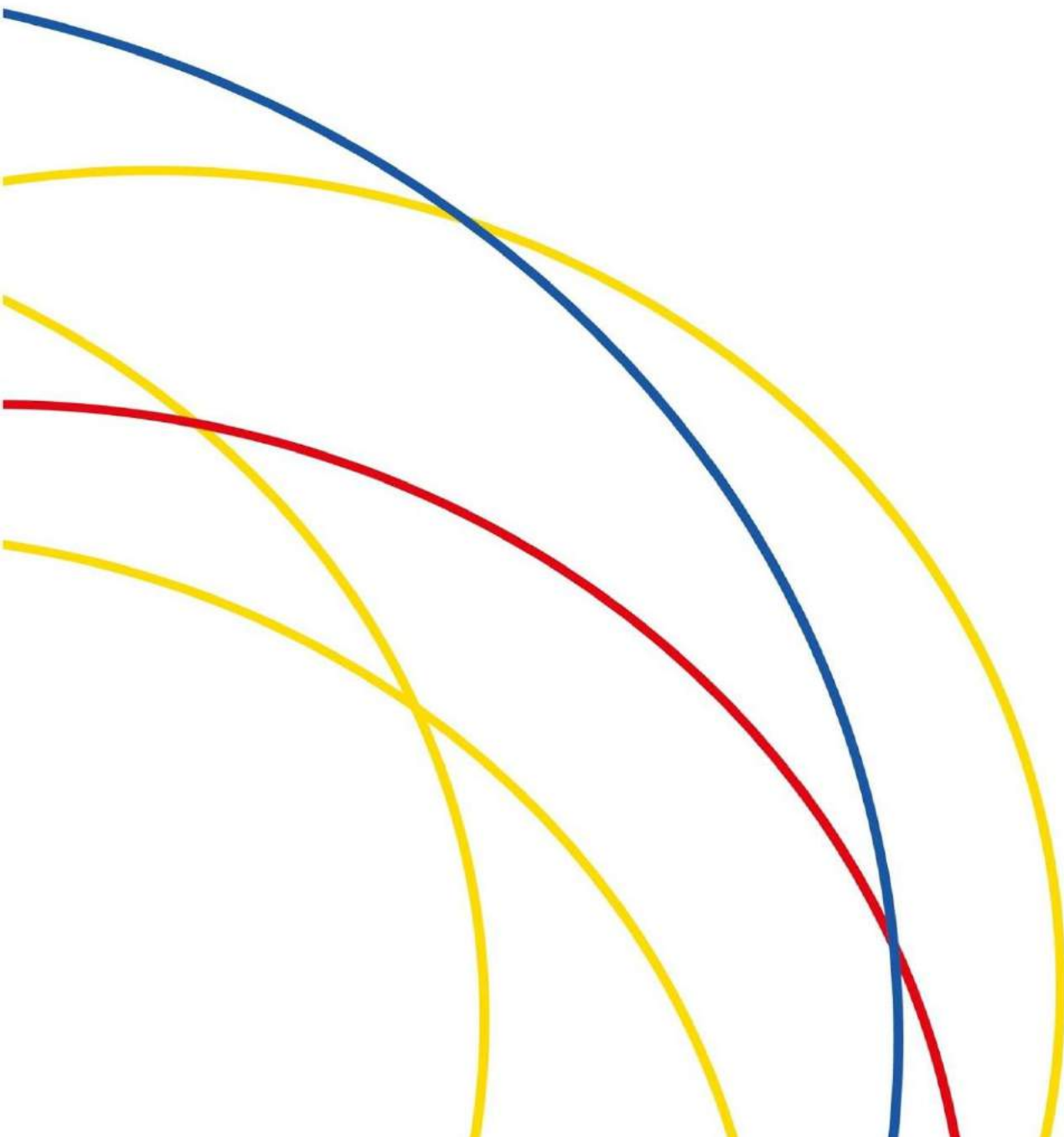




Towards a common credit transfer system for intra-ASEAN and ASEAN–EU mobility

## SHARE Handbook

October 2018





European Union Support to Higher Education in The ASEAN Region



**SHARE**, European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region, is a four-year initiative of the EU and ASEAN. The Implementation of SHARE has been entrusted to a consortium comprised of the British Council (lead organisation), Campus France, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Nuffic (the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education), ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and the EUA (European University Association). Launched in Jakarta in May 2015, SHARE aims to support ASEAN in harmonising regional higher education by sharing European expertise. It does this through strengthening regional cooperation and by enhancing the quality, competitiveness and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education for institutions and students, thereby contributing to the formation of a closer ASEAN community which will endure in the years ahead.

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## *Abbreviations and acronyms*

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| AAC          | Asian Academic Credits  |
| ACTFA        | SEAMEO-RIHED Academic Credit Transfer Framework   |
| ACTS         | ASEAN Credit Transfer System  |
| ADB          | Asian Development Bank  |
| AEC          | ASEAN Economic Community  |
| AECTS        | ASEAN-EU Credit Transfer System   |
| AIMS         | ASEAN International Mobility for Students Programme   |
| AQAFHE       | ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework in Higher Education   |
| AQAN         | ASEAN Quality Assurance Network   |
| AQRF         | ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework  |
| ASEAN        | Association of Southeast Asian Nations  |
| ASED         | ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting   |
| ASEM         | ASIA Europe Meeting   |
| AUN          | ASEAN University Network  |
| BC           | British Council   |
| CF           | Campus France   |
| CoE          | Council of Europe   |
| CTS          | Credit transfer system  |
| DAAD         | German Academic Exchange Service  |
| EC           | European Commission   |
| ECTS         | European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System  |
| EHEA         | European Higher Education Area  |
| EI           | Education International   |
| ENQA         | European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education  |
| EQA          | External quality assurance  |
| EQAA         | External quality assurance agencies   |
| EQF-LL       | European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning   |
| ESU          | European Students' Union  |
| EU           | European Union  |
| EUA          | European University Association   |
| EURASHE      | European Association of Institutions in Higher Education  |
| GMS          | Greater Mekong Subregion  |
| HE-EQF       | European Qualifications Framework - Higher Education  |
| HEI          | Higher education institution  |
| IQA          | Institutional quality assurance   |
| IRO          | International relations office  |
| ISCED        | International Standard Classification of Education  |
| LA           | Learning Agreement  |
| LAA          | Learning Agreement Amendment  |
| MT           | Mobility tool   |
| NQF          | National qualifications frameworks  |
| QF-EHEA      | Qualifications Frameworks in the European Higher Education Area   |
| SEAMEO-RIHED | South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development |
| SHARE        | European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region  |
| ToR          | Transcript of Records   |
| UCTS         | UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme   |
| UMAP         | University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific   |
| UNESCO-CEPES | European Centre for Higher Education  |

# 1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

## 1.1. What is SHARE?

Officially launched in May 2015, SHARE<sup>1</sup> is a €10 million European Union (EU) grant-funded project with the overarching objective of strengthening regional cooperation and of enhancing the quality, competitiveness and internationalisation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' higher education institutions (HEIs), thereby contributing to the formation of a closer ASEAN community which will endure in the years ahead. The main aim of the project is to enhance cooperation between the EU and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and to create lasting benefits from the harmonisation of higher education across ASEAN.

SHARE supports ASEAN's ambition to build a regional higher education area in the region. The following outcomes are envisaged by the end of SHARE in early 2019:

- Increased and enhanced mobility for university students across ASEAN through improved qualification frameworks, quality assurance, and an ASEAN-wide credit transfer system (CTS) and scholarship scheme.
- Improved equality of opportunity for exchange as students benefit from SHARE's technical assistance across ASEAN member states, thereby improving connectivity across higher education in ASEAN.
- Strengthened ties between ASEAN universities and increasing opportunities for EU-ASEAN university partnerships.

From 2016 onwards, SHARE has provided some 500 scholarships for ASEAN university students, enhancing student mobility and putting the improved CTS to the test, mainly by supporting student exchange and credit recognition within the ASEAN region.

SHARE is comprised of 3 main Result Areas:

- Result Area 1 - Policy Dialogues: Led by the British Council;
- Result Areas 2a and 2b - ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework and ASEAN Quality Assurance: Led by the DAAD in collaboration with ENQA and the EUA;
- Result Areas 3a and 3b - ASEAN Credit Transfer System (ACTS) and ASEAN-EU Credit Transfer System (AECTS): Led by Campus France;
- Result Area 3c - ACTS and AECTS Student Mobility with Scholarships: Led by Nuffic.

Campus France is in charge of the design of a credit transfer system (CTS) for mobility in ASEAN. The consortium is assisted in its work by pools of European and Asian experts. The European pool is led by Fabrice Hénard and co-led by Sylvie Bonichon (France) and includes Nadine Burquel (Belgium), Juan Carlos Duque Ametxazurra (Spain), Andy Gibbs (UK), Sandra Kraze (Latvia), Lerzan Özkale (Turkey), Stéphane Pardo (IT expert, France) and John Reilly (UK). The Asian pool of experts is led by Ethel Agnes P. Valenzuela (Philippines) and includes Nigel Billany (Myanmar), Rath Chhang (Cambodia), Panya Chanthavong (Laos), Zita Mohd Fahmi (Malaysia), Darren McDermott (Singapore), Bundit Thipakorn (Thailand), and Trinh Quang Khai (Vietnam).

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<sup>1</sup><http://share-asean.eu/about>

## 1.2. Result Areas 3a and 3b

Within the consortium, Campus France has led Result Areas 3a and 3b, for the creation of an ASEAN-European Credit Transfer System (AECTS), which is compatible with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

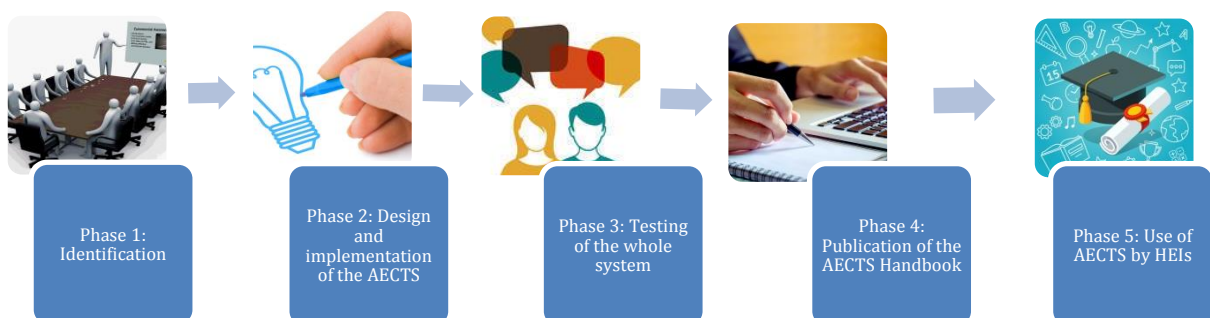
The work of SHARE in the field of credit transfer systems (CTS) aims to ensure the comparability and compatibility of study programmes and to facilitate student mobility so that credits gained abroad will be recognised at the student's Home institution.

The activities pursued in Result Area 3 are correlated with the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework and Quality Assurance procedures developed under Result Area 2, led by the DAAD. Indeed, all SHARE activities underpin Result Areas 3a and 3b and enhance the capacity of higher education stakeholders to recognise and transfer credits across ASEAN, thereby stimulating international student mobility (enabled by Result Area 3c) and increasing students' employability in a competitive labour market.

Campus France's tasks were to map existing Asia-based credit transfer systems; to design an ASEAN Credit Transfer System valid for ASEAN and EU mobility (i.e. the AECTS); to create an online platform for the AECTS (see Annex 1); and to support HEIs' capacity building. From 2016 to 2018, the AECTS was tested by the 500 ASEAN students to whom scholarships were awarded within the programme.

Assistance was provided to HEIs to implement the AECTS and create a visible, sustained system for sharing good practice. The tasks undertaken included a desk review of existing credit transfer systems in the ASEAN; the consultation of European and Asian expert panels; a self-analysis of country-specific higher education systems and of other credit transfer systems used by HEIs; and the organisation of conferences, specialised workshops and training seminars.

