



ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

School of Physics

Program of Postgraduate Studies Physics of Atmospheric Environment and Global Change

Regulation of mobility

26 February 2024

The Senate of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) in its meeting number 2980/20 & 21-2-2019 decided to approve the adoption of good practices for the correct implementation of the ERASMUS+ program, which apply accordingly to all Study Cycles, in accordance with the current Legislation and the Regulation of the respective PPS.

In addition, the procedures are since then updated and specified according to the directions of the State Scholarship Foundation and are published respectively by **the Department of European and Educational Programs** of AUTH on its website <https://eurep.auth.gr/el/students/studies>.

The above Decision of the Senate of AUTH reads as follows:

A) Outgoing Students

The following aims to ensure that mobile students receive full and automatic recognition of their period of study in a partner institution, subject to the successful completion of their academic obligations.

1. When completing the Learning Agreement for Studies, prior to the transfer, the respective ECTS Coordinator, as the designated representative of the relevant School based on Ministerial Decision no. Φ.821/2318T/89676/Z1, must ensure that the workload of the transferee at the Host Institution, as undertaken with the declaration of the corresponding academic obligations in the relevant table of the above form (Table A), will amount to 30 ECTS credits for one academic semester. For reasons of flexibility and given the heterogeneity of the study programs, a deviation from the upper norm (whether positive or negative) is allowed for the number of credit units of one (1) single course in the case of an academic term or semester and two (2) courses in the case of commuting for one academic year.
2. When completing the Learning Agreement, the ECTS Coordinator should ensure the full recognition of the aforementioned workload by including in the corresponding table of the Learning Agreement (Table B), the credits and courses/academic obligations from which he will be exempt from, upon successful completion of those mentioned in Table A. This process must have the approval of the Assembly or corresponding competent body of the relevant School, via a relevant decision that could be made once and apply for all. This decision is included in the Application-Declaration form submitted by mobile students to the European Programs Department.
3. The aforementioned recognition should be divided into three categories:

I. Compulsory courses based on the study program of the relevant School of AUTH and on the condition that the curriculum of the course offered at the Host Institution matches that of the course of the relevant School.

Recognition: Courses successfully completed by outgoing students will be recognized with the respective title of the relevant School.

It is **recommended** that the signed consent of the course instructor is required before completing the Learning Agreement.

II. Elective courses (major or not) based on the study program of the relevant School, to which the condition of matching content does not apply, however, they should be included in the academic field treated by the Faculty, School or Sector.

Recognition: Courses that outgoing students have successfully completed abroad will be recognized either by their title at the Host Institution or by the course title of the relevant School, provided there is a content correspondence between the courses. It is noted that the electronic system of the Secretariats supports the recognition and inclusion of EPC courses (Exchange Program Courses) in the Curriculum of each School. These courses may be included in the learning agreement either with its own title, in the case of a corresponding course in the study program of the relevant School, or without its title but simply as an "elective course" (major or not).

It is **recommended** that a sufficient number of elective courses (major or not) relative to the scientific field of the School are included in the study programs. The inclusion of such courses offers flexibility to the Schools regarding the recognition of the courses and enriches the study programs with courses that may not be taught in the School (e.g. due to the absence of relevant faculty members) but are relevant to the study program.

III. Free elective courses, for which the condition of matching content or inclusion of the course in the academic field of the School does not apply.

Recognition: Courses of this category successfully completed by outgoing students will be recognized with the title they hold at the Host Institution. The maximum number of ECTS of free elective courses included in the learning agreement before the move must be identical to the number of ECTS of free elective courses allowed by the study program concerned. These courses may be included in the Learning Agreement without their title, simply as "free elective course"

The introduction of a small number of elective courses (e.g. 6-10 ECTS) is additionally **recommended** in the context of upcoming curriculum reforms.

