

Agreement on the Bachelor of Arts Project in Applied European Languages

Preamble

Considering that the European Union needs flexible, mobile employees and entrepreneurs with excellent linguistic skills, intercultural knowledge and an understanding of business principles;

Considering that current Bachelor programmes in languages and business, despite their growing awareness of the importance of the European dimension, largely continue to educate for local markets;

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

Taking into account the fact that the European Institutions encourage the design of integrated programmes by consortia of higher education institutions, particularly also at Bachelor level;

Considering that such a European Bachelor also heightens the chances of graduates to be admitted to a wider range of Master programmes in different member states;

Taking into account the success of the precursor to the present initiative, i.e. a European programme in languages and business studies leading to multiple degrees from different universities;

Considering that a jointly organized bachelor guarantees an integrated curriculum, an unambiguous formulation of learning outcomes and a high profile for the degree;

the signatories agree, subject to approval by their respective university and/or accreditation organization, to organize a bachelor programme according to the description below:

Art. 1 – Founding universities

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

- Cologne University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule Köln), Germany
- University of Granada (Universidad de Granada), Spain
- Université de Provence, France
- University College Ghent (Hogeschool Gent), Belgium

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

Art. 2 – The AEL degree

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

(2-2) It is the explicit aim of the signatories to strive for a Joint Degree in all cases as soon as the legal and regulatory conditions allow this. In the meantime, the course shall be implemented by each participating university respecting its own local framework of regulations:

- Partner universities whose regulations allow the creation of a Joint Degree, shall implement the AEL as a Joint Degree.
- Partner universities whose regulations do not (yet) allow Joint Degrees, but who can continue or create a Multiple Degree agreement with one or more partners, shall award their AEL degree together with the AEL degree of the said partner(s).
- Partner universities that can neither work with a Joint Degree nor with a Multiple Degree arrangement, shall co-operate on the basis of certified exchanges and will be called Associate Members. The credits earned with the Associate Members shall be recognized towards the student's AEL degree(s).

(2-3) The individual universities shall be allowed to give their AEL course a specific chosen name.

(2-4) Upon successful completion of the course, the graduate shall obtain the following certification:

- where the home university is allowed to confer a Joint Degree: a Bachelor's Degree Certificate with the logos and signatures of the universities involved in the Joint Degree;
- where the home university has a Multiple Degree agreement with one or more partners: the AEL degree certificates of the two or three partners where the student has studied;
- for the part of the course that has been attended with an Associate Member: an Exchange Certificate issued by the Associate Member, in accordance with the model specified in Annex 1 to this agreement.

(2-5) In addition to the degree certificate(s) graduates shall receive the usual transcripts of records and the obligatory diploma supplement(s), in accordance with the guidelines of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES.

Art. 3 – Administrative co-ordination

(3-1) Each year an annual meeting shall be organised by one of the partner universities. They shall take this task in turns deciding at the end of each meeting who will be the organiser of the next meeting.

(3-2) Each partner university shall appoint a local co-ordinator who liaises with the other co-ordinators and shall be responsible for the smooth functioning of the AEL course at his/her university.

Art. 4 – Objectives

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

- An excellent command of the mother tongue and two other languages, to level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- An excellent knowledge of the culture and institutions of the main countries where the two foreign languages are spoken and in particular of the countries where the languages have been studied.
- Basic translation skills involving the languages studied.
- A good knowledge of economics, business administration and law, including European Institutions, obtained through:

- (a) taught courses on these subjects and/or
 - (b) translation work on these subjects and/or
 - (c) relevant work placements.
- Academic and research skills as required for the admission to postgraduate study.
 - For those not having English as their mother tongue and not taking English as one of their main subjects of study; a good working knowledge of English (B2 or near-B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

The graduates of AEL are intended to pursue careers in businesses and European organizations. On completion of the AEL degree course the students shall be qualified to apply for or take up postgraduate studies.

Art. 5 – Structure of the degree course

The degree shall consist of four programme units of 60 credits each. Students shall attend the first programme unit at their home university, the second at a partner university and the third at another partner university. For the final 60 credits, the students shall return to their home university.

Art. 6 - Curriculum and credit structure

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

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

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

Component 3: Applied Subjects, covering Business Administration, Economics and Law.

Component 4: Complementary Subjects as required. These may for example include area studies specific to the country where the student is studying. Further subjects (like Supplementary English) shall be agreed between partners on the basis of the student's language combination and the countries where the student is studying.

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

(6-3) Each student's curriculum of 240 ECTS shall be designed in such a way that it contains:

(a) an average of minimum 12 credits per programme unit for Component 1 (i.e. a minimum of 48 credits in all)

(b) an average of minimum 12 credits per programme unit for Component 2 (i.e. a minimum of 48 credits in all)

(c) an average of minimum 7.5 credits per programme unit for Component 3 (i.e. a minimum of 30 credits in all).

