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## FINAL REPORT

# EUROPEAN MASTER IN MIGRATION AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS (EMMIR) (MASTER OF ARTS) (3.01)

OFFERED BY

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AHFAD UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN, OMDURMAN (SUDAN)

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (UGANDA)

UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA (SLOVENIA)

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH BOHEMIA (CZECH REPUBLIC)

UNIVERSITY OF STAVANGER (NORWAY)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND (SOUTH AFRICA), AND

RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY (INDIA)

March 2025

Assessment following the European Approach  
for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes



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## DECISION OF THE AQAS STANDING COMMISSION ON THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- **“EUROPEAN MASTER IN MIGRATION AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS” (EM-MIR) (MASTER OF ARTS)**

### OFFERED BY

- **CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY OLDENBURG (GERMANY)**
- **AHFAD UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN, OMDURMAN (SUDAN)**
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- **UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND (SOUTH AFRICA), AND**
- **RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY (INDIA)**

Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussions of the AQAS Standing Commission in its 24<sup>th</sup> meeting on 24 February 2025, the AQAS Standing Commission decides:

1. The study programme **“European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations” (Master of Arts)** jointly offered by the **Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg (Germany)**, **Ahfad University for Women (Sudan)**, **Mbarara University of Science and Technology (Uganda)**, **University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia)**, **University of South Bohemia (Czech Republic)**, **University of Stavanger (Norway)**, **University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa)**, and **Rabindra Bharati University (India)** is accredited according to the Standards defined in the European Approach for Quality Assurance for Joint Programmes.

The accreditation is unconditional.

The study programme complies with the requirements defined by the criteria and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version.

2. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **31 March 2031**.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programme:

1. The programme should ensure the consistent application of the masterplan's strategic objectives and enhance constructive alignment between foundational and specialised modules to better meet the diverse needs of students, improving engagement and facilitating a smoother transition through the curriculum
2. The programme should include a dedicated module on international migration law to provide deeper legal training and better prepare students for careers in law, policy, and related sectors.
3. The programme should offer more proactive support in the first semester, including clearer workload expectations and tailored academic advising, while also enhancing flexibility or differentiation within foundational courses like "Migration 101" to better engage students from diverse academic backgrounds and ensure the content is appropriately challenging and relevant.
4. The programme should modernise its admission process to manage the growing number of applications and incorporate safeguards, such as AI detection tools and structured interviews, to ensure that the integrity of the application process is maintained.
5. The programme should increase opportunities for collaborative research projects and practical, research-driven teaching to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and provide more hands-on experience for students.
6. The programme should strengthen its student community by introducing a buddy scheme, fostering connections between cohorts to support transitions between institutions.
7. The programme should provide earlier and more structured internship guidance, beginning in the first semester, to help students better align their internships with career goals and mobility paths.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Standing Commission refers to the attached experts' report.

**EXPERTS' REPORT****ON THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

- “EUROPEAN MASTER IN MIGRATION AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS” (EMMIR) (MASTER OF ARTS)

**OFFERED BY**

- CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY (GERMANY)
- AHFAD UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN, OMDURMAN (SUDAN)
- MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (UGANDA)
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- UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH BOHEMIA (CZECH REPUBLIC)
- UNIVERSITY OF STAVANGER (NORWAY)
- UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND (SOUTH AFRICA), AND
- RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY (INDIA)

Visit to the university: 24-25 September 2024

**Panel of experts:**

**Prof. Dr. Tomaž Deželan**

University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), Faculty of Social Sciences, Chair of Policy Analysis and Public Administration, Professorship for Political Sciences,

**Prof. Dr. Peter Scholten**

Erasmus University Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Department of Public Administration and Sociology, Professorship for Governance of Migration and Diversity,

**Dr. Sascha Krannich**

University of Gießen (Germany), Faculty of Medicine, Institute, Institute of the History, Theory and Ethics of Medicine (Labour market representative),

**Florens Förster**

Student of Applied Geography at RWTH Aachen University (Germany) (Student representative).

**Coordinator:**

Patrick Heinzer

AQAS, Cologne, Germany

## I. Preamble

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AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation supported by more than 90 universities, universities of applied sciences and academic associations. Since 2002, the agency has been recognised by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). It is, therefore, a notified body for the accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes in Germany.

AQAS is a full member of ENQA and also listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) which confirms that our procedures comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), on which all Bologna countries agreed as a basis for internal and external quality assurance.

AQAS is an institution founded by and working for higher education institutions and academic associations. The agency is devoted to quality assurance and quality development of academic studies and higher education institutions' teaching. In line with AQAS' mission statement, the official bodies in Germany and Europe (GAC and EQAR) approved that the activities of AQAS in accreditation are neither limited to specific academic disciplines or degrees nor a particular type of higher education institution.

## II. Accreditation procedure

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This report results from the external review of the master's programme "European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations" (Master of Arts) offered jointly by Carl von Ossietzky University (Germany), Ahfad University for Women, Omdurman (Sudan), Mbarara University of Science and Technology (Uganda), University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia), University of South Bohemia (Czech Republic), University of Stavanger (Norway), University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), and Rabindra Bharati University (India).

### 1. Criteria

The programme is assessed against the criteria defined by the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. The criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015.

### 2. Approach and methodology

#### *Initialisation*

The university consortium mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in April 2023. The university consortium produced a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). In March 2024, the consortium handed in a draft of the SER together with the relevant documentation on the programme and an appendix and statistical data on the programmes. The appendix included e.g.:

- an overview over statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student dropouts),
- the CVs of the teaching staff/supervisors,
- information on student services,
- core information on the main library,
- as well as academic regulations.

AQAS checked the SER regarding completeness, comprehensibility, and transparency. The accreditation procedure was officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS Standing Commission on 27 May 2024. The final version of the SER was handed in August 2024.

#### *Nomination of the expert panel*

The composition of the panel of experts follows the stakeholder principle. Consequently, representatives from the respective disciplines, the labour market, and students are involved. Furthermore, AQAS follows the principles for the selection of experts defined by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). The Standing Commission nominated the aforementioned expert panel in September 2024. AQAS informed the university consortium about the members of the expert panel and the university consortium did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

#### *Preparation of the site visit*

Prior to the site visit, the experts reviewed the SER and submitted a short preliminary statement including open questions and potential needs for additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the university consortium and to all panel members in order to increase transparency in the process and the upcoming discussions during the site visit.

#### *Site visit*

After a review of the SER, a site visit to the university took place on 24-25 September 2024. On site, the experts interviewed different stakeholders, e.g. the management of the higher education institutions, the programme management, teaching and other staff, as well as students and graduates, in separate discussion rounds and consulted additional documentation as well as student work. The visit concluded by the presentation of the preliminary findings of the group of experts to the consortium's representatives.

#### *Reporting*

After the site visit had taken place, the expert group drafted the following report, assessing the fulfilment of the criteria. The report included a recommendation to the AQAS Standing Commission. The report was sent to the consortium for comments.

#### *Decision*

The report, together with the comments of the university consortium, forms the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission to take a decision regarding the accreditation of the programme. Based on these two documents, the AQAS Standing Commission took its decision on the accreditation on 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2025. AQAS forwarded the decision to the university consortium. The university consortium had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In April 2025, AQAS published the report and the result of the accreditation as well as the names of the panel of experts.

### III. General information on the universities

The European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR) is a two-year Erasmus Mundus Master programme jointly run by three African, two Asian, and four European partners, along with a wider network of associate partners. According to the self-evaluation report, it offers a multidisciplinary approach to migration studies, focusing on migration through an intercultural lens.

It is said that the programme provides students with theoretical and methodological skills in migration studies, enabling them to conduct fieldwork in African, Asian, and European contexts. With 120 ECTS credits, EMMIR addresses contemporary issues in migration, emphasizing social justice, human dignity, rights, conflict, and reconciliation.

EMMIR aims to meet the increasing demand for expertise and multi-perspective approaches to migration. By institutionalizing a North-South-South dialogue, the programme offers state-of-the-art education in theoretical concepts and empirical methods, preparing students for careers in academia, policy, media, and research.

EMMIR III (2022-2027) aims to produce over 120 globally recruited professionals, adding to its international network of 221 graduates and engaging with various academic and non-academic stakeholders. The program will organize three summer schools/conferences, publish papers, book chapters, monographs, and curated blog posts, while also creating Open Educational Resource packages to spread its ideas and approach globally.

### IV. Assessment of the study programme

#### 1. Eligibility

*1.1 The institutions that offer a joint programme should be recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries. Their respective national legal frameworks should enable them to participate in the joint programme and, if applicable, to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree(s) should ensure that the degree(s) belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.*

*1.2 The joint programme should be offered jointly, involving all cooperating institutions in the design and delivery of the programme.*

*1.3 The terms and conditions of the joint programme should be laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement should in particular cover the following issues:*

- *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
- *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income etc.)*
- *Admission and selection procedures for students*
- *Mobility of students and teachers*
- *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.*

#### Description

##### Status

As of March 2024, the EMMIR consortium consists of eight universities in Germany (UOL), the Czech Republic (USB), Norway (UIS), Slovenia (UNG), South Africa (WITS), Sudan (AUW), Uganda (MUST), and India (RBU), along with one research centre in India (CRG). All but three institutions in the consortium are public universities;



Ahfad University for Women and Univerza v Novi Gorici are private institutions, while CRG is a private research institution.

Since 2013, EMMIR has been fully accredited by the JOQAR pilot project and by the relevant national and institutional authorities. In 2018, the European Accreditation followed. According to the documentation, the joint degree programme has been fully accredited by the relevant bodies in Programme Countries Germany, Norway, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic. In the Partner Countries, the degree is recognised.

**University of Oldenburg (UOL)** is a fully recognised, state-owned higher education institution entitled to award joint Master's degrees in Germany in accordance with the *Niedersächsisches Landeshochschulgesetz* (Higher Education Act of Lower Saxony). The current accreditation of the EMMIR programme is valid until September 2025.

**Ahfad University for Women (AUW)** is a private university and holds the right to award MA degrees as well as joint degrees. AUW is a member of both the Arab Universities Board and the African Universities Board and has a system-accreditation. EMMIR is fully implemented into the course catalogue at AUW, and the degree is fully recognised. However, since April 2023, the university has been closed due to the war in Sudan, affecting all educational institutions. Currently, the reopening date for AUW is uncertain.

**Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)** is a public university recognised and accredited by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). The implementation of joint degrees at MUST has been approved by the NCHE and the University's senate. The focus module offered by MUST has been accredited as part of the national MA degree "Conflict Analysis and Inclusive Development".

**University of Stavanger (UIS)** is self-accrediting in Norway, given the authority from the Norwegian government to establish and cancel study programmes in all three cycles without applying to the government. EMMIR is recognised as a joint degree in Norway.

**University of Nova Gorica (UNG)** is a private institution accredited by the Slovenian national accreditation agency *Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu* (NAKVIS) and is legally allowed to offer the degree under the assessment framework for joint programmes issued by the European Consortium for Accreditation. EMMIR has been re-accredited by NAKVIS in May 2020.

**University of South Bohemia (USB)** is a public institution of advanced learning in the Czech Republic. EMMIR has been accredited from 2008-2016 and recognised as a joint degree in the Czech Republic. It was re-accredited in 2019 by the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education.

**University of Witwatersrand (WITS)**, as a public university in South Africa, awards MA degrees and is able to be part of a joint degree-issuing consortium. At WITS, EMMIR is linked to the national degree "MA Migration and Displacement".

**Rabindra Bharati University (RBU)** is a public university accredited by the University Grants Commission Act 1946 and is allowed to award university degrees. RBU can be a part of a consortium awarding joint degrees based on the UGC Notification F. No. 4-1/2022. **Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (CRG)** is a research institute and does not award degrees.

Following the SER, all current degree-awarding institutions have integrated EMMIR within their national degree catalogues and recognise the joint degree. Evidence for this is annexes to the SER.

#### Joint Design and Delivery

The documentation outlines the significance of collaboration within the European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR) consortium. Joint curriculum development began in 2003-2006, with the

Intensive Phase (IP) being a crucial cooperative activity for the past 20 years. African partners have been fully involved since 2008. The consortium emphasises an integrated approach, with each partner contributing disciplinary expertise, creating a well-balanced interdisciplinary teaching and learning environment. Key elements of joint collaboration include the joint assessment of applicants, joint teaching during the Intensive Phase, and joint grading. Throughout the programme, it is said that there is continuous joint evaluation of teaching and curriculum development. Additionally, all partners share management responsibilities and monitor the programme's impact.

