models to student enrollment all require a substantive top-down initiative at the partner institution, be it in the form of a re-accreditation because of changes in the respective study programs or in jointly managing teaching contracts, a 'traditional' model of enrolling students at the host institution where courses are

being offered, taught and credited is to be preferred. This model leaves to options: either set up a ring structure comprising several consecutive semesters or enroll students at all partners simultaneously.

We choose to do the latter since our goal was to offer one single VE semester. In fact, as we found out, it is exactly the multilateral aspect of the project that set it apart from others. In a sense, by opting for a cross-institutional exchange administrative structure based on the regular procedures for exchange students, we created a unique selling point, making the VE semester different from other options, such as for example within the ERASMUS Blended International Programme.

The next challenge however then became, how to coordinate procedures and reduces the organizational burden on students and administrative staff. This issue will be taken up in the next chapter.

### 3. Administrative Processes for Exchange Students at the Partner Institutions – Similarities and Differences

A large part of the work of the Administrative Infrastructure working group consisted of comparing different procedures and requirements and streamline those in such a way that they would minimize the paperwork for interested students without overburdening the administrators at the back end. The best opportunities for streamlining present themselves at the start of the administrative process so therefore student application and registration and enrollment was given special attention. After students are enrolled at the respective institutions, national legal and administrative requirements are fixed and leave less room to maneuver. At this stage however, this does not need to be problematic since at the end of the administrative process only the issuing of the transcript of records remains as the final administrative step after students having finished classes and taken the exams in the meantime.

#### 3.1 Application Process and Deadlines, Required Application Documents and Data

In order to get a better understanding of the different administrative procedures for exchange student nomination, registration and enrollment, partners set up an extensive excel file for each individual institution. This overview is included in **Annex 3** and gives an indication of the level of extensiveness of required data from students and administrative input. For the purpose of the project, it served as an inventarisation of shared requirements and as a basis for discussion which data to collect from students as a minimum requirement for the purpose of the VERSATILE VE semester.

This step in setting up the administrative infrastructure is an extensive and work intensive one but pays off in the long run since it can be repeated indefinitely once the administrative structure is set and established among partners. It is also a very useful exercise in determining which information is really necessary to be required from students and consider where to limit the organizational and bureaucratic workload, but on the students as well as on the involved administrators.

#### 3.2. After enrollment: Exam Registration, Transcript of Records, Grade Conversion and Credit Transfer

Similar to regular exchange student mobility administration, once students are enrolled at the partner institution, they are subject to the same rules and regulations as regular students. This also means they have the same rights and obligations as regular students and this is an important principle for organized students exchange between higher education institutions. Since universities outside the EU will use a different student credit system and the grading system is different within the EU as well, it is important to clear the way for a swift and problem free transfer of grades and credits before students start with their semester abroad, or in his case, with their online semester at the partner institution. Through a Learning

Agreement both the grade conversion and credit transfer can be coordinated beforehand and prevents disappointment in case it turns out that courses taken by students at the partner university are not recognized by their professors at the home institution.

The academic part of student mobility and collaboration between the administration and the academic departments is an important part of this so that in the next paragraphs special attention will be paid to how course recognition and credit transfer are organized.

### 3.2.1 TAMK Exam Registration, Grade Conversion and Credit Transfer

Students registered at TAMK with a TAMK-issued user account can enroll on courses and exams. Teachers decide the schedule of their course exams and other assessment events. Students are usually informed of the exam at the beginning of the course. Exams can be organized as centrally organized, electronic examinations, or other invigilated exams. Electronic examinations differ from traditional paper-based examinations. Students book a time slot for an electronic exam through the electronic examinations system.

International students are entitled to have a transcript of records on completed studies. They can have the transcript of records in Finnish and/or in English. They should check annually that all completed courses have been entered to the student administration system, and their transcript of records is up to date. They can download an electronically signed and verified transcript of records or a study certificate from the TAMK's study administration system PAKKI. The documents are electronically signed using the certificate of the Population Register Centre of Finland (DVV), which guarantees the authenticity of the electronic signature.

Grade Conversion and Credit Transfer for studies completed in international exchange TAMK follows the credit transfer system approved by the European Union and thus studies and practical training passed abroad are fully transferred to the pursued degree. Transferred studies and practical training are entered to the study register according to the following assessment scale: A = excellent (5), B = good (4), C = good (3), D = satisfactory (2), E = satisfactory (1), and FX = fail (0) or with the marking pass (S).

### 3.2.2. MUNI Exam Registration, Grade Conversion and Credit Transfer

A detailed explanation of the grading system for our partner universities is available here: [Grading System and ECTS at MU](#). The scale of grades used at Masaryk University is a part of every Transcript of Records, issued for international students at the end of their study at MU. See a sample of Transcript of Records (see the Documents sections).

For detailed information, see the MU Study and Examination Regulations.

At Masaryk University the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) is used. This means that 60 ECTS represents the workload required for one year's full-time study, or 30 ECTS/semester. As far as international exchange students are concerned, we require 20 ECTS/semester.



Students of Masaryk University (including exchange students) are entitled to 3 exam attempts for each course (provided that they fulfil the course requirements during the semester). This means that if the student fails the first attempt, he or she can try to pass the course once or twice more. Teachers provide at least 3 exam dates for each course towards the end of the teaching period and students are required to enroll for the exam slots in the Information System. The first exam date sometimes takes place during the last week of the teaching period, the rest takes place during the exam period. An example grade in a situation where the student first failed and then passed can look like this: “FD”. This means that the final grade is a “D”, but the first “F” negatively influences the grade average.

The questions inquire about the recognition of VERSATILE courses at the home institution, whether they were existing courses, substitutes for existing courses, or new additions to the curriculum. However, due to the project's characteristics, MUNI will recognize it as summer school courses with the option to change the credit score. Therefore, incorporating VERSATILE courses in the course catalogue would be complicated.

#### 3.2.4. HSRW Exam Registration, Grade Conversion and Credit Transfer

Exchange students can register for exams through the Centre for Internationalization and Languages at HSRW in paper form. The CIL will then transmit the exam information to the Examination Service, which handles the exam registrations. Prior to the exams, the submitted registrations will be checked for accuracy by the Academic Exchange Coordinator. Exams will take place during the designated exam periods at HSRW.

International exchange students will receive their transcripts of academic records from the Centre for Internationalization and Languages at HSRW. The transcripts will be provided in English and German. It is important for students to regularly check that all completed courses are accurately recorded in the student administration system (HISinOne) and that their transcript of records is up to date.

HSRW adheres to the credit transfer system approved by the European Union, which allows for full transfer of studies and practical training completed abroad to the pursued degree. Transferred studies and practical training are recorded in the study register using the following grading scale: A = excellent (1.0), B = good (2.0), C = satisfactory (3.0), D = sufficient (4.0), E = poor (5.0), and F = fail (0.0).

For HSRW students doing individual courses from the VERSATILE course offer, these were recognized either as “projects” that are built into our curricula or as an elective (Current Issues in International Relations and Political Economy) that is purposely open in order to facilitate the recognition of courses taken at a foreign university or summer schools. For students doing a semester abroad within the VERSATILE offer, our curricula have a built-in mandatory semester abroad/internship module. This mobility window enables students to take courses related to their home university study program at a foreign university. These recognition possibilities were agreed with our exam board prior to the VERSATILE semester starting and communicated to students up-front.

### 3.3 How the Procedures were Coordinated or Simplified

It will be clear from the above that a MVE project requires more administrative coordination than regular bilateral student exchange, not just because there are more partners involved but also since regular bilateral exchange can run through reciprocity and partner institutions take over responsibility for the administrative process after students have been nominated. Here, the nomination of outgoing and incoming students is not a manageable option since alternatively four partners would need to cross nominate students on a bilateral basis making the whole administrative process three times as time consuming as a regular bilateral exchange both for students and the partners' student administration. The next paragraphs will focus on coordinated student application and registration and credit recognition and transfer.

#### 3.3.1 A Joint Application and Enrollment Procedure

As lead partner, HSRW coordinated the application and enrollment procedure for all students of all partners that wanted to join the courses of the online semester, based on the idea that students should have a one stop shop and a single point of contact for their registration and queries concerning anything administrative.

Unlike regular student mobility, no nomination of students from the administration of the home institution to the receiving institution is necessary. The multilateral exchange agreement and continued administrative coordination make this step no longer required so that students who are interested can apply directly to the program.

HSRW used its regular application portal 'MoveOn', which it also uses for regular student exchange and management of its international network of partner institutions, to this end and set up an additional protocol for VERSATILE users. Through the MoveOn applications, HSRW would gather all the application data and uploaded application documents from students at the front and disperse them among partners through the back end based on the comparison excel sheets (see Annex 3). This meant the collection of all information considered by all partners as the minimum necessary for enrollment at the partner institutions offering the courses through a joint registration form (see **Annex 4**). For the information needed in the student application process this was done for all four partners. For the University of Derby an extra feedback loop to students was incorporated since students cannot be enrolled at UoD unless they do the enrollment in person on an individual basis.

The other three institutions used the registration data to complete the entire administrative process in the back office and established a single contact for student enquiries and student support per e-mail through the project website (see next Chapter). Through the application form students were informed about reason why their data were needed and that they would be deleted at the end of the project. They were also informed about the fact that they could contact student support in case they had any inquiries concerning data protection issues. Even though MUNI, TAMK and HSRW fall under the same EU data protection law, an additional agreement to secure joint responsibilities and arrangements was set up and may be a useful addition to the multilateral exchange agreement in general (see **Annex 5**).

After collection all student applications, they were shared through a secure cloud service with partners so that they could inform students about setting up the Learning Agreement. In

order to support students selecting courses, all module descriptions were published on the VERSATILE project website (see also Chapter 5). Instead of cross-nominating and registering students, a joint format for the Learning Agreement was used, using the standard ERASMUS format (see **Annex 6**). After this agreement was signed, as is standard procedure, by the administration, academic contact person in the department and the coordinating administrator, students were allowed to upload the document through the portal and finish their registration. An advantage of organizing a multilateral VE semester is that regular meetings were organized between different working group coordinators and project coordinators of each participant institution so that the intersection between administration and academia was always unproblematic because participants were familiar with each other's needs and wishes (see also Chapter 4).

The coordinator at HSRW informed partners as soon as all application was complete so that students could be enrolled at those institutions where they wanted to attend courses (students were free to take either all courses and do a full semester of 30 ECTS online or take less courses for additional credit or substitute existing courses at the home institution). At this point, students received an official Letter of Acceptance (see **Annex 7**) informing them about their enrollment and communicating important information typical for the project. For example, students were asked to ignore any information that came directly from individual partners. This concerned things like automatically generated information sent after the enrollment about housing, use of the library or student support service. At this stage, it was very important to make sure students would only use lines of communication used by the project team. The template in Annex 7 should help future project navigate this issue.

### 3.3.1 Exam registration, Credit Recognition and Certification

After having secured academic credit recognition and transfer in case students pass the exams through the Learning Agreement and making uploading this document a necessary requirement for finishing the application, students could start taking classes and prepare for exams. The administrative working group used this time to organize a kick-off meeting and social events for students during the semester (see Chapter 5). Exam registration was done for the students depending on the requirements of the individual institutions, keeping with the one-stop-shop principle.

At the end of the semester only a final administrative act remained in the form of issuing the Transcript of Records. In order to have credits transferred to their home institution and towards their diploma, students need official proof of having passed their exams and earning study credits. Receiving theses from each individual institution provided this and at the same time also counted as proof of officially having earned credit at a multitude of universities, which is exactly what makes the project of additional interest to students.

Transcripts of records however were not sent out directly to students but collected at HSRW and, together with an additional VERSATILE joint certificate (see **Annex 8**), mailed to students.

### 3.4 Summary and Conclusions

The inventarisation of the administrative student exchange procedures between the participating partners showed some differences but enabled a joint application and registration procedure for students requiring them to apply with a minimum of application documents, basically being the lowest common denominator among partners. Even though MUNI, TAMK and HSRW fall under the same EU data protection law, an additional agreement to secure joint responsibilities and arrangements was set up and may be a useful addition to the multilateral exchange agreement in general and for future projects with partners outside the EU. A joint application through the MoveOn Portal for student mobilities at HSRW offered students a one stop shop, not just for the application but also for their inquiries and general communication. This will be elaborated on in more detail in the next Chapter.

During the VERSATILE project, HSRW coordinated the streamlined administrative process and was in continuous communication with partners. Administrative matters like enrolling students in the institutions' student administration, exam registration and issuing the Transcript of Records by necessity were done at each home institution but form a relatively small part of the process. This means that there is a larger additional burden on the coordinating institution that may be offset in case partners decide to continue the MVE project and take over the role of administrative coordinator in turn. Different from established virtual or blended ring structure models like the ERASMUS BIP Programme (see Chapter 2) this would still enable to study at all partner institutions during one semester and not being forced to spread it out over several semesters in which partners take turns as being the single receiving institution.

## 4. Organization, Communication and IT Related Issues

The basic principle of organizing the VERSATILE project was that the entire project work was carried out by working groups that were allocated specific tasks or work packages, each of them composed of representatives of all member institutions of the project consortium and led by one of the partners. In case of the Administrative Infrastructure Working Group HSRW was the lead partner and organized regular meetings (twice per months) during which minutes were made and, together with all relevant working documents were uploaded to a shared working platform through MS Teams, made available through colleagues at TAMK.