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

Art. 7 - Teaching methodology

(7-1) The courses combine theoretical and practical approaches to the subjects studied. Classes combine contact courses with coursework and projects. Work placements shall be subject to prior approval. Courses shall be at a level that guarantees the development of

academic and research skills.

(7-2) Course descriptions specifying learning outcomes, the contents and methods used and the methods of assessment, shall be available to all students via a website and/or a learning environment.

Art. 8 – Rules of assessment

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

(8-2) AEL students shall have the right to at least one re-sit per subject they have failed. This re-sit shall not be organized later than in September after the failed exam. Students who also fail the re-sit may instead take a different subject in a subsequent year of their course where this is possible.

(8-3) Conversion tables shall be agreed on, establishing the correspondences between the grading systems of the partner universities among each other and with the ECTS Grading Scale.

Art. 9 – Selection of students and student flows

(9-1) Admission to the first 60 credits of the AEL depends on the admission criteria applying to language studies at Bachelor level at the home university where the applicant wishes to enrol.

(9-2) Admission to the remainder of the course depends on selection criteria established at the home university. Once a student has been admitted to the programme he/she shall, after having completed 60 ECTS, automatically be admitted to the next level of study at the next university.

(9-3) The partners shall agree to the student itineraries and student numbers outlined in Annex 2. This Annex shall be annually updated by all partners.

Art. 10 – Enrolment fee

(10-1) Students enrol at their home university for the full duration of the programme and pay fees to that home university during the full duration of the programme. Students also enrol at the partner universities where they study as part of the degree course but are exempt from enrolment fees in these universities during the duration of their studies. Students may, however, have to pay fees in connection with re-sits where the university regulations require this.

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

(10-2) Only the home institution will report students to the national funding bodies where appropriate.

Art. 11– Financial plan

In the event that the consortium is able to attract funding for the AEL project through subsidies or sponsorships (other than the normal grants awarded by education authorities to

individual universities), these funds shall be redistributed as agreed during the Annual Meeting. The following are among the costs that are eligible for compensation through funds obtained by the consortium:

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

If the consortium does not generate any income, the Annual Meeting will agree on how the expenses mentioned will be met.

Art. 12 – Quality assurance

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

(12-2) Quality assurance of the degree shall respect the standards of the individual universities as well as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (http://www.eqar.eu/uploads/media/050221_ENQA_report_01.pdf).

(12-3) Any intended curriculum changes shall first be discussed with all partners.

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

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

Art. 13 – Partners' obligations not stated elsewhere

(13-1) Partner universities undertake to supply as best they can all the information needed at all stages of the co-operation.

(13-2) Partner universities undertake to be co-operative in the organization of quality assessment of the course.

(13-3) Partner universities agree to ensure, as best they can, the smooth organization of the course, including the timely communication of exam marks (transcript of records). Annex 3 details

(a) the approximate dates of semesters and exam periods of each partner

(b) the agreed deadlines by which each partner guarantees the communication of marks, also

including the agreed deadlines for the communication of the marks of re-sits.
This Annex shall be annually updated by all partners.

Art. 14 – New partners

Universities wishing to join the AEL project may apply at all times, preferably providing a reference by one of the existing AEL partners. The Annual Meeting shall decide by simple majority on their eligibility for admission to the consortium. They shall become members after their university has signed a protocol accepting all the articles of the present agreement.

Art. 15 – Equal Opportunities

Partner universities shall be responsible for ensuring that its procedures for, and interactions with, AEL students conform to an Equal Opportunities statement which shall be jointly developed by the partner universities.

Art. 16. – Intellectual Property Rights

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

Art 17. – Use of Name and Logos

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

Art 18. – Data Protection.

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

Art. 19 – Withdrawal Clause

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

Art. 20 – Jurisdiction in the case of disputes

Where a disagreement has not been resolved by mutual consultation, each party may refer the matter for final resolution to a court of appropriate jurisdiction, in which case legal proceedings shall always first be brought before an arbitration court. The agreement shall be governed by German Law and all legal proceedings shall be held in English and brought before the Law Courts of Cologne, Germany.

The present agreement shall take effect from 1 October 2011, which will also be the deadline for exchanging the current versions of the Annexes mentioned above.

(University)
Université de Provence
CEVU du 9/7/2011
CA du 18/7/2011

(Place and Date)
Marseille, 12 DEC 2011

(Signature)

(Representative's name)
Jean-Paul CAVERNI

(Representative's function within the university)
Président

(University) Fachhochschule Köln

(Place and Date)
Cologne, 10. Jan. 2012

(Signature)

(Representative's name)
Prof. Dr. Joachim Metzner

(Representative's function within the university)
President

(University)

(Place and Date)
Granada, 02/02/2012

(Signature)

Luis M. Jiménez del Barco Jaldo
Vicerrector de Ordenación Académica y Profesorado
(Representative's name)
BOJA 156 de 10 de Agosto

(Representative's function within the university)

(University)

(Place and Date)
Gent, 09/03/2012

(Signature)

(Representative's name)

Dr. Robert Hoogewijs
Principal

(Representative's function within the university)