4. In the case of courses related to the scientific field of the School (core or elective) detailed examples of recognition are found in the Appendix I (attached). In the case of courses that do not fall within the scientific field of the relevant School, these are recognized as free elective courses, as mentioned above. For the recognition of the credits from these courses, alternative combinations proposed in Appendix I are applied. It should be noted that when selecting courses for the learning agreement, the transfer students are consulted by the ECTS coordinator, so in case courses outside the relevant academic field are chosen, these courses gather credits equal to those the study program of the relevant School allows for free elective courses. This ensures recognition upon return from the Host Institution. The inclusion of such courses in the curricula will fulfill the necessity for full recognition of the commuting period (60 credits for an academic year, 30 credits for an academic semester, 20 credits for an academic quarter).
5. In case of discrepancy regarding the number of credit units between AUTH and the Host Institution, the maximum degree of flexibility should be applied, and all possible combinations of recognition should be considered after the student's return, always within the framework of the regulation of the respective study program. In any case, maximum effort should be made to ensure the recognition of all credit units gained from the Host Institution. In this process, the principle of "**fair recognition**" is applied,, as described in the ECTS Guide, allowing a deviation of 1 or 2 credit units, always to the benefit of the commuter.

6. After the return of the mobile students, there is a MANDATORY recognition of the credit units gained by the mobile students, after successful examination/evaluation, as agreed. The recognition will follow the signed learning agreement (original or revised) which is binding for the School and AUTH. The commuters have the opportunity to make use of article 60 of the Regulations of AUTH, at the end of their studies, according to which "the student is entitled to be examined in two additional selected courses, the grade of which will replace lower grades in other electives". Based on this article of the Regulation, the student can, only at the end of his studies, request for 2 selected courses, including those successfully completed during his studies at the Host Institution, to not be included in the final grade of the diploma and always provided the necessary number of ECTS to obtain the degree has been completed.
7. Collecting additional credit units from free elective courses, exceeding those expected by the relevant School of AUTH, most often constitutes a poor choice for the learning agreement, unless the Host Institution does not offer any other choice to Erasmus students. In this case, the ECTS coordinators have to re-examine the curriculum of the cooperating Institution and, if it does not meet the required conditions for the recognition of courses for undergraduate mobile students, then the following courses of actions should be examined: (a) limiting the bilateral agreement to the level of second- and third-cycle student mobility (postgraduate and doctoral level, respectively), (b) limiting the bilateral agreement only to the level of faculty mobility, or (c) terminating the bilateral agreement with the specific Institution. The Department of European and Educational Programs invites the Schools to evaluate their bilateral agreements every year, and examine issues of course availability to students, since this a serious evaluation criterion that determines the review or even termination of a bilateral agreements.
8. It is recommended that the ECTS Coordinators inform the students about the mobility opportunities through the Erasmus+ program, as early as the first years of admission to AUTH. This prompt notification ensures appropriate planning on behalf of the students in terms of the chosen courses at the Host Institutions and the required number of credits for the implementation of the move.
9. The role of the ECTS Coordinator of a Department, as defined by the Ministerial Decision no. $\Phi.821/2318T/89676/Z1$, it is rather crucial, as he/she ensures the correct implementation of the Erasmus+ program in the relevant School and by extension in AUTH, leading to full recognition of the period of study of the mobile students at the Host Institution. For this reason, it is recommended to avoid frequent changes of the ECTS Coordinator for reasons of continuity and efficient management of student mobility. It is also recommended that the ECTS Coordinator is a member of the Study Program committee of the relevant School due to the high degree of interconnection of travel issues with the study programs of the Schools, as he/she should also be a member of the Assembly of the School to inform its members about the Erasmus program issues. It should be noted that these issues now concern a large number of students (at least 600 students per year) who benefit from the knowledge and the advisory services of the ECTS Coordinator and are entitled to full recognition of their studies at the Host Institution.

B) Incoming Students

1. Adequate knowledge of the language in which the courses are taught is required by incoming students, based on the conditions of the bilateral agreement. It is recommended that a recognized certificate of language proficiency (when required by the Schools) is provided, in case this is required in the annex of the bilateral agreement.
2. Incoming students' grade record (Transcript of Records) is sent to the Home Institutions no later than five weeks after the end of the commuting period. Non-compliance with this obligation may lead to the termination of cooperation between two Institutions and for this reason the ECTS coordinator in collaboration with the members of the School's Secretariat ensures that the grade records of the incoming students are sent in time.

It is noted that the terms "student", "students", "professor", "professors" refer to all genders.

In the context of student-oriented learning, all links with all relevant information, concerning the opportunities offered to students are also posted on the website of the School of Physics (<https://www.physics.auth.gr/erasmus>), together with the information for the School's member in charge of travel within the Erasmus+ program.