### Result Area 3a-b: Timeline





The different phases of the development of the AECTS involved numerous activities as detailed below:

#### Phase 1: Identification

- Consultation of a pool of ASEAN experts in higher education who completed self-analysis questionnaires.
- The collection of data and the identification of challenges.
- Feedback gathering and brainstorming with ASEAN experts at a workshop in Ho-Chi-Minh City.
- Reporting to, and brainstorming with, EU Bologna and Erasmus experts, at a workshop in Paris.

#### Phase 2: Design and implementation of the AECTS

- Preparation of mobility documents / tools (the Mobility Tools - MTs) and of a template for universities for the construction of a Course Catalogue (inspired by, and adapted from, ECTS and Erasmus +) during a workshop and policy dialogue in Bangkok.
- The organisation of training sessions on how to formulate learning outcomes and on how to fill in Learning Agreements (LAs), at a policy dialogue in Hanoi.
- Completion by universities of their Course Catalogue, including programme and course descriptions with learning outcomes (or knowledge, skills and competences).
- Presentation of a first draft of the MTs to the participating HEIs and to EU Bologna and Erasmus experts at a workshop in Kuala Lumpur.
- The collation of feedback on the documents and on the Course Catalogue template at a workshop in Paris.
- The adjustment of the MTs and of the Course Catalogue template, and the organisation of six training sessions on the AECTS at workshops in Kuala Lumpur, Phnom Penh, Jakarta, Hanoi, Manila and Yangon.
- The preparation of conversion mechanisms for the transfer of credit points.

#### Phase 3: Testing the whole system

- The further development of the use of MTs and of the AECTS through mobility batches.
- The collection and analysis of data from the MT.
- The collection of continuous feedback from universities and students at a feedback session in Hanoi and during the 1<sup>st</sup> student mobility forum in the ASEAN in Manila (Policy Dialogue conference).
- The collection of feedback from students on their workload during mobility period.
- The adjustment of the MTs.
- The testing of a credit point calculator.

#### Phase 4: Publication of the AECTS Handbook

- The drafting of the Handbook on the basis of the results of the consultation with the European and ASEAN experts.
- The inclusion of remarks formulated by academics and students during:
  - the mobility period of four batches of SHARE scholarship holders (with the individual follow-up of mobile students);

- the various capacity-building workshops with ASEAN universities.
- The inclusion of the remarks of students surveyed by Nuffic in autumn 2017 on the value and perception of mobility and credit transfer.
- The publication of the draft version of the CTS Handbook and presentation of results in Phnom Penh, in May 2018 (SHARE What Works Conference on CTS).

**Nota Bene 1: Who are the mobile students?**

In the Handbook, a mobile student is a student enrolled at an ASEAN higher education institution who crosses the border to study at the regional level within ASEAN or at the international level in Europe or elsewhere in the world.

## Phase 5: Use of the AECTS by HEIs

- Institutions are now able to adopt the AECTS, Mobility Tools and processes to support academic mobility to and from their institution.

### 1.3. To whom is this SHARE Handbook addressed?

This Handbook is intended for use by Home/Host universities and more specifically by the International Relations Office (IRO) in charge of mobility management, by academics and staff responsible for the curriculum, and by mobile students.

## 2. LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE ASEAN REGION

### 2.1. The state of play: The existing credit transfer systems in the ASEAN region

In the ASEAN region, HEIs and countries have long been engaged in student mobility. The recognition of credits gained abroad has been a long-term priority to enable students to study abroad with the prospect of having their credits validated at their Home HEI. All countries have undergone major reforms to facilitate credit transfer and accumulation. Networks such as the AUN and multi-country projects have committed to building a higher education area in which credits will be recognised wherever studies are undertaken.

#### Nota Bene 2: AUN-ACTS

The ASEAN University Network (AUN) supports academic exchanges among its 30 member universities and introduced the ASEAN Academic Transfer System (ACTS) for that purpose. Although AUN-ACTS is in place, the system is not applicable to all HEIs in the region.

Today, various credit transfer systems in ASEAN co-exist at national and regional levels.

Table 1: Credit transfer systems across ASEAN<sup>2</sup>

| Name of the CTS   | Area of use  | Key features   | Point of reference for transfer                                 |
|---|--|--|---|
| AUN-ACTS  | ASEAN +3 (Japan, South Korea and the People's Republic of China) – 30 member universities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student-centred</li> <li>• Student-friendly with an online application system</li> </ul>  | ACTS grading scale  |
| UMAP-UCTS (before 2012)                                 | Asia-Pacific region – 428 participating universities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modelled on ECTS</li> </ul>   | Grade and credit-conversion principle                           |
| UMAP-Asian Academic Credits (after 2012)                | Asia-Pacific region – 428 participating universities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one basis</li> </ul>   | 1 AAC = 38–48 hours of student workload                         |
| SEAMEO-RIHED Academic Credit Transfer Framework (ACTFA) | Greater Mekong Subregion countries (2 provinces in China - Guangxi, Yunnan, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam) – 24 participating universities (as of 2016) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking to develop a harmonised higher education environment</li> <li>• Government-led initiative</li> <li>• Principle of reciprocity for sending and receiving students</li> </ul> | No CTS but a framework for CTS<br>ACTFA still under development |

ASEAN countries use different CTSs that have been developed across the region over the past 10 years. Some countries have developed their own CTS and some HEIs use different CTSs, either national or regional, within the same country.

Most CTSs in ASEAN use the notion of “credit points” or “units” whose definition depends on the organisation of the programmes and courses, the sequence of the modules, or the number of teaching hours. Comparing credit points is a challenge since they differ from programme to programme, HEI to HEI and country to country. This variation leads to confusion about, and misunderstanding of, the way credits are earned, accumulated and transferred. Mobile students may feel insecure about international mobility when there is a lack of assurance that their studies abroad will be validated on return to their Home HEI.

The co-existence of a range of CTSs reflects the diversity of higher education provision in ASEAN, as detailed below:

<sup>2</sup> SHARE (2016), *Self-Analysis Documents and Mapping Student Mobility and Credit Transfer Systems in ASEAN Region* ([www.share-asean.eu](http://www.share-asean.eu))

- The duration of comparable programmes is extremely variable. For instance, a 3-year Bachelor's degree might span over 8 years in some countries, allowing students to interrupt and resume their studies.
- Credits are often automatically allocated without reference to a common understanding of, for instance, the contact hours or student workload on which they are based. Often credit allocation is based on an aggregate of different variables (e.g. attendance at the institution and/or coursework). The allocation of credits on the basis of contact hours and workload without any correlation with the achievement of learning outcomes militates against their comparability.
- Many HEIs use a competence-based approach to course evaluation including reference to learning outcomes. However, the lack of a common definition of learning outcomes amongst the HEIs of a same country is frequent within ASEAN.
- Course Catalogues, which should detail the programmes and courses within are compatible with studying abroad, are often insufficiently comprehensive and out of date.

#### **Nota Bene 3: Learning outcomes**

Learning outcomes are statements of what the individual knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The achievement of learning outcomes has to be assessed through procedures based on clear and transparent criteria. The educational achievement which results from the mobility should be articulated in terms of learning outcomes. In some cases, the mobility might lead to a specific qualification often recognised by a professional organisation (e.g. in fields such as accountancy or nursing).

*Source: ECTS Users' Guide 2015*

In many cases, ASEAN students initiate their mobility period. They select their courses, without approval from their Home HEI and with limited information on the courses at the Host HEI. Few HEIs organise the mobility period as a 'pedagogical experience' on the 'education journey', to be recognised at home. Instances arise in which students are required to change courses at the Host HEI due to a lack of information before their departure.

For all these reasons, the AECTS aims to provide an overarching system which is understood and trusted by mobile students and HEIs engaged in mobility. The AECTS does not intend to replace the existing CTSs, but to render them compatible so that students have a guarantee that their credits will be recognised whatever CTS is used in their Home or Host institution.

The AECTS has been designed to be compatible with international CTSs, such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Furthermore, in order to avoid duplication of effort and to build on existing good practice, the AECTS has taken into consideration the AUN mobility scheme and CTS, developing additional functions to it. In addition, the AECTS and SEAMEO-RIHED's project, *Building a Common CTS for Greater Mekong Subregion*, have been developed in parallel with a view to cross-fertilising the lessons learned from each project.

#### **Nota Bene 4: Building a common CTS for the Greater Mekong Subregion**

With the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), SEAMEO-RIHED is implementing the project, 'Harmonization and Networking in Higher Education: Building a Common Credit Transfer System for Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) and Beyond', which aims to provide the GMS with a mechanism for harmonising the existing credit transfer arrangements in higher education.

*Source: SEAMEO RIHED's website*

## 2.2. The AECTS - an overarching common credit transfer system

The SHARE Credit Transfer System, or AECTS, is a system to be used across ASEAN higher education institutions in order to make the content and learning outcomes of courses and study programmes, and the qualifications to which these lead, transparent and comparable. The AECTS aims to inform mobile students and their HEIs about the programmes and courses which facilitate mobility in order to provide a guarantee of recognition (subject to the student's successful achievement of the learning outcomes), irrespective of where the studies take place. The AECTS allows for the transfer and accumulation of credits gained by mobile students across programmes, courses and institutions located in the ASEAN countries. Accordingly, it provides students with reassurance that their studies abroad will be recognised on an equitable basis. By providing full transparency, the AECTS will foster mutual trust between HEIs, ensuring that each HEI can facilitate student mobility and 'count' the credits awarded to mobile students with confidence.

The AECTS is a system that encompasses the whole range of processes and tools (hereafter referred to as Mobility Tools - MTs) with which Home and Host HEIs, as well as mobile students, must engage. It addresses every step of the mobility process, from the student's application to the recognition of the credits gained. Accordingly, this Handbook supports the proper functioning of the system, so that the validation of mobility periods is guaranteed for both incoming and outgoing students as well as for the Home and Host institutions and countries committed to facilitating international student mobility.

The value of the AECTS is that it enables the validation and recognition of defined learning outcomes in a transparent way, whatever the pedagogies and assessment methods used. Programmes can be compared through the learning outcomes achieved upon graduation: these are comparable across programmes regardless of the institution at which they are acquired and irrespective of the teaching and learning methods.

The AECTS facilitates the compatibility of programmes and courses without compromising their specificity. It aims to make sure that the study programme attended abroad will be fully recognised at home - i.e. that all of the credits gained and examined at the Host HEI will be recognised by the Home HEI.

The rich diversity of the programmes and courses in the ASEAN region offers a vast range of educational opportunities to ASEAN students, enabling them to acquire the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the development of the region and for their personal and professional advancement. The AECTS acknowledges and embraces this diversity while demonstrating the compatibility and comparability of the programmes and courses. It therefore mitigates the potential confusion arising from the proliferation of new and differentiated programmes across the ASEAN as higher education in the region has expanded and developed.

Table 2: The AECTS at a glance

The AECTS includes several partners namely:

- The student
- The Home institution (the higher education provider sending the student)
- The Host institution (the higher education provider receiving the student)
- The Scholarship provider that financially supports student mobility (if applicable)

| Parameter of the AECTS | Key document  | Purpose  | Who is responsible?   |
|------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Conditions</b>      | ➤ SHARE HEI Charter for Inter-ASEAN and EU-ASEAN Mobility | ➤ To support agreement of the terms of the partnership between institutions and with the Scholarship provider. The Scholarship provider supports the regional mobility and the implementation of the CTS.  | ➤ The Home institution and Host institution participating in the mobility and the Scholarship provider.<br>➤ The Charter is signed by the Home institution and Host institution with the Scholarship provider (if applicable)                                       |
|                        | ➤ SHARE Student Charter                                   | ➤ To set out the rights and responsibilities of mobile students.   | ➤ Students are expected to comply with the Student Charter.   |
|                        | ➤ Course Catalogue  | ➤ To provide complete information to students before the mobility period.  | ➤ The Host institution that offers courses and programmes to support student mobility   |
| <b>Processes</b>       | ➤ Stipulated in each Mobility Tool (MT)                   | ➤ To formalise the mobility process and agree on its terms.  | ➤ The Home institution and Host institution are both in charge of the MTs, but with various levels of responsibility, as detailed below.  |
| <b>Mobility Tools</b>  | ➤ Learning Agreement                                      | ➤ To support the agreement of the academic content of the mobility period and the associated credits that are allocated to the mobility period. This is negotiated by the academic affairs offices of the Home and Host institutions in cooperation with each participating student. | ➤ The Home institution leads the process but the Learning Agreement is signed by 3 signatories, namely the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Home institution,</li> <li>○ Host institution and</li> <li>○ Each student applying for study abroad.</li> </ul> |
|                        | ➤ Inter-Institutional Agreement                           | ➤ To set the terms and the conditions of the partnership between the Home institution and Host institution. The Inter-Institutional Agreement can be multi-annual.   | ➤ The Home institution and Host institution   |
|                        | ➤ Transcript of Records                                   | ➤ To detail the student's grades and credits awarded during the mobility period.   | ➤ The Host institution  |
|                        | ➤ Credit Transfer Sheet                                   | ➤ To formally recognise the credits earned abroad.   | ➤ The Home institution  |
|                        | ➤ Certificate of Attendance                               | ➤ To certify that the student attended the courses for which he/she is credited.   | ➤ The Host institution<br>➤ The Home institution  |

### 2.3. Credits, quality assurance and qualifications

Internationalisation is considered to be of the utmost importance for increasing the quality of learning outcomes, improving employability, and for successful research. Worldwide, HEIs no longer operate from a uniquely national perspective.