Superordinate to the working groups/work packages was the steering committee, which consisted of at least one representative from each partner institution and was led by HSRW. The steering committee was the decision-making body of the project organizing the transnational partner meetings, evaluating and accepting (or refusing) the reports of the working groups coordinators, supervising the work of these units, respect of the timing included, assuring coherency between the work of the different units. The steering committee was also responsible for supervising all dissemination, exploitation and sustainability activities. It was also in charge of applying a contingency plan in case of obvious necessity demands it.

The transnational partner meetings were an important vehicle for ensuring that suitable decisions are made through discussion. The steering committee was seconded by general project management, also at HSRW as lead partner.

The general work packages formed the overarching project infrastructure and ran through the entire project duration. The content-related work packages partly built on each other, so that one work package followed the other: starting with the 'State-of-the-Art Analysis' for online teaching work package, followed by the development of an online teaching 'Tool Box' and the work package 'Curriculum Development'. The Administrative Infrastructure working group ran in parallel with the above three work packages. All work packages finally led to the last work package 'Online Semester Delivery' in the spring / summer semester of 2023, which put the results of the previous work packages into practice.

The main channel for communication between the VERSATILE partners has been a designated 'Microsoft Teams' platform, hosted and administrated by TAMK. Additionally, email has been widely used, since it might be challenging to log in the Teams platform due to the two-step multifactor authentication. The main archive of the VERSATILE project documents has also been MS Teams, so that all team members could work on documents simultaneously and always have access to the most recently updated files. It also proved useful to have a central online platform to upload the minutes to the bi-monthly working group meeting minutes. The main tools for video and audio meetings in the VERSATILE project were Webex and Zoom, but Teams video meetings were also used to some extent, whatever worked best for the hosting party.

### 4.1 VERSATILE Project website

As stated earlier, the goal of the project administration infrastructure was to provide students with a one stop shop for everything related to their paperwork. To ensure effective

communication with our students, various measures were implemented including a VERSATILE website.

The website was designed to provide a comprehensive overview of what project offers and to make it easy for students to find all information they needed. This included information on registration deadlines, semester dates, the project's focus, mode of courses delivery, information about no additional fees, credit recognition, and language of instruction. We also included a link to the timetable, which provided an overview of the course schedule. Additionally, we used the homepage to advertise important events, such as online meetings to discuss administrative questions and FAQs to students

To provide more detailed information about the exchange program, several subpages were created. The "For Students" subpage was designed to provide a general overview of the program, including who it was suitable for and its advantages. It also provided links to more specific subpages, including "How to Apply" and "Course Catalogue". The "How to Apply" subpage was created to provide step-by-step instructions on how to apply for the exchange program. It included all the necessary documents and useful links. Additionally, we provided contact information for the contact persons for application process, along with a FAQ section that addressed common questions about the application process. The "Course Catalogue" subpage provided an overview of all the courses offered in the program. This included information on the course name, workload, language of instruction, teaching mode, teacher information (including photos and email addresses), implementation time, course timetable, capacity, final exam dates, objectives, expected learning outcomes, concepts, teaching methods, assessment methods, and evaluation criteria. The subpage was designed to provide students with all the information they needed to make informed decisions about which courses to take.

Next to informing students about the online semester and the courses they can take, the website is also used for a larger target audience of teachers and administrators in the field that want to learn more about the goal of the VERSATILE project and its results. The project outputs, like the online teaching Toolbox or these Administrative Infrastructure Guidelines can also be found at: <https://www.VERSATILE-erasmus-project.eu>.

## 4.2. Marketing of Courses to Students

An important step in organizing an online exchange semester that should not be overlooked and is a shared responsibility both for involved teachers as well as administrators is how to market it to students. As noted above, the project website presented a list of arguments to students on why they should consider taking part:

- Online courses allow you to study in four countries simultaneously and earn study credit;
- Develop vital future-focused skills, including intercultural engagement, digital literacy, and collaborative working in international teams;
- Enjoy student support: interactive Discord platform, helping hands through a single contact point and regular online social events;
- Gain unique international experiences and interact with multiple nationalities;
- No additional costs (you only pay the regular tuition fees at your home university);
- No need to look for an apartment or housing;
- Become part of an innovative and sustainable concept;
- Experience different teaching styles from experts from 4 different European countries.

Key to receiving students' attention and generating traffic towards the website is first and foremost through the involved teachers. Their enthusiasm about the project and knowledge about the program (that they developed in close collaboration with colleagues and will be team teaching together) is key to get students to apply. In addition, the administration group made sure to use set up a link at their home institution and use their home institutions' social media channels to generate interest.

Given the limited number of students that initially applied for the online semester, it was important not to rely completely on online marketing tools, but to take the marketing efforts into the physical classroom through the teachers and also develop flyers and poster (see **Annex 9**) to inform students on campus. This way, we were able to go from an initial number of 7 students after the first deadline to 46 students after extending for two weeks and taking additional action.

### 4.3 IT Platform Employed for Teaching

An important overlapping issue between the administrative or organizational part of the project and the teaching part of the project is the question how to centralize information about the courses, social events (see Chapter 5), access to course materials and teaching platforms.

As is the case with much of higher education related software (such as with the management platforms for international mobilities like MoveOn mentioned earlier, or general student administration software on a national level), the number of options is very limited. As their main general Learning Management Systems (LMS) three partners (HSRW, MUNI and TAMK) use Moodle, whereas UoD uses Blackboard.

In order not just to have a one stop shop for student administration but also for teaching and other interactive activities, the project made use of a Moodle application developed by TAMK that could provide access not only for all students, but for all project participants from the different institutions as well. The regular Moodle (moodle.tuni.fi) is a closed environment allowing access to the LMS by the students and staff of the Tampere Universities' Community. The DigiCampus (digicampus.fi) application used for the VERSATILE project provides a platform for a coalition of Finnish universities and UASs to manage and deliver their online courses and educational content. It is designed to support various modes of learning, including self-paced, blended, and fully online learning. The platform includes features such as course creation and management, content management, student tracking and analytics, communication tools, assessment and evaluation tools.

DigiCampus is primarily used by the universities and UASs in Finland which have purchased a yearly license to the service. However, since TAMK is a licensed user of the DigiCampus LMS, and according to the licensing practice, educational projects that TAMK is involved with can also place their courses on the platform. In other words, it could be used at no additional cost by the VERSATILE project. It is available in both Finnish and English and it is hosted on the cloud, which means that users can access it from anywhere. Moreover, DigiCampus has several login options covering both students and staff of all the four VERSATILE universities. Another advantage of the DigiCampus was that it was a Moodle-based platform, and Moodle was a familiar LMS in the three universities: HSRW, Masaryk University and TAMK.

University of Derby had to put more effort to get familiar with the DigiCampus, as they had not been using a Moodle on a regular basis. DigiCampus provided a platform that none of the four universities (including TAMK) was using in their regular day-to-day activities. Moreover, by choosing DigiCampus as a common platform, the VERSATILE partners could place all their virtual exchange courses on one site and create a focused hub of courses that was easy to find and access for both the students and the professors (see Annex 10 for a screenshot).

A challenge that the project did not fully anticipate was the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) processes caused by the fact that UK is no longer an EU member. DigiCampus provides a Privacy Statement, Terms of Use and Accessibility Statement in accordance with the European GDPR, and it also follows the GÉANT Code of Conduct for Service Providers. Since the UoD had to comply with UK legislation it could not get a direct entry to the DigiCampus system. This problem was resolved however by the possibility to login through eduGAIN. Only HSRW did not have this possibility on time to be used during the VERSATILE project so that users from HSRW had to set up an extra user account.

For the delivery of the classes, (team) teachers were free to use whatever platform they felt comfortable with, be it MS Teams, Webex or any other platform. In the collaboration between administration and teachers at the university's academic department issues like the timing of any synchronous learning activities during the courses was addressed on the DigiCampus since it concerned all teaching. Even three different time zones can cause confusion among students unless you indicate the times very clearly. Another issue here is that the workload for students is balanced during the courses. As different institutions are offering the courses, the maximum workload and stress might fall on the same couple of weeks in all of them, and students might drop out for this reason.

#### 4.4 Summary and Conclusions

Since VERSATILE is a multilateral, cross-institutional project, it was important to coordinate its management between institutions but also between administration and teaching participants. An important feature of the organizational structure of the project, and in the end of its efforts to minimize additional workload arriving from the fact that four institutions offer online courses simultaneously, is the structural collaboration between these two academic realms. In the communication to all end users, both students and teachers, we sought to centralize online platforms through the website and the DigiCampus Moodle application. The DigiCampus platform serves as a good and very practical example of how administration and teaching effort may go hand in hand.



## 5. Creating a Student Experience

As stated earlier, student administration was understood by all in the administrative working group as being student support. This meant not only to minimize the additional administrative burden on students willing to join us in this experiment, but also making it an overall enjoyable experience for them. Given the fact all teaching is offered only online, a social student experience framework is a necessary condition for a successful MVE and was taken up by the administrative infrastructure working group.

### 5.1 How to Motivate Students and Initiate International Classroom Experiences

Motivating students and fostering international classroom experiences are essential aspects of modern education. Creating an engaging learning environment that encourages students to actively participate and explore diverse perspectives can significantly enhance their motivation to learn and promote a deeper understanding of different cultures and perspectives. Another crucial factor in motivating students and initiating international classroom experiences is the role of teachers and instructors. Educators who are enthusiastic, supportive, and inclusive can create a positive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and encouraged to express themselves. Teachers can also serve as facilitators, guiding students in exploring diverse perspectives, challenging assumptions, and promoting critical thinking. Additionally, teachers can share their own international experiences and stories, inspiring students to broaden their horizons and develop a global perspective. In our experience, personal contact of the local teachers with their students seemed essential for recruiting them for the cross-institutional virtual exchange courses. One can hardly overestimate the significance of the teachers' role in introducing the VERSATILE virtual exchange courses to their students (see also Chapter 4).

In our experience, personal contact of the local teachers with their students seemed essential for recruiting them for the cross-institutional virtual exchange courses. One can hardly overestimate the significance of the teachers' role in introducing the VERSATILE virtual exchange courses to their students.

Creating a sense of community and belonging within the classroom is also key to motivating students and initiating international classroom experiences. Encouraging students to work in diverse groups, promoting inclusive discussions, and celebrating cultural diversity can foster a sense of mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation among students. This can create a positive classroom culture where students feel empowered to share their unique perspectives and learn from each other's experiences.

### 5.2 Measures Taken Within VERSATILE

For students a reason for taking part in a virtual exchange, next to the possibility of taking courses in international classrooms from different universities around Europe, is the possibility to connect with people, create friendships, experience other cultures and this way also acquire intercultural soft skills and personal growth. This obviously goes also for teachers and staff in the project, but this paragraph will focus on students as the projects' main target group.

The idea was to add a VERSATILE social life as another important layer to the online semester that could assist in breaking down barriers and add to the online exchange experience. We meant to enable informal contact that could engendered confidence and self-esteem in students and staff and thus establish new relationships and social interaction. In addition, some of the events also served to fulfil the requirements for recognition of an exchange semester, as the students from HSRW who registered to complete a full online exchange semester where required to prove acquisition of sociocultural experience as part of the semester.

To facilitate all this, it was decided that we would offer a number of social activities and online events to provide a social environment that could potentially add a layer of fun to the VERSATILE semester. A DigiCampus course was especially created called the Cyber VERSATILE Café right next to the academic courses where the events were announced and links were posted to all the events as well as to all the contact information to all student support points. Among the planned social events were an online semester Kick-Off event, Country Spotlight events, activities like a virtual breakfast or walk, Get-together sessions, weekly study nights and an interactive Discord exchange group.

### 5.2.1 The VERSATILE Opening Ceremony

The online semester Kick-Off was to resonate as an Official Opening Ceremony to everyone involved and thus was organized as a welcome to both students and staff. Our goal was to spread a sense of community, the feeling that each participant was an important establishing part of the whole VERSATILE project and to spread a transporting pioneer spirit of starting something new and joyful.

We aimed to let students know how much we appreciated their interest in participating in the VERSATILE Exchange Semester but also to give staff an opportunity to see everyone involved. First, Professor Philipp Schorn (HSRW), the academic lead of the project, welcomed all participants. Following the introduction, the partner leads briefly introduced their participating universities. Then the teaching teams took over to say a few introducing words about themselves and their course contents. The administrative members gave a brief overview of the upcoming VERSATILE social events and support channels, and finally students were free to stay for a quick chat or to ask questions, which they did, both via the chat or by speaking up. The official opening ceremony was a great success. We were delighted that the majority of students and staff had come, that many cameras were turned on and that there seemed to be a cheerful and optimistic spirit of things finally starting.

### 5.2.2 VERSATILE Country Spotlights

The Country Spotlights were designed as intercultural events that were to both give insight into the home countries of the partner universities where the students were now enrolled, and beyond that to enhance the spirit of the unique international classroom that the students created by coming together from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds, universities, disciplines and mindsets.

Two Country Spotlight events were organized to shine a light on the cultural diversities and characteristics of Czechia, England, Finland and Germany specifically, as the main

exchange countries involved. Students were invited to learn more about where they were currently studying virtually, where their teachers were located, which environment their new educational surroundings were located in and overall to enjoy a fun VERSATILE community evening created especially for them. We encouraged students to take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about the partner universities and countries, to ask questions, share their own cultural backgrounds, compare and play with stereotypes and clichés and at the same time develop their personal intercultural skills. Most importantly, we tried again to make them feel welcome, cared for, interested in and to convey that their participation was a vital and integral part in creating the VERSATILE exchange community.