Furthermore, the SER states that joint components of the EMMIR structure can be seen in the following aspects:

### **1) Partner meetings**

According to the documentation, the consortium consists of three bodies: the Consortium Committee, the Examination Board, and the Selection Board, with all full partners represented in each body. Each partner selects its representatives, typically two for the Consortium Committee (usually the Course Director and an administrative representative, at the partner's discretion), and one representative for both the Examination Board and the Selection Board. The Course Directors primarily represent the partners in both bodies. The Selection Board and Consortium Committee are chaired by the Primary Coordinator, while the Examination Board is chaired by either the UiS or MUST Course Director. The Consortium Committee and the Examination Board hold in-person meetings once a year, with additional virtual meetings. The Selection Board meets annually (virtually in March/April), and the Examination Board also convenes virtually in December. These regular meetings, attended by all partners, are considered essential for effective project cooperation.

In September, the Consortium Committee Meeting (CCM) is preceded by a less formal partner meeting. Both meetings are used to negotiate various aspects of the study programme, including evaluation and quality assurance, prospective student selection and admission, student assessment, coordination of teaching activities and modules, curriculum development, and complementary research activities. Student representatives also participate in the CCM, with one representative from each active edition having voting rights. In March/April, the Selection Board meets virtually to finalize the ranking list for scholarship and non-fee paying applications, while in December, the Examination Board convenes virtually after the Proposal Colloquium to decide on admission to the Master thesis.

### **2) Admission**

Admission to the programme is one of the joint responsibilities of the consortium. The details are outlined in chapter 7.1 of this document.

### **3) Joint Curriculum and Implementation**

Following the SER, the EMMIR programme emphasizes collaboration between academics and students from Africa, Asia, and Europe to develop innovative responses in migration research and inter/transcultural relations. The joint curriculum, developed by the fully integrated consortium of partners, reflects this collaborative approach, incorporating diverse perspectives.

It is outlined that the Consortium Committee coordinates partners' contributions, ensuring effective communication and smooth transitions. EMMIR Course Directors report to the committee regularly, and significant curriculum changes require its approval. The curriculum combines complementary approaches to migration studies with a cohesive teaching agenda, including joint and specific modules.

Throughout the programme, partners share teaching, assessment, and supervision responsibilities, a major strength of EMMIR. This includes the jointly organized Intensive Phase at the beginning of the programme, the second semester at UiS, and the Proposal Colloquium in the fourth semester. Dissertation supervision is

also shared among all partners, with each dissertation being supervised/examined by two scholars from different institutions.

#### **4) Joint Diploma**

Upon completion of the programme and the acquisition of 120 ECTS credits, students are awarded a master's degree. They receive a joint diploma recognised by all participating institutions, along with a joint transcript of records detailing their academic performance at each partner institution. Additionally, they receive a joint Diploma Supplement based on the model developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and UNESCO/CEPES. The diploma document includes the logos of all EMMIR partner universities and specifically mentions the institutions where the student studied during their programme.

#### **5) Cooperation**

Following the documentation, collaboration with consortium partners extends beyond EMMIR's core syllabus. This collaboration includes joint project proposals, conferences, and publications, as well as student internships with associate partners. The links with associate partners are established and maintained by the partner universities, often based on long-standing institutional and individual scholar-level collaborations.

The coordinating institution's team oversees the network of associate partners, while each consortium partner has a facilitator responsible for maintaining this network. Cooperation with partner country organisations is essential for implementing EMMIR's African focus, with twelve associate partners in Africa. Additionally, it highlights the global dimension of the programme, with further associates in non-EU and non-African countries.

EMMIR operates within an academic context characterised by intensive professional interaction with various socio-economic, cultural, and academic sectors. Following the documentation, each EMMIR partner engages extensively with relevant sectors, with academics serving as experts and advisors, facilitating outreach, and conducting field work and applied research. Globally, EMMIR has 33 associate partners in the world of work. Efforts to involve stakeholders from the 'world of work' in EMMIR teaching are ongoing. Associates and other stakeholders offer internships and employment opportunities for graduates, provide guest lectures, and offer insights into developments in the labour market, including required skills and qualification profiles.

#### **6) Sustainability**

The SER outlines that strategies to ensure the sustainability of the study programme and potential changes to the EMMIR consortium in the future are developed and regularly discussed jointly in working groups during the Consortium Committee Meetings (CCMs). By the beginning of 2025, EMMIR plans to apply for EU funding for programme phase IV, covering the period from 2026 to 2031. One objective of the re-application is to integrate the programme's research focus with a concurrent PhD programme. Additionally, the consortium is considering further strengthening South-South connections, including the Centre for Migration Studies at the University of Ghana.

As per the documentation, joint collaboration is not only a defining feature of teachers' and professors' activities but also plays a crucial role in the overall performance of the programme and the consortium's routines and procedures, with student representatives actively involved. With student representatives present in all of EMMIR's bodies, the joint activities described above systematically integrate students' perspectives.

Furthermore, as outlined in the overall study plan, EMMIR aims to form student groups that foster a peer-learning atmosphere during the first two semesters and maintain this connection until they reconvene for the Proposal Colloquium in December of the second year. This approach is also evident in the assignments students undertake, particularly in the first semester, which involve a combination of individual assignments and group work.

### Cooperation Agreement

The SER outlines that all partners have entered into a cooperation agreement effective since 1 January 2022, outlining the terms and conditions of the joint programme. A signed copy of this Consortium Agreement and Financial Framework (CAFF) has been annexed to the documentation.

In addition to central formal aspects such as degree-awarding procedures, programme duration, mutual recognition of examination results, and mobility paths, the agreement describes the responsibilities of the partners involved, as well as the general admission and selection procedures for students.

The degree awarded in EMMIR is a Joint Degree of Master of Arts (M.A.) in the Erasmus Mundus Master's programme European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations. Upon completion of the curriculum, students receive a Joint Master's Degree diploma issued by the University of Oldenburg on behalf of the partner institutions, displaying all logos and co-signed by the Chair of the EMMIR Examination Board.

Each graduate also receives a transcript of records describing personal curriculum contents and the academic contribution of the institutions, along with a joint diploma supplement. This degree entitles the holder to the legally protected professional title "Master of Arts" and qualifies students for doctoral studies upon meeting all formal criteria.

The CAFF specifies the responsibilities of all partners involved in the. The EMMIR Primary Coordinator, representing the coordinating institution (UOL), holds the main responsibility for management and financial organisation. Each partner institution has a Course Director responsible for coordinating the operation of the course and serving as the first communication link with the Primary Coordinator. The coordinating institution (UOL) bears the financial responsibility for the programme, with resource allocation following the principles detailed in the CAFF. Budget decisions are made during regular Consortium Committee Meetings (CCMs).

It is said that student application, selection, and admission criteria and procedures are detailed in the EMMIR "Admission Regulations" passed by the EMMIR Consortium Committee and ratified by all partner institutions.

According to the documentation, EMMIR contributes to enhanced learning mobility of teachers and students and aims to foster sustainable development of partner countries in higher education through jointly developed modules according to Bologna criteria.

The EMMIR study plan combines group mobility and individual mobility. While all students spend the first semester at UOL and the second semester at UIS, they follow individually agreed mobility paths during their second study year. Except for the proposal colloquium, which always takes place at UOL at the beginning of their fourth semester in early December, students are free to design their mobility path, including study periods at each of the eight partner institutions and internships/research stays in any of the partner countries and beyond – under the direct supervision of one of the full partners. The consortium aims to allow every student to choose the mobility path of their interest while agreeing on certain standards to guarantee the academic quality of the third-semester focus modules, such as defining minimum or maximum numbers of participants for those modules.

According to the documentation, the cooperation agreement includes the EMMIR "Study and Examination Regulations" passed by the EMMIR Consortium Committee, legally reviewed by UOL, and ratified by all partner institutions. These regulations specify student assessment methods, credit recognition, and degree awarding procedures within the consortium (see Annex 8 – Study and Examination Regulations).

In addition, the regulations define examination objectives, methods, and assessment criteria; internship objectives, scope (minimum 300 hours), timing, support, and acknowledgment; detailed resit and appeal procedures; the consortium's zero tolerance cheating policy; and a jointly agreed grade conversion table (although most partners use the EMMIR grading system).

Recognition of prior learning is regulated in accordance with the Lisbon Convention. Recognition of credits acquired at partner universities is straightforward, as all partners have agreed to award ECTS credit points.

The examination regulations also outline the procedure to achieve an adjusted EMMIR grade if the partner university's grading scale differs from the letter grade system used in the programme.

### **Experts' evaluation**

Based on the discussions held during the on-site visit and the review of relevant documentation, the EMMIR consortium demonstrates a strong and coherent structure that ensures high standards in both academic delivery and administrative management. The programme operates effectively across a diverse range of partner institutions, and it is clear from the visit that the consortium is highly committed to maintaining the quality and sustainability of the programme.

During the on-site visit, the consortium's legal and accreditation status was discussed in detail, and it is evident that the EMMIR programme is supported by a robust legal framework. All partner institutions, including both public and private universities, are fully accredited in their home countries and are legally entitled to award joint degrees. The University of Oldenburg, as the coordinating institution, plays a crucial role in overseeing the programme's accreditation and legal compliance across the consortium.

The representatives from partner institutions confirmed that EMMIR is fully integrated into the national degree frameworks of each country involved, which guarantees that the joint degree is recognised internationally. Despite the temporary closure of Ahfad University for Women due to the conflict in Sudan, the consortium has shown resilience by maintaining the programme's operations through alternative arrangements, ensuring that students are not disadvantaged.

The discussions revealed a high level of confidence in the programme's sustainability, with clear plans in place to maintain its accreditation and legal standing in the years to come. The consortium is already preparing for future accreditation renewals and further strengthening its legal and administrative frameworks.

Throughout the on-site visit, it became clear that the joint design and delivery of the EMMIR programme are central to its success. The programme is the product of long-standing collaboration among the partner institutions, with a shared commitment to maintaining high academic standards. Each partner brings unique expertise to the curriculum, ensuring a well-rounded and interdisciplinary approach to migration studies.

The discussions with academic staff highlighted the depth of collaboration involved in both the design and delivery of the curriculum. The joint teaching approach, particularly during the "Intensive Phase" and second semester, was praised by both faculty and students as a strength of the programme. Faculty members from different universities actively contribute to various modules, providing students with a rich and diverse learning experience. The shared supervision of dissertations, where two scholars from different partner institutions co-supervise, was also cited as an example of effective academic cooperation.

Governance structures were discussed in detail, and the role of the Consortium Committee, Examination Board, and Selection Board was highlighted as critical in maintaining the programme's quality and consistency. Regular meetings, both in-person and virtual, enable continuous communication between the partners, ensuring that any issues are addressed collaboratively. The inclusion of student representatives in these meetings was seen as a positive aspect, allowing for direct feedback from students and ensuring that their voices are heard in the decision-making process.

Aspects of the cooperation agreement underpinning the EMMIR programme was discussed during the on-site visit, and it was clear that this agreement plays an important role in the smooth functioning of the consortium. The agreement clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of each partner, ensuring that both academic and

administrative tasks are distributed fairly. The University of Oldenburg, as the coordinating institution, manages the overall financial and administrative operations, but all partners contribute actively to these processes.

Discussions with administrative staff revealed that the cooperation agreement facilitates smooth transitions for students between partner institutions, particularly in terms of credit recognition and degree awarding processes. The joint diploma, which is awarded upon completion of the programme, is fully recognised by all participating institutions, and students receive a transcript that reflects their academic journey across the different universities.

Furthermore, the sustainability of the programme was a key focus during discussions, with the consortium members emphasising their commitment to securing future funding and maintaining the programme's high standards. There are plans to apply for further EU funding to support the next phase of the programme, and the consortium is exploring ways to strengthen partnerships, particularly with institutions in the Global South, particularly in Latin America. These forward-thinking strategies demonstrate a clear commitment to the long-term success of the programme.

Additionally, the cooperation agreement's inclusion of associate partners, particularly from the labour market, was highlighted as an important element. These partnerships provide students with opportunities for internships, guest lectures, and potential employment, ensuring that the programme remains relevant to the current job market.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 2. Learning outcomes

- 2.1 The intended learning outcomes should align with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications framework(s).*
- 2.2 The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills, and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).*
- 2.3 The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.*
- 2.4 If relevant for the specific joint programme, the minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC, or relevant common trainings frameworks established under the Directive, should be taken into account.*

## Description

### Level

EMMIR is equivalent to Level 7 of the European Higher Education Area Qualifications Framework (FQ-EHEA). The annex added to the SER draws a comparison between the EMMIR intended learning outcomes on the programme level differentiating between the three categories Knowledge (1), Skills (2), and responsibility and autonomy (3). In addition, the annex provides an overview on the respective national qualifications frameworks and the EQF.

### Disciplinary fields

It is stated that EMMIR is an interdisciplinary programme focused on migration studies, encompassing fields such as history, political science, development studies, sociology, anthropology, education, gender studies, and cultural studies. The programme is structured around four main thematic foci:



- Gender, diversity, and intersectionality
- Development, conflict, and justice
- Representation, power relations, and knowledge production
- Education and citizenship

Each module offered in EMMIR reflects these thematic foci, allowing students to develop specialist expertise and gain specific work experience while also acquiring horizontal skills such as work techniques, presentation and language skills, and inter/transcultural competencies.