**Quality assurance, qualifications frameworks and credits are intertwined.**

Various inter-related dimensions revolve around internationalisation and quality assurance. At a time of increasing globalisation of societies and of education, the international activities of higher education institutions (e.g. joint programmes, courses in foreign languages, student mobility) are incorporated into existing national quality assurance systems. However national quality assurance systems are increasingly challenged. Accreditors and evaluators are no longer operating within the confines of national borders,

but engage with experts from abroad, exchange practices with them, and define common rules or principles in accordance with international trends.

In ASEAN, the two dimensions (the internationalisation of higher education and quality assurance) are inextricably linked. Across the region, as in other higher education areas, internationalisation takes multiple forms (the most visible being student mobility) and incites national governments to reformulate the interrelationship between their institutions. ASEAN-wide organisations and initiatives (such as AUN, SEAMEO-RIHED, and UMAP) are playing an increasingly important role in the development of quality standards within the context of the cross-border mobility of students and faculty members.

The ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework in Higher Education (AQAFHE) plays a key role in harmonising the national quality assurance systems with a view to safeguarding and improving the quality of higher education. AQAFHE consists of four sets of interrelated principles, namely:

- External quality: The AQAFHE aims to correlate the national quality assurance systems and the internal quality assurance arrangements of the HEIs within the region. It supports the missions and remits of the national external quality assurance agencies (EQAA) facing new challenges due to the internationalisation of higher education.
- External quality assurance (EQA) standards and processes.
- Institutional quality assurance (IQA).
- National qualifications frameworks (NQFs).

The NQFs are linked to internationalisation and thus to mobility and CTSs. The NQF is an instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved. It aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications sub-systems; to improve the quality and transparency of qualifications; and to support access to, and progression pathways through, education. Accordingly, NQFs are of vital importance to the national and global labour market and to the cultivation of civil society. They are essential to the development and implementation of regional qualifications frameworks, enabling institutions to form enduring partnerships with regional and international counterparts. The ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) is a common referencing framework that serves as a translation device for the interpretation of the NQFs of the countries in the ASEAN region. It highlights the quality assurance in education, skills, training and specialisations across countries, thereby nurturing the confidence of industry in the higher education sector.

The AECTS acts as a bridge between quality assurance and qualifications frameworks, at both national and regional levels, with the objective of safeguarding the quality of studies undertaken abroad for the benefit of both incoming and outgoing students and their institutions.

The AECTS aims to guarantee that credits gained abroad:

- Are the result of a robust, fair and quality-assured teaching and learning process;
- Are aligned with qualifications frameworks at both national and regional levels;
- Correspond to the knowledge, skills and competences gained during the mobility period, which are comparable and recognised irrespective of the location of study.

Mobility is a driver of quality-enhancement, highlighting the quality of existing programmes and the improvements that need to be made for the benefit of all students, both internationally-mobile and domestic. Therefore, guaranteeing that credits are the result of a quality-ensured mobility period should support the integration of the following



parameters within the internal quality assurance processes of the Home and Host institutions, as well as within the frameworks of national quality assurance agencies:

- The clarity of the pedagogical objectives of the courses taken abroad;
- The organisation of the modules;
- The appropriate skills for the teaching of students coming from abroad;
- The appropriateness of the pedagogy used for students with different cultural and educational backgrounds;
- The comprehensiveness of the Course Catalogue, as a document which is updated on a regular basis;
- The organisation of the mobility period (from the selection of students to the recognition of credits);
- The reliability of student assessment;
- The follow-up of mobile students after studying abroad and graduation;
- The appropriateness of the learning environment (for example in terms of the laboratories, IT infrastructure, library resources, dormitories, etc.) for students coming from different environments;
- The student support and counselling services, starting with the selection of courses until the recognition of credits back home.

#### 2.4. Ensuring the commitment of all stakeholders

The AECTS encompasses a process and the provision of mobility tools that can be quality-assured by the Home and Host institutions, recognised by national quality assurance agencies, and accommodated within NQFs and within regional frameworks currently under development.

Through the SHARE Charters (see below), the AECTS supports the engagement of the parties involved in academic mobility (Home and Host institutions; students; and the Scholarship provider) through the utilisation of the Mobility Tools. The SHARE Charters are the key documents outlining the responsibilities of the various partners involved in academic mobility and therefore provide the foundation for fostering trust between all parties, within the SHARE Scholarship programme.

A charter for international mobility in education is a formal document ratified by an authority or organisation which provides financial support to higher education providers and students for the organisation of, and participation in, international activities such as student exchanges. Examples include mobility supported by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme and by the SHARE project until 2019. A charter for international mobility stipulates the rights, commitments and duties of the recipients or beneficiaries of the funded programme. The criteria for the award of a charter are set by the Scholarship provider.

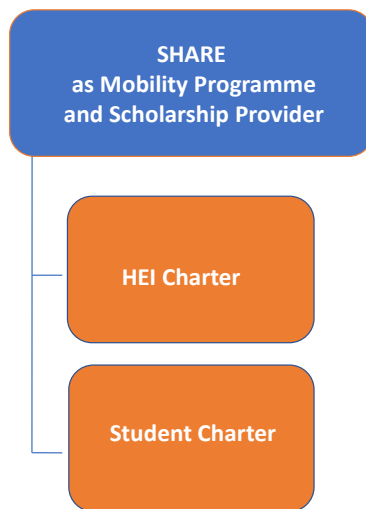
Responsibility for the implementation of a charter usually lies with the Head of the higher education institution in receipt of the award.

The SHARE project, as a mobility programme and Scholarship provider, proposes two SHARE Charters to make sure that beneficiary HEIs and students respect the SHARE mobility process, thereby providing due recognition to participating HEIs and to participating students for their study abroad.

The signatories of the SHARE Charters are the Manager of the SHARE consortium, the Head of the participating HEIs, and the scholarship beneficiary.



Figure 1: The SHARE Charters



The SHARE HEI Charter for Intra-ASEAN and EU–ASEAN mobility sets out the commitment of the HEIs, the mobility programme and Scholarship provider. Similarly, the SHARE Student Charter safeguards the rights and responsibilities of mobile students. Both charters embody the official commitment of all parties and facilitates the recognition of credits wherever studies are undertaken.

In instances in which there is no source of external funding, there is no obligation to develop a Charter for the implementation of an international mobility programme. Most engagements can be dealt with through the Inter-Institutional Agreements between the Home and Host institutions. However, as soon as external financing is provided, the charters are essential to make the roles and engagements of all parties explicit.

### 3. BUILDING THE COMMON CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM

The SHARE common Credit Transfer System for mobility (AECTS) is a student-centred system supported by a number of instruments and documents.

As compatibility with the European Union is a key objective of SHARE, all the tools and processes related to the AECTS and designed under the SHARE project for the ASEAN region have been inspired by, and adapted from, the *ECTS Users' Guide* (2015) and from the policies and procedures which underpin the European Commission's Erasmus+ mobility programme.

Figure 2: SHARE common CTS for student mobility

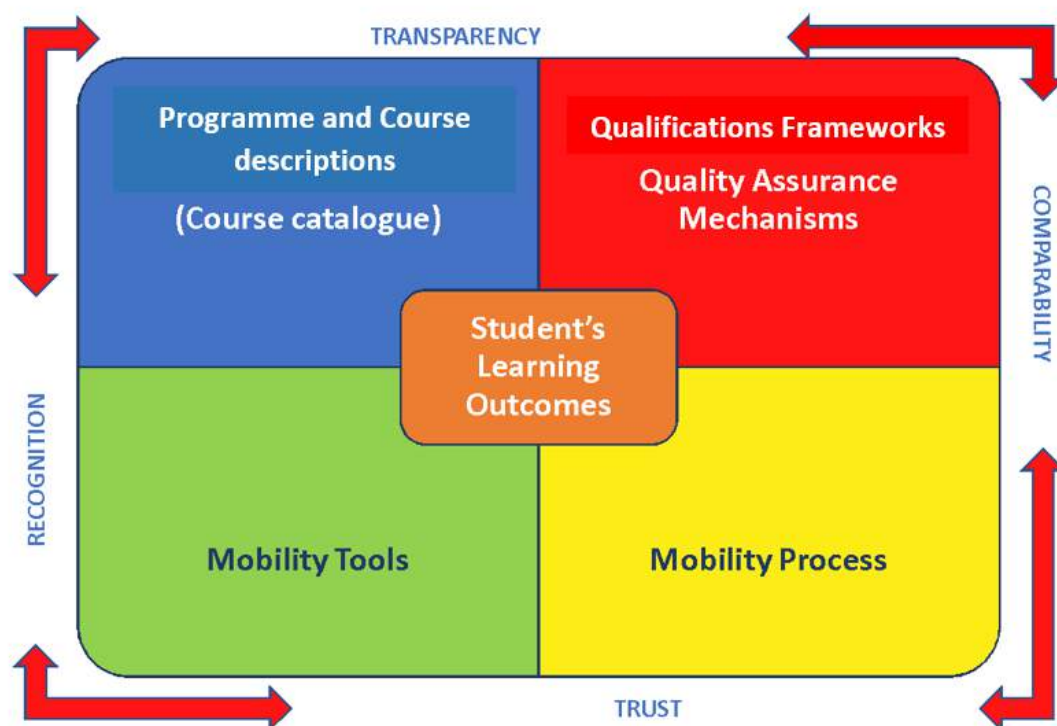


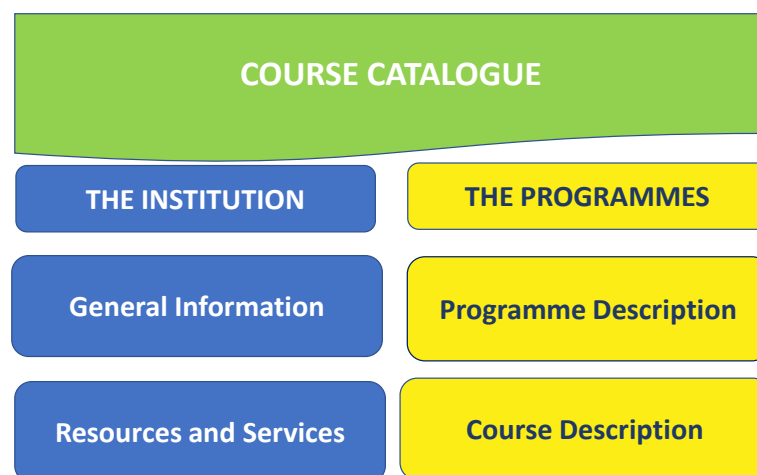
Figure 2 above details the four main components of the AECTS and illustrates how they complement each other to build Transparency, Comparability and Trust in order to reach Recognition by the Home HEI of the mobile student's achievements at the Host HEI.