The first Country Spotlight event focused on Czechia and Finland (MUNI and TAMK) and was hosted by Masaryk University and Tampere University on Zoom. The second event took place two weeks later on Webex, centered around England and Germany (UoD and HSRW) and was hosted by both Rhine-Waal University and the University of Derby. Both events took place in the evening and lasted about one hour each. Colleagues of each university had prepared a presentation including audio and video highlighting some of the idiosyncrasies and specialties of their countries. Each presenter deepened their subject by including an interactive activity via an online collaboration platform facilitating a real-time feedback like Mentimeter. Time was included in between for questions and exchange about the similarities and difference of the contents with regard to each participant's own cultural background and experiences with the exchange country.

The events would have seemed empty had there not been about four staff members at each of them because unfortunately both Spotlights were sparingly visited. Only two to three students came and not all of them turned on their cameras. This was a surprise to us after the Kick-off event. From the The Hague Network evaluations we had learned that students had explicitly missed the possibility of informal social interactions. At the same time the Network report had also foreshadowed that curiously at the same time the social events they had offered had not been very well attended. The reasons why our Spotlight events were no great success, while very fun and well-liked by the persons present, are as yet unclear as the evaluation from students is at this time still outstanding. We assume that a number of reasons were responsible, among them the evening date and perhaps communication of the events mainly via email and the Cyber Café instead of further advertising via the classrooms. Perhaps shyness played a role as the The Hague experiences indicated. They had reported that often particularly introverted students would choose online exchange rather than travel to a different country in person.

### 5.2.3 Social Interactive Activities like Virtual Breakfast

We had gathered a number of ideas for informal social events or get-togethers. Our goal was that students meet socially, interact and can get to know each other besides their academic interactions to ease sharing on a personal level.

The Virtual Breakfast took place on a Friday from 8 to 9 o'clock (CET, 7 am UK time, 9 am Finnish time). Two colleagues opened up a room on Webex and cameras this time offered a view into their kitchens instead of an office. The idea was to share about favorite breakfasts, similarities and differences of breakfast habits on a personal level as well as with regard to the home country, and thus ease into a casual conversation, while actually cooking breakfast or making toast, coffee, hot chocolate or tea. The hope was that we could also share things

like our morning moods, rituals and routines, things that help people through a study day or just talk about favorite foods, films and music or things participants don't like about mornings or virtual studying. Only two students came and they did not turn on their cameras, which made the hosts feel a bit uncomfortable. At least the two students freely answered and shared about their morning rituals, breakfast habits and typical food of their home countries. Perhaps generation Z is not interested in such activities.

Other activities had been planned but did not take place due to the little success with precious ones. Among the activities planned were *Virtual Walks* which incorporated actual walking while connected via mobile phones so that students could share their neighborhood, favorite streets, places or campus spots on their walks together. We had planned an Hang-out evening called *Five Questions Night*, where students would bring their five favorite questions to ask of their fellow students. They could choose from a given list, or random icebreaker generators were to be used to start a conversation that we hoped would start to flow on its own after that. We had also planned to do offer weekly evening *Study Nights*, which were meant to open a room that would give students space for silent studying after a short hello and perhaps one icebreaker. Joined studying was supposed to support, encourage and ease students into getting started with their study work and assignments. Each session was to be opened by another colleague on a rotating basis. These sessions were to also encourage the possibility of sharing between students of the same classes. We wanted to also signal that a support person was present for any upcoming questions. Time constraints among colleagues as well as a failing belief that students would even take advantage of such an offer finally thwarted this activity.

#### 5.2.4 Discord for Relaxed Exchange

We chose to employ Discord as a communication conduit because it had the potential to offer both group communication and also become a lecturer-free chat environment for students who got to know each other.

Discord is a VoIP and instant messaging social platform that allows creation of a community area that can incorporate several themed chat groups under one roof, but also allows to create private chats as part of the community, while offering a number of communication mediums to choose from like text, audio and video.

For the VERSATILE project we created our own Discord community called "VERSATILE exchange semester SS 2023" including several themed sub channels, one for each of the eight study courses and additional courses like "Talk2us", "Announcements", "Study Nights" and "exchange-VERSATILE-team" where students had a direct line to our support staff.

These are the advantage that we saw Discord offer to us for communication within the VESATILE project:

- It allows the exchange of text messages, voice calls and video chats. This provides students with flexible options to communicate and interact with each other, whether it's for group assignments, discussions, or informal conversations.
- Discord is known for its user-friendly interface and intuitive controls, making it easy for students to quickly familiarize themselves with the platform and use it effectively.
- The platform enables real-time communication, allowing for instant interaction and feedback. This is particularly useful for collaboration on group assignments or spontaneous discussions.

- The application offers various customization options, such as creating different chat rooms (called "channels") for different topics or activities. This allows students to exchange information and organize communication around specific topics.
- Discord is a cross-platform application that can be used on both desktop and mobile devices. This allows students to access the platform from various devices and communicate flexibly.

Overall, Discord provides students within the VERSATILE project with a VERSATILE, user-friendly, and effective platform for communication and collaboration, both for formal and informal activities, or so we thought. We had promoted the Discord channels right from the beginning by including an invitation into the confirmation letters and also promoted the platform during our Kick-off. However, when only three students had joined the channel by the start of the semester, it became clear that we could not use it as a platform for any of our events.

Only later did it become clear that not only had students had problems with the invitation link and could not enter as easily as we had expected but the platform itself posed technical difficulties when trying to set up a group video call. It did not work and thus all events and communication were rerouted to the conventional Meeting platforms Zoom and Webex.

### 5.3 Summary and Conclusions

For social interactions to work they need to be well planned and early on in the project. Our recommendation is that one or two persons who enjoy planning social events are especially tasked with their organization, and with sufficient amount of time allotted to both the preparations and the communication of such events to students via several channels like email, chat groups, the teachers, a black board. It might be helpful to employ a student assistant familiar with the up-to-date current communication preferences and language of student communities. This could help to separate more between staff being involved and staff-free communication to ease shyness among students.

In future project, it may also help to ask students before the start of the semester which of the suggested get-to-know and get-together-sessions would be their favorite to come to, perhaps via interactive platforms like Mentimeter, Kahoot! or similar. In any case, it is important to very clearly communicate the time differences if countries with different time zones are included in the project and take care to plan dates and times throughout the semester and start conducting social events very early on as it might help get a feel for which events work and which do not.

## 6. General Recommendations

These Guidelines set out to provide more insight of the institutional and organizational context in which the project was organized, explain as best as possible what alternatives were available and which ones and which administrative model was set up by the partners. For future project looking to profit from these guidelines, it is important to note the main characteristics of the VERSATILE experiment and compare these with those of new initiatives. In sum, the general recommendations based on our experience relate to projects that:

- Offer Virtual Exchange across several institutions simultaneously and as such are Multilateral virtual Exchange (MVE)
- Are relatively small scale, bottom up and / or organized by personal professional networks and have limited external funding or shared resources.

Based on the findings described in the above Chapters a few general recommendations can be made for those who plan to embark on a similar journey:

1. Get acquainted not just with (new) team members, but also with their institutional setting before planning smaller work packages (see Chapter 1, Annex 1). This helps profiting from available expertise and talents but also should prevent disappointment about unrealistic expectations.
2. Set up a project structure that safeguards collaboration between administrative staff and teachers (see Chapter 4). Join in project meetings and online events with students (see Chapter 5).
3. Embrace being a pioneer. As long as higher education is embedded in national legal systems, an administrative infrastructure based on student enrollment at host institutions is inescapable (see Chapter 2). EU initiatives like digital student identifier code, EU student ID card etc. may ease the administrative burden in the future between member states.
4. Make joint legal arrangements that cover multilateral exchange and data protection (see Annex 2 and Annex 5). This becomes even more important for safeguarding continuous collaboration since there is an important role for the coordinating institution coordinating student mobilities and sharing that burden among partners (see Paragraph 3.3).
5. Keep additional paperwork for students to a minimum. Offering a one stop shop for students lowers the threshold for their participation while simultaneously making it clear that there is an additional commitment from there side as well (see Chapter 3).
6. Organisation of online social events is a crucial part of student support for a Virtual Exchange Semester. The fact that that are several partners involved however, makes these even more worthwhile and an important part of the student experience (see Chapter 5).
7. Choose a central hub for inter and external communication and information, but be pragmatic about the use of any IT platforms (see Chapter 4).
8. Invest in the marketing of the project to students (see Paragraph 4.3). The student target group are those who would not or cannot take part in regular exchange and as such are already hard to reach (see Chapter 1). An issue that comes on top of students generally receiving a lot of information regarding their studies and being overburdened in that respect.
9. Present the Virtual Exchange as a unique opportunity to all students, not just to those who would otherwise have difficulty spending part of their studies abroad for whatever reason (see Chapter 4).
10. Use these guidelines!

## 7. Annexes

- Annex 1: Organigram of VERSATILE participants per partner institution
- Annex 2: Multilateral Exchange Agreement
- Annex 3: Student Enrolment Excel Sheets
- Annex 4: Joint Student Application Form
- Annex 5: Joint Data Protection Agreement
- Annex 6: Joint Learning Agreement
- Annex 7: Letter of Acceptance
- Annex 8: Joint Student Certificate
- Annex 9: Marketing Flyer
- Annex 10: DigiCampus screenshot

## ANNEX 1: Organizational Charts of Partner Institutions

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.....	1
Tampere University of Applied Sciences.....	4
University of Derby.....	6
Masaryk University.....	7

The management of the VERSATILE Project has its own organizational structure but in order to be able to get a better look at where the individuals working on the project and implementing its activities within their respective institutions are situated, an organizational chart of the partner institutions offers more insight. It also allows for a better reflection on which project activities have proven to fit better at which institutional level.

### Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences

National Higher Education Characteristics: Rhine-Waal University of applied sciences is a German public university in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. In Germany, the way education is organized, including higher education is a matter of the individual federal states. A federal Ministry for Education and Research, Nation Scientific Council and numerous other academic organizations provide (financial) support to Higher Education Institutions. The federal German Academic Exchange Organization (DAAD) supports higher education internationalization.

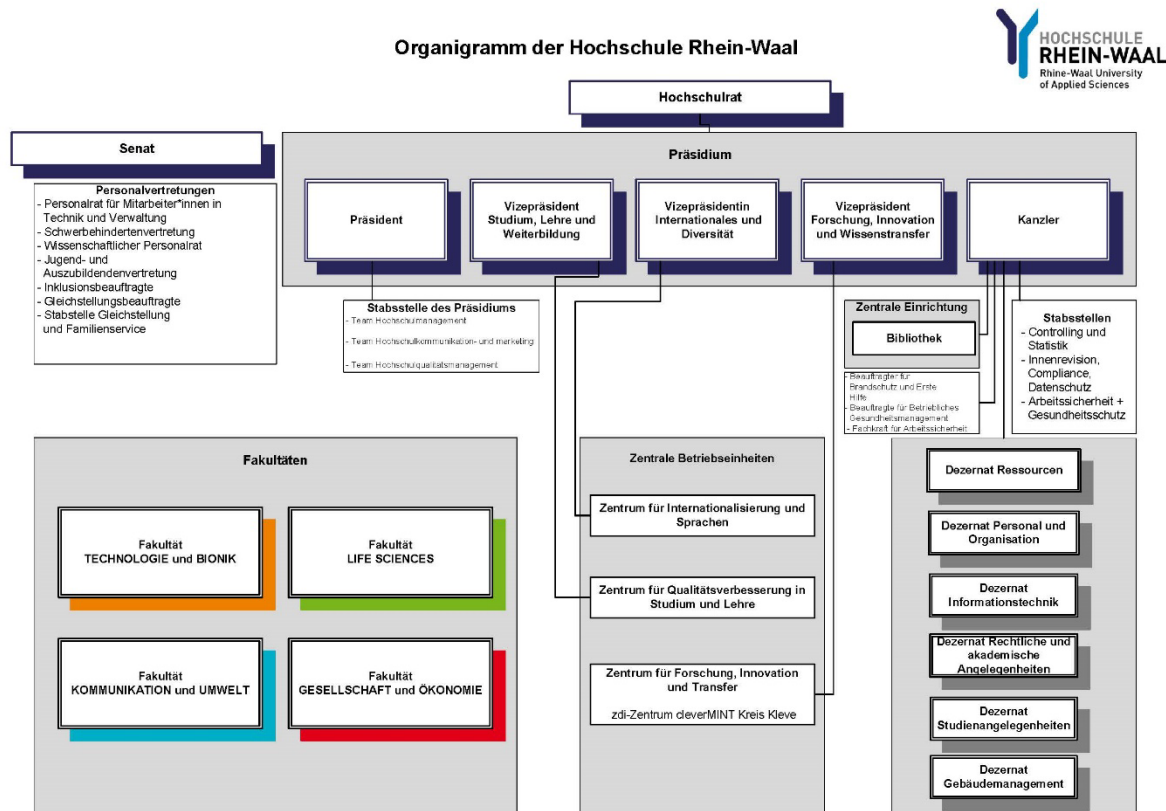
Public universities in Germany play a dominant role in higher education although a small number of private institutions is growing. Public universities do not charge tuition fees but only so called semester contributions twice a year of around 300 Euros. These contributions (specifically not called 'fees') form a system of student solidarity support and pay for student housing, cafeterias, student unions and other representation as well as a ticket for free public transportation. At the start of the VERSATILE project the state of North Rhine Westphalia did not make an exception for online teaching in charging these semester contributions.

Institution Characteristics: What sets Rhine Waal apart from other universities in Germany is that over 55 Percent of its 6.500 students are foreign students who are enrolled as degree seeking students. The reason for its attractiveness to foreign students is the fact that over 80 percent of 27 Bachelor degree programs and 12 Master degree programmes are taught completely in English. Rhine Waal has more international students than any other university in Germany and compared to those institutions on the Times Higher Education Ranking list with the greatest percentage of foreign students world wide would be number ten. Rhine Waal also has the highest number of foreign staff in both academic departments and administration in Germany. The international community of students and staff is regarded as one of the main assets of the institution.

