



Frequently Asked Questions – Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

(Latest update: Dec. 2014)

The following "questions and answers" on aspects related to the action "Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees" (EMJMD) are published as a source of information for applicants intending to submit a project proposal under the Erasmus+ 2015 Call for Proposals.

The FAQs should help applicants find a quick answer to general matters relating to the preparation of their EMJMD proposal. The document addresses both enquiries received by the Executive Agency and issues which the Agency considers useful to make clear to potential applicants in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Please note that the primary sources of information remain the **Call for Proposal 2015** (EAC/A04/2014), the **Erasmus+ Programme Guide** (esp. Part B, Key Action 1: "Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees", incl. Annex I on EMJMD), the **Instructions for Applicants**, and the documents related to the **Response to the Award Criteria**. These information sources constitute your first reference to guide you through your EMJMD application; they can be consulted in the EMJMD Call section at the following Agency website:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding_en

The Erasmus+ Programme Guide specifies key terms, explains the nature and functioning of EMJMD, presents the funding scheme, and outlines the application/selection procedures in the context of this action. Most of the answers to questions which may arise for EMJMD applicants can be obtained from a close reading of the Guide, for instance:

- the eligibility criteria for potential applicants (e.g. is my organisation eligible, how many organisations does a consortium need to comprise at application stage, etc.),
- the award criteria that applicants need to address in their proposal,
- the way EMJMD scholarships are allocated.

Please note that the current version of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide (version 3 of 14/11/2014) features important differences compared to earlier versions, esp. those applicable to the first Erasmus+ Call for Proposals. Further details on the main changes related to EMJMD are presented in Q1.

If you have specific enquiries where you consider that further explanations and/or clarifications by the Agency are needed for a more complete understanding of the EMJMD rules, then you can send an email to the following Agency mailbox and you will receive an answer as soon as possible from our staff: EACEA-EPLUS-JMD@ec.europa.eu

A) Questions on general and institutional matters

Q1: What are the main changes in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree action compared to the 2014 Call for Proposals?

Answer: The changes in the Programme Guide which take effect for the EMJMD Call 2015 are:

- the name of the action has changed: "Joint Master Degrees" (JMD) are now called "Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees" (EMJMD);
- the provisions on the accreditation status of the joint Master, which have become an eligibility criterion. It is now stipulated (p. 95) that HEIs established in a Programme Country must be able to demonstrate at application stage the accreditation at national level of each degree-awarding Master programme on the basis of which the EMJMD programme is composed. Besides accreditation, the national degree-awarding programmes must be mutually recognised by the consortium HEI partners from Programme Countries (see PG, Annex 1, p. 271). It is thus not expected that the EMJMD as such has already been accredited at application stage; the PG specifies that the process of accreditation must have been completed before the first student intake starts.
- the weighting of the award criteria has changed: maximum points allocated for award criterion 2 ("quality of the project design and implementation") and award criterion 4 ("impact and dissemination") are now max. 25 points each.
- new elements in the scholarship scheme: no contribution to subsistence costs in country of residence and, in addition for Partner-Country students, not beyond three months in any other Partner Country.
- the (optional) allocation of additional scholarships per student intake for one or more priority regions/countries of the world (details see PG p. 99, and "Instructions for applicants"). This is linked to an additional award criterion.
- the "Quality Review" (as described in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide applicable to the first Joint Master Degree Call 2014) has been a pilot exercise and will no longer be implemented.

Please check also the website of DG EAC for additional information on changes in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/guide/index_en.htm

Q2: Which countries have now become Erasmus+ Programme Countries compared to the 2014 Call?

Answer: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and Turkey have acceded to the Erasmus+ Programme with equal rights and obligations as EU Member States/other Erasmus+ Programme Countries. Please note: Switzerland currently keeps the status

as Partner Country. Therefore EMJMD applications involving Switzerland as one of the minimum number of "Programme Countries" in the consortium will be considered ineligible.

Q3: Do the EU sanctions against Russia have any impact on participation of Partner Countries in the Erasmus+ EMJMD action?

Answer: Yes, institutions from Crimea are not allowed to participate in Erasmus+ EMJMD.

Q4: Can Master Courses formerly selected under the Erasmus Mundus scheme (EMMC) with a FPA number of 2010 apply under the Erasmus+ Call for EMJMD currently open (i.e. with deadline 4 March 2015)?

Answer: Yes, they can if they have a FPA of 2010 or earlier. EMMCs with a FPA of 2011 or later are not allowed to take part in the open 2015 Erasmus+ Call for EMJMD.

Q5: Is it necessary to have a Participant Identification Code ("PIC") for all organisations in the consortium including associated partners?

Answer: Yes, each organisation involved in an Erasmus+ application needs to have a PIC in order for an application to be validated. To obtain a PIC, an organisation must register in the Unique Registration Facility (URF) of the European Commission Participant Portal available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html>.

To do this, you first need a login/password for secure access to URF via the European Commission's Authentication Service (ECAS). For all details and internet links please consult the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, Part C "Information for Applicants".