- The **Course Catalogue** for mobile students provides all of the relevant information needed for incoming mobile students, from generalities and practicalities (Course Catalogue Section 1) to the descriptions of the programmes and courses which they may undertake (Course Catalogue Section 2). The Course Catalogue is useful for communication purposes between the main actors of the mobility process, namely the mobile students and the sending (Home) and receiving (Host) institutions. The Course Catalogue for mobile students should be up to date, accurate and easily accessible on the Host institution's website through a specific tab or as a downloadable document.

- **Qualifications Frameworks** are national and regional instruments which describe the levels of qualifications through a competence-based approach (in ASEAN) or through a learning outcomes-based approach (in Europe). Both approaches are compatible since they are student-centred and focused on what a student knows, understands and is able to do and demonstrate when awarded a specific qualification.
- **Mobility processes** are processes with which the Home institution, Host institution and mobile students should comply in order to ensure a quality-assured mobility experience. From the selection of candidates to the recognition, validation and conversion of credits acquired by mobile students at the Host institution, the processes define each party's role and commitment at every step of the mobility timeline. The processes facilitate coordination and liaison between the stakeholders which is essential for an effective and successful mobility experience for the students, on the one hand, and for a sustainable partnership for Home and Host institutions, on the other.
- **Mobility Tools** are a set of documents such as Learning Agreements, Certificates and Transcripts of Records. They are supportive tools in the implementation of the AECTS and related processes. They are also aimed at consolidating inter-institutional partnerships.

### 3.1. Harmonising and improving communication: The Course Catalogue

Figure 3: The Course Catalogue



The Course Catalogue is a key element in the building of partnerships and in the organisation of academic mobility. It provides a profile of the Host HEI and is the starting point for discussions with potential partners. The common framework it provides supports the standardised layout of information about HEIs and their programmes, and thus improves comparability between different educational systems.

The Course Catalogue is composed of two main sections including detailed information that should be updated on a regular basis.

These two sections are:

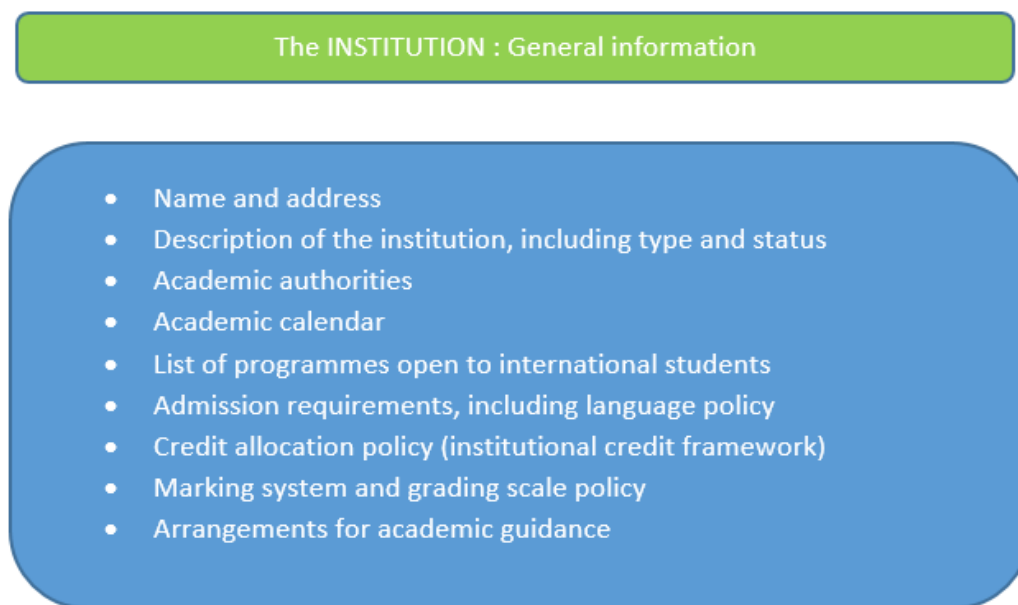
1. The institution and resources and services available to students;
2. The programmes offered and their educational components.

The Course Catalogue, mainly in its second section, may also be used as a methodological tool for programme and course design. Programme and course design represents a major step in the building of transparency and comparability and has a direct impact on the recognition of a mobile student's achievements.

### 3.1.1. The institution and resources and services available to students

Mobility requires the availability of full information on the partner HEIs. Information is a key element in fostering a common knowledge of the institutions involved in the mobility process and should be updated on a regular basis.

Figure 4: The institution - General information



- **The name and address** of the institution should be clearly stated. Branch campuses located on different sites or in different cities should also be detailed in this section.
- **The description of the institution** could include the institution's mission statement, internationalisation strategy, etc.
- **Academic authorities** should include names and positions.
- The **academic calendar** should be detailed and up-to-date. The start dates and end dates of semesters or trimesters, deadlines for registration for incoming and outgoing mobility students, together with examination periods, are important pieces of information. They facilitate the preparatory phase of the mobility period for incoming students. From registration and the application for a visa (if needed)

to the preparation of the study plan and mobility and logistical issues, the process is time-consuming and requires meticulous attention.

- Finding one's way among the diversity of **study programmes and courses** that are open to students may be confusing for incoming students. For example, it is important for them to know in advance whether or not they can register for a programme in which they are interested, and whether it is available during any semester or trimester.
- **Admission requirements** for mobile students should be detailed and the **language policy** clearly defined in order to prevent any confusion or misunderstanding.
- Understanding the **Credit Allocation Policy** (if any) at the Host institution is important since credits are integral components on which trust is built between the Home and Host institutions, as well as the building blocks for the recognition of the student's study abroad period. Accordingly, it is essential that a clear description of how credits are allocated to programmes, and of how they are calculated, is provided. Furthermore, students should be fully informed of the criteria for the acquisition of credits.
- In respect of the CTS Allocation Policy, and for the same reasons, the **Marking System and Grading Scale Policy** should be detailed thoroughly so that it is clear to all stakeholders. This information should be provided in a specific section in the Inter-Institutional Agreement as well as on the incoming student's Transcript of Records at the end of the mobility period.
- It is important for mobile students to know who to meet and where to go in relation to any enquiry linked to **academic guidance**.

Figure 5: The institution - Resources and services



- Mobile students should know where to find the **International Relations Office (IRO)** or the Student Affairs Office to which they can address enquiries and from whom they can seek support. They should also be informed of how they can contact dedicated staff at their Home and Host institutions.
- **Mobility windows** may be varied and open to both incoming and outgoing students.
- **Practical information** should help incoming and outgoing students to organise their mobility experience and to integrate into their new environment. For incoming students, practical information about accommodation and catering facilities, transport and medical services will be provided.

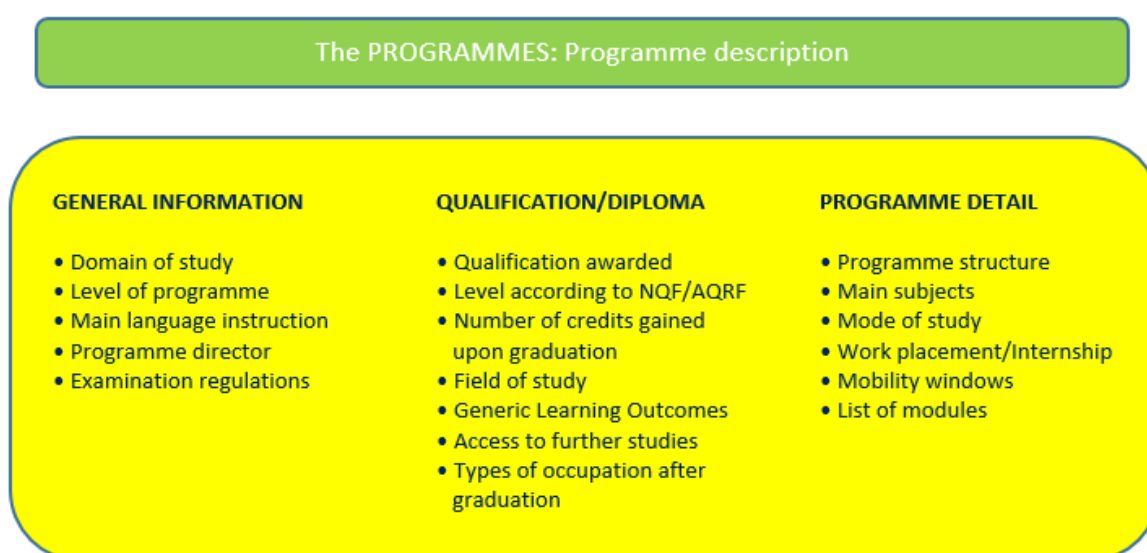
- A mobile student may be registered on a programme that is taught in a different language from that spoken in the Host country (English in most of the cases). For the international student the language barrier in the Host country may be an obstacle in the learning process as well as in everyday life. The organisation of **language courses** for international students will be essential, enabling them to thrive in their new environment as well as raising their awareness of the culture of their Host country.
- Mobile students should be informed of all the **learning facilities** that they can access, of how they can benefit from the facilities and whether they are free of charge.
- **Mobile students with disabilities and special needs** should be informed of any structures and specific arrangements that are available for them to facilitate their everyday life and their learning experience at their Host institution.
- **Student associations** are appropriate locations for mobile students to get involved in the community, meet locals and other international students. A list of student associations together with their contact details should be made available.

### 3.1.2. Programmes and modules (educational components)

The aim of this section is to provide international students and their Home institution with detailed information about the programmes and modules or educational components offered to them. This will improve prospective incoming students' understanding of their study options during their mobility period abroad (namely the learning outcomes, course content, organisation and assessment) and facilitate the selection of courses.

This part of the SHARE Course Catalogue for mobile students is essential since the mobile student's study plan will be based on it. For HEIs this section can be used as a methodological tool for optimising transparency in the description of programmes and their components.

Figure 6: The programmes - Programme description



### ➤ General Information

- The **domains or fields of study** can be indicated as well as the corresponding ISCED code (see Annex II).
- The **level of programme** can be “undergraduate, graduate, etc.”
- The **main language of instruction** may be the national language of the host country but also a common foreign language such as English. Some programmes may also include non-language modules taught in different languages, which should be detailed.
- The **Programme Director’s** name and contact details may be useful for his/her counterparts at partner institutions abroad. Mobile students’ Home institutions may need to contact the Programme Director at the Host institution when preparing for or at any time during the mobility period.
- The **examination regulations** should comply with the national regulations or with the regulations specific to the HEI.

#### Nota Bene 5: The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)

UNESCO developed the ISCED from the 1970s. ISCED provides a comprehensive framework for organising education programmes and qualifications by applying uniform and internationally agreed definitions to facilitate comparisons of education systems across countries.

*Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics*

### ➤ Qualification / Diploma

- In English, the **qualification or diploma awarded** would be “Bachelor, Master, Doctorate/PhD”, etc. However, the title of the qualification should be the one used in the national language.
- The criteria on which the levels of qualifications in qualifications frameworks are based are commonly stated in terms of descriptors. These provide an insight into the knowledge and understanding, competences, capacity for judgement, communication skills and lifelong learning skills acquired at each level of qualification. The **level of the qualification / diploma** according to the national qualifications framework (if any) and/or the AQRF enables a better understanding of the level of the learning outcomes for a programme. When building partnerships with counterparts in other ASEAN countries, or between ASEAN and other countries (e.g. in Europe), the use of national and regional qualifications frameworks (i.e. the AQRF in ASEAN and EQF in Europe) is essential. These instruments facilitate the comparison of qualifications.
- In order to avoid any confusion, the **total number of credits gained upon graduation** for the specific qualification/diploma should be given in national credits, i.e. the credits pursuant to national regulations. The wording (credits or units) used should be consistent with, and thoroughly detailed, in Section 1, entitled ‘The Institution - General Information’ as indicated above.

- **Programme learning outcomes** give an overview of what a student is expected to know, understand and be able to do after the completion of a programme. They should adequately reflect its context, level, scope and content. They can be formulated using a competence-based approach, as is the case in many HEIs in the ASEAN region, or a learning outcomes approach, as in Europe.

#### **Nota Bene 6 : Formulating programme Learning Outcomes**

Considerable care needs to be taken in formulating learning outcomes. The following non-exhaustive list provides a set of guidelines, which has proved to be helpful.

The learning outcomes should adequately reflect the context, level, scope and content of the programme.