Organizational Characteristics: Rhine Waal has a central organizational unit for internationalization called the 'Centre for Internationalization and Languages' (CIS) that reports directly to the Vice President for Internationalization and Diversity. It advises the Executive Board and academic Departments on the development and advancement of internationalization initiatives and assist in their organizational implementation. The Centre



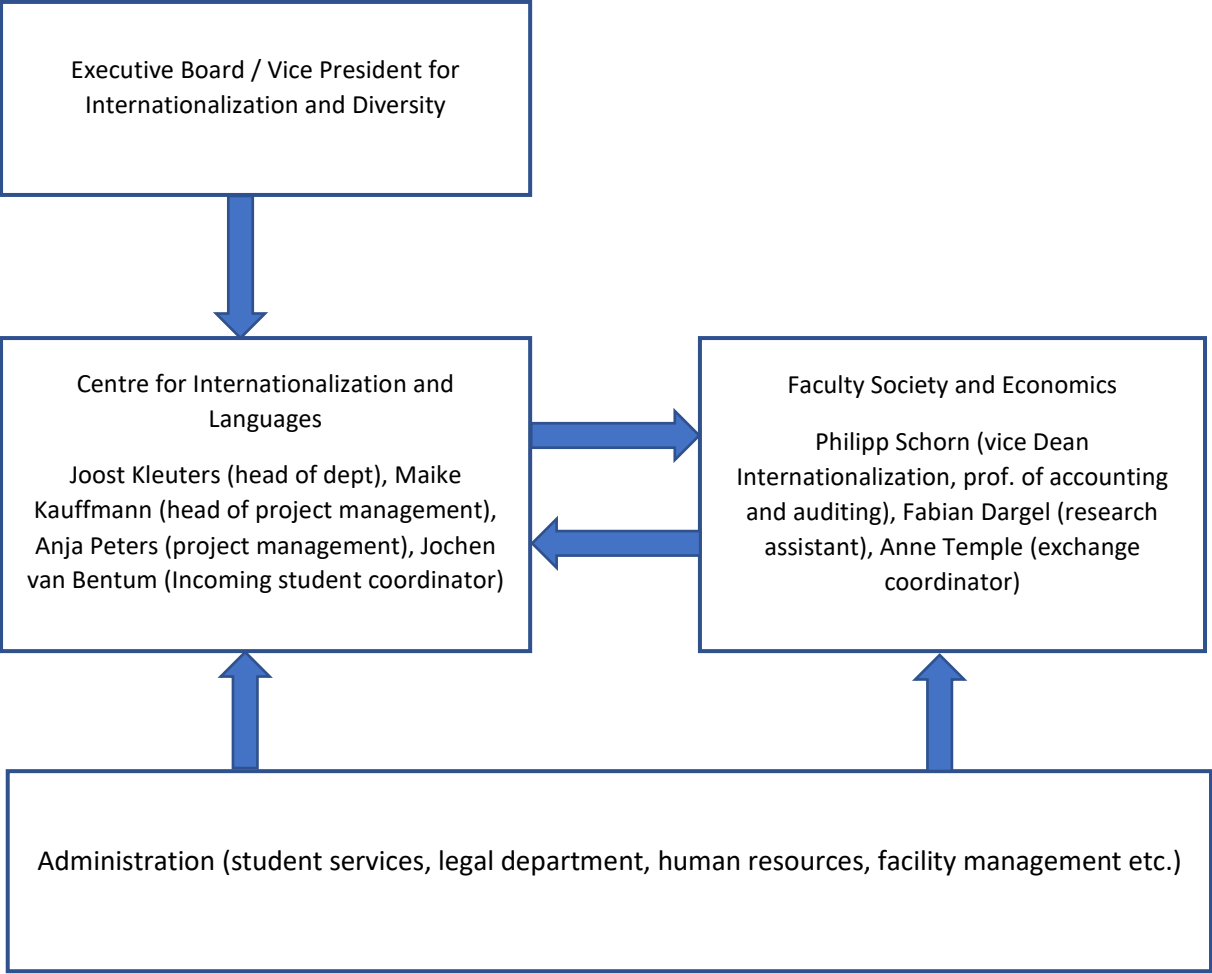
coordinates exchange as well as funding opportunities such as the DAAD's scholarship programs or the ERASMUS Program for the University's students, staff and researchers, next to supporting international exchange students from all over the world while studying one or more semesters at Rhine-Waal University. In promoting intercultural competencies, the Centre offers a wide range of language courses as well as self-study facilities for all members of the University and exchange students from partner universities.



SMI\_Organigramm\_Datenbank\_Hochschule Rhein-Waal, Datum: 06/05/2022

The CIS collaborates intensively with the academic departments that each have an academic departmental coordinator or vice dean and an exchange coordinator. This collaboration safeguards a unified process for student exchange, academic relevance of internationalization initiatives as well as an across-the-board visibility of internationalization within the institution.

Enrolment of exchange students is also done at CIS and not by the university administration in order to have all relevant information and contact persons related to partner institutions and academic departments coordinated at the Centre.



# Tampere University of Applied Sciences

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) is the second largest university of applied sciences (UAS) in Finland. It has more than 11.000 students, more than 50 degree programmes and around 750 employees.

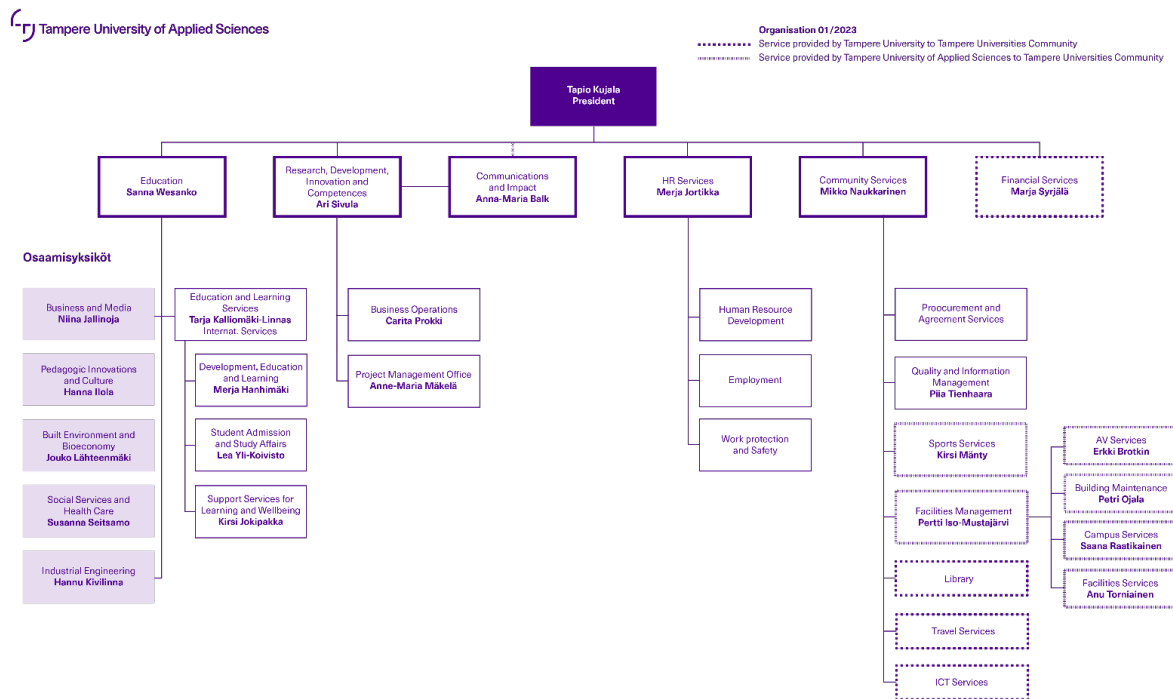
Generally, UASs in Finland have three tasks:

- Educational responsibility: educational responsibilities are determined in the university of applied sciences' operating license, and they are agreed with the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- Applied research, development and innovation as well as artistic activity Integration of education and RDI
- Regional impact: Eg regional activity, cooperation with different stakeholders.

Together **Tampere University (TAU)** and **Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK)** constitute the **Tampere Universities' community**. It is an international and diverse university community with its areas of focus in technology, health and society. More than 30.000 students study at the Tampere Universities community.

TAMK and TAU share some of their services: for instance the library and the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC). The TLC of the Tampere Universities community is a network that brings together pedagogical expertise and the information and services needed by teachers. TLC supports all those who teach in the community.

The organization of TAMK as of 1 Jan 2023 is illustrated below. The services indicated with a dotted line are provided to TAMK by the Tampere University.



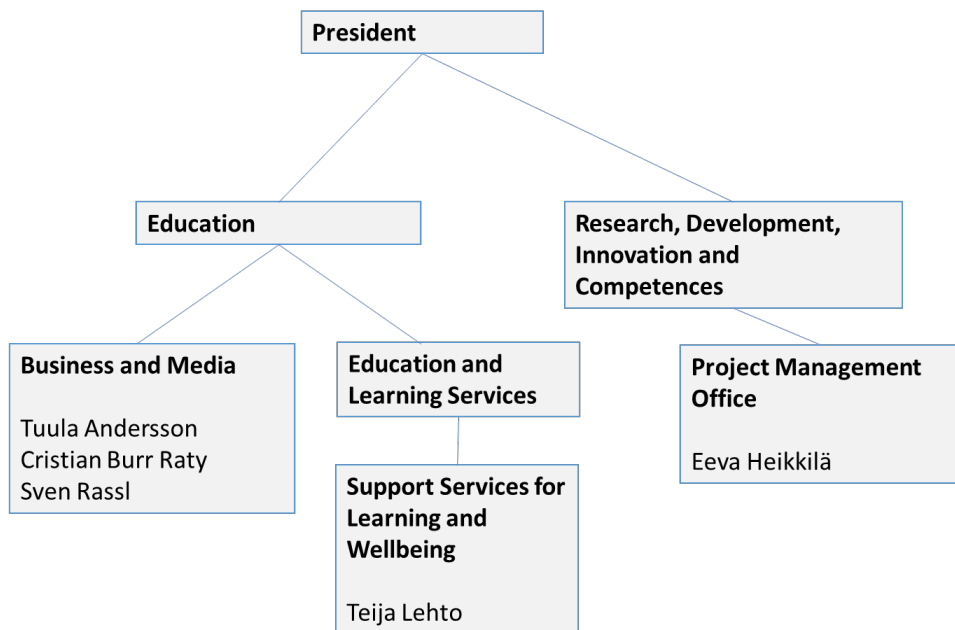
The degree programme based education is divided into five schools:

- School of Business and Media
- School of Pedagogical Innovations and Culture

- School of Built Environment and Bioeconomy
- School of Social Services and Health Care
- School of Industrial Engineering

TAMK's schools organize their core operations so that education, RDI and paid services are seamlessly connected to one another.

VERSATILE project actors are located in the following units at TAMK:



TAMK has several specialized learning environments:

- FieldLab Industry 4.0 test environment
- Catering Studio learning and service environment in hospitality management
- Mediapolis learning and working environment in media field
- Proakatemia base for team entrepreneurship
- HUBS for entrepreneurship coaching and networking
- Sote Virtual Lab wellbeing and health promotion
- Well-being Centre wellbeing services
- Learning Lab multidisciplinary practical projects for students
- Taitokeskus for training of clinical nursing skills
- HeAT Lab Health and Assistive Technology Laboratory

In the field of international collaboration TAMK has:

- 335 cooperation partners in 55 countries
- Student and staff exchanges
- International theme weeks
- Summer School
- Intensive courses
- International projects and cooperation networks

# University of Derby

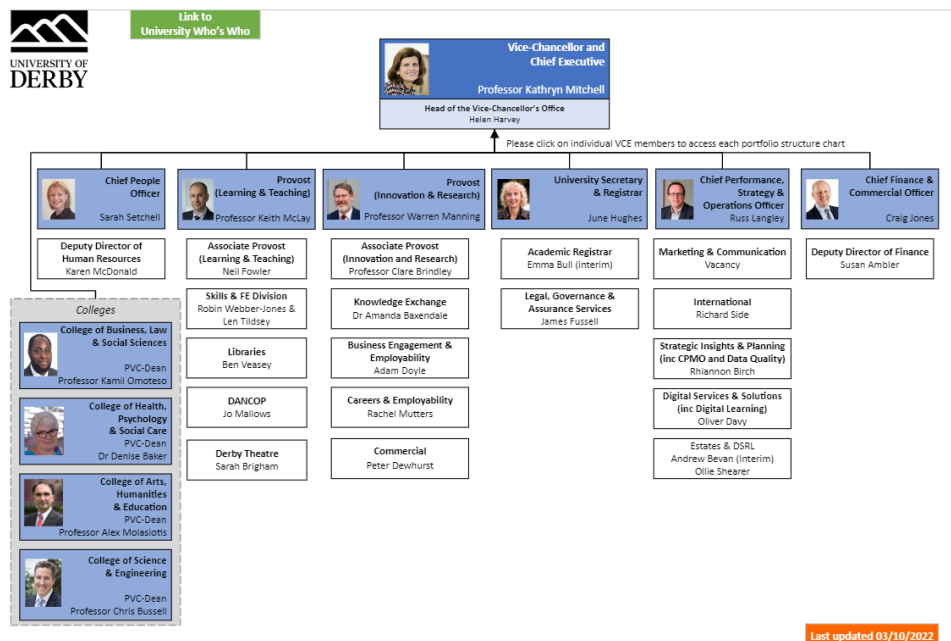
The University of Derby is a British Public University located in Derbyshire, in the East Midlands. Universities in the United Kingdom have generally been instituted by royal charter, papal bull, Act of Parliament, or an instrument of government under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 or the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. Degree awarding powers and the 'university' title are protected by law, although the precise arrangements for gaining these vary between the constituent countries of the United Kingdom.