Q6: Can university faculties apply for Erasmus+ actions (here: EMJMD) with their own PIC and independently from their "mother" university?

Answer: Yes, however please note: in order to be eligible to participate in Erasmus+, universities from Programme Countries must have been awarded an "Erasmus Charter for Higher Education" (ECHE). Faculties cannot receive the Charter independently from the universities to which they are attached. Faculties which have a legal status that is autonomous from the "mother" university (as agreed by the national authorities) may apply for a grant with the ECHE number of the "mother" university and register in the participant portal (i.e. get a separate PIC) individually.

Q7: We have established a consortium of three full partners – all HEIs – and are thinking of including another university which is, however, not yet ready to host students on their mandatory mobility. Should we include this additional partner as a full or an associated partner?

Answer: In the peer review evaluation of the proposals the role, involvement and preparedness of all partners in view of EMJMD implementation will be looked at. The EMJMD eligibility criteria define that HEIs from Programme Countries must be in a position to host EMJMD students and deliver at least the minimum number of ECTS credits for the study period spent in their institution. If a Programme-Country HEI cannot host EMJMD students for a mobility period, it is recommended not to include such a partner in the consortium as a full-partner HEI. The consortium needs to be aware of the limited role this partner could actually play in the EMJMD implementation.

B) Questions related to student mobility, scholarships, and EMJMD implementing rules

Q8: Which kind of supporting documents do Higher Education Institutions (HEI) need to request and verify in order to determine the student's "country of residence" in the framework of EMJMDs?

Answer: HEIs need to request 2 types of supporting documents in order determine the "country of residence" of student scholarship candidates:

- a certificate of residence in line with the provisions of the municipality where the student is registered;
- a certificate confirming the place of employment or study/training, issued by the employer or the institution where the student studies/finished his/her studies.

There may be specific cases in which the HEI may ask for additional relevant documents in order to determine the current "country of residence" of a student (e.g. for a student of a Partner Country who has just finished his/her studies in a Programme Country and returned to a Partner Country, the HEI could request as additional supporting documents a copy of the plane ticket, a confirmation by the university where the student finished his/her studies, etc.)

Q9: Does a national Master programme in a Partner Country, which is part of the mobility tracks offered within an EMJMD and where students can spend a study period, need to be accredited?

Answer: The eligibility criteria published for EMJMD in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide currently in force oblige HEIs established in Programme Countries to demonstrate at the application stage the accreditation at national level of the degree-awarding Master programme on the basis of

which the EMJMD is composed. If EMJMD study periods take part in Partner Countries where the local course/modules have yet not been nationally accredited, it must be ensured that the respective course/ modules and the related ECTS are fully recognised in all Programme Countries HEIs taking part in the consortium. If necessary, the Partner Country mobilities should be implemented under academic supervision of one of the Programme Country HEIs.

Q10: If a "double degree" is issued only by two full partner HEIs within an EMJMD consortium of three full partner HEIs, does the third partner HEI also need to be a degree awarding institution?

Answer: Yes, it must be degree-awarding institution, however without the obligation to issue the degree in this specific scenario ("double degree").

Q11: A minimum of 75% of EMJMD scholarships are earmarked for candidates from Partner Countries. Does this include the additional scholarships for targeted regions of the world?

Answer: No, the additional scholarships for targeted regions in the world will not be taken into account for the calculation of the EMJMD scholarship ratio between students from Programme and Partner Countries to be reached at the end of the third intake.

Q12: What happens with unspent funds from the EU grant (e.g. contributions to travel costs) which have accumulated during the first and second intake of an EMJMD? Can they still be spent in the third edition as additional full or partial scholarships?

Answer: Yes, these unspent funds can be allocated to students in the third intake while respecting certain rules (e.g. the min. ratio of 75% Partner-Country EMJMD scholarship holders) which will be further specified on the website of the Agency (in the EMJMD beneficiary space).

Q13: What are the specific rules for scholars in the implementation of an EMJMD? Is it mandatory to include any, and if yes based on how many weeks and on which scholar grant?

Answer: Scholars/guest lecturers must be included in each of the three EMJMD editions financed under the EU grant, namely four (4) invited scholars/guest lecturers per student intake for at least eight (8) weeks in total per intake. The consortium can finance their participation through the EU contribution to the "consortium management costs". Scholar/guest lecturers' mobility is considered eligible in the following cases: (a) mobility between the partners of the consortium (including to/from associated partners), and (b) mobility from outside the consortium, if this mobility is clearly linked to the Master course.

The specific rules applying to scholars/guest lecturers (e.g. definition of a working week) are laid down in the EMJMD administrative & financial handbook and will be made public on the Agency website (beneficiary web space).

Q14: Can an EMJMD be implemented for students on part-time basis or in remote?

Answer: No, an EMJMD is a full-time study programme and cannot be attended on a part-time basis or as distance-learning course (physical mobility cannot be replaced by virtual mobility). However, an EMJMD course module may contain complementary e-learning elements.