- The statements of learning outcomes have to be succinct and not too detailed.
- The learning outcomes have to be mutually consistent.
- The learning outcomes should be easily understandable and verifiable in terms of what the student has actually achieved at the end of the programme.
- The learning outcomes have to be achievable within the specified workload.
- The learning outcomes have to be linked with appropriate learning activities, assessment methods and assessment criteria.
- There are no rules on the ideal number of learning outcomes at programme level. Experience suggests that between 10 and 12 are appropriate.
- A widely accepted way of formulating learning outcomes is based on three essential elements:
  1. Use an active verb to express what students are expected to know and be able to do (e.g. graduates can 'describe', 'implement', 'draw conclusions', 'assess', 'plan').
  2. Specify what this outcome refers to (object or skill e.g. can explain the 'function of hardware-components' or can present the 'design of a living-room by hand').
  3. Specify the way of demonstrating the achievement of learning outcomes (e.g. 'to give an overview of the materials most often used in electro-engineering'; 'to develop a research design by applying up-to-date scientific methods', etc.).

*Source: ECTS Users' Guide 2015*

Formulating learning outcomes in a clear way is a meticulous exercise. Some hints on how to formulate learning outcomes are given in the *Nota Bene* box below taken from the *ECTS Users' Guide*.

- Information on **access to further studies** will provide mobile students and their Home institution with comparability criteria.
- **Types of occupation after graduation.** Information about career prospects for graduates with a specific qualification may also represent a comparability criterion for the Home institution and the mobile student.



Figure 7: The programmes - Course description

| THE PROGRAMMES : Course Description   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| IDENTIFICATION  | GENERAL INFORMATION   | COURSE DETAILS   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code</li> <li>• Title</li> <li>• Type</li> <li>• Level of difficulty</li> <li>• Number of credits allocated</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period when it is delivered</li> <li>• Number of contact hours</li> <li>• Pre-requisites</li> <li>• Mode of delivery</li> <li>• Name of lecturer(s)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language of instruction</li> <li>• Learning Outcomes</li> <li>• Content</li> <li>• Planned learning activities</li> <li>• Teaching methods</li> <li>• Assessment methods</li> <li>• Assessment criteria</li> <li>• Recommended or required reading</li> <li>• Learning resources and tools</li> </ul> |

➤ **Identification**

- **Codes** are specific to each module or educational component and to each HEI. They are mentioned in mobility documents.
- **The title** should be clear and precise to avoid any confusion with other similar modules.
- **Type** means whether the course is core (mandatory, compulsory), elective (optional, facultative) or professional (technical).
- **Level of proficiency** specifies if the course is at beginner, intermediate or advanced level. Level can be marked 1, 2 or 3. It should respond and be concordant with the information given under 'General Information - Pre-requisites'.
- **The number of credits allocated** should be consistent with the credit system used at the institution and for the qualification. The credits in the Course Catalogue for mobile students should be the ones normally used in the programme for local students. Otherwise the conversion and transfer of credits will not be possible.

➤ **General Information**

- **The period when it is delivered** is essential information for future incoming students. It should detail the year of study (if applicable) and the semester/trimester when it is provided. This information should be updated regularly.
- **The number of contact hours** may be given in terms of hours, lessons per week or the total number for the whole period.
- **The pre-requisites** detail the academic entrance requirements for the module, enabling mobile students to ascertain whether their prior learning is sufficient for successful participation.
- **The mode of delivery** details how the course is provided, which may be face-to-face (contact hours), distance-learning, etc.
- **The name of the lecturer** enables students to identify who is giving the course. This information may be useful for academic staff from the Home

and Host HEIs, enabling them to liaise in preparation for their students' mobility period.

### ➤ Course Details

- **The language of instruction** indicates the language in which the course is provided, i.e. local/national language, English, or another foreign language.
- **Learning outcomes** at the course level correspond to what the student knows, understands and is able to do after completion of the specific course.
- **Main topics** refer to the subjects/topics taught.
- **The planned learning activities** should support students in their acquisition of the expected learning outcomes of the course. They can be peer-learning activities, project work, online activities or work-based activities.
- **Teaching methods** should enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes through the learning process. The methods can be based on lectures, team work, individual or group research, case-studies or online activities.
- **Assessment methods** should be integral to the learning outcomes and consequently varied in time and form to enable the students to demonstrate their achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Assessment methods may include inter alia projects, group work, essays, presentations or problem solving.
- **Assessment criteria** should be clearly defined so that students understand the link between the assessment and the learning outcomes and the basis for awarding merit grades.
- **Recommended or required reading** can include any articles, books or other materials relevant to the achievement of the learning outcomes.
- **Learning resources and tools** should include access to a library or digital resources, etc.

#### **Nota Bene 7: Learning outcomes in educational components**

The principles for formulating learning outcomes for educational components (modules) are the same as for programme learning outcomes. There are no absolute rules on the ideal number of learning outcomes for an educational component. It will depend on the level and the nature of the unit, as well as the estimated workload. However, good practice suggests that the number should be limited, and general experience indicates that 6 to 8 is an appropriate number.

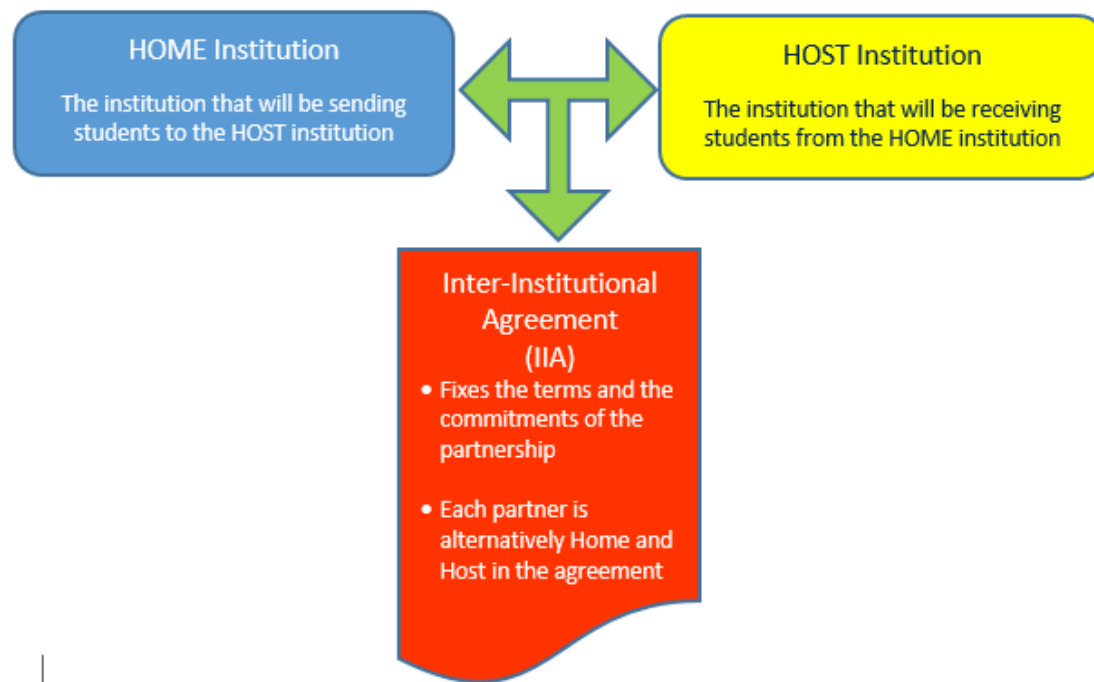
*Source: ECTS Users' Guide 2015*

## 3.2. Implementing the mobility process

### 3.2.1. The Inter-Institutional Agreement

The Inter-Institutional Agreement confirms the commitments of the Home and Host institutions within the framework of a mobility scheme.

Figure 8: The Inter-Institutional Agreement



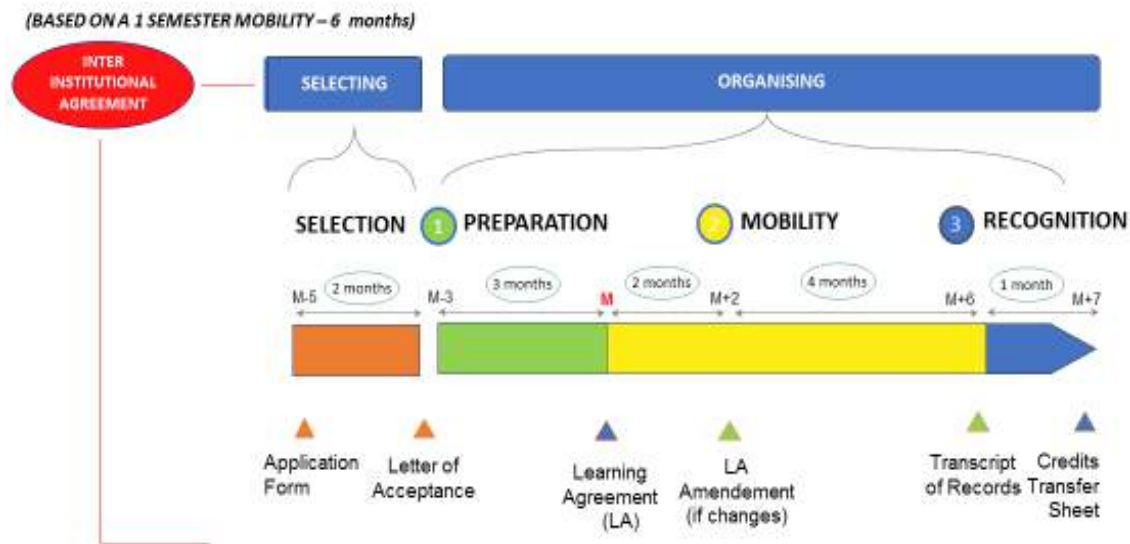
The **Inter-Institutional Agreement** is a bilateral agreement, the purpose of which is to facilitate and support mobility. It may be binding for one year or several years. By signing an Inter-Institutional Agreement, the signatory institutions agree to cooperate to support the exchange of students in ASEAN or between ASEAN and the EU. They commit to complying with the quality assurance requirements in all aspects of the organisation and management of the student mobility process and agree on a series of quantitative and qualitative measures to ensure that the mobility is of a high quality. The Inter-Institutional Agreement is therefore a vital mechanism for ensuring the quality of student mobility. Most of the potential? Obstacles to mobility can be removed through the Inter-Institutional Agreement.

The Inter-Institutional Agreement supports the optimal preparation for, and implementation of, student mobility, as well as its monitoring, before, during and after the study abroad period. It also facilitates the recognition of credits earned by the participating students and enhances cooperation between the Home and Host institutions, helping to foster sustainable inter-institutional partnerships.

### 3.2.2. Timeline

Figure 9 below details the timeline for the organisation of a one-semester mobility period (of 6 months' duration). It can be easily adapted to support the preparation of a shorter or a longer mobility period.

Figure 9: Timeline for the organisation of a mobility period



- The Inter-Institutional Agreement is a required document for the implementation of a mobility-scheme.
- The overall process for the organisation of international mobility is comprised of two sub-processes, “Selecting” and “Organising”, which are detailed in the following sections.
- In the timeline, “**M**” stands for the month in which the mobility period is due to commence.
- As shown in Figure 9, the time dedicated to the “Preparation” phase (prior to **M**) should be of sufficient length to enable thorough preparation which is the key to providing a successful, effective and quality-assured mobility experiences.
- Each phase of the “Organising” process is supported by mobility documents (MTs). The principal MTs are listed below.
- The present timeline is intended mobility for studies, but it can be adapted for any other type of international student mobility, such as traineeships (internships) or research placements.

### 3.2.3. Selecting Home students for mobility

The selection process is the first step towards mobility.