Institutions that hold degree awarding powers are termed recognised bodies, this list includes all universities, university colleges and colleges of the University of London, and some higher education colleges. Degree courses may also be provided at listed bodies, leading to degrees validated by a recognised body.

The representative bodies for higher education providers in the United Kingdom are Universities UK and GuildHE. The responsible minister within the Department for Education is the Minister of State for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education.

Publicly funded educational institutions normally charge two levels of fee: a lower 'home' fee and a higher 'overseas' fee. Private sector institutions often have only one level of tuition fee, which all students must pay. Whether students pay a 'home' or 'overseas' fee depends on whether they meet certain criteria.

Recognised for its teaching quality, the University of Derby has a strong focus on applied learning. It uses its industry connections and state-of-the-art facilities to ensure students gain the blend of academic knowledge, practical skills and confidence they need to succeed in their career. The teaching team brings a wealth of real-world experience, with many still active in their profession. Teaching is informed by ground-breaking research in a number of areas. Derby is home to many world-leading and well-known companies, offering offers students unparalleled opportunities to gain professional work experience alongside their studies.



## Masaryk University

Masaryk University, located in Brno, is the second-largest university in the Czech Republic. At present it comprises ten faculties with over 200 departments, institutes and clinics. Recognized as one of the most important teaching and research institutions in the Czech Republic and a highly-regarded Central European university, it has been infused with a strong democratic spirit ever since its establishment in 1919.

Masaryk University offers degrees in a wide range of traditional as well as newly-emerging disciplines and is currently one of the fastest-growing higher education institutions in Europe. Placing a great deal of emphasis on international cooperation with prestigious foreign universities and research institutions, Masaryk University supports the continuous exchange of knowledge, ideas and information as well as researchers, instructors and students on a worldwide scale, assuring equal educational and research opportunities for all.

One of Masaryk University's top priorities is scientific research. In addition to attaining a leading position in research grant competitions, the university has made considerable financial investments in order to enhance research and teaching capacity, facilitate the development of tools for the transfer of knowledge and improve support for research and innovation.

### STUDENTS & STAFF

Total students

**29,768**

● UG students   ● PG students  
**47%**   **53%**

International students

**7,316**

● UG students   ● PG students  
**40%**   **60%**

Total faculty staff

**1,945**

● Domestic staff   ● Int'l staff  
**85%**   **15%**

MUNI structure:



# Masaryk University

Address: [Žerotínovo nám. 617/9, 601 77 Brno, Rector's Office](#)  
Phone: [+420 549 49 1111](#)  
E-mail: [info@muni.cz](mailto:info@muni.cz)

Company identification number: 00216224  
VAT identification number: CZ00216224  
Data Box ID: 9tmj9e4

[DEPARTMENT WEB](#)

## Organization structure

[Employees](#) [Projects](#) [Publications](#) [Statistics](#)

### Faculties

- [Faculty of Law](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Medicine](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Science](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Arts](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Education](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Pharmacy](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Economics and Administration](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Informatics](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Social Studies](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Faculty of Sports Studies](#) | [WEB](#)

### Rector's Office

- [Rector's Office](#)

### Other Units

- [University Archives](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Language Centre](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Centre for International Cooperation](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Support Centre for Students with Special Needs](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Technology Transfer Office](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Mendel Museum](#) | [WEB](#)
- [University Centre Telč](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Career Centre](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Competence Development Centre](#) | [WEB](#)

### Specialized Units

- [Accommodation and Catering Services](#) | [WEB](#)
- [University Press](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Management of the University Campus at Bohnice](#) | [WEB](#)

### Institutes

- [Institute of Computer Science](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Central European Institute of Technology](#) | [WEB](#)
- [Centre for Culture, Art and Events](#)

### Authorities

- [Academic Senate](#)
- [Rector](#)
- [Scientific Board](#)
- [Board of Trustees](#)
- [Bursar](#)
- [Rector's Board](#)
- [Expanded Rector's Board](#)
- [Senior Management](#)
- [Internal Evaluation Board](#)
- [Emergency Committee](#)
- [Emergency Board](#)
- [Security Emergency Board](#)

### Boards and Committees

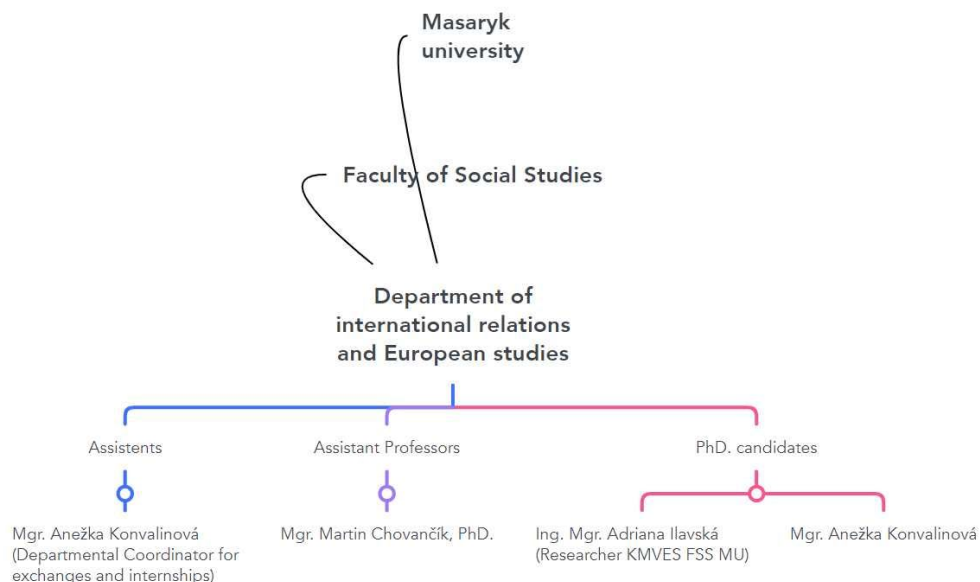
- [Masaryk University Deputies in Council of Higher Education Institutions](#)
- [International Scientific Advisory Board](#)
- [Publishing Board \(Convocation\)](#)
- [Ethics Board](#)
- [Research Ethics Committee](#)
- [Committee for Strategic Research Projects](#)
- [Board for Sustainable Development](#)
- [Finance Committee](#)
- [Accommodation Board](#)
- [Board for Culture Centre](#)
- [Board for Culture and the Arts](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Panel](#)
- [Editorial Board of the University Magazine](#)
- [Information Technologies Board](#)
- [Technology Transfer and Commercialization Board](#)
- [Student Grants Board](#)
- [Canteens Board](#)
- [Board for Studies of the University Centre in Telč](#)
- [Board for Teacher Studies](#)
- [Development Board](#)
- [Board for Studies of the University of the 3rd Age](#)
- [Legal Board](#)
- [CLAIMS COMMISSION](#)

Masaryk University has a dedicated unit focused on international cooperation called the Masaryk University Centre for International Cooperation (CZS MU). The center provides methodological assistance and coordinates the activities of Masaryk University related to foreign cooperation. CZS MU oversees international exchange opportunities for students, teachers, researchers, and other staff members, and cultivates bilateral partnerships with foreign universities.

In addition, CZS MU coordinates the development of English-language study programs for international students, promotes these programs abroad, and produces promotional materials to raise awareness of Masaryk University's offerings.

The Centre for International Cooperation is involved in six main areas of activity:

1. Establishing and fostering bilateral partnerships with foreign universities.
2. Facilitating international mobility opportunities for students, teachers, and administrative staff.
3. Developing and implementing English-language programs, including short-term and semester-long programs and summer schools.
4. Providing guidance and consultation for project preparation in various international programs, including the Lifelong Learning Programme Erasmus+, CEEPUS, AKTION, among others.
5. Promoting Masaryk University at higher education conferences and fairs abroad.
6. Engaging in activities within international university networks such as the Utrecht Network, Compostela Group of Universities, and ISEP.





## ANNEX 2: Multilateral Agreement on Virtual Student Mobility

This agreement, hereinafter referred to as 'Agreement', is between:

University of Derby, a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of the United Kingdom, with registered office at Kedleston Rd, Derby DE22 1GB, Derby, United Kingdom ("UoD");

Masaryk University, a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of the Czech Republic, with registered office at Žerotínovo nám. 617/9, 601 77 Brno, Czech Republic ("MUNI");

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of Germany, with registered office at Marie-Curie-Strasse 1, 47533, Kleve, Germany ("HSRW");

Tampere University of Applied Sciences, a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of Finland, with registered office at Kuntokatu 3, 33520 Tampere, Finland ("TAMK");

And serves to promote international understanding and to enhance educational opportunities for their students. The abovementioned institutions collaborate in the ERASMUS (Key Action 226: Strategic Partnerships in Response of the COVID-19 Situation: Partnerships for Digital Education Readiness in the field of Higher Education) funded project called 'VERSATILE', Virtual Education Readiness Semester - Adaptive Toolbox for an International Learning Experience, coordinated as lead partner by Rhine-Waal University of applied sciences.

Part of the project is the delivery of a joint online study semester offered to students from all project partners which will take place in the spring / summer semester of 2023. In order to facilitate this virtual exchange semester, the abovementioned universities, hereinafter referred to as 'Partners', agree on the following provisions:

### I. Virtual Student Exchange

**Offered modules:** The modules offered to students have been developed by the Partners specifically for this project. Each module corresponds with a 5 ECTS workload. The number of modules that participating students are required to take will be decided by the students' home university.

**Selection of Students:** The Partners will set up a joint application procedure for students. They will each have their own requirements in place to ascertain that each participating student is proficient in the language of instruction and meets the academic requirements in order to be able to successfully finish the modules.

**Enrollment:** Enrollment will be determined by the host university based on their rules and regulations. Partners will make the best possible effort to support students in the enrollment procedure. Students will be registered at the host university and will be entitled to all the privileges and subject to the same rules and regulations as regular students at the host university.

**Mobility of students:** The Partners offer only a virtual mobility option. The number of students each Partner may receive is to be determined by the academic departments responsible for

the modules. Each Partner aims at a balance between their incoming and outgoing mobilities.

**Credits:** At the end of the virtual exchange semester, appropriate authorities at the host university will send a transcript of records for courses completed to the student's home University.

**Tuition waiver:** Students will pay their regular tuition and fees to the home university. The host university will charge no further tuition fees.

**Costs:** Each exchange student is responsible for the arrangements and costs for:

- Course literature and printed material,
- Wi-Fi and electronic equipment,
- Health and accident insurance and
- Any other costs related to the participation in the virtual exchange semester.

**Refund of Fees:** No refund of fees will be made if a student is unable to complete his or her digital course.

## II. Other Forms of Collaboration

If appropriate, the Partners agree to seek out and pursue opportunities other than virtual student mobility beyond the time frame and scope of the VERSATILE project, which will enable them to assist each other in their efforts to enhance the internationalization of students, researchers, teachers and staff.

Areas of collaboration could be, but are not limited to:

- Follow up (multilateral) virtual exchange programs,
- Physical student mobility,
- Exchange of academic and administrative staff members,
- Exchange of academic publication materials or other information,
- Co-operation in academic projects for specified areas of development,
- Collaborative research and possible exchange of academic papers,
- Opportunities for other forms of co-operation

The terms of specific areas of additional future collaboration must be negotiated separately between the partners and are in each specific case to be established in separate written agreements prior to the initiation of any particular activity.

## III. Funding

This Agreement does not give rise to any funding commitments from the Partners.

## IV. Confidentiality and Personal Data Protection

The Partners will comply with such laws and regulations in force when processing, storing and archiving (if applicable) personal data relating to the activities and comply with its notification obligations (if any). The laws and regulations for public authorities in each country apply, which concerning handling of personal data include (but are not limited to), EU data protection regulations (GDPR), regulations about archiving and the principle of public access to official records.

#### V. Use of trademarks

Each Partner is entitled to limited use of the other Partners' marks and trademarks in order to provide information about the VERSATILE project. Each Partner may only use such marks and trademarks with the relevant Partner's prior written approval. Any other purposes are subject to consent from the relevant university.

#### VI. Limited liability

Each Partner is liable for direct damages, injury or loss caused to the other Universities in performance (and non-performance) of this Agreement. Liability does not extend to compensation for any indirect or consequential loss or damages, unless caused by a willful act or gross negligence. The Partners' aggregate liability shall however always be limited to such sum as each Partner is able to retrieve under its relevant insurance policy, and shall in any event not exceed the sum of EUR €10,000 .

#### VII. No representation, partnership or agency

Neither Partner shall be entitled to act or to make legally binding declarations on behalf of the other Partners. Nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to constitute a joint venture, agency, partnership, interest grouping or any other kind of formal business grouping or entity between the Partners.

#### VIII. Equal opportunity

The Partners subscribe to a policy of equal opportunity and will not discriminate on the basis of race, national and ethnic origin, gender, gender identity or gender expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, religion or other beliefs or disability. The Partners strive to widen the participation in international education through inclusion and diversity providing equitable access to the benefits of global education to all students, teachers and staff.

#### IX. Terms and termination

This Agreement shall become effective as of the last date of its execution by an authorised representative of each of the Partners and shall continue in effect for a period of five (5) years from the date of execution. This Agreement can be terminated at any time by any Partner upon a one (1) year's written notice.