These profiles strive to equip EMMIR graduates to work effectively in both academic and non-academic environments. With the ability to present, negotiate, manage, cooperate, and critically evaluate, graduates are prepared for doctoral studies, teaching in the field of migration studies, and roles in national and international governmental and non-governmental institutions dealing with migration, inter/transcultural competence, education, development, and gender issues.

According to the SER, the EMMIR learning outcomes combine both academic skills and core competences specific to migration studies and inter/transcultural studies (LO 1-8) with professional tools required in the labour market (LO 9-15). These outcomes aim to develop metacognitive problem-solving skills, critical efficacy beliefs, and the ability to transfer knowledge bidirectionally or multidirectionally while acknowledging ethical responsibilities.

Upon successful completion of the joint master's in Migration and Intercultural Relations, a student will achieve the following intended learning outcomes:

- ILO1.** Gain an overview of migration processes and policies, critically evaluating their structures, implications, and future scenarios. This includes understanding categories and approaches of migration research.
- ILO2.** Acquire in-depth knowledge about theories on migration, inter/transcultural relations, and multiculturalism, and autonomously contextualise terms and concepts in related fields.
- ILO3.** Acquire knowledge about and experience with research methods, methodology, and knowledge production, reflecting on their significance, unpredictability, and interdependencies in transcultural contexts.
- ILO4.** Develop competence to design a research agenda, develop research projects, and conduct them self-reflexively in a diverse team.
- ILO5.** Gain experience in designing and addressing complex and original research questions, and independently evaluating research processes and results.
- ILO6.** Evaluate the relevance of disciplinary as well as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches to specific research questions, including positioning their own work in the field of studies and its emerging issues.
- ILO7.** Develop an understanding of theories, concepts, and policies related to at least one of the programme's foci (i.e., gender, diversity and intersectionality; development, conflict and justice; representation, power relations and knowledge production; education and citizenship), and acknowledge their cross-cutting and strategic relevance in the field of migration and intercultural relations.
- ILO8.** Gain up-to-date expert knowledge in a specific area linking their disciplinary with transdisciplinary perspectives and specifying their individual profile.
- ILO9.** Gather experience in the occupational sphere shaping their professional profile and employability.
- ILO10.** Acquire practical expertise to present and structure an argument in academic English based on enhanced reading and writing skills in various text types.

**ILO11.** Develop competence in handling new media and communication technology in a critical and reflexive way, scrutinising its indications and connotations.

**ILO12.** Develop the ability to condense and visualise work results to present them to various audiences.

**ILO13.** Develop competence in self-management, including the ability to prioritise, set goals, and make decisions in individual and group work processes.

**ILO14.** Develop the ability to identify and critique discriminating forms of verbal and non-verbal communication, reflecting power relations and their own biases aiming at self-reflective interaction.

**ILO15.** Develop competence to initiate, lead, and/or participate in teamwork in inter/transcultural contexts, orienting themselves in unfamiliar areas, countries, and contexts.

To deepen inter/transcultural understanding and enhance inter/transcultural communication skills, as well as to improve future life and career prospects, EMMIR considers foreign language competence to be a crucial prerequisite. According to the EMMIR admission regulations, applicants must demonstrate proficiency in at least two languages other than their first language, with English being one of them. Many applicants already possess advanced language skills and aim to further enhance them. Therefore, EMMIR pays particular attention to expanding students' language proficiency.

Since Edition 10, EMMIR has employed a native English speaker who is both an academic and a creative writing expert to support students throughout all four semesters in improving their English language skills. During the first study year, the two institutions hosting students offer courses in German and Norwegian language and culture. Since Edition 10, the German course has been offered at level A 1.1, and students have benefited from this opportunity (20 students in Edition 10, 8 in Edition 11). Partner universities also offer courses in less commonly spoken languages, and the Language Centre at UOL provides a wide variety of language courses. In the future, EMMIR aims to strengthen this dimension by explicitly including languages of the Global South. Ongoing negotiations with RBU and Wits, as well as with potential new partner, the University of Ghana, aim to offer such classes to EMMIR students. Additionally, various other elements are being developed further, including digitization/AI and migration as a topic in teaching, as well as new formats for student assignments and publications (e.g., videos or podcasts as semester and/or thesis work).

### Achievement

The SER states that the curriculum of the European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR) offers a combination of mandatory courses, elective courses, and extracurricular activities, allowing students to specialize in migration studies and intercultural relations. According to the documentation, graduates gain theoretical and methodological knowledge in these fields, along with in-depth expertise in their chosen disciplinary focus and geographical area of migration. Through internships, it is aimed that they gain practical experience and develop links between their studies and the working world. It is stated that the programme employs reflexive teaching methods to achieve its learning outcomes. As of 2022, nine editions of the programme have been completed, with a graduation rate of 95%, and only nine dropouts, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SER outlines the success of the European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR) programme by highlighting the employability and achievements of its graduates. The EMMIR Tracer Study conducted in January 2024 reveals that a certain number of graduates are employed in various sectors, including NGOs, academia, research institutions, intergovernmental organisations, private enterprises, and government institutions.



Key findings from the tracer study include:

- **NGOs:** One-third of EMMIR graduates work in national and international NGOs, including well-known organisations such as Amnesty International, Plan International, and World Vision.
- **Academia and Research:** Nearly one-third of graduates pursue careers in academia or work in research and knowledge institutions. Many continue as PhD candidates or hold positions at universities worldwide.
- **Intergovernmental and International Organisations:** Seventeen percent of graduates are employed by intergovernmental and international organisations, such as the EU Commission, UN bodies, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- **Other Fields:** A quarter of graduates work in fields such as private enterprises, public or government institutions, or as freelancers.

The documentation also discusses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the programme and its students, highlighting the resilience of both. Despite the challenges, the EMMIR programme maintained its high standards of education and achieved positive outcomes.

The success of the programme is further evidenced by alumni surveys, which show high levels of satisfaction among graduates. The surveys indicate that EMMIR effectively prepares students for the international labour market and provides them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

### Experts' evaluation

Overall, the EMMIR programme is a leading example of international collaboration in higher education, successfully preparing students for the complex and evolving field of migration studies. The programme's strengths in interdisciplinary education, practical application, and student achievement position it as a model for joint degrees in the European Higher Education Area and beyond.

The on-site visit provided clear evidence that the EMMIR programme is fully aligned with the expectations of Level 7 of the European Higher Education Area Qualifications Framework (FQ-EHEA). This alignment was supported through both the formal documentation, such as the matrix alignment document, and direct discussions with academic staff and students. The programme's structure, as outlined in the annexes, ensures that students progressively develop advanced knowledge, skills, and autonomy - key components of a Level 7 qualification.

During the discussions, it became apparent that the programme achieves this alignment by carefully differentiating between knowledge, skills, and responsibility. In the early stages, such as in the first semester's "Introduction to Migration Studies" and "Evaluating and Developing Research Methods for Transcultural Contexts" modules, students are introduced to core theoretical frameworks and methods. These modules lay a foundation by fostering students' ability to critically evaluate migration theories, policies, and processes. In subsequent semesters, students are encouraged to apply this foundational knowledge in more complex and specialised contexts, including independent research projects in the third and fourth semesters.

The programme's emphasis on autonomy was frequently highlighted during our discussions with students and faculty. Students are given significant responsibility for their own learning, particularly when designing and conducting independent research projects. The clear alignment of learning outcomes with Level 7 criteria is seen in students' ability to tackle complex and original research questions. This focus on autonomy prepares them for high-level professional roles, where they will be expected to manage projects, make informed decisions, and apply critical thinking to dynamic and unpredictable situations—core requirements at this level of the FQ-EHEA.

However, some students raised concerns regarding the transition from foundational courses like "Migration 101" to more specialised content. They expressed the need for these introductory courses to be more engaging

and reflective of the diverse academic backgrounds within the cohort. Given that the EMMIR programme brings together students from various disciplines, this diversity presents a unique challenge in creating courses that are accessible and stimulating for all. This feedback is critical because, in a joint programme like EMMIR, managing the progression from generalist to specialist content is essential for ensuring that students are both sufficiently grounded in core concepts and prepared for more advanced studies. If foundational courses do not effectively cater to the varied levels of prior knowledge and experience, some students may feel disengaged, either because the content feels too basic or too advanced.

From the expert's point of view, this issue underscores the importance of the masterplan's role in ensuring consistency across the curriculum. The masterplan is designed to provide a structured pathway for learning, allowing for progression between generalist and specialist courses. Programme members noted that while the interdisciplinary nature of the programme is a major strength, there is room for improvement in ensuring that the different modules communicate effectively with each other. By ensuring that the strategic objectives of the masterplan are applied consistently, the programme can better align the foundational modules with the needs of a diverse student body, keeping the content challenging and relevant. This would enhance student engagement early on and provide a stronger foundation for the more complex, specialised topics that follow, thereby supporting the rigorous standards required for a Level 7 qualification (**Finding 1**).

The interdisciplinary nature of the EMMIR programme was repeatedly highlighted during the on-site visit as one of its greatest strengths. The programme successfully integrates a wide range of academic disciplines, including history, sociology, political science, anthropology, gender studies, and education. In the second semester at the University of Stavanger, for example, students can choose from six different sub-modules, allowing them to focus on areas of interest while maintaining a solid interdisciplinary foundation. This comprehensive approach enables students to explore migration from multiple perspectives, ensuring that they graduate with a well-rounded understanding of the field.

The thematic foci—gender, diversity, and intersectionality; development, conflict, and justice; representation, power relations, and knowledge production; and education and citizenship—are effectively incorporated across the curriculum. Students and faculty alike valued this interdisciplinary approach, which equips students to understand migration from various angles while allowing for specialised expertise in specific areas of interest.

Furthermore, the programme's responsiveness to current academic and professional trends was highlighted during the discussions. Faculty members spoke about ongoing efforts to enhance the curriculum in areas such as international migration law and advanced research methodologies, which are increasingly in demand in both academic and professional settings. The integration of these emerging areas will further strengthen the interdisciplinary nature of the programme, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared for the complex realities of migration and intercultural relations.

The on-site visit confirmed that the EMMIR programme has a strong track record of student achievement, both in terms of academic success and employability. The data provided in the tracer study, alongside feedback from students and alumni, showed that the programme is highly effective in preparing graduates for a wide range of professional roles. With a graduation rate of 95%, the programme has clearly established itself as a leader in migration studies, supporting students throughout their academic journey and into their professional careers.

During the visit, discussions with alumni and current students highlighted the practical value of the skills gained through the programme. Graduates have gone on to work in prominent international NGOs, research institutions, intergovernmental organisations, and government bodies. The real-world application of the programme's theoretical content, combined with practical internships and project-based learning, ensures that students graduate with not only academic expertise but also hands-on experience in migration-related fields. These

experiences allow students to apply their academic knowledge in real-world settings, building their professional networks and enhancing their employability.

However, there was also recognition among programme members and students that measuring the full impact of the learning outcomes—particularly in relation to real-world professional demands—remains a challenge. Programme members and experts discussed ongoing efforts to refine the programme's assessment methods to ensure that they fully capture the breadth of skills and knowledge that students acquire, including soft skills like intercultural communication and leadership. Additionally, the programme's plans to incorporate new learning formats, such as the integration of digital tools and AI in migration studies, were seen as important steps in staying relevant to both students and the evolving job market (see Chapter IV.4).

The programme's achievements, particularly in terms of high graduation rates and strong employability outcomes, reflect its academic and practical strengths. The integration of internships and project-based learning ensures that students are well-prepared for the labour market, while the programme's continuous improvements in curriculum design and assessment methods ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to both student needs and professional trends.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 3. Study programme

*3.1 The structure and content of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the in-tended learning outcomes.*

*3.2 The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.*

*3.3 A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the FQ-EHEA); for joint doctor-ates there is no credit range specified. The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.*

## Description

### Curriculum

The aim of the European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR) programme is to comprehensively address migration-related subjects and objects, including human migration and the mobility of cultural practices, knowledge forms, and ways of life. The curriculum examines the interdependencies between these subjects and objects in various historical and cultural contexts.