Figure 10: Selection process

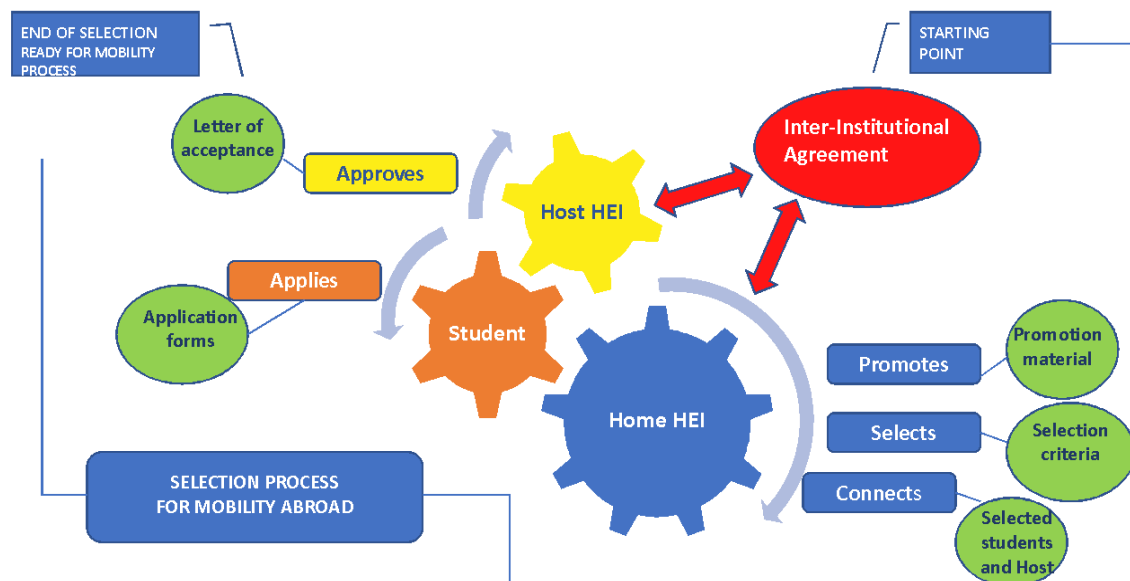


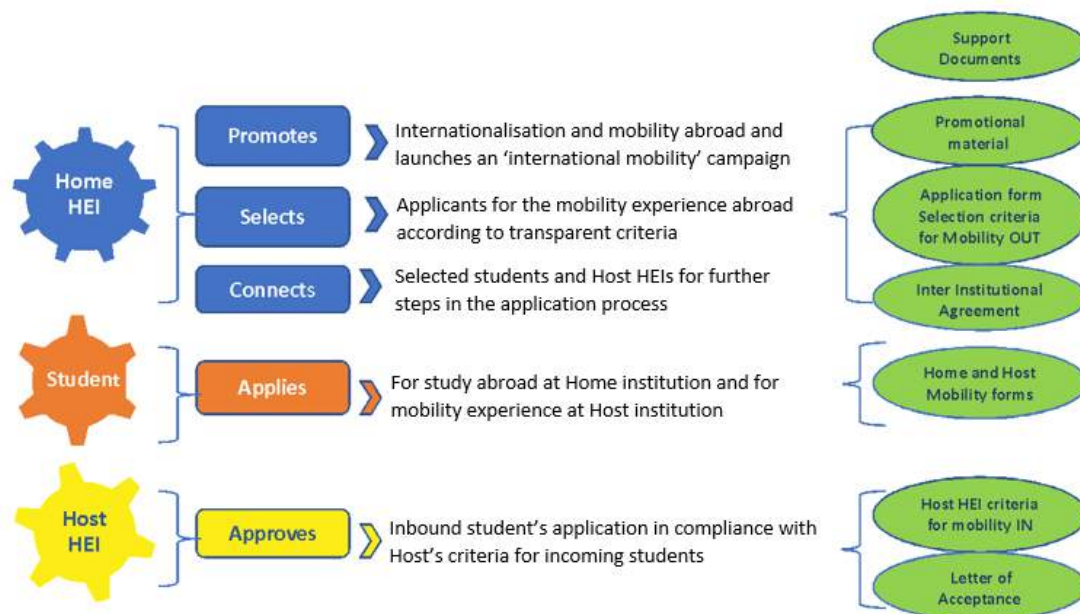
Figure 10 above illustrates the need for any HEI committed to international mobility to engage in the establishment of international partnerships that are formalised with **Inter-Institutional Agreements**. The Inter-Institutional Agreement details the purpose of the partnership and the commitments of each partner and gives information about the domains and level of study which are open to international students; the number of mobile students which can be hosted in each institution and on each programme; the requirements for admission; the dates and processes for application and contact details.

It shows that the Home institution organises the selection process and that students are required to obtain authorisation from their Home institution in order to participate in mobility scheme. Once selected, and after the Home and Host institutions have consulted with each other, students are able to proceed to apply to the Host HEI. Afterwards, communication and engagement between the three stakeholders should continue.

The role of the stakeholders in the mobility selection process is detailed in the figures below.

At the end of the selection process and following the receipt of the Letter of Acceptance from the Host institution, the process for the organisation of the mobility can commence.

Figure 11: Mobility selection process



- ✓ The promotion of international mobility schemes can be through posters, leaflets, conferences on campus, announcements on the Home HEI's website, etc.
- ✓ The application process and the selection criteria at the Home and Host institutions should be clearly defined and made available to students at the International Relations Office and on the Home and Host institutions' websites.
- ✓ The Letter of Acceptance is an important document. It confirms that the student has been accepted at the Host institution on a specific study programme at specified dates. The Letter of Acceptance may be needed to support visa applications.

#### 3.2.4. Organising student mobility

As outlined above in the timeline for the organisation of a mobility period (Figure 9), the process for the organisation of student mobility commences directly after the selection process has been completed. It is comprised of **three phases**:

- **Preparation**, before the student leaves;
- **Mobility**, during the period of study at the Host institution;
- **Recognition**, when the student has returned to the Home institution.

The **three phases** of the "Organisation" process entail commitment and regular communication and engagement between the stakeholders, as stated in, and in compliance with the **Inter-Institutional Agreement**.

The aim of this process is to strengthen the links between the Home and Host institutions for a sustainable partnership, to ensure a quality assured mobility experience for the student and to guarantee the recognition of the credits that the student has achieved and had validated at the Host institution.

Figure 12: SHARE mobility process: Credit Transfer Sheet; Credit Transfer &amp; Conversion

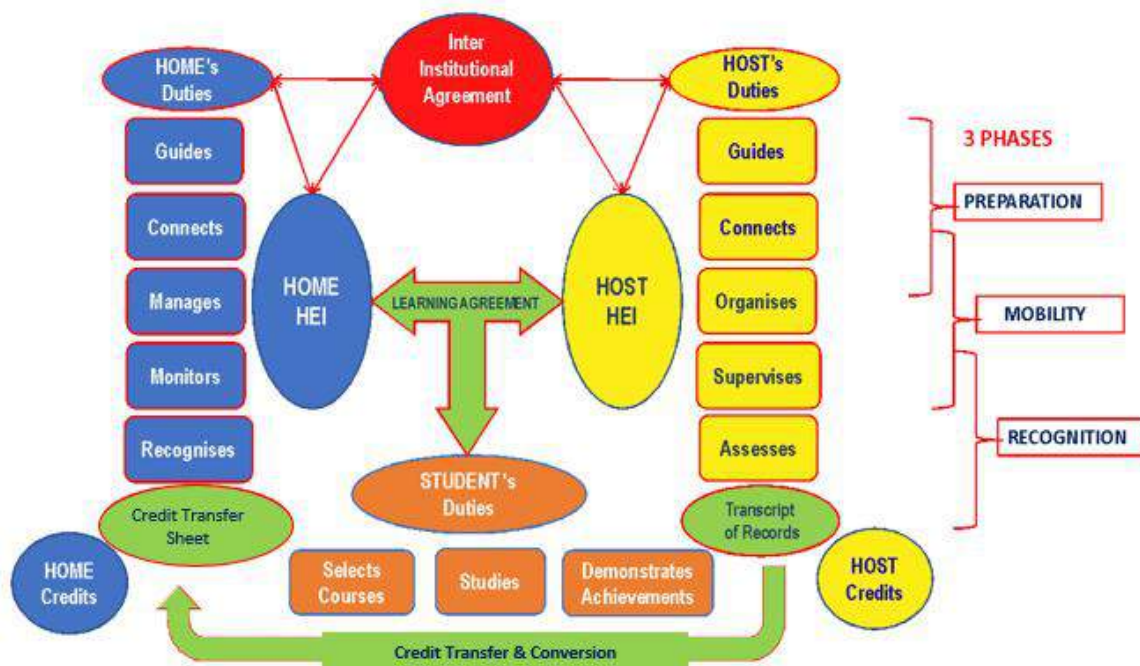


Figure 12 above details the entire SHARE mobility process. It outlines the role and duties of each party and shows that close liaison is essential. It also demonstrates the centrality of the Learning Agreement to the process, and the vital importance of the Transcript of Records and the Credit Transfer Sheet to the process of credit transfer and conversion from the Host to the Home institution.

The roles and duties of the stakeholders are detailed in the figures below.

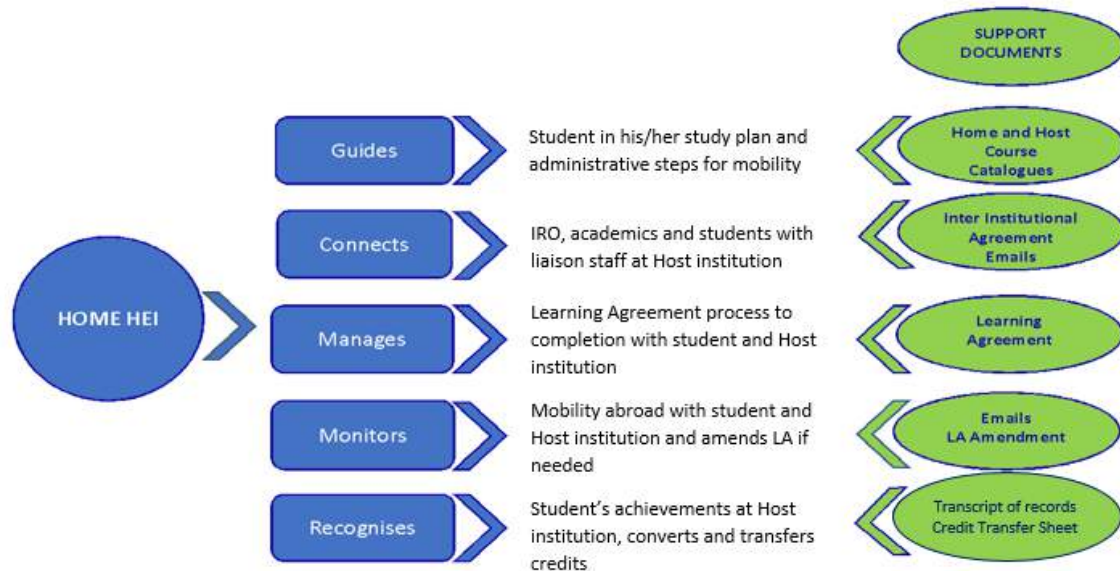


### 3.3. Role of the stakeholders

#### 3.3.1. As a Home institution

The Home institution, as a sending institution, leads the mobility process for its students. The Home institution's IRO staff and academics should support mobile students and provide thorough follow-up to ensure a successful experience.

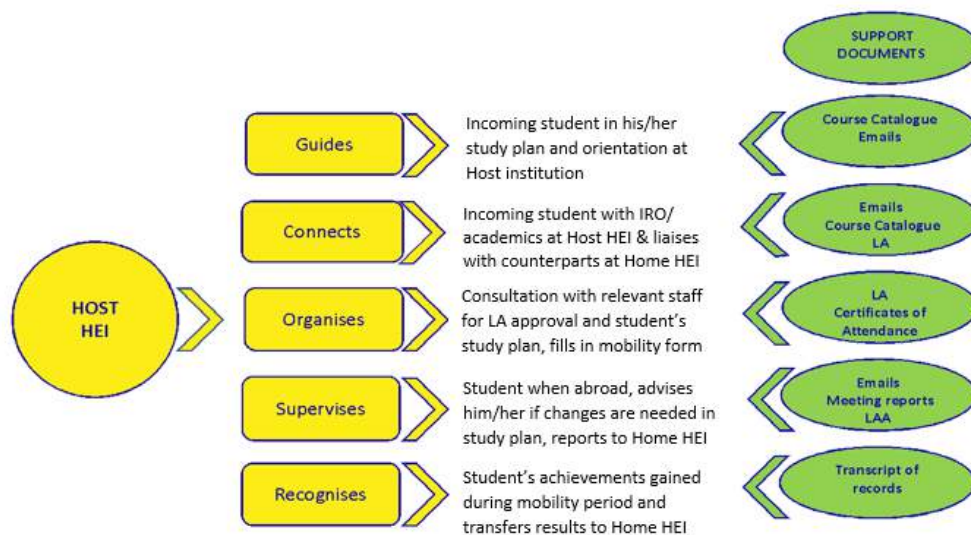
Figure 13: The mobility process at the Home HEI



#### 3.3.2. As a Host institution

The Host institution, as a receiving institution, should monitor incoming students during their mobility experience and liaise with the Home institution in relation to any decisions linked to the student's study plan.