#### X. Signatures

This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which when executed and delivered shall constitute a duplicate original, but all the counterparts shall together constitute the one agreement. The Partners acknowledge and agree that this Agreement may be executed by electronic signature, which shall be considered as an original signature for all purposes and shall have the same force and effect as an original signature. The Partners have caused this Agreement to be duly signed by the authorized representatives in separate signature pages.

To evidence each Partners' acceptance of this Multilateral Agreement on Virtual Student Mobility, the representatives of each Partner will sign the Agreement on separate pages that are part of the Agreement.

#### XI. Notices

Any notice given to a Partner under or in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing and may be delivered at its registered office (if a company) or its principal place of business (in any other case), and may also be sent by email to the email address given below:

UoD:

MUNI:

HSRW:

TAMK:

#### XII. Jurisdiction

Each Partner irrevocably agrees that the courts of [...] shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with this Agreement or its subject matter or formation.

To evidence each Partners' acceptance of this Multilateral Agreement on Virtual Student Mobility, the representatives of each Partner will sign the Agreement on separate pages that are part of the Agreement.

On behalf of the **University of Derby**:

Signature:

Name and title:

Date:

On behalf of the **University of Masaryk**:

Signature:

Name and title:

Date:

To evidence each Partners' acceptance of this Multilateral Agreement on Virtual Student Mobility, the representatives of each Partner will sign the Agreement on separate pages that are part of the Agreement.

On behalf of **Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences**:

Signature:

Name and title:

Date:

To evidence each Partners' acceptance of this Multilateral Agreement on Virtual Student Mobility, the representatives of each Partner will sign the Agreement on separate pages that are part of the Agreement.

On behalf of **Tampere University of Applied Sciences**:

Signature:

Name and title:

Date:



# ANNEX 3: Student Enrollment Comparison

ERASMUS+ KA2 Strategic Partnership 2020-1-DE01-KA226-HE-005751 VERSATILE – Virtual Education Readiness Semester – Adaptive Toolbox for International Learning Experience									
Registration process for Incomings at HSRW									
Process steps	Dates, deadlines	Person responsible	Actions	Data required	Supporting proofs/documents	Is the data essential? What is the basis for collecting it?	Where is the data processed?	Fee, Tuition or Contribution required?	Notes, remarks, questions, difficulties
1. Nomination incoming exchange students have been nominated by Sending Institution	1 May - for winter semester 1 November - for summer semester	Partner university (Sending Institution)	sends information on nominees to International Center Coordinator (ICC) at HSRW	personal data + contact data + study programme	email or excel sheet with information	purpose: contacting Incomings Erasmus+ Programme Guide	Online Application Platform <b>MoveOn</b> (by QS Unisolution) + Server HSRW	-	
2. Welcoming + Informing Incomings	shortly after nomination deadline	International Center Coordinator (ICC)	sends out welcome email with information on application and enrolment process to prospective exchange student	-	-	-		-	
3. Application	1 June - for winter semester 1 December - for summer semester	Prospective exchange student	applies via online platform (provides required data, uploads documents)	personal data + contact details + study-related information	passport or ID card scan, Transcript of Records, Proof of Enrolment, language proficiency proof	required by HSRW Enrolment Regulations (based on State regulations)		-	
4. Learning Agreement	(final version until 5 weeks after semester start)	Exchange student + home academic supervisor + Academic Exchange Coordinator (AEC) HSRW	navigate Learning Agreement selecting and matching courses	course selection + signatures	signed Learning Agreement	make sure that student fits programme + earned credit points can be transferred (approval of Faculty acc. to §1(5) Enrolment Regulations)		-	
5. Admission	-	ICC	checks application documents + sends admission letter + informs of enrolment (registration) requirements	completed application requirements	Admission Letter	admission is a prerequisite for enrolment	MoveON	-	
6. Enrolment (registration)	before lectures start (mid April or mid September)	Prospective exchange student	hands in / sends enrolment (registration) documents	health insurance details, study-related information, proof of payment (semester fee)	health insurance proof + proof of payment (semester fee) + issuing date of university entrance qualification certificate + non-EU citizens: visa or when already resident in the EU: completed "Notification Form Mobility for Students"	Data needed to register exchange student in Campus Management System HIS, which in turn is required to generate an account for the IT-Infrastructure/Services, to process exam registration and results  HSRW enrolment regulations requirements (based on State regulations) for module participation and exam eligibility	MoveOn	Social Services Contribution: €310.68 for one semester  <b>UPDATE:</b> Student Council confirms that semesterticket fees (€213.06) can be waived, reduced fee is €101.30	<b>health insurance</b> required by law during physical attendance, <u>exemption possible when not staying in Germany</u>  <b>semester fee</b> (= social service contribution): refund of semesterticket fees is possible, <u>currently seeking waiver for presence-related social services</u> (canteen, housing, other advisory services)  <b>visa:</b> not a requirement for exchange students for digital enrolment (as opposed to regular student requirements)
7. Finalising Enrolment in CMS	-	ICC	checks enrolment documents + transfers data to CMS	see above	see above	see above	HISinOne (CMS), Moodle, email. (Webex may also be accessible via cost-free account)	-	
8. Exam registration	5 weeks after semester start	Prospective exchange student	sends filled exam registration form to ICC who checks and forwards to Examination Services	name + matriculation no. + programme + list of courses	exam registration form	Examination Regulations HSRW	Email	-	
9. Exam registration approval	-	Examination Service (ICC)	student is registered for exams in CMS after approval	see above	exam registration form	Examination Regulations HSRW	students can see registration in their HISinOne accounts	-	
10. Transcript of Records / Achievement Certificate	-	Examination Services/ ICC	issue TOR + Letter of Confirmation (proof of completion of semester abroad)	grades entered in HIS by Examination Services after exams	data in HIS	Examination Regulations HSRW	Email, HIS	-	

**Registration process for Incomings at MUNI**

Process steps	Dates, Deadlines	Person responsible	Actions	Data required	Supporting proofs/documents	Is the data essential? What is the basis for collecting it?	Where is the data processed?	Fee, Tuition or Contribution required?	Notes, remarks, questions, difficulties
1. Nomination incoming exchange students have been nominated by Sending Institution	January – April/May for Autumn semester and January – September/October for Spring semester	Partner university (Sending Institution)	sends information on nominees to International Center Coordinator (ICC) at MUNI	personal data + contact data + study programme	documents in ISOIS/email	purpose: contacting Incomings Erasmus+ Programme Guide	Online Application Platform <b>ISOIS MUNI/ in some cases email</b>	-	
2. Welcoming + Informing Incomings	shortly after nomination deadline	Center for International Cooperation	sends out welcome email with information on application and enrolment process to prospective exchange student	-	-	-		-	
3. Application	February – April/May for Autumn semester and January – September/October for Spring semester	Prospective exchange student	applies via online platform (provides required data, uploads documents)	personal data + contact details + study-related information	printed online application, Learning Agreement (LA), certificate or document proving your level of English	required by MUNI Enrolment Regulations		-	
4. Learning Agreement	February – September/February – January LA approval (final version until 5 weeks after semester start)	Exchange student + home academic supervisor + Academic Exchange Coordinator (AEC) MUNI	navigate Learning Agreement selecting and matching courses	personal data, course selection + signatures	signed Learning Agreement	make sure that student fits programme + earned credit points can be transferred		-	
5. Admission	-	Center for International Cooperation	checks application documents + sends admission letter + informs of enrolment (registration) requirements	completed application requirements	Admission Letter	admission is a prerequisite for enrolment	ISOIS/email/IS	-	
6. Enrolment (registration)	before lectures start (mid April or end of September)	Prospective exchange student	hands in / sends enrolment (registration) documents	study-related information, personal data	-	Data needed to register exchange student in the Information System MUNI, which in turn is required to generate an account to the IT-Infrastructure/Services, process exam registration and results  MUNI enrolment regulations requirements (based on State regulations) for module participation and exam eligibility	ISOIS	-	
7. Finalising Enrolment in CMS	-	Center for International Cooperation	checks enrolment documents + transfers data to IS	see above	see above	see above	Email, (MS, ZOOM, Webex may also be accessible via cost-free account)	-	
8. Exam registration	January – mid-February for Autumn semester/late May – July for Spring semester, registration for exams is during or right before examination period	Prospective exchange student	-	Student ID number	exam registration form	Examination Regulations MUNI	IS	-	After student is enrolled, he is considered as normal student of MU, so all action are being done in the MUNI information system.
9. Exam registration approval	-	-	student is registered for exams in IS	Student ID number	-	Examination Regulations MUNI	students can see registration in their IS accounts	-	
10. Transcript of Records / Achievement Certificate	-	Center for International Cooperation	issue TOR + Letter of Confirmation (proof of completion of semester abroad)	grades entered in IS by Examination Services/Teachers after exams	data in IS	Examination Regulations MUNI	Email, IS	-	

Students from EU countries	Students from the EU (plus Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) are exempt from student visa requirements
Students from countries outside the EU	Once you have been accepted for studies at Masaryk University, you will have to turn to the local Czech embassy or consulate: the Czech Republic, like most other countries, requires foreign students studying in the country to have a student visa. Possession of a student visa is a condition for studying at Masaryk University.
Students living in the EU countries but originally from outside the EU	<a href="#">The same procedure as for students from countries outside the EU. You are obliged to apply for a visa to study in the Czech Republic (even though you have a residence permit in one of the European countries). If you are a holder of a long-term residence permit in an E.U. country you can submit your visa application in one of the Czech regional visa centres (see the section Documents).</a>

ERASMUS+ KA2 Strategic Partnership  
2020-1-DE01-KA226-HE-005751  
**VERSATILE – Virtual Education Readiness Semester – Adaptive Toolbox for International Learning Experience**

**Registration process for Incomings at TAMK**

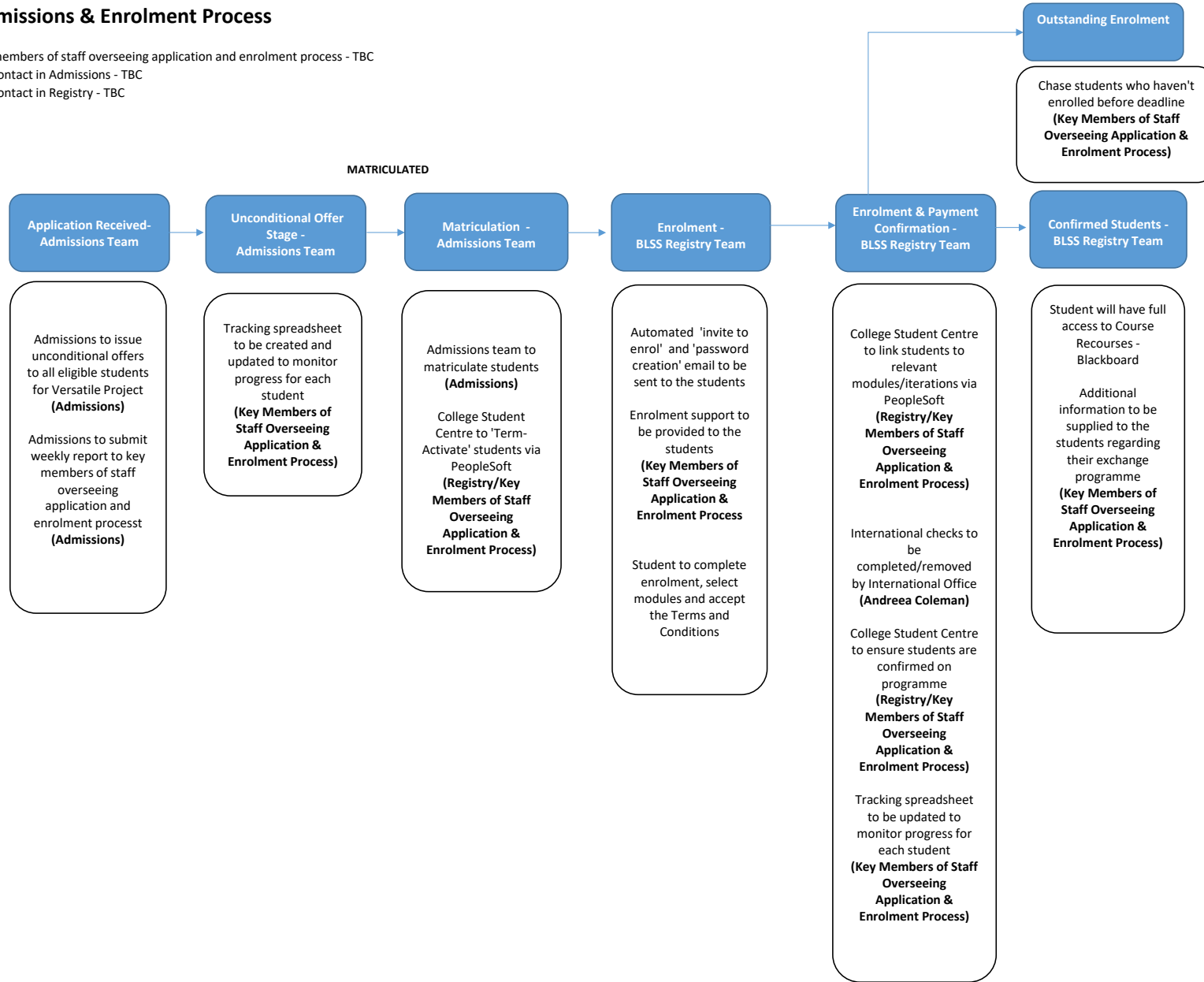
Process steps	Dates, Deadlines	Person responsible	Actions	Data required	Supporting proofs/documents	Is the data essential? What is the basis for collecting it?	Where is the data processed?	Fee, Tuition or Contribution required?	Notes, remarks, questions, difficulties
1. Nomination incoming exchange students have been nominated by Sending Institution	15 April - for Autumn semester 30 September - for Spring semester	Partner university (Sending Institution)	sends information on nominees to Student Mobility Team infoming.tamk@tuni.fi	personal data + contact data + study programme	email or excel sheet with information	purpose: adding students information to SoleMOVE Erasmus+ Programme Guide	Online Application Platform SoleMOVE (by SoleNovo)	-	
2. Welcoming + Informing Incomings	shortly after nomination deadline	Student Mobility Team incoming.tamk@tuni.fi	sends out welcome email with information on online application and enrolment process to prospective exchange student	-	-	-		-	
3. Application	30 April - for Autumn semester 15 October - for Sping semester	Prospective exchange student	applies via online platform (provides required data, uploads documents)	personal data + contact details + study-related information	Passport-size photo, motivation letter, CV, Transcript of Records, preliminary LA, language proficiency proof	required by TAMK Enrolment Regulations		-	
4. Learning Agreement	30 April - for Autumn semester 15 October - for Sping semester	Exchange student + home academic supervisor + Degree programme International Coordinator	navigate Learning Agreement selecting and matching courses	course selection + signatures	signed Learning Agreement	make sure that student fits programme + earned credit points can be transferred (approval of Faculty acc. to §1(5) Enrolment Regulations)		-	
5. Admission	-	Degree Programme + Student Mobility Team	checks application documents + sends admission letter + informs of enrolment (registration) requirements	completed application requirements	Admission Letter	admission is a prerequisite for enrolment	SoleMOVE	-	
6. Enrolment (registration)	before lectures start (mid August or early January)	Prospective exchange student	hands in / sends enrolment (registration) documents	health insurance details, study-related information	health insurance proof + issuing date of university entrance qualification certificate + non-EU citizens: visa or when already resident in the EU: completed "Notification Form Mobility for Students"	Data needed to register exchange student in Study Register system Peppi, which in turn is required to generate an account fo the IT-Infrastructure/Services, process exam registration and results  HSRW enrolment regulations requirements (based on State regulations) for module participation and exam eligibility	Study register Peppi		<b>health insurance</b> required by law during physical attendance  <b>visa:</b> not a requirement for exchange students for digital enrolemnt (as opposed to regular student requirements)
7. Finalising Enrolment in study register Peppi	right after acceptance	Student Mobility Team	creates new coming groups and models, transfers student data to study register in Peppi	personal data + contact details + study-related information	Study certificate	Study right at TAMK, IT servcies, Moodle	Study register Peppi	-	
8. Exam registration	Depends on each teacher if course even have an exam	Prospective exchange student	Depends on each teacher					-	All courses does not have exams at all. We have separate general retake exams if student fail to pass normal exams
9. Exam registration approval	Depends on each teacher if course even have an exam	Course teacher	Depends on each teacher			Course teacher		-	All courses does not have exams at all. We have separate general retake exams if student fail to pass normal exams
10. Transcript of Records / Achievement Certificate	-	Student Mobility Team	issue TOR + Letter of Confirmation (proof of completion of semester abroad)	grades entered by course teachers within 3 weeks after course has ended	data in Peppi	Based on degree regulations at TAMK	Email, Peppi (student can have own documents from Pakki)	-	