The EMMIR curriculum covers a wide range of topics, including:

- Phenomena and processes of subjectivation and education in migration settings
- Power relations that influence these settings
- Political, cultural, and academic representations of migrations
- Struggles for belonging and the reproduction or transgression of cultural orders

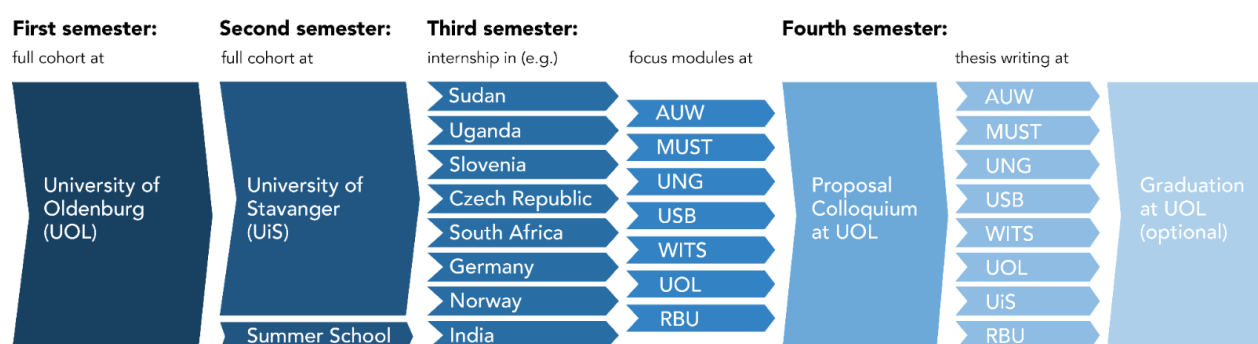
The programme takes a multi-perspective approach, discussing migration and intercultural relations in different geographical and historical contexts. It focuses particularly on gender, diversity, and intersectionality, as well as on development, conflict, justice, representation, power relations, knowledge production, education, and citizenship.

The curriculum also encourages self-reflection, exploring the variations, possibilities, and limitations of critical migration research. It incorporates non-Western perspectives and examines how and where knowledge on migration is produced, disseminated, and utilised.

A key element of the programme is the development of specialisation profiles tailored to each student's individual interests, prior education, professional experiences, and language proficiency. Through counselling sessions and individual consultations with EMMIR staff, students refine their profiles and career goals.

The curriculum includes cross-semester tutorial sessions titled "Navigating EMMIR," where students reflect on their learning experiences and design their individual study and mobility paths. In the second year, profiles are further specified through close supervision during the project-based internship, focus module, and MA dissertation, with intensive advice and consultation provided throughout the first year.

An overview of the curriculum looks as follows:



Translated into a study plan the curriculum can be depicted as follows:

<b>Semester 1, September - December @ UOL</b>		
Until September	Arrival in Oldenburg	UOL
First two days in September	Immersion Days (Enrolment and orientation at UOL)	UOL
September	<b>Intensive Phase (IP), MM11 Introduction to Migration Studies (8 ECTS)</b>	UOL & partners
October-December	<b>MM12 Evaluating and Developing Research Methods for Transcultural Contexts (14 ECTS)</b> <b>MM13 Theorising Historical and Contemporary Migration Processes and Intercultural Relations (8 ECTS)</b>	UOL
<b>Semester 2, January-June @ UIS</b>		
Mid-January-June	<b>MM21 Emigration and Immigration: A Northern European Perspective (12 ECTS)</b>	UIS
Mid-January-June	<b>MM22 Theorising Migration and Multiculturalism (18 ECTS)</b> .1 Migration, Integration, and Social Protection .2 Migration, Borders and Citizenship .3 Aesthetic Approaches to Working with Migration in Educational Contexts .4 Theorizing and Multiculturalism: Migration, Gender, Work .5 Controversies over Multiculturalism .6 Intercultural Education (Students chose three sub-modules out of six according to their interest and focus; each sub-module equals 6 ECTS)	UIS & UNG
Early March	Mobility Path Consultation with Programme and Academic Coordinators	UOL
Mid-March	Final Mobility path choice	
<b>Semester 3, July - November @ various</b>		
July-September or July-November or September-November	<b>MM31 Project-based Internship (15 ECTS)</b>	@ any partner institution
(depending on Focus module choice)		
	<b>MM32 Focus module (15 ECTS)</b>	
October-November	.1 Methods and Theories in Migration Studies: Knowledge Production and Research Methodology	UOL
October-November	.2 Representation, Ethnicity and Nation State	USB
October-November	.3 Migration and Small Nations: Situating Migration in Population	UNG
August-October	.4 Migration, Mobility, and Health in Southern Africa	Wits
October-November	.5 Forced Migration, Gender, and Post-Conflict Settings in East Africa – Migratory Processes in Uganda	MUST
August-September	.6 Gender, Identity, Multiculturalism, Development	AUW
September-November	.7 Care and Protection of Migrants and Refugees in the Global South	CRG-RBU
<b>Semester 4, December-July @ one partner institution</b>		
First week of December	MA Dissertation Proposal Colloquium	@UOL, all partners participate online
December-June	<b>MM41 MA Dissertation (30 ECTS)</b>	
June 30	MA Dissertation Submission Deadline	
September	Graduation Ceremony	@ UOL

The SER explains furthermore three essential components of the curriculum, namely the mobility path, the focus module and the project-based internship:

The EMMIR study programme incorporates both group mobility and individual mobility. During the first semester, all students study together at the University of Oldenburg (UOL), and in the second semester, they move as a group to the University of Stavanger (UIS). However, during their second year of study, students follow their individual mobility path.

According to the SER, this individual mobility path allows students to:

- Design their own study periods at seven partner institutions for the focus module.
- Undertake internships or research stays in any of the partner countries, under the direct supervision of one of the full partners.
- Develop an individual research focus drawing on the expertise of all involved partners.

The mobility serves two main purposes:

1. Exposing students to various migration theories, policies, approaches to intercultural relations, and cultural diversity.
2. Allowing students to develop their individual research focus, drawing on the expertise of partner institutions and their specialisations.

Students have the opportunity to specialise in various ways, including:

- Focusing on specific geographic regions or countries, potentially leveraging their language skills.
- Choosing 'major' nations in global migration, such as Germany, South Africa, or Sudan.
- Exploring intercultural relations and migration issues in small nations and young nation-states.
- Adopting different theoretical and methodological approaches to migration, including focusing on scholarly work emerging in the Global South.
- Engaging in comparative or multi-sited research on two or more countries.
- Specialising in overarching questions related to global migration.
- Building a network and further specifying an individual profile, particularly regarding future employment.

Most partner institutions offer a third-semester focus module where students are grouped based on their chosen specialisation. This module provides a framework and support structure for their individualised work, allowing them to deepen their expertise and competences in specific areas. The focus modules typically take place between September and November, and students may choose to undertake the module and internship in the same country, although it is not mandatory.

Students are responsible for choosing a suitable institution for their internship, which should focus on migration and intercultural relations from political, pedagogical, journalistic, economic, or academic perspectives. The internship is complemented by a preparatory course organised by the local partner institution's Course Director and accompanied by a tutorial. Internships usually take place in associate partner institutions or institutions closely related to the programme's partners, or students may apply to organisations of their choice based on advertised vacancies.

### Credits

According to the documentation provided, the study programme is divided into four semesters, organised into modules following the European Bologna standard. Credit points are awarded according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Students are required to earn 30 ECTS per semester and 120 ECTS in total.



One ECTS credit point equates to a workload of 25 to 30 hours. The credit points for each module, which may include seminars, lectures, workshops, study trips, tutorials, and other forms of teaching, are detailed in the relevant module syllabus. According to the Study and Exam Regulations approved in 2023 (annexed to the documentation), students can earn an additional 3 ECTS per semester for language classes and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The documentation states that there are plans to expand these opportunities, for example, by offering optional job shadowing for EMMIR students during their fourth semester after they have submitted their thesis.

### Workload

EMMIR is a master's programme where students are required to accumulate a minimum of 120 ECTS credits by the time they graduate. Each semester, students must earn 30 ECTS credits, with each credit point representing a workload of 25 to 30 hours, including contact hours, reading, assignments, and independent study.

According to the SER, the workload may vary (30 hours at UOL – 25 as an option for partners), providing a degree of flexibility. Credit points are evenly distributed across modules over the four semesters. Active participation in class and performance in examinations indicate whether students are meeting the requirements and adequately preparing for seminars. To ensure students can manage the workload, various measures are in place. UOL and UIS evaluate all seminars, workshops, and electives using standardised evaluation forms, also taking into account students' experience with the workload.

"Navigating EMMIR" sessions in the first and second semesters provide a platform to address students' feedback, including concerns about the workload. The workload in focus modules is reviewed with respective teachers at partner universities. Workload in the internship module is monitored by supervisors from the partner university in cooperation with supervisors from the internship organization and, if applicable, in small thematic research teams at supervising partner institutions. The workload related to the master's dissertation (MM41) is individually monitored and reviewed in consultation with the respective thesis supervisor, either through individual meetings or regular colloquia.

It is stated that students often find the first semester intense, with some feeling the workload is high. This concern has been raised by student representatives during the CCM and "Navigating EMMIR" sessions. Teaching staff at UOL regularly addresses this issue throughout the first semester. The curriculum of the Intensive Phase has been revised to accommodate this concern. The first semester, particularly the Intensive Phase, is designed to provide students from diverse disciplinary and academic backgrounds with a common basis and various approaches and perspectives before starting the more specialised modules in semesters two to four. Furthermore, it is stated that although demanding, this phase is necessary to establish the foundation for the following semesters. Once students become accustomed to the programme's requirements, they typically find the second semester much less stressful and work-intensive, as indicated by regular communication during the "Navigating EMMIR" sessions in the second semester.

### **Experts' evaluation**

The curriculum of the EMMIR programme, as observed during the on-site visit, is highly structured to meet the complex and interdisciplinary nature of migration and intercultural relations studies. It effectively integrates core theoretical and methodological approaches to migration, drawing on diverse academic fields such as sociology, political science, gender studies, and anthropology. The programme is designed to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of migration processes, while also allowing for specialisation in key areas such as gender, development, and global migration patterns.

However, feedback from students indicated that the foundational courses, particularly "Migration 101" may not fully engage all students, especially those with prior academic experience in migration studies. This raised concerns about whether the foundational modules adequately cater to the diverse backgrounds of the student cohort. The curriculum is intended to provide a common base, but it was suggested that greater flexibility or differentiation within these introductory courses could improve student engagement. This would ensure that all students, regardless of their previous academic background, find the content appropriately challenging and relevant to their individual goals (**see below under workload**).

The curriculum's strength lies in its multi-perspective approach and its integration of non-Western perspectives, which students and faculty praised for providing a more comprehensive and global view of migration. This inclusion of diverse viewpoints enriches the learning environment and reflects the global nature of the programme. Furthermore, the focus modules and the opportunity to tailor the learning experience through individual study paths and mobility options were highlighted as key elements that allow students to deepen their expertise in areas aligned with their research interests and professional ambitions. These aspects ensure that the curriculum remains flexible while maintaining academic rigor.

A recurring theme during the on-site visit was the growing importance of migration law within the broader context of migration studies. Both students and faculty highlighted the need for stronger integration of migration law into the curriculum, especially given the increasing demand for expertise in this area across academic, policy, and professional sectors. Migration law is critical for understanding the regulatory frameworks that govern cross-border movements, asylum policies, and the rights of migrants—topics that are central to both research and practice in migration and intercultural relations.

Currently, the curriculum touches on aspects of migration law within broader modules, but many students expressed a desire for more in-depth training in this area. In particular, they suggested the inclusion of a dedicated module on international migration law, which would provide more focused attention to legal frameworks, case law, and the practical implications of international agreements and treaties. The programme members acknowledged this feedback and recognised the need to enhance this aspect of the curriculum to better align with the professional demands students are likely to face after graduation.

Strengthening the migration law component would not only benefit students interested in legal and policy careers but would also contribute to a more holistic understanding of migration for all students, regardless of their specialisation. As migration laws shape much of the global discourse on mobility, inclusion, and border policies, a deeper exploration of these legal structures would enhance the programme's interdisciplinary nature and equip students with the skills needed to critically engage with the legal dimensions of migration. Such an enhancement could also improve students' employability in sectors such as international organisations, NGOs, and governmental bodies, where legal expertise is increasingly valued (**Finding 2**).

The project-based internship, which students must complete, was also widely appreciated for its practical application of academic knowledge. However, during the discussions, some students suggested that greater support and guidance during the internship selection process could enhance the overall experience. This could involve clearer guidelines or more structured partnerships with organisations to ensure that internships align well with students' academic goals and professional development (**see Finding 7**).

### Credits

The use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in the EMMIR programme ensures that students' academic workload is evenly distributed across the four semesters, with 30 ECTS required per semester and 120 ECTS in total for completion. During the visit, the credit allocation was deemed appropriate by both programme's teaching staff and students, particularly in terms of balancing academic rigor with practical learning components.



However, some students raised concerns about the variability in how the workload is experienced across different partner institutions. For example, while the workload per ECTS at UOL was generally manageable, some students noted that certain modules at other partner institutions required significantly more time and effort for the same number of credits. This discrepancy between institutions could lead to inconsistencies in student workload, which, if not addressed, might impact students' ability to maintain a balanced academic schedule throughout their mobility path. However, the discussions showed that the QA departments take that into account and will address these issues if considered to be more dominant.

The flexibility of earning additional credits through language courses and MOOCs is a valuable feature that allows students to further personalise their learning experience. Students were particularly appreciative of these opportunities, as they could enhance their language skills, which are crucial in migration studies, or explore supplementary topics that complemented their research focus. The planned introduction of optional job shadowing opportunities in the fourth semester was also well-received, as it promises to strengthen the link between academic study and real-world professional applications.