Figure 14: The mobility process at the Host HEI

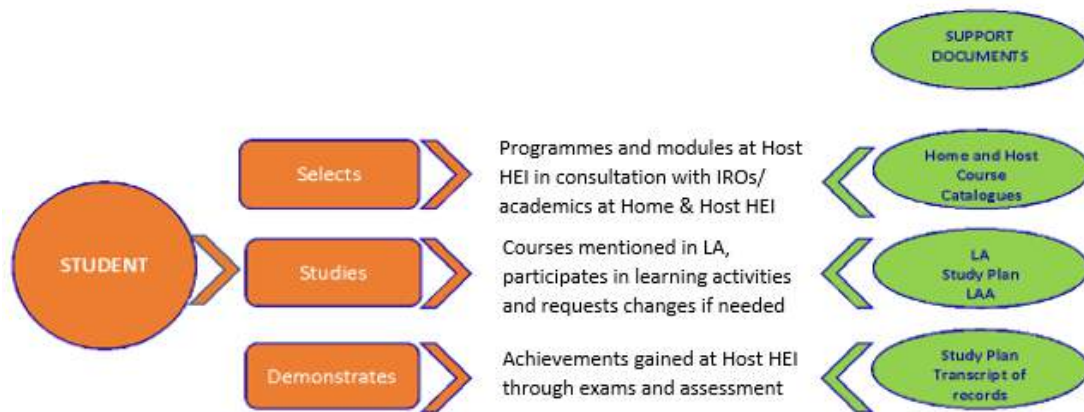




### 3.3.3. As a student

The mobile student should communicate with the Home and Host's IROs and academic staff, and should refer to his/her Home advisor(s) in relation to any issue linked to his/her study plan at the Host institution.

Figure 15: The mobility process for students



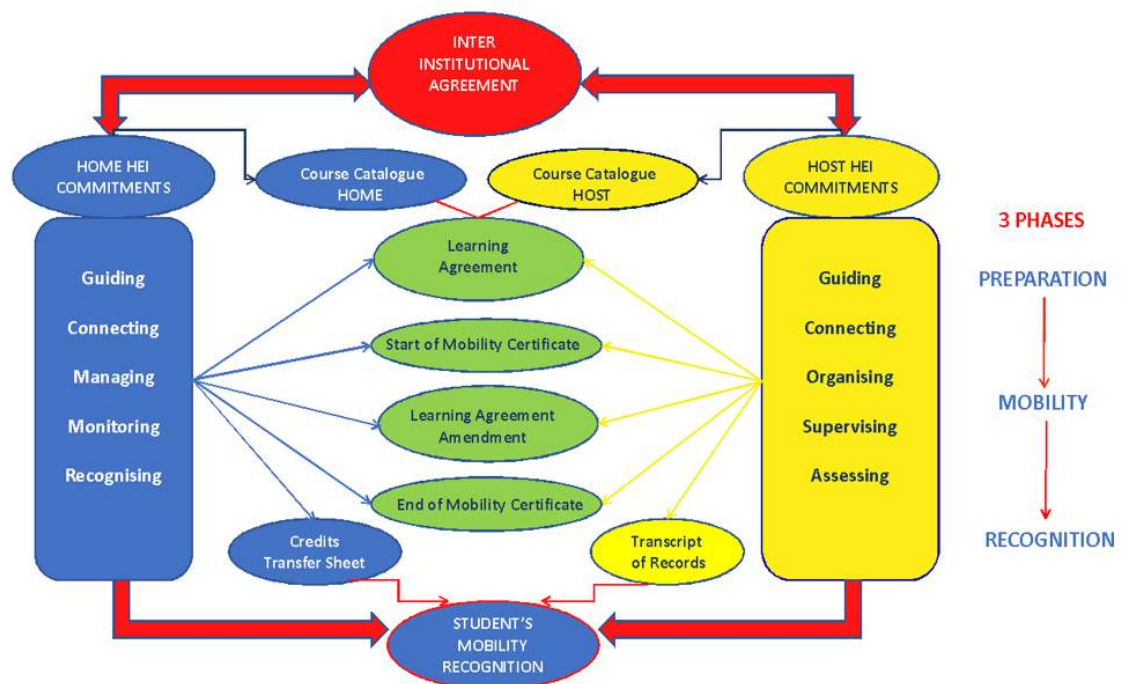
### 3.4. Mobility tools and instruments

Mobility tools and instruments are documents that support Home and Host HEIs and mobile students in the mobility process from the preparation through to the recognition of the credits earned.

A thorough use of these documents supports communication between the stakeholders, builds mutual trust, enables regular follow-up of students' mobility experiences and ensures the recognition of students' achievements at the Host institution.

The SHARE mobility documents are listed in green in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16: Mobility and recognition tools and instruments



- **The Inter-Institutional Agreement**, as described in section 2.2.1 above, is a prerequisite for the implementation of a mobility process.
- The Home and Host institutions' **Course Catalogues** are crucial elements in the mobility process (see sections 2.1 and 2.1.1). Discussions during the elaboration of the mobile student's Learning Agreement will be based on the information given in the Course Catalogues, which should be accurate and up-to-date.

**The Home institution provides its outgoing students and the Host institution with all of the mobility documents.**

The Transcript of Records detailing the student's achievements during the mobility is the only document to be provided by the Host institution.

- **The Learning Agreement (LA)** is intended to provide confirmation to the student that the learning outcomes and credits he/she successfully achieves during the mobility period will be recognised.  
The LA is initiated and led by the Home HEI for its outgoing students. It is drawn up in close collaboration with the Host HEI and the student involved. It should be thoroughly prepared, filled in and signed by the three parties before the mobility period commences. The LA includes detailed information on the mobile student, on the programme he/she studies at Home, and on the study plan he/she will follow at the Host institution together with the dates and duration of the mobility period and the contact details of the designated contact persons at the Home and Host institutions.
- **The Learning Agreement Amendment (LAA)** is used if changes need to be made to the student's initial study plan at the Host institution. The document is provided to the Host HEI by the Home HEI. Changes are instigated by the mobile

student in consultation with both the Home and Host HEIs. The LAA should be filled out and signed by the three parties during the course of the first weeks of the mobility period. Deadlines for submission of a LAA should be stipulated in the Inter-Institutional Agreement. The use of the LAA should be exceptional.

- The **Certificates of Attendance** or **Start and End of Mobility Certificates** are provided by the Home HEI to the Host HEI, which should fill them in and send them back to the Home HEI respectively on the first and last day of the student's mobility period.
- The **Transcript of Records (ToR)** is provided by the Host HEI to its incoming mobile students. It includes the titles and references of the courses that the student attended during the mobility period, and the examination results with marks, grades and the number of credits gained. It should be in compliance with the student's study plan as described in the student's Learning Agreement. The ToR should be sent to the mobile student's Home HEI soon after the end of the mobility period (according to the dates indicated in the Inter-Institutional Agreement). The student should receive a copy.

The Transcript of Records should include a detailed description of the marking and grading systems used at the Host HEI.

- The **Credit Conversion and Transfer Sheet** is a document provided by the Home HEI to its outgoing mobile student. It informs the mobile student of the number of credits gained at the Host institution which will be recognised and transferred to the Home institution. The conversion of credits is only required in instances in which the (national) credits used at the Host and Home institutions are different. Indeed, national regulations pertaining to credit systems may differ from one country to another.

## 4. THE RECOGNITION, CONVERSION AND TRANSFER OF CREDITS

The **recognition** of learning outcomes or of knowledge, skills and competences gained through study or in any other learning context, whether at the local, national or international level, is essential for individuals to progress in their lifelong learning journey. This should also be the case for students' achievements at a Host HEI during a mobility period abroad.

**Transparency and comparability** are two requirements for making recognition possible in the framework of a mobility programme, and this is what a common CTS offers by providing a number of tools, instruments and processes.

**Credits** as measurement units associated with learning outcomes are tools that facilitate the recognition process and can be used as a sort of currency. They can be earned, accumulated and transferred.

### 4.1. Towards the SHARE mobility percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits

#### 4.1.1. Basic principles

The **SHARE mobility percentage system** is possible only if the following principles are accepted:

- **The comparability of the levels of qualifications** at the Home and Host HEIs in countries A and B is possible and verifiable via the alignment of national qualification frameworks and/or regional qualification frameworks (AQRF for the ASEAN region; EQF for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)).
- **The comparability of the levels of the study programmes' learning outcomes** between Home and Host HEIs in countries A and B is possible and verifiable on the basis of the descriptions of the programmes and courses available at the HEIs.

### THE COMPARABILITY AND COMPATIBILITY OF QUALIFICATIONS AND PROGRAMMES

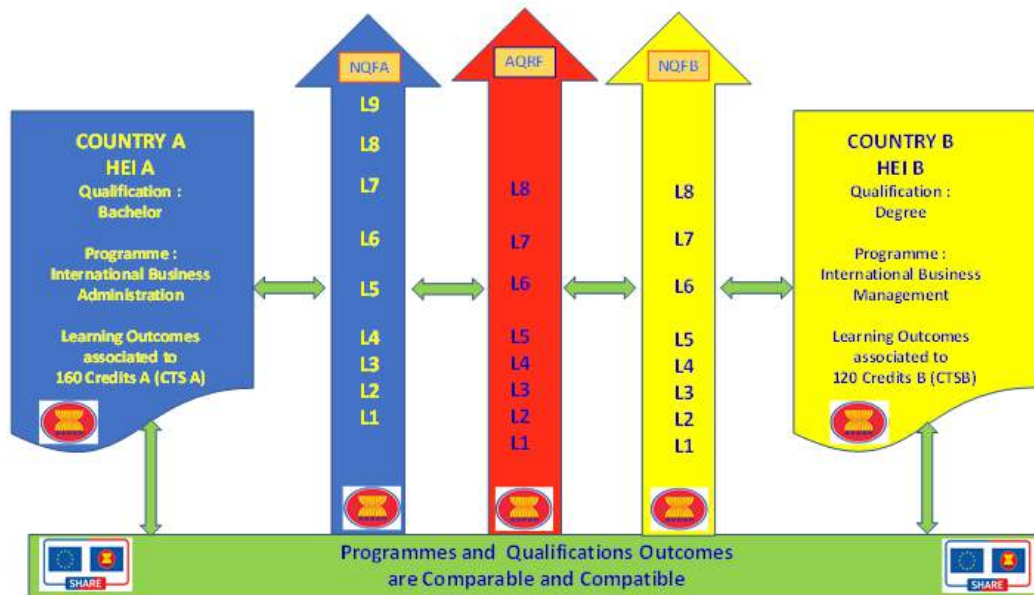
National and regional qualifications frameworks are crucial instruments to enable HEIs to establish partnerships for student mobility abroad.

By comparing the levels of qualifications and related programmes, and more specifically the corresponding descriptors of levels according to the national or regional frameworks, HEIs can make sure their students' study plans for mobility abroad will be at the right level at their Host HEI and in line with the studies for which they are registered at their Home HEI.

Since NQFs are specific to the educational context of each country, the figures that represent the levels within NQFs may vary from one country to another. A thorough reading of the level descriptors, usually formulated in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills and aptitudes or in terms of learning outcomes, is essential.

Where they exist, regional qualifications frameworks make comparability and compatibility even easier since each country in the region, by aligning its NQF with the regional framework, facilitates the international comparability of the qualifications offered by HEIs, supporting the recognition of mobile students' achievements during mobility.