### Registration process for Incomings at UoD

Process steps	Dates, Deadlines	Person responsible	Actions	Data required	Supporting proofs/documents	Is the data essential? What is the basis for collecting it?	Where is the data processed?	Fee, Tuition or Contribution required?	Notes, remarks, questions, difficulties
1. Nomination incoming exchange students have been nominated by Sending Institution									UoD to identify key contacts for exchange students to ensure smooth enrolment via Admissions, SRA, Registry
2. Welcoming + Informing Incomings		Course Welcome / Starting Page	Prospective exchange student reads guidance available and clicks on external link to apply	Link to UoD website	Prospective exchange student completes enrolment form and reads what information is required as part of their application		UoD Website		UoD to confirm if the students can be flagged on PeopleSoft so reports can be run
3. Application		Prospective exchange student applies via UoD website and completes application form	Prospective exchange student submits application (provides required data, uploads documents)	personal data + contact details + study-related information	Passport or ID card scan, Transcript of Record, language proficiency proof		UoD Website / PeopleSoft / Admissions		UoD to confirm if students will apply for the modules via Online Learning or normal route?
4. Learning Agreement									
5. Admission		Admissions Office - checks application documents + sends admission letter + informs of enrolment (registration) requirements	Student completes application requirements and Admissions processes application	Admission Letter	Admission is a prerequisite for enrolment - students are matriculated and are requested to be term-activated	Prospective student would need to provide Passport or ID card scan, Transcript of Record, language proficiency proof in order for the offer to become unconditional.	UoD Website / PeopleSoft / Admissions	Fees are automatically calculated via PeopleSoft - UoD to confirm if these students will be charged? Fees may need to be removed by SRA	UoD to confirm if a bespoke Offer letter will need to be created for these students
6. Enrolment (registration)		Prospective exchange student completes enrolment upon offer letter being received	Automated Passport creation email is sent to the student to create login details	Prospective exchange student completes enrolment by inputting personal details	Prospective exchange student selects module class numbers and accepts the terms and conditions	IT account will be created, prospective students can be term active and confirmed on programme, fees will be populated (if required). Student will have access to UDOL and Course Resources (Blackboard) for classes	Student Records and Awards / PeopleSoft / Registry		UoD to confirm if specific module class numbers will need to be created for these exchange students (like MBA Block Programme) by PACMAN.
7. Finalising Enrolment in CMS									
8. Exam registration									
9. Exam registration approval									
10. Transcript of Records / Achievement Certificate									

# Admissions & Enrolment Process

Key members of staff overseeing application and enrolment process - TBC  
 Key contact in Admissions - TBC  
 Key contact in Registry - TBC



## ANNEX 4: Joint Student Application Form Data

### **VERSATILE Joint Application Form Data**

#### **Identity**

Family name

First name

Gender

Date of birth

Country of birth

Place of birth (as listed in your passport)

Nationality

Student ID at your home university

Identity document number

Country

Street

Postcode

City

Phone number

Email address

#### **Educational Background**

Home University & Faculty/Department/School

Degree/Qualification pursued at home institution (e.g.: B.Sc. in Economics)

Current semester of studies

#### **Your university entrance qualification**

Date of your secondary education completing certificate (for example high school leaving certificate, Abitur, Matura, matriculation examination, vocational education, etc)

## **Language Skills**

Mother tongue

English language level

## **Course Selection**

Please indicate the courses you would like to register for (e.g. "1, 3, 7") from the list below:

## **Special Needs**

Do you have any disabilities, impairment or long-term medical condition which may affect your studies?

Are there any requirements which you feel may be relevant to share?

## **Uploads**

Academic Transcript of Records

Photocopy of Identity Document

Proof of enrolment from your home university

Proof of English language proficiency

Signed Learning Agreement

## **Declaration of Consent**

Information provided is correct and complete, and any discrepancies may result in registration cancellation.

Information will be stored electronically and used in accordance with GDPR.

Information will be forwarded to partner universities for course registration.

Compliance with laws of host country and hosting institution's rules and regulations.

## ANNEX 5: Joint Data Protection Agreement

# Shared Responsibility Agreement

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This agreement, hereinafter referred to as 'Agreement', is between:

- (A) Masaryk University , a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of the Czech Republic, with registered office at Žerotínovo nám. 617/9, 601 77 Brno, Czech Republic ("MUNI"); Responsible person:
- (B) Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences , a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of Germany, with registered office at Marie-Curie-Strasse 1, 47533, Kleve, Germany ("HSRW"); Responsible person:
- (C) Tampere University of Applied Sciences , a higher education institution organized and existing under the laws of Finland, with registered office at Kuntokatu 3, 33520 Tampere, Finland ("TAMK"); Responsible person:

### 1. Purpose of the Agreement

(1) A contractual relationship exists between the parties ("Principal Contract"), the purpose of which is the implementation of the project "VERSATILE" by responsible persons (A), (B), (C) ... . With respect to this existing contractual relationship, the parties agree to decide jointly on the purposes and methods of data processing within the meaning of Art. 4 no. 7 GDPR as well as determine the extent to which responsibility is shared among the parties.

(2) This Agreement governs the shared responsibility between the parties within the meaning of Art. 26 GDPR. It sets forth and clarifies which party is responsible for which GDPR-related duties in connection with the joint processing of personal data.

### 2. Description of data processing

(1) The purpose, type and scope of personal data processing are set forth by the Principal Contract between the parties as well as any additional contractual provisions, if applicable.

(2) The type of data and the specific data subjects are defined in **Annex 1** of this Agreement.

### 3. Responsibility for processing steps / phases

(1) The parties have described the processing steps falling under joint responsibility as well as the parties' individual responsibilities within this context in **Annex 2** of the Agreement. Where not explicitly stated and no specific responsibilities are otherwise assigned in the Agreement, it is hereby understood that all parties are equally responsible for the processing of the data in question.



(2) Moreover, in **Annex 2** the parties may also specify responsibilities for the processing and implementation of measures that are necessary for allowing data subjects to exercise their rights set forth by Art. 15-21 GDPR. Where not explicitly stated and no specific responsibilities are otherwise assigned in the Agreement, it is hereby understood that all parties are equally responsible for the processing of the aforementioned requests from data subjects.

(3) Notwithstanding subsections (1) and (2), the parties agree that all data subjects are entitled to contact either of the parties in order to exercise their legal rights. In this case, the contacted party is obligated to forward requests from data subjects without delay to the responsible party defined in Annex 2 of this Agreement. The parties agree to provide suitable contact information for this purpose and to notify the other parties in writing of any changes to this information without delay.

#### **4. Ensuring the rights of data subjects**

(1) Each party is obliged to comply with the duties to provide requested information to data subjects arising from Art. 12-14 GDPR and Art. 26 (2) sentence 2 GDPR insofar as the party is responsible for those specific processing step(s) or phase(s) within the meaning of Section 3 of the Agreement. The parties shall ensure that this information is available online and provide to each other the specific URLs to access this information.

(2) The requested information shall be provided to data subjects without charge, in clear and plain language, and in a precise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible form.

(3) The parties may define primary responsibilities for complying with the information duties set forth by Art. 12-14 GDPR.

#### **5. Data protection**

The parties mutually agree to adhere to technical and organisational data security measures in accordance with Art. 32 GDPR with respect to the processing of personal data for which joint responsibility exists within the meaning of Art. 26 GDPR.

#### **6. Reporting requirements for data breaches**

(1) Each party is obliged to report immediately in writing any and all personal data breaches within the meaning of Art. 4 no. 12 GDPR to the other parties. The parties shall share with each other all information required to assess the severity and consequences of the breach as well as to comply with any applicable reporting requirements in accordance with Art. 33, 34 GDPR.

(2) In the event that the data breach must indeed be reported under Art. 33 GDPR, the parties shall work together to a reasonable extent to plan the subsequent steps and mutually support each other in complying with all applicable reporting requirements.

(3) If the parties need to notify the affected data subjects under Art. 34 GDPR, they shall work together to a reasonable extent to contact the data subjects jointly, provided the parties consider this course of action sensible.

## **7. Joint responsibilities**

The parties mutually agree to notify each other immediately and fully as soon as they discover any errors or irregularities in data processing or any violations of provisions in this Agreement or applicable data protection law (the GDPR in particular).

## **8. Third-party processors**

(1) Commissioning a third-party processor within the meaning of Art. 4 no. 8 GDPR requires the prior written approval of the other parties.

(2) Before issuing their approval, the other parties can demand to see the contractual agreement that will be concluded with the third-party processor in order to verify compliance with Art. 28 GDPR.

(3) Should the third-party data processing occur in a third country, the commissioning party shall describe to the other parties of this Agreement which guarantees are in place to ensure an appropriate level of data protection in the third country.

(4) In the event of any changes to a currently valid contractual agreement with a third-party processor, the commissioning party is obligated to notify the other parties of this Agreement of the aforementioned changes. If the aforementioned changes to the contract with the third-party processor violate the provisions set forth in Art. 28 GDPR, the other parties are entitled to demand immediate rectification of the contract to ensure full compliance with Art. 28 GDPR.

## **9. Cooperation with regulatory authorities**

(1) If a party is contacted by a regulatory authority with regard to a data processing matter falling under this Agreement, it is obliged to inform the other parties immediately.

(2) The parties agree to coordinate with each other when responding to requests from regulatory authorities with regard to data processing matters falling under this Agreement, provided this is legally permissible and/or reasonable to do so.

(3) The parties principally agree to comply with all orders from regulatory authorities. At the same time, the parties agree to investigate whether and to which extent legal recourse can be pursued with regard to regulatory orders.

## **10. Liability**

(1) The parties are liable to affected data subjects in accordance with applicable law.

(2) The parties agree to release each other internally from all liability for harmful events that were caused by the actions of a single party in accordance with their assigned responsibilities under Section 3 of the Agreement. This also applies to fines levied against one of the parties due to a violation of data protection law.

## **11. Concluding provisions**

(1) The provisions of the Principal Agreement apply with regard to the term and termination of this Agreement. If provisions in this Agreement clash with other

agreements between the parties, in particular the Principal Agreement, the provisions in this Agreement shall take priority.