### Workload

The workload of the EMMIR programme was discussed extensively during the site visit, and students reported that while the programme is demanding, it is generally manageable. The first semester, however, emerged as a common point of concern. The "Intensive Phase", designed to provide all students with a solid foundation in migration studies, was described by some as overwhelming, particularly for those who are new to the field. Despite revisions to reduce the intensity of this phase, it remains challenging, with some students feeling that the workload is disproportionately high compared to later semesters.

Students noted that the "Navigating EMMIR" sessions were crucial in helping them manage the workload and adjust to the programme's demands. These sessions provide a platform for discussing workload-related issues and allow faculty to make real-time adjustments. However, some students suggested that more proactive support in the first semester—such as clearer expectations about workload distribution or more tailored academic advising—could ease the transition into the programme, especially for those coming from different academic disciplines (**Finding 3**).

The third semester, which includes the focus module and the project-based internship, was praised for its balance of academic and practical learning. The internship component, in particular, was noted for its importance in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and professional skills. However, some students indicated that the internship workload could vary significantly depending on the organisation and location, with certain internships requiring far more time and effort than anticipated. More standardised guidelines for internship workload management could help ensure a more equitable experience for all students.

Overall, while the workload is demanding, students acknowledged that the EMMIR programme prepares them well for both academic research and professional roles in migration-related fields. Some students raised concerns about the variability in how the workload is experienced across different partner institutions. For example, while the workload per ECTS at UOL was generally manageable, some students noted that certain modules at other partner institutions required significantly more time and effort for the same number of credits. This discrepancy between institutions could lead to inconsistencies in student workload, which, if not addressed, might impact students' ability to maintain a balanced academic schedule throughout their mobility path. However, the discussions showed that the QA departments take that into account and will address these issues if considered to be more dominant.

However, the experts believe that the responsiveness to student feedback regarding workload issues, particularly through the "Navigating EMMIR" sessions, ensures that workload concerns are addressed in a timely

manner. This adaptability is a key strength of the programme, but further efforts to standardise workload expectations across different modules and partner institutions would enhance the overall student experience.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 4. Admission and recognition

*4.1 The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the pro-gramme's level and discipline.*

*4.2 Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies (including recognition of prior learning) should be applied in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.*

## Description

### Admission

As outlined in the admission regulations, which are annexed to the documentation, interested students can find all necessary information, including minimum application requirements and forms, on the EMMIR website.

It is said that the application deadline is announced by the Consortium Committee at least four months prior to the respective date. The deadline for Erasmus Mundus scholarship applications and non-fee paying self-funded students is 20 December, while fee-paying self-funded students may apply for the same cohort until mid-June the following year.

All applications must be submitted online, and hard copies are required from candidates awarded study places. There is no charge for applications, and application management is coordinated by UOL using an IT tool that allows for joint responsibility among all partners in the qualitative selection process.

Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification in related fields such as international relations, social sciences, history, cultural studies, educational sciences, law, economics, or journalism. They must also demonstrate:

- Knowledge in migration studies, intercultural relations, and empirical methods, preferably with documented modules completed at the undergraduate level, papers, essays, and examination results.
- Proficiency in English (IELTS  $\geq 6.5$ ; Cambridge Advanced  $\geq B$ ; TOEFL IBT  $\geq 88$  or equivalent).
- Proficiency in a second language relevant to migration studies, in addition to fluency in English and a first language.

The application must include:

- Applicant's CV detailing their professional career, including certificates of advanced training (preferably using the Europass tool).
- A Statement of Purpose clarifying the applicant's motivation to study EMMIR, focusing on their professional or practical experience in the field of migration or migration studies and their intended focus or specialization.
- Applicants for an Erasmus Mundus scholarship must indicate this in the form.

According to the SER the UOL coordinating team manages the applications, including promotions, application information sessions, and formal requirement checks. The selection and admission process is organized jointly by the consortium. The EMMIR Consortium Committee follows transparent, fair, and objective admission

procedures, with a focus on quality assessment based on agreed criteria. A complex and detailed assessment procedure is used, with applications scored based on predetermined criteria, and a final ranking according to quality.

As outlined, applicants are encouraged to apply for an Erasmus Mundus scholarship when applying for EMMIR, unless they have previously received a scholarship. Study places are allocated based on a ranking list, considering the scholarship windows, and ensuring that no more than three students of the same nationality are selected.

The admission process involves several steps:

- **Formal Requirements Check:** UOL staff verifies all formal requirements and the candidate's eligibility.
- **Quality Assessment:** Applications meeting the formal criteria are assessed for quality by at least two different partners, with professors/lecturers from all partner institutions involved in the assessment. Assessors are familiarized with the selection criteria beforehand. Each application is independently assessed by at least four assessors.
- **Selection Board Meeting:** The Selection Board, comprising all consortium partners, holds an annual virtual meeting in spring. UOL compiles ranking lists based on partner assessments, which are checked for consistency during the meeting. Reassessments are discussed and agreed upon, and the final selection is made.

Accepted applicants receive notification from UOL and a letter of acceptance from the Consortium Committee. The notification of acceptance includes a registration deadline with UOL. Failure to meet this deadline renders the acceptance null and void. If places are available after the registration deadline, additional applicants from the ranking list will be admitted. Applicants not accepted receive a notification of rejection.

For self-funded students, the same criteria apply, but the selection procedure is slightly different. Selection is carried out via email and decided upon in a circular decision in June/July. Admission procedures close no later than two weeks before the semester starts.

The documentation discusses that in EMMIR III, the number of completed applications has exceeded 400 per edition. Unlike in EMMIR I and II, where self-funded students constituted a substantial part of each edition, in EMMIR III, this has changed due to the introduction of "non-fee paying students". Together with scholarship students, they occupy almost all available study places. The proposal for EMMIR III suggests four fee-paying students per edition.

### Recognition

The SER states that recognition of prior education is regulated in the study and examination regulations annexed to the documentation and based on competences. Generally, competences acquired from prior education may be recognized for credit if their content and level are predominantly equivalent to the content and level of the module examinations of the programme.

A system for the interpretation, recognition, and validation of skills and qualifications within Europe is in place, utilizing the EQF, ECTS, CEFR, and the Europass tool. This system facilitates mobility between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) through a comprehensive credit and degree recognition system. Despite this, no student has ever requested recognition of prior education.

Recognition of first degrees from outside the European Higher Education Area: During the application management process, if there is doubt about the validity of the first degree required for admission, UOL staff consult the Anabin database to verify the status of the degree-awarding university.

Recognition of competences acquired at EMMIR partner institutions, either before or during the programme, typically does not pose a problem, as the Consortium has agreed to work with ECTS. Partner institutions communicate student attainment accordingly.

Lecturers/professors may grade students' work based on the scale generally used in their respective partner university. To record the grade in the student's examination records, it is converted into the adjusted EMMIR grade, following the conversion table agreed upon by all EMMIR partners and specified in the regulations, which are annexed to the documentation.

## **Experts' evaluation**

### Admission

During the on-site visit, the EMMIR admission process was praised for its transparency and inclusiveness, but several areas for potential improvement were identified. Programme members and staff involved in the admissions process provided valuable insights into how the system works in practice, highlighting both its strengths and challenges. One of the clear strengths of the process is the joint decision-making mechanism, which involves all partner institutions. This collaborative approach ensures that admissions reflect the diverse perspectives of the consortium, maintaining fairness and balance across applications from different regions and backgrounds.

However, a recurring issue raised during the discussions was the increasing pressure on the admission process due to the rising number of applicants, particularly for Erasmus Mundus scholarships. With over 400 completed applications per edition and a limited number of spots available, managing the influx while maintaining rigorous standards has become a challenge. Programme members noted that the selection process is time-consuming, as each application is carefully reviewed by multiple assessors to ensure objectivity. While the quality assessment process is thorough, the sheer volume of applications is creating a bottleneck, and there are concerns about the sustainability of the current system without additional support.

Moreover, discussions with staff highlighted the importance of modernising the admission procedure, particularly in light of emerging concerns about the potential misuse of artificial intelligence in application documents. Faculty raised the need for more safeguards to ensure the authenticity of personal statements and other application materials. While the process is currently robust, incorporating additional verification methods, such as structured interviews or automated tools to detect AI-generated content, would help maintain the integrity of the selection process. It was clear from the visit that these updates would ensure that applicants are evaluated based on genuine merit and motivation (**Finding 4**).

### Recognition

The recognition mechanisms of prior education within the EMMIR programme was reviewed during the visit and found to be well-structured and in line with European higher education standards. The staff at the University of Oldenburg responsible for overseeing recognition processes discussed how prior learning is managed and evaluated. One notable point that emerged is that, despite the availability of a formal system for recognising prior education and qualifications, there has been minimal demand from students for such recognition. Programme members speculated that this might be due to students either not being aware of the process or not seeing the need to apply for recognition within the programme's framework.

Staff involved in handling international applications mentioned that the process of verifying degrees from non-EHEA institutions is smooth, largely thanks to the use of the Anabin database, which has been an invaluable tool for confirming the validity of degrees from international institutions. This ensures that applicants from diverse educational backgrounds meet the programme's academic standards, and no significant issues have been reported in this area. Staff also mentioned that recognition between partner institutions within the

consortium runs efficiently, with no major issues in transferring credits due to the well-established use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 5. Learning, teaching and assessment

*5.1 The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially in view of potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.*

*5.2 The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.*

## Description

### Learning and Teaching

The SER outlines that EMMIR adopts a broad understanding of migration and migration studies, welcoming applicants from various disciplines such as social sciences, cultural studies, educational sciences, linguistics, development studies, history, economics, international relations, law, and journalism. It is said that this diversity significantly impacts the teaching approach and learning methods of the programme, which are designed with clear qualification objectives in mind.

The didactics and teaching methodologies of EMMIR aim to develop self-motivation and problem-solving skills among students. The programme emphasizes the importance of providing students with state-of-the-art, in-depth knowledge in their field, along with the ability to critically reflect on their perspectives and positions. Additionally, students are equipped with the necessary tools for presentation, negotiation, application, conceptualization, cooperation, administration, and management.

Teaching in EMMIR takes into account the diverse composition of the student group. The programme begins by querying students' experiences and expectations, allowing teaching staff to adapt to the group and promote peer learning and overall student interaction. Teaching forms used in the first semester enable the assessment of student qualifications and academic skills, providing opportunities for students to practice various research and learning methods individually and in small groups.

Support structures are in place to assist students in reaching qualification objectives, including individual consultation hours, practice sessions, tutorials, academic writing support, presentation workshops, and individual as well as group supervision for the master's thesis.

The diversity within the student group is considered a valuable resource, allowing for constant reflection on knowledge production processes and forms and critical assessment of theories of inter-, multi-, and transculturality. Expert knowledge is systematically connected to a peer-learning approach, including peer-feedback elements. Workshops, small group and individual consultations on psychosocial well-being and intercultural communication are also provided as part of the programme.

The involvement of EMMIR graduates in the teaching programme and coordination is seen as an important resource. This includes EMMIR team members, teaching staff, and an optional one-week study trip.

The curriculum includes mandatory core teaching and elective classes, with students working in both full group and small group settings. They complete individual and group assignments, including group discussions,

presentations, papers, independent reading/research, oral presentations, reflection papers, essays, research design and implementation, independent empirical research, and self-conducted research projects linked to practical experience.

The teaching methods are regularly reviewed and updated based on student feedback and evaluation. The Study and Examination Regulations specify rules for cases where a student is incapacitated to complete a particular requirement or module in time.

The international dimension of the programme has a significant and long-lasting effect on the competence of the teaching staff involved. Staff members are invited to participate in extracurricular academic events, including conferences such as the Young Africans on the Move Conference.

### Assessment of students

The SER outlines that throughout each module, students are assigned specific tasks aligned with course content, study objectives, and intended learning outcomes. All requirements must be successfully completed during the course of study. Assignments and tasks are evenly distributed over the semester to maintain a constant workload for students. A detailed semester calendar, published prior to each semester and available online, allows students to estimate their weekly workload and assignment deadlines. Students are required to demonstrate their commitment to successfully completing the programme. Examination and assessment requirements ensure standards in terms of study period and course content, focusing on preparing students for professional practice.

Module requirements are outlined in the respective module descriptions and may consist of several components. While the types of assignments vary according to the course design and learning outcomes, shared standards ensure reliability and the quality of EMMIR.

Potential assignments include:

- Book review
- Presentation
- Reflection/Response paper
- Term paper/Research paper
- Project report

Details about each assignment type, including purpose and grading criteria, are provided in the student handbook and syllabi. Attendance and active participation in all scheduled classes, tutorials, and meetings with teachers and fellow students are integral parts of the assignments.

Performance evaluation follows the EMMIR examination regulations, based on a grading table defining how student performance translates into letter grades. Additionally, a jointly agreed-upon EMMIR grading grid further defines expectations and criteria, communicated to students from the beginning to familiarize them with grading procedures and criteria. Student performance is closely monitored, and specific support is provided as soon as problems such as academic writing difficulties or psychosocial issues become noticeable.