Figure 17: An example of comparability and Compatibility in ASEAN

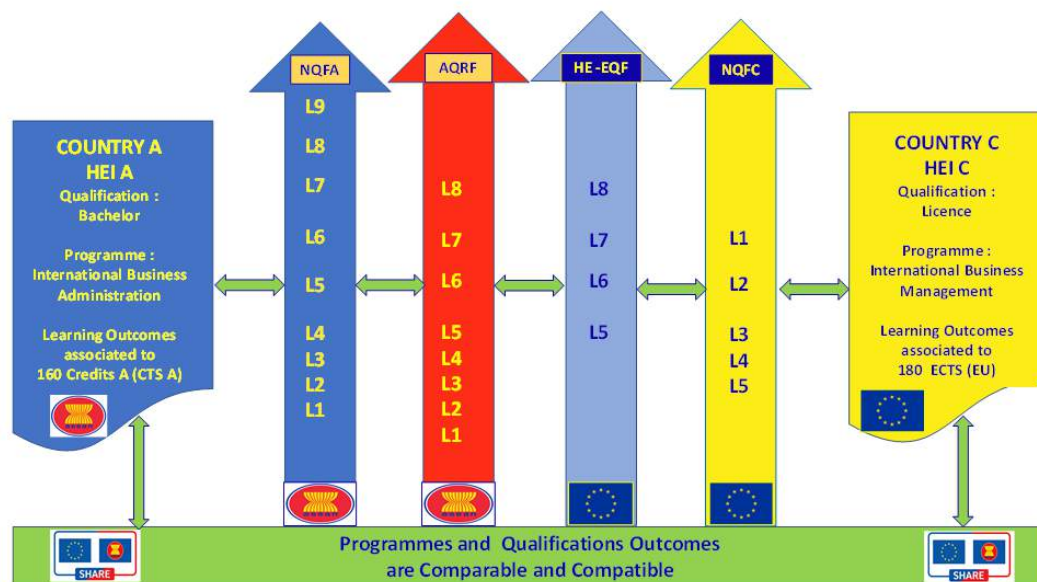


**Figure 17** shows the alignment of qualifications and study programmes between ASEAN A and B countries using their NQFs and the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF).

In this example, qualifications in countries A and B are named differently (Bachelor/Degree) and the level of the compared qualifications on the respective NQF is not numbered in the same way in country A and country B (L5/L6), yet the descriptors and the programme outcomes are similar.

Both ASEAN countries' NQFs are aligned with the AQRF regional framework, so it is clear that both Business programmes in Countries A and B are very similar. They use a different credit system but the level of the outcomes, as detailed in the descriptions of the programmes and courses, are equivalent.

Figure 18: An example of ASEAN-EU comparability and compatibility



As in Figure 17, **Figure 18** shows the alignment of qualifications and study programmes but in this case between an ASEAN country (country A) and a European country (country C), using their respective NQFs and their regional qualifications frameworks, namely the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) for the ASEAN and the European Qualifications Framework - Higher Education (HE-EQF) for Europe.

In Figure 18, the qualifications in countries A and C are also named differently (Bachelor/Licence) and the level of the compared qualifications according to the respective NQFs is, as in Figure 17, not numbered in the same way in country A and country C (L5/L2). However, as in Figure 17, the descriptors and the programme outcomes are comparable and compatible.

Both ASEAN and EU countries' NQFs are aligned with their regional frameworks. Furthermore, the AQRF and EQF-HE could also be aligned. So, as in Figure 17, it is clear that both International Business programmes (in countries A and C) are very similar. Each utilises a different credit system but the level of the outcomes, as detailed in the descriptions of the programmes and courses, are equivalent.

**Figures 17 and 18** demonstrate that, in line with qualifications frameworks and with the level descriptors detailed therein, HEIs' descriptions of their programme outcomes and course outcomes enable the building of trust and understanding between HEIs from different countries and even from different regions of the world. The level of the qualifications and the level of the programme outcomes are rendered comparable and compatible. While the number of credits associated with the programme-outcomes may be different and calculated differently, the "value" of the qualification and the programme is the same. Qualifications and programmes at HEIs A, B and C in countries A, B and C are comparable, just like similar articles labelled in different currencies. Accordingly, credits correspond to a currency for which an exchange rate is needed to enable transfer and conversion from one country to another. It is this conversion that the SHARE percentage system for mobility supports.

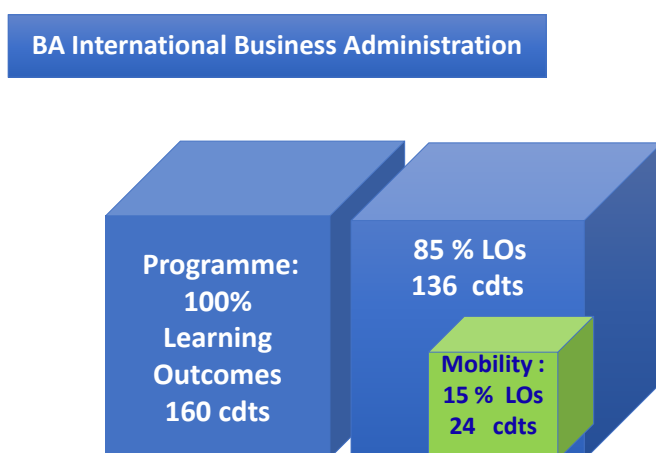
#### 4.1.2. What is the SHARE percentage system for mobility?

To start with, it is accepted that a qualification represents 100% of a programme's outcomes, and that, in order to graduate, a student must demonstrate he/she has attained and validated these outcomes and been assigned the total number of associated credits.

- The SHARE mobility percentage system quantifies students' learning experience abroad within the context of their entire study programme. For example, it may be decided that the studies engaged in during the mobility period will represent 12% or 16% (or more or less) of the whole programme and therefore of the total number of credits to be earned before graduation.
- The percentage system maintains the flexibility that exists in a region within which credit systems are diverse and students' educational journeys vary depending on their status, the domain of study and the year of study.
- The percentage system can apply to any sort and duration of mobility.
- In this system, the learning outcomes gained during a mobility period abroad count for a percentage (named the 'mobility percentage' in this Handbook) of the total learning outcomes to be achieved before graduation and of the total credits earned from these.
- Thus, the mobility percentage applies to the total number of credits required for graduation.

The SHARE mobility percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits takes into account the weight of the students' mobility outcomes in their full study programme at their Home HEI. **The applied mobility percentage is fixed by HEIs before the Learning Agreement is signed.**

#### Case 1: The SHARE Mobility Percentage, weighing Mobility Learning Outcomes in a Home study programme



In this example the mobility percentage has been fixed at 15%, but it could be any percentage provided it is appropriate to the mobile student's study programme.



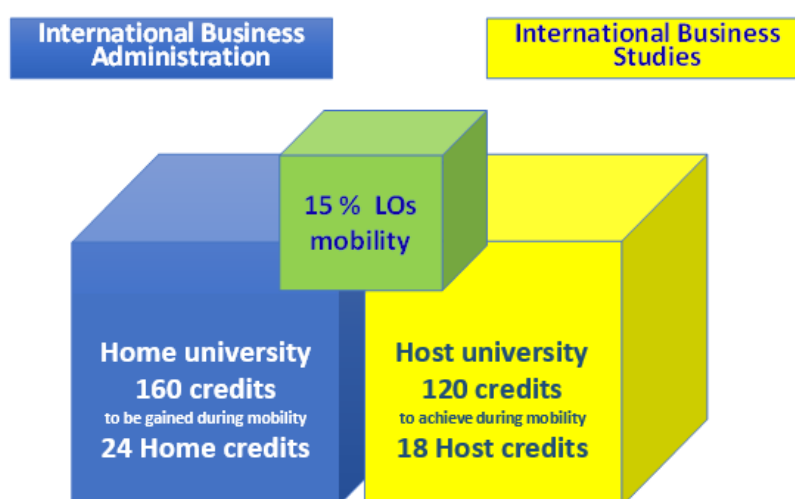
This example shows how to use the mobility percentage to calculate the number of credits applied to the mobility period: a 2<sup>nd</sup>-year student in International Business Administration leading to a Bachelor degree at University A in Country A has to earn a total of 160 Home credits A, representing 100% achievement of the programme outcomes, before graduation. A mobility period in the second year representing 15% of the whole programme's expected learning outcomes, would correspond to  $160 \times 15\% = 24$  Home credits A to be earned during the mobility period.

#### 4.1.3. How can the SHARE mobility percentage system help to calculate the number of credits to be earned at a Host university?

- The SHARE tools, instruments and processes, together with national and regional qualifications frameworks, make it possible to compare and align the programmes and the learning outcomes of qualifications from HEI A in Country A with those of HEI B in Country B and *vice versa*.
- The learning outcomes associated with a programme and a qualification in a specific domain of studies at a Home HEI A in Country A and at a Host HEI B in Country B can be considered to be of a similar value even if the national credits gained upon graduation differ between the HEIs.
- The mobility percentage fixed by the Home HEI A applies to the equivalent programme's learning outcomes at Host HEI B and is translated into Host credits B.

The SHARE percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits provides a mobility percentage methodology, based on the weight of the student's mobility outcomes and the total expected learning outcomes of similar study programmes at Home and Host HEIs.

#### Case 2: Applying the SHARE Mobility Percentage to a Host study programme



The 2<sup>nd</sup>-year student in International Business Administration, leading to a Bachelor degree at University A in Country A, is undertaking a mobility period given a 15% weighting by his/her Home University A, which corresponds to 24 Home credits to be earned during the





#### 4.2.2. What happens if the number of credits calculated via the mobility percentage doesn't exactly match the number of credits linked to the student's study abroad plan?

- The mobility percentage gives an indicative number of credits. The actual number of credits may be more or less. This has to be arranged between the Home HEI, the Host HEI and the mobile student. The final agreed number of credits will be written in the Learning Agreement.
- For example, in Figure 19 above, for a mobility percentage of 15%, a student is expected to earn 18 credits B at Host HEI B. But, if when adding the credits to be earned for 5 courses it amounts to  $4+3+3+3+3 = 16$  credits B. The mobility percentage would be  $16/120 \times 100 = 13.33\%$  (instead of 15%), and the corresponding number of Home credits A would be  $160 \times 13.33\% = 21.33$  credits A (rounded up to 21.5 or 22, instead of 24).
- As long as the student's Learning Agreement has agreed on the Learning Outcomes to be achieved, a minor credit difference is acceptable. This issue should be discussed in the preparatory phase of the mobility period.

#### 4.2.3. What happens if HEIs prefer to fix the number of credits for mobility rather than assigning a mobility percentage?

- Mathematically the calculation principle remains the same and is based on a cross-multiplication using three figures: the number of Home credits to be earned upon graduation, the number of Host credits to be earned upon graduation in a similar study programme, and the number of credits (Home or Host) for mobility.
- Examples referring to Figure 19 above:
  - Case 1: The Home HEI A decides the number of Home credits A to be earned during the mobility period is 24 out of 160 credits A required for graduation.  
The number of Host credits B to be earned upon graduation in a similar study programme is 120 credits B. The cross-multiplication to define the number of credits B to be earned at Host B during the mobility period is:  $24/160 \times 120 = 18$  credits B.
  - Case 2: Host HEI B decides the number of Host credits B to be earned during the mobility period is 20 out of 120 credits B required for graduation.  
The number of Home credits A to be earned upon graduation in a similar study programme is 160 credits A. The cross-multiplication to define the number of corresponding credits A to be earned at the Home HEI A is:  $20/120 \times 160 = 27$  (rounded up) credits A.
- Mobility cross-multiplication is useful for converting the final number of credits gained at a Host HEI into Home credits at the end of the mobility period.

The SHARE mobility percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits is based on two calculation rules: percentage and cross-multiplication.

### 4.3. Using the SHARE mobility percentage system in the Recognition Phase after the mobility period

#### 4.3.1. How can the Home HEI operate conversion and transfer?

- If the credits earned during the mobility period at the Host HEI and written in the Host Transcript of Records are in line with the Learning Agreement, the Home HEI then just has to convert the Host credits into Home credits and record the transfer and recognition of the credits in the student's records.
- In an instance in which the number of credits earned