(2) If individual provisions in this Agreement are or become ineffective or contain loopholes, the validity of the remaining provisions remains unaffected. The parties agree that invalid provisions shall be replaced by legally valid provisions which reflect as closely as possible the intended purpose of the invalid provisions and also comply as best as possible with Art. 26 GDPR.

(3) German law and the GDPR shall apply.

\_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_  
Place Date

\_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_  
Place Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
- Responsible party (A) -

\_\_\_\_\_  
- Responsible party (B) -

\_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_  
Place Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
- Responsible party (C) -

## **Annex 1**

### **1. Type(s) of personal data**

The following types of personal data are subject to regular processing:

#### **Identity**

Family name  
First name  
Gender  
Date of birth  
Country of birth  
Place of birth (as listed in your passport)  
Nationality  
Student ID at your home university  
Identity document number  
Country  
Street  
Postcode  
City  
Phone number  
Email address

#### **Educational Background**

Home University & Faculty/Department/School  
Degree/Qualification pursued at home institution (e.g.: B.Sc. in Economics)  
Current semester of studies

#### **Your university entrance qualification**

Date of your secondary education completing certificate (for example high school leaving certificate, Abitur, Matura, matriculation examination, vocational education, etc)

#### **Language Skills**

Mother tongue  
English language level

#### **Course Selection**

Please indicate the courses you would like to register for (e.g. "1, 3, 7") from the list below:

#### **Special Needs**

Do you have any disabilities, impairment or long-term medical condition which may affect your studies?

Are there any requirements which you feel may be relevant to share?

#### **Uploads**

Academic Transcript of Records  
Photocopy of Identity Document  
Proof of enrolment from your home university

Proof of English language proficiency  
Signed Learning Agreement

### **Declaration of Consent**

Information provided is correct and complete, and any discrepancies may result in registration cancellation.

Information will be stored electronically and used in accordance with GDPR.

Information will be forwarded to partner universities for course registration.

Compliance with laws of host country and hosting institution's rules and regulations.

### **2. Categories of data subjects**

The following people's data will be processed in accordance with the Agreement:

- Students from participating universities

## Annex 2

Type of processing	Responsible	Responsible for ensuring the rights of data subjects
Collecting personal data from data subjects for course registration	Party (A) / Coordinator	Party (A)
Storing personal data in CMS database MoveOn	Party (A) / Coordinator	Party (A)
Sending student data to partner institutions	Party (A) / Coordinator	Party (A)
Enrolling students into university student administration	Party (A) / Party (B) / Party (C)	Designated person at data subject's home university
Requests from data subjects	Designated person at data subject's home university	Designated person at data subject's home university

## ANNEX 6: Joint Learning Agreement

Student	Last name(s)	First name(s)	Date of birth	Nationality <sup>1</sup>	Sex [M/F]	Study cycle	Degree program
						<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor (EQF level 6)	
Sending Institution (Home University)	Name	Faculty/Department		Address	Country	Contact person name <sup>2</sup> ; email	
	Please choose	Versatile Project		Please choose	Please choose	Please choose	
Receiving Institution	Name	Faculty/ Department		Address	Country	Contact email	
	Team Versatile	Centre for Internationalisation and Languages		Marie-Curie-Str. 1 47533 Kleve	Germany	<a href="mailto:students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu">students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu</a>	

### Before the virtual mobility

#### Study Programme at the Receiving Institution

Planned period of the virtual mobility: 01.03.2023 - 26.05.2023

Table A Before the virtual mobility	Component <sup>3</sup> code (if any)	Component title at the Receiving Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue <sup>4</sup> )	Semester	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) <sup>5</sup> to be awarded by the Receiving Institution upon successful completion
				<b>Total: ...</b>

Web link to the course catalogue at the Receiving Institution describing the learning outcomes:

The level of language competence<sup>6</sup> in English that the student already has or agrees to acquire by the start of the study period is:

A1  A2  B1  B2  C1  C2  Native speaker

#### Recognition at the Sending Institution

Table B Before the virtual mobility	Component code (if any)	Component title at the Sending Institution (as indicated in the course catalogue)	Semester	Number of ECTS credits (or equivalent) to be recognised by the Sending Institution
				<b>Total: ...</b>

Provisions applying if the student does not complete successfully some educational components

#### Commitment

By signing this document, the student, the Sending Institution and the Receiving Institution confirm that they approve the Learning Agreement and that they will comply with all the arrangements agreed by all parties. The Receiving Institution confirms that the educational components listed in Table A are in line with its course catalogue and should be available to the student. The Sending Institution commits to recognise all the credits or equivalent units gained at the Receiving Institution for the successfully completed educational components and to count them towards the student's degree as described in Table B. Any exceptions to this rule are documented in an annex of this Learning Agreement and agreed by all parties. The student and the Receiving Institution will communicate to the Sending Institution any problems or changes regarding the study programme, responsible persons and/or study period.

Commitment	Name	Email	Position	Date	Signature
Student			Student		
Responsible person <sup>7</sup> at the Sending Institution	Please choose	Please choose	Versatile Project		
Responsible person at the Receiving Institution <sup>8</sup>	Team Versatile	<a href="mailto:students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu">students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu</a>	Centre for Internationalisation and Languages		

- 
- <sup>1</sup> **Nationality:** country to which the person belongs administratively and that issues the ID card and/or passport.
- <sup>2</sup> **Contact person:** person who provides a link for administrative information and who, depending on the structure of the higher education institution, may be the departmental coordinator or works at the international relations office or equivalent body within the institution.
- <sup>3</sup> An "**educational component**" is a self-contained and formal structured learning experience that features learning outcomes, credits and forms of assessment. Examples of educational components are: a course, module, seminar, laboratory work, practical work, preparation/research for a thesis, mobility window or free electives.
- <sup>4</sup> **Course catalogue:** detailed, user-friendly and up-to-date information on the institution's learning environment that should be available to students before the mobility period and throughout their studies to enable them to make the right choices and use their time most efficiently. The information concerns, for example, the qualifications offered, the learning, teaching and assessment procedures, the level of programmes, the individual educational components and the learning resources. The Course Catalogue should include the names of people to contact, with information about how, when and where to contact them.
- <sup>5</sup> **ECTS credits (or equivalent):** in countries where the "ECTS" system is not in place, in particular for institutions located in Partner Countries not participating in the Bologna process, "ECTS" needs to be replaced in the relevant tables by the name of the equivalent system that is used, and a web link to an explanation to the system should be added.
- <sup>6</sup> **Level of language competence:** a description of the European Language Levels (CEFR) is available at: <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>
- <sup>7</sup> **Responsible person at the Sending Institution:** an academic who has the authority to approve the Learning Agreement, to exceptionally amend it when it is needed, as well as to guarantee full recognition of such programme on behalf of the responsible academic body. The name and email of the Responsible person must be filled in only in case it differs from that of the Contact person mentioned at the top of the document.

**Responsible persons at the Sending institution (Versatile Project):**

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences:	Ms Anne Tempel ( <a href="mailto:Anne.Tempel@hochschule-rhein-waal.de">Anne.Tempel@hochschule-rhein-waal.de</a> )
Masaryk University:	Ms Anežka Konvalinová ( <a href="mailto:449212@mail.muni.cz">449212@mail.muni.cz</a> )
University of Derby:	Ms Kimberley Dolman ( <a href="mailto:K.Dolman@derby.ac.uk">K.Dolman@derby.ac.uk</a> ) or Ms Jessamie Self ( <a href="mailto:j.m.self@derby.ac.uk">j.m.self@derby.ac.uk</a> )
Tampere University of Applied Sciences:	Ms Eeva Heikkilä ( <a href="mailto:eeva.e.heikkila@tuni.fi">eeva.e.heikkila@tuni.fi</a> )

- <sup>8</sup> **Responsible person at the Receiving Institution:** The Academic Exchange Coordinators of the respective faculty are the contact persons for the approval of the Learning Agreement.





# ANNEX 7: Letter of Confirmation

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



VERSATILE | Lead Partner | Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences | Marie-Curie-Straße 1  
D-47533 Kleve

VERSATILE Team

VERSATILE exchange student

Germany | Czech Republic | Finland | UK

Email: [students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu](mailto:students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu)

Date: 03.03.2023

## Letter of Confirmation – VERSATILE Summer Semester 2023

Dear VERSATILE Exchange Student,

I am writing to confirm your participation in the VERSATILE virtual exchange programme, offered in the beginning of summer semester 2023 by the four VERSATILE partner universities. As part of this programme, you will be joining students from Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (Germany), Masaryk University (Czech Republic), Tampere University (Finland) and University of Derby (England) for a virtual semester.

The virtual semester, known as VERSATILE, will take place from **1 March 2023 to 26 May 2023** and will include online coursework and virtual interactions with students and faculty from all four participating universities. Please note that the content and format of the virtual semester may vary depending on the specific courses you have enrolled in. The programme is designed to provide students with a unique and enriching international learning experience, regardless of their location.

As a participant in this programme, you will be able to access all of the university virtual resources, including online course materials and virtual student support services. You will also have the opportunity to engage in a range of virtual cultural and academic activities.

Please note that this letter serves as official confirmation of your participation in the VERSATILE virtual exchange programme. We ask that you keep a copy of this letter for your records.

**Additionally, please always use the email address you put in the registration form and ignore automatic IT emails from the partner universities.**

Please be advised that we will send all critical information and updates regarding your exchange semester to your registration email from the following email address: [exchangestudents@hochschule-rhein-waal.de](mailto:exchangestudents@hochschule-rhein-waal.de). Make sure to keep this email address in your contacts and check it regularly for any important updates.

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Please note that all course materials and professors will be introduced on a platform called **Digicampus.fi**. We kindly request that you register on this platform to access course schedules, additional materials, and information on social events. Please click on the following link to access the **Digicampus platform**:

<https://digicampus.fi/course/index.php?categoryid=227>.

It is important that you register promptly so that you can join your course on time. Thank you! For technical and data safety reasons we recommend the following login modes according to university membership:

MUNI: eduGain

UoD: eduGain

TAMK: Haka account

HSRW: Manual login (create new account).

We are also excited to invite you to our **virtual kick-off event** for the VERSATILE programme on **9 March 2023**, which will take place on **Webex at 7 pm CET (6 pm UK time, 8 pm finish time)**. Please follow this link to join:

<https://hsrw.webex.com/hsrw/j.php?MTID=mc8f870b5fa11f0a125baef17ce6a5e07>

Additionally, it is important to mention that if you have chosen a **course from the University of Derby** (valid for course 1: “Managing Responsibly” and/or course 7: “Understanding Organisational Behaviour”), you will need to enroll in it through the University of Derby's enrollment platform, which can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/services/admissions/online-application-guide/>

Kindly enroll through this platform to ensure your participation in the course.

Please be advised that this letter of admission is valid for summer semester 2023 only and cannot be extended.

Should you have any questions or encounter any difficulties, please feel free to reach out to us via the following email address: [students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu](mailto:students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu). Our team will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to welcoming you to the VERSATILE virtual exchange programme and to supporting you throughout your virtual semester.

Sincerely,

Team VERSATILE

## ANNEX 8: Joint Student Certificate



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# CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

This is to certify that

XXX

successfully completed the following modules within the  
**The VERSATILE Virtual Online Exchange Semester**  
during summer semester 2023

Name of the Module	Held by	Final Grade	Status	Credits (ECTS)*
Managing Responsibly	UoD/TAMK		approved	
International and European Sanctions	MUNI/HSRW			
EU Institutions	MUNI/HSRW			
Sustainability and SME's	HSRW			
Economics of the European Union	MUNI/HSRW			
Entrepreneurship and Leadership	TAMK/ UoD			
Understanding Organisational Behaviour	UoD/TAMK			
EU History and Current Challenges	HSRW/MUNI			

\*For possible recognition of ECTS, please contact the examination board at your university and include your Versatile Learning Agreement and Transcripts of Records.

Issued: 2023-05-31, in Kleve/Germany

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Professor Dr Philipp Schorn  
Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences  
Academic Project Lead

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Dr Joost Kleuters  
Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences  
Administrative Project Lead



## ANNEX 9: Marketing Flyer



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**VERSATILE  
Semester**

**Can't travel and still  
want to study abroad?**

-  Study for free at **4 European universities** at same time
-  Choose from **8 innovative online courses**
-  **Apply till 15 February 2023**
-  Get Erasmus recognised credits

  
**MORE INFO**

<https://versatile-erasmus-project.eu/for-students>

# ANNEX 10: DigiCampus Screenshot

## VERSATILE

### Virtual Exchange Courses for Students from

- Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (HSRW), Germany
- Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK), Finland
- University of Derby (UoD), UK
- University of Masaryk (MUNI), the Czech Republic

The courses are running from 6 March to 26 May 2023.

Click on the **i**-icon for a brief course description.

Check the full course catalogue!

#### Administrative questions?

Contact by email: [students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu](mailto:students@versatile-erasmus-project.eu)

#### Course Content questions?

Please contact the teachers named in the course descriptions (click on the **i**-icon).

Economics of the European Union	<b>i</b>
Entrepreneurship and Leadership	<b>i</b>
EU History and Current Challenges	<b>i</b>
EU Institutions	<b>i</b>
International and European Sanctions	<b>i</b>
Managing Responsibly	<b>i</b>
Sustainability and SMEs	<b>i</b>
Understanding Organisational Behaviour	<b>i</b>
THIS WAY to the Cyber VERSATILE Café	<b>i</b>
VERSATILE – Teachers' Exchange	<b>i</b>



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### All VERSATILE courses

[List of all Versatile courses](#)

### VERSATILE website

The courses in this section are **VERSATILE** courses. Please [visit the official website](#) for more information.

### How to get started?

View a video: [Welcome to VERSATILE virtual exchange semester](#)