To ensure the quality and adequacy of the grading process, several measures are in place. These include joint grading procedures during the Intensive Phase and occasional peer-evaluation of student presentations.

Students are expected to present their own learning and research efforts, and plagiarism is strictly prohibited. The deliberate use of someone else's language, ideas, or original material without proper acknowledgment is not tolerated. In case of perceived unfair evaluation, appeal procedures are available. Grades for modules completed at partner institutions are communicated to the coordinating institution.



Furthermore, the use of AI in academic work is currently being discussed within the consortium, with potential implementation in future editions of EMMIR.

## Experts' evaluation

### Learning and Teaching

During the on-site visit, the EMMIR programme's approach to learning and teaching was widely appreciated by both teaching staff and students. Programme members highlighted the importance of adapting teaching methods to the diverse backgrounds of the student cohort. This diversity, which includes students from fields such as social sciences, law, and journalism, enriches the learning environment. The people involved in teaching confirmed that they actively incorporate this interdisciplinary diversity into their teaching, using a range of methodologies to promote peer learning and critical engagement. Students particularly benefit from being exposed to multiple perspectives, which enhances discussions and deepens their understanding of complex migration issues.

However, there was consensus that more emphasis on collaborative research activities could significantly improve the learning experience. Students and programme members expressed interest in more opportunities to engage in joint research projects, such as co-authored papers or collective research initiatives. This would not only encourage interdisciplinary collaboration but also align with the programme's goal of fostering a community of scholars who can contribute to migration studies through shared academic output. Additionally, creating more space for practical, research-driven teaching would allow students to gain hands-on experience, which many students felt was somewhat limited in the current structure (**Finding 5**).

The support structures within EMMIR were also discussed in detail. Both students and faculty appreciated the range of academic support available, including writing workshops, individual consultations, and peer feedback mechanisms. Programme members emphasised that these structures are crucial for helping students adapt to the programme's demands, especially for those coming from non-migration-related fields. The success of these support measures was reflected in student feedback, which consistently highlighted the availability of faculty and the value of ongoing, personalised guidance.

### Assessment of Students

The assessment process was another area highlighted for its fairness and variety. The programme employs a wide range of assessment types, including presentations, research papers, reflection papers, and group projects, ensuring that students can demonstrate their abilities across multiple formats. This variety is important given the interdisciplinary nature of the student cohort, as it allows each student to showcase their strengths in different areas.

The use of standardised grading criteria and peer evaluation helps maintain fairness, and students are kept informed of grading standards through clear communication of expectations. The documentation showed that the EMMIR Grading Grid and other standardised rubrics provide transparency in how assessments are evaluated, ensuring that students across all partner institutions are held to the same academic standards.

Moreover, students expressed appreciation for the timely and constructive feedback they receive on their work, which is crucial for their academic development. Programme members also highlighted the use of peer feedback mechanisms as an important tool for reinforcing collaborative learning while ensuring individual accountability. From the expert's point of view, this process not only supports students' academic growth but also prepares them for professional practice by fostering skills in self-assessment and critical reflection.

The programme places a strong emphasis on academic integrity, with strict protocols to prevent plagiarism and ensure originality in student work. People from the programme were proactive in discussing measures to

ensure that students understand and adhere to these policies, maintaining the high academic standards expected in the programme.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 6. Student support

*6.1 The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.*

### Description

Following the documentation in the SER, it is stated that the EMMIR programme differentiates student support in services, internships, insurance, equity policies, and inter-cohort meetings and Alumni network.

#### Services

The Consortium Committee of the EMMIR programme is dedicated to ensuring that future students are well-prepared for their studies in Europe, Africa, or India.

It is stated that prior to their arrival, students receive an extensive information package, including:

- A comprehensive 100-page student handbook covering all relevant information regarding visa and travel preparations, arrival and residence in Germany and the partner countries, student life and facilities, the EMMIR partnership, and organizational and structural aspects of the programme, including the Course Directors, administrative staff, mobility path, and module catalogue.
- A letter of acceptance from the consortium and UOL, along with an invitation letter for visa application purposes.
- A special pre-arrival package by UOL's International Student Office (ISO), tailored to the needs of international students, including information on various practical issues, and details about UOL's offer to participate in a preparatory German language course (Beginners' level) just before the start of the programme.
- Pre-departure online information sessions by the EMMIR Team, including residence permit requirements.
- Post-arrival orientation and campus tour by the EMMIR Team.
- A model student contract and individual insurance policy.
- A digital reader for the Intensive Phase (distributed in August) as well as a detailed module catalogue and syllabus.

Additionally, students receive similar information packages about the institutions hosting the following semesters.

Upon admission, students are granted access to IT tools such as StudIP and UOL Cloud, where all the above-mentioned information and further materials regarding accommodation and other organizational issues are made available online.

The programme manages the application process, communication with students, and distribution of learning materials throughout the four semesters using an online platform. The coordinating team at UOL is available to address general enquiries via email, phone, and BigBlueButton (BBB).

During the semester, students can visit the EMMIR office at UOL or the offices of the partner universities' EMMIR administrators and Course Directors for assistance.



Upon arrival at the first hosting institution, the EMMIR coordinating team and UOL's International Office (IO) make first contact with the students. The IO assists with registration formalities and provides general information about student life and the University. The coordinating team conducts orientation sessions to facilitate a structured start to the studies, covering the programme, the first semester, mobility, and the partnership in general.

The international offices or contact desks for international students at all partner institutions provide assistance regarding all significant aspects of students' stay at the respective university, always in consultation with the EMMIR coordinator.

Detailed information on services provided by each partner university is available in the student handbook and information packages from partners made available during the Intensive Phase in Oldenburg and online.

### Internships

It is stated that finding a suitable internship placement is the responsibility of each individual student in the EMMIR programme. To support students in this process, each partner institution has nominated facilitators who maintain a network of associates offering internships and assist students in connecting with these organizations. A list of current EMMIR associate partners is annexed to the documentation.

During the first and second semesters, students receive repeated counseling regarding their mobility choices. In the first semester, students are provided with information about internship possibilities with the programme's associate partners.

In cooperation with UOL's programme coordinator, the individual study plan and mobility track are outlined. The final decision regarding the internship placement is made in the second semester, when UOL's programme coordinator travels to UIS to offer further mobility counseling. UOL administrative staff also support self-funded students' applications for external funding by providing necessary supportive documents.

Starting in 2024/2025, EMMIR plans to offer job shadowing opportunities to second-year students as an optional element in their last semester. These opportunities will primarily be provided by alumni and associate partners.

### Insurance

Insurance is provided to all EMMIR students in accordance with EACEA regulations. The insurance is specifically designed for Erasmus Mundus students, ensuring that it meets the minimum Erasmus Mundus programme requirements for insurance coverage. This includes features such as a 24-hour multilingual emergency call centre and coverage for all costs related to necessary medical treatments or medically appropriate medical evacuation in case of illness, pregnancy/childbirth, or accident without retention.

The insurance is valid in all EU/EEA/EFTA countries, as well as in the third countries in the partnership, without any further notice. Insurance coverage begins automatically from the first day of travel to Germany, and the costs are deducted from the students' participation costs. Additionally, the insurance is in accordance with German statutory health insurance regulations.

### Equity policies

According to the SER, the Consortium aims to ensure equal opportunities for all students. All European institutions within the consortium are barrier-free and promote universal access. During the application process, applicants are encouraged to inform the coordinator of any special requirements they may have. In the rare cases where students require special assistance, adjustments, or equipment during their studies or exam periods, the consortium provides support.

Efforts have been made to accommodate students who wish to be accompanied by their families. However, finding a structural solution for parents to bring small children while studying EMMIR has been challenging.

Public childcare options, particularly in Germany, often have deadlines and criteria that EMMIR students cannot meet, and privately organized childcare is financially out of reach for many students. Although informal solutions have been explored, this has been especially difficult for students from partner countries.

Applicants are informed that German embassies have differing policies concerning visas for families. In terms of gender balance, the share of female applicants has averaged around 60%, with the number of female students ranging between 60% and 90%. The consortium does not have a specific policy to attract more male students but aims to achieve a well-balanced composition of the group in terms of geographical diversity.

Despite having funds available, attracting applicants with special needs has been challenging. However, EMMIR has had several students who are also parents of small children. Unfortunately, the EACEA funds for special needs do not cover the assistance required for students who have children with them during their mobility.

#### Inter-cohort meetings and Alumni network

Informal face-to-face exchanges and networking among students from different cohorts have proven to be crucial for orientation, especially at the beginning of their studies in EMMIR. Therefore, cohort meetings are systematically included in the study plan.

Firstly, the annual EMMIR graduation ceremony at UOL in September is synchronized with the Intensive Phase (IP) so that first-semester students can benefit from graduates' experiences and advice. Additionally, every December, third-semester students attend a three/four-day proposal colloquium and World of Work workshop at UOL. First-semester students are invited to participate and meet third-semester students, particularly regarding second-year mobility.

Moreover, students spending their third and fourth semesters in Oldenburg or Stavanger always connect with junior students in their first or second semester for mutual exchange of experiences and expectations.

In September 2016, the first EMMIR Alumni Meeting took place, where students from cohort 4 had the opportunity to meet alumni from cohorts 1-3. Additionally, some students from cohorts 5 and 6 were also present.

EMMIR conferences held in November/December 2018 (e.g., 2018, 2019, 2023) provided a platform for inter-cohort and alumni exchange. The EMMIR Post-Doc Workshop in September 2022 and the EMMIR World of Work workshop in December 2023 also facilitated such exchanges.

The involvement of alumni in teaching and tutoring activities has been an extremely positive experience and has become an integral element of every new EMMIR edition. With a growing number of graduates, networking among EMMIR students and between students and graduates becomes more relevant in the context of potential employment.

In 2014, the consortium enhanced its alumni activities by setting up a continuously updated database of graduates' contact details and employment. In some cases, organisations employing EMMIR alumni began providing internship placements for EMMIR students. EMMIR recommends students and graduates to join the Erasmus Mundus Association (EMA). Already during the IP, they are introduced to the benefits of being an active member of the EMA community and sharing experiences and expertise, both for other (potential) students and the successful completion of their own studies.

EMMIR also created an Alumni Working Group tasked with enhancing and curating the EMMIR alumni network. Extracurricular inter-cohort and alumni communication is facilitated largely by social media pages run independently by the students/alumni themselves.

## Experts' evaluation

During the on-site visit, the EMMIR programme's student support system was recognised as comprehensive and well-coordinated across its consortium institutions. The International Offices and EMMIR coordinators at each partner institution provide essential services, helping students navigate the administrative and practical challenges posed by the programme's multi-country mobility structure. Pre-arrival information packages, detailed orientation sessions, and continuous access to digital resources like StudIP and UOL Cloud ensure that students are well-prepared for both academic and logistical aspects of their journey.

However, the evaluation revealed that while these services are robust, there is a clear need to invest in student community formation. The frequent transitions between countries and institutions, a key feature of this joint programme, can lead to a fragmented student experience. Although communication networks and support systems exist, they would benefit from a revamp to strengthen the sense of community across cohorts. In a programme where students move regularly between different institutions, maintaining a cohesive and supportive student body is crucial for their academic and personal well-being (**Finding 6**).

One proposed solution is the introduction of a buddy scheme, where experienced students from later cohorts mentor incoming students. This would foster inter-cohort connections, helping new students integrate more smoothly into the programme while also benefiting from the guidance and practical advice of their peers. Such a scheme would enhance the peer-learning environment and build stronger interpersonal connections across the different stages of the programme. In a joint programme like EMMIR, which spans multiple countries and institutions, a structured student community is vital to creating a stable and supportive academic environment.

Internships form a key part of the EMMIR programme, providing students with the opportunity to apply their academic knowledge in practical, professional settings. Each partner institution has designated facilitators who maintain relationships with a network of associate partners, offering students valuable connections for securing internship placements. This structure was positively received by students, who appreciated the programme's efforts to provide professional opportunities aligned with their studies.

However, a significant finding from the site visit was the need for earlier and more structured internship guidance. While facilitators assist students with internships during the second semester, many students expressed a desire for support to begin earlier, ideally in the first semester. This would allow them to better align their internships with their long-term career goals and mobility paths. In a joint programme like EMMIR, where mobility is integral to the learning experience, internships play a crucial role in bridging academic study and professional practice. Therefore, providing earlier guidance would ensure that students can make informed decisions about their internships, enabling them to integrate these experiences more effectively into their overall academic journey (**Finding 7**).

The upcoming job shadowing opportunities, planned for the final semester, are a welcome addition to the internship structure. These opportunities, facilitated by alumni and associate partners, will further enhance students' professional development. However, more proactive engagement in the internship process from the start of the programme would significantly improve the integration of academic learning with practical experience, ultimately contributing to students' career preparedness.

The insurance provided to EMMIR students is comprehensive, meeting all Erasmus Mundus requirements and ensuring coverage across the consortium's partner countries. Students are automatically covered from their first day of travel to Germany, with the insurance extending throughout their mobility across Europe and partner countries outside the EU. The coverage includes essential medical services and emergency support, offering students peace of mind as they navigate their studies abroad.

Students were satisfied with the clarity of the insurance arrangements and the seamless integration of costs into their participation fees. The coverage, which adheres to German statutory health regulations, ensures that

students can access necessary medical services without additional financial burden. This aspect of the programme was seen as well-managed and an essential component of the student support system, particularly given the international mobility required by the EMMIR programme.

The programme's equity policies aim to ensure that all students have equal access to opportunities and support throughout their studies. European partner institutions within the consortium are barrier-free, and the programme provides assistance for students with special needs or disabilities. However, one significant challenge identified during the on-site discussions is the difficulty in accommodating students with families, particularly regarding access to affordable childcare.

While the programme has made efforts to explore informal childcare solutions, especially for students from non-European countries, these measures have been insufficient to meet the needs of student-parents. Public childcare in Germany, in particular, is often inaccessible due to strict deadlines and high costs. This remains an ongoing issue that affects the full participation of student-parents in the programme and requires further structural solutions.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 7. Resources

*7.1 The staff should be sufficient and adequate (qualifications, professional and international experience) to implement the study programme.*

*7.2 The facilities provided should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes.*

## Description

### Staff

#### Institute's profile

##### a) UOL

According to the SER, the University of Oldenburg has been actively involved in the development of EMMIR. With several study programs, international collaborations, research initiatives, and interdisciplinary academic centers, UOL is considered one of the prominent universities in Germany for migration studies, intercultural education, and gender studies.

The members of the working group "Migration-Gender-Politics," currently located at the Department for Literary and Cultural Studies, are responsible for coordinating and implementing EMMIR at UOL. They specialize in internationally oriented, transdisciplinary projects at the intersection of migration and gender studies. Their expertise includes transnational curriculum development and collaboration with numerous partner universities in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

The staff at Oldenburg work at the intersection of postcolonial and cultural studies approaches to migration, as well as theories and methodologies from the social sciences focusing on human mobility. Research and teaching fields include theories and methods in migration studies, post-colonial theory, qualitative methods, and art-based research.

## b) AUW

The Regional Institute of Gender, Diversity, Peace, and Rights (RIGDPR) at Ahfad University for Women in Omdurman conducts extensive research on gender, migration, and intercultural relations.

Through its participation in the EDULINK funded curriculum development and research cooperation IMMIS (with UOL and MUST, 2008-2011), it became one of the pioneering institutions in Eastern Africa to develop and implement modules focusing on migration and multiculturalism. These modules are linked to gender, development, governance, and peace studies.

AUW, with its expertise in gender, multiculturalism, and development, is internationally recognized in this field and is considered one of the top women's universities in Africa and the Arab world. It provides a unique space offering ethnically and religiously integrative, high-quality academic education for women, serving as a 'safe haven' for learning, teaching, and research in a conflict-ridden society.

Since April 2023, the war in Sudan has made it impossible for the university to operate physically. The university leadership is exploring options to partially reopen. Despite this, AUW remains committed to all EMMIR activities related to consortium meetings, conferences, teaching, student supervision, and quality checks of applicants. Currently on hold are EMMIR internships and an EMMIR module at AUW.

## c) MUST

Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) is actively involved in integrating migration studies into its postgraduate programs. As one of the partners in the EDULINK funded research and curriculum development project IMMIS from 2008 to 2011, MUST played a significant role in the development of EMMIR and the integration of migration studies into African higher education.

EMMIR is hosted by the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies (FIS) at MUST and is interconnected with the postgraduate course in Conflict Analysis and Inclusive Development. Although EMMIR students study a module in this program, they do not undertake the entire program. MUST focuses on community-based training and contributes to the interdisciplinary analysis of development in Uganda, with a particular emphasis on the problems and prospects for Uganda and the Great Lakes Region.

The university plays a crucial role in capacity building in development studies by contributing to local, national, and international policymaking. Additionally, MUST provides an organizational framework and facilitates project-based internships in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, which is the only settlement in Uganda with diverse nationalities. This offers EMMIR students a unique experience to work with refugees and asylum seekers from seven different nationalities, alongside various local and international organizations.

Specializing in Development Studies and Interdisciplinary Teacher Training, MUST's expertise in forced migration, peace, and reconciliation is particularly relevant to the EMMIR program. The university collaborates with the University of Rwanda on transnational cooperation and offers an MA program in "Conflict Analysis and Inclusive Development".

The EMMIR module at MUST often includes a study trip to Rwanda, where students observe and learn about experiences of war, post-war, and post-conflict management strategies. Visits to genocide memorial centers are an integral part of this unique learning experience.

## d) UIS

Following the documentation, the University of Stavanger (UiS) played a significant role in initiating a joint (European) MA course on Migration and Intercultural Relations back in 2001. Faculty members involved in EMMIR bring extensive experience in curriculum development and expertise in topics related to migration and intercultural education.

The Department of Education at UiS has established a focus on micro-history, migrant narratives, and migration experiences. Scholars in this department document the lived experiences of immigrants in the local region through various methods such as interviews, photovoice, and digital storytelling. Employing an inclusive and community-based participatory research approach, faculty members collaborate with former EMMIR students, the Stavanger Museum, local high school teachers, and students.

The faculty at UiS is engaged with local schools and educational networks like Dembra, which is dedicated to preventing the development of group-based prejudice and hostility by promoting intercultural and inclusive citizenship perspectives.

Furthermore, scholars at UiS collaborate closely with colleagues from other institutions, both nationally and internationally. Partnerships include the Centre for Intercultural Communication (SIK) and VID Specialized University in Stavanger, the International Migration and Ethnic Relations Center (IMER) at the University of Bergen, the Global Migration Center at the University of California, Davis, and the Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative (BIMI) at the University of California, Berkeley. These collaborations span various disciplines in the social sciences and humanities.

#### e) UNG

The University of Nova Gorica (UNG) became a part of the network that now operates EMMIR in 2001, and has actively contributed to joint curriculum development, including the establishment of the precursor program, JMMIR. Key staff members representing EMMIR have played a significant role in implementing the program throughout its funding periods.

UNG collaborates closely with the Slovenian Migration Institute (SMI) at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU). SMI is engaged in interdisciplinary research on international migration, focusing on various aspects such as emigration and immigration, return migration, ethnicity, migration and integration processes and policies, as well as the cultural and artistic production of migrants. SMI researchers involved in teaching within EMMIR bring expertise from a range of disciplines including historiography, literary history, art history, ethnology, anthropology, geography, cultural studies, political studies, and sociology.

UNG's focus modules are designed to reflect the specific expertise of the university and offer students advanced perspectives and in-depth exploration of various topics in the field of migration studies. One of UNG's modules focuses on migration and small nations, including demographic considerations.

#### f) USB

At the University of South Bohemia (USB) in České Budějovice, EMMIR has been coordinated within the Department of Social Sciences at the Faculty of Education since 2011. The department's primary focus is on training future teachers of civic education, with an emphasis on active student participation in various projects and research. Since 2005, one of the department's main areas of expertise has been migration, particularly focusing on processes of nationalism, ethnicity, and representations.

USB has been involved as a partner institution in several projects, including Comenius 3 Learning Migration (funded by the European Commission) and the JMMIR study program. In 2022, the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, specifically the Institute of Social and Special-Pedagogical Sciences, took on a significant role in coordinating the EMMIR program. This institute's involvement stems from its long-term scientific research and educational activities in the field of migration.

Students have the opportunity to choose the migration module during their bachelor's studies in the Social Work program, enabling them to engage in complementary activities alongside both Czech and foreign students. The scientific focus on migration at USB includes aspects of migrants' health and integration, combining expertise in these areas with political science and cultural studies.



EMMIR teaching at USB focuses on migration in Central Europe, with an emphasis on questions of representation and minorities, particularly the Roma community. The interdisciplinary approach incorporates elements of psychology, education, social work, and social policy. Additionally, the module includes collaboration with civil society organizations and regional governmental institutions.

g) WITS

At the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), EMMIR is hosted by the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS). The ACMS is an independent, interdisciplinary, and internationally engaged Africa-based center of excellence for research and teaching. It plays a crucial role in shaping global discourse on human mobility, development, and social transformation. As the continent's leading institution for research, teaching, and outreach on migration, ACMS offers Honours, MA, and PhD programs that attract students from South Africa, the southern African region, and beyond.

During the Intensive Phase and the third semester focus module, ACMS contributes specific expertise to EMMIR. This includes areas such as queer theory and methodology, as well as the intersections of health, well-being, and migration from a social determinants of health perspective.

h) RBU

Rabindra Bharati University (RBU) was established on May 8, 1962, under the Rabindra Bharati Act of the Government of West Bengal, 1961. Its mission is to disseminate Tagore's thoughts on education and promote Tagorean internationalism and its contemporary relevance through curricula in the Humanities and Arts. In 2001, RBU was accredited and awarded a four-star status by NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council). In February 2016, the University was recredited with Grade A and a CGPA score of 3.10.

In recent years, RBU has expanded its scope to include new departments such as Environmental Studies, the Department of Human Rights and Human Development, and the Department of Women's Studies, all offering MA or MPhil programs. The university is committed to knowledge production in a context of religious plurality and cultural diversity, with a pledge not to discriminate on the basis of caste, religion, gender, class, or nationality.

The SER states that RBU primarily serves students from the peripheries of West Bengal and from marginalized and underprivileged segments of society, which constitute more than seventy percent of its student body. However, due to its academic excellence, RBU also attracts international students. Several of RBU's research centers are closely connected to EMMIR focus areas, including the Centre for African Studies, the Radha Krishna Centre for Human Rights, the Centre for Environmental Rights, and the Gender Studies Centre, sponsored by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

RBU's participation adds another dimension to the EMMIR collective by bringing in experts with knowledge of fine arts and visual arts in the field of migration studies. This is particularly relevant in a region with highly complex internal migration flows and refugee populations. EMMIR is the first Joint Master program in migration studies in India, contributing to the paramount efforts needed to address various challenges in the region and beyond in migration societies. RBU/CRG has conceptualized and is now (as of 2023) responsible for a module entitled "Global Protection System for Refugees and Migrants."

i) CRG (Associated partner)

The Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (now known as Calcutta Research Group- CRG) was established as a facilitating group in support of the peace movement in West Bengal in 1996. Its founders included researchers, trade unionists, feminist thinkers and women's rights campaigners, academics, journalists, among others. Evolving as a forum primarily of young public activists and socially committed researchers, it is stated that CRG has become a well-known research organization recognized for its studies, dialogues, and advocacy work.



CRG has carved a niche for itself in the scholar-activist world, particularly for its research on forced migration, displacement, peace and conflict resolution, citizenship, borders, and other themes relevant to democracy. As the leading Indian think tank on migration, CRG has been collaborating with EMMIR since 2011. CRG contributes its expertise in the contemporary international regime of protection for migrants and refugees in the context of mixed and massive population flows.

CRG brings South Asian perspectives to the EMMIR focus areas on Europe and Africa, particularly in terms of research. Additionally, CRG provides expertise on climate change and migration, adding a perspective that has become increasingly significant in recent years.

#### Staff involved in the programme

##### **University of Oldenburg (UOL)**

The University of Oldenburg (UOL) plays a crucial role in the EMMIR programme as the coordinating university. With a team of experienced professionals, including literature and cultural studies scholars, social scientists specializing in migration and gender studies, and experts in postcolonial studies and cultural theories, UOL contributes significantly to the teaching, research, and supervision within the programme. The team's expertise ranges from forms and figures of cultural mobility to migration and gender, migrant families, postcolonial medical humanities, and postcolonial studies. Additionally, UOL provides administrative support, quality management, and coordination of various programme activities. According to the SER, UOL involves ten people in managing the whole programme. This includes professors, lecturers, academic coordinators, programme coordinators,

##### **University of Stavanger (UiS)**

The University of Stavanger (UiS) contributes to EMMIR with a diverse team of lecturers and researchers specializing in history, educational sciences, humanities, and social sciences. Their expertise includes migration history, local and cultural history, educational sciences, labour migration, integration, political mobilization, Islam in Europe, and processes of inclusion and exclusion. UiS also provides administrative support, quality management, and coordination of programme activities.

##### **University of Nova Gorica (UNG)**

The University of Nova Gorica (UNG) brings its expertise in sociology, migration studies, multiculturalism, identity, ethnic studies, and public health to the EMMIR programme. With a focus on migration and multiculturalism, UNG's team of lecturers and researchers provides valuable insights into migration and work, social policy, public health, labour migration, and integration. UNG also coordinates its activities with the Slovenian Migration Institute, enhancing the programme's depth and breadth.

##### **University of South Bohemia (USB)**

The University of South Bohemia (USB) contributes to EMMIR with its team of experts specializing in linguistics, media, sociology, and social work. USB's expertise includes teaching and learning languages, intercultural education, media education, social health, and social work. The team's research areas cover a wide range of topics, including ethnic stereotypes in media, migration studies, and the role of media in society.

### **University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)**

The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) hosts EMMIR in collaboration with the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS). Wits' team includes social scientists and researchers focusing on migration, health, urban vulnerabilities, transgender issues, LGBTIQ migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and migration governance in Africa. The team also provides administrative support and coordinates programme activities.

### **Rabindra Bharati University (RBU) / Calcutta Research Group (CRG)**

The Calcutta Research Group (CRG) is a leading Indian think tank on migration, peace, and conflict resolution. Its team of researchers and lecturers specializes in issues of borderlands, gender, forced migration, peace politics, and the theory and practices of dialogue. CRG's research areas include justice and rights in conflicts, migration and refugee studies, and new regimes of technological restructuring and labour control.

### **African University for Women (AUW)**

The African University for Women (AUW) hosts EMMIR through its Regional Institute of Gender, Diversity, Peace, and Rights (RIGDPR). AUW's team comprises sociologists, political scientists, psychologists, and gender studies experts focusing on gender, migration, peace, conflict, and political participation. Their expertise includes gender-based violence, peace and conflict, migration, and gender empowerment. AUW also provides administrative support and coordinates programme activities.

### **Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)**

Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) contributes to EMMIR with its expertise in governance, refugee management, administration, refugee policy, security, development, and displacement. The team's research areas include refugee and migrant security, conflict analysis, post-conflict reconstruction, internal displacement, development displacements, migration, and development.

### Facilities

It is stated that EMMIR ensures that students receive comprehensive support from admission to graduation. The international student offices, along with student associations and clubs, play a crucial role in integrating students into the programme and ensuring their well-being. They provide assistance with visa requirements, accommodation, and other administrative matters. Social media platforms are used effectively to address students' specific needs and facilitate communication.

Accommodation and other facilities are provided by all partner universities, including student halls and IT facilities. However, housing shortages, especially for international students, pose a challenge in some locations like Oldenburg and Slovenia. Despite these challenges, the EMMIR team is committed to supporting students in finding suitable accommodation.

All necessary reading materials for EMMIR modules are provided either in printed or digital format, with a preference for open-license educational resources. Students have access to university libraries and eJournal subscriptions throughout their studies, ensuring they have the resources they need.

EMMIR students are not required to incur any expenses for obligatory courses, and services and facilities are standardized as much as possible across partner universities. However, differences in national and institutional

infrastructures contribute to the intercultural learning experience. At AUW and MUST, it is stated that EMMIR students receive preferential treatment, including accommodation in staff housing. Nonetheless, individualized support is provided to all students as needed.

### Experts' evaluation

The on-site evaluation of the EMMIR programme highlighted the significant expertise and commitment of the academic and administrative staff across all partner institutions. This diverse team plays a crucial role in ensuring the programme's interdisciplinary and international character, contributing to both teaching and research in migration studies, intercultural relations, gender studies, and related fields. The staff's wide-ranging academic backgrounds provide students with access to multiple perspectives, enriching the learning environment and fostering a deep understanding of migration in various cultural, political, and social contexts.

The joint nature of the programme means that staff from various institutions work together closely on curriculum development, teaching, and supervision. This collaboration was highlighted as a major strength, as it ensures that students receive a comprehensive and cohesive learning experience, despite moving between different institutions during their studies. The mobility of both students and faculty within the consortium is particularly valuable in providing a diverse academic environment where interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged.

The staff also play an essential role in student support, from admissions through to graduation. During the visit, it became clear that faculty are deeply involved in mentoring and guiding students through their academic journey, providing regular feedback and individual consultations. This support is crucial in a programme like EMMIR, where students are navigating both academic challenges and the complexities of studying in multiple countries. The strong connection between students and staff helps to ensure that students receive the guidance they need to succeed academically and professionally.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 8. Transparency and documentation

*8.1 Relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures etc. should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.*

### Description

It is stated that relevant information for prospective students, including details on the application process, minimum application requirements, admission regulations, study and examination regulations, study plan, learning outcomes, and more, are available online on the regularly updated EMMIR website. Evidence for the stated documents were annexed to the documentation. This information is particularly accessible in the "Important Documents" section, as well as on the participating universities' websites. Following the SER, the information provided on the website aligns with the requirements for programme websites set by the EACEA.

As outlined in the chapter for student support, students receive an information packet containing all relevant forms, contracts, and regulations in digital format upon admission and in printed form upon arrival.

According to the SER, transparency in programme management and the workings of the Consortium Committee is established in two ways:

a) The Consortium Committee comprises not only two representatives from each partner university but also two elected student representatives, one from each active cohort. These student representatives act as liaisons to their respective cohorts, communicating feedback from the cohort to the rest of the committee and vice versa.

b) The Coordinator regularly reports to the EACEA about all aspects of the programme, as stipulated in the multi-beneficiaries agreement.

### Experts' evaluation

During the on-site visit, the transparency and accessibility of information provided by the EMMIR programme were highlighted as key strengths in managing a complex, multi-institutional academic framework. Prospective students and current participants have access to clear, regularly updated information on the EMMIR website. This includes essential details about the application process, admission requirements, study plans, learning outcomes, and other key regulations. The site is designed to ensure that students, faculty, and external stakeholders can easily navigate and find relevant information, contributing to the programme's overall transparency.

One of the notable aspects of the programme's communication strategy is the use of a dedicated "Important Documents" section on the EMMIR website, which houses essential forms, regulations, and study-related information. The regular updates and easy access to these documents support students in staying informed about programme requirements and upcoming deadlines. Additionally, partner universities supplement this information with details available on their own websites, ensuring consistency and accessibility across the consortium.

In terms of transparency in governance, the involvement of students in the Consortium Committee is a significant feature of the programme. Student representatives, elected from each active cohort, play an important role in communicating the concerns, feedback, and suggestions of their peers to the committee. This inclusion of students in decision-making processes enhances the responsiveness of the programme to student needs, ensuring that issues are addressed collaboratively. The committee's structure, which includes representatives from each partner institution, fosters a shared responsibility for programme management, reinforcing the collaborative spirit of the EMMIR consortium.

The Coordinator's regular reporting to the EACEA further reinforces the programme's commitment to transparency and accountability. By adhering to the reporting requirements outlined in the multi-beneficiaries agreement, the EMMIR programme maintains open lines of communication with its funding and oversight bodies, ensuring compliance with external standards and expectations.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 9. Quality assurance

*9.1 The cooperating institutions should apply joint internal quality assurance processes in accordance with part one of the ESG.*

### Description

In addition to ensuring transparency and documenting relevant regulations, procedures, and documents covering all stages of students' progression in the programme, the consortium is committed to further quality assurance mechanisms. The effectiveness and sustainability of these mechanisms and tools are paramount

concerns of the Consortium Committee, with a quality assurance strategy outlined in the cooperation agreement.

It is stated that the continuous review includes:

- a) Structuring and content of the study plan
- b) Selection of teaching staff and teaching and learning approaches
- c) Choice of assessment criteria
- d) Evaluation mechanisms and feedback-based improvements

The SER states that the following internal evaluation measures are multi-layered:

- Module or semester evaluations: Upon completing semester 1 and 2 modules, students complete anonymous quantitative and qualitative online evaluation forms assessing various aspects, including content, teaching quality, workload, materials used, achievement of learning outcomes, and support provided. Results are also forwarded to the respective teachers.
- Programme surveys: Annually in June, students complete an online questionnaire focusing on various aspects of the programme, such as consistency, achievement of learning outcomes, compliance with individual study goals, and employment prospects.
- Informal feedback: Throughout the first year, students have the opportunity to discuss academic, organisational, and infrastructural issues in weekly and monthly meetings with the coordinating team. The content of these meetings is noted and brought to the attention of the coordinator or the Consortium Committee if necessary.
- Reports from student representatives to the Consortium Committee and discussions in the CCMs.
- Statistical monitoring: Monitoring of statistics includes applications, self-paying students, drop-outs, graduates according to schedule, and qualitative information regarding alumni employment.

Any necessary changes to admission or examination regulations are jointly discussed, approved, and implemented by all partners and published.

An alumni survey provides systematic information on post-graduation activities, assessing graduates' employment situations and soliciting feedback on the programme's future prospects. According to the survey, up to 90% of alumni found medium or long-term employment directly related to their studies within a year after graduation.

Student feedback is crucial, and approximately 70% to 100% of students participate in module and study programme evaluations. Two student representatives are involved in the Consortium Committee's activities to communicate students' positions and stimulate discussions.

External measures involving accreditation, the MA Thesis Award, feedback from scholars and associates, stakeholders' assessments from the world of work, and participation in expert panels ensure comprehensive quality assurance.

The consortium conducts annual joint curriculum reflection and development workshops to guarantee topicality and accordance with the requirements of the working world. These workshops allow for the implementation of necessary changes to module descriptions and examination regulations.

Regular reporting to the EACEA is another element of quality assurance. The Programme Coordinator reports on all aspects of the programme using the EACEA's "Mobility tool" (EMT) as stipulated in the grant agreement. The programme has consistently received positive responses from the EACEA, with the 2018 assessment designating EMMIR as a "success story" and a best practice example for Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic during the 2016-2021 funding period, the programme received a 'good practice' label in the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform.

### **Experts' evaluation**

The internal quality assurance system of the EMMIR programme reflects a strong and multi-faceted approach to ensuring the quality and relevance of its curriculum, teaching, and student experience.

The programme uses several internal evaluation measures, including semester evaluations, programme surveys, and informal feedback from students. These measures are conducted regularly and are central to the continuous improvement of the programme. For example, semester evaluations allow students to provide feedback on course structure, content relevance, and teaching effectiveness. This feedback helps ensure that the curriculum is clearly structured and that teaching methods effectively support student learning. The University of Oldenburg and the University of Stavanger stand out within the consortium due to their highly sophisticated instruments. Experts believe that, for the consortium's future development, all partners should aspire to reach this level.

The programme's dedication to improving the student experience is evident in the feedback loops integrated into the quality assurance process. Feedback from students on aspects such as workshops and their connection to the curriculum has led to adjustments in module structure and teaching approaches, ensuring that theoretical and practical learning are well-aligned. Evaluation results are shared with both students and teachers, promoting transparency and enabling timely improvements.

Additionally, the programme conducts tracer studies to track the employment outcomes of its alumni, which consistently demonstrate the programme's success in preparing graduates for careers in various sectors, including NGOs, international organisations, academia, and government institutions. These studies provide valuable feedback for refining the curriculum and ensuring it remains aligned with the evolving demands of the job market.

By combining internal feedback mechanisms with external quality assurance tools, the EMMIR programme ensures that it maintains high standards while being flexible and responsive to the needs of students and the professional field. Given the diverse settings in which the programme is delivered, across multiple countries and institutions, this ongoing process of evaluation and adjustment is critical to maintaining coherence and providing a consistent, high-quality education for all students.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.

## V. Recommendation of the panel of experts

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The panel of experts recommends accrediting the study programme “European Master in Migration and Inter-cultural Relations” (EMMIR) (Master of Arts) offered by Carl von Ossietzky University (Germany), Ahfad University for Women, Omdurman (Sudan), Mbarara University of Science and Technology (Uganda), University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia), University of South Bohemia (Czech Republic), University of Stavanger (Norway), University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), and Rabindra Bharati University (India) without conditions.

### Commendation:

- The EMMIR programme's interdisciplinary approach, integrating various academic disciplines and perspectives, provides students with a well-rounded understanding of migration.
- The joint nature of the programme ensures comprehensive and cohesive learning, supported by close collaboration between staff across institutions.
- The programme's sustainability is underpinned by strong partnerships, future funding strategies, and active collaborations with institutions in the Global South.

### Findings:

1. The programme should ensure the consistent application of the masterplan's strategic objectives and enhance constructive alignment between foundational and specialised modules to better meet the diverse needs of students, improving engagement and facilitating a smoother transition through the curriculum
2. The programme should include a dedicated module on international migration law to provide deeper legal training and better prepare students for careers in law, policy, and related sectors.
3. The programme should offer more proactive support in the first semester, including clearer workload expectations and tailored academic advising, while also enhancing flexibility or differentiation within foundational courses like "Migration 101" to better engage students from diverse academic backgrounds and ensure the content is appropriately challenging and relevant.
4. The programme should modernise its admission process to manage the growing number of applications and incorporate safeguards, such as AI detection tools and structured interviews, to ensure that the integrity of the application process is maintained.
5. The programme should increase opportunities for collaborative research projects and practical, research-driven teaching to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and provide more hands-on experience for students.
6. The programme should strengthen its student community by introducing a buddy scheme, fostering connections between cohorts to support transitions between institutions.
7. The programme should provide earlier and more structured internship guidance, beginning in the first semester, to help students better align their internships with career goals and mobility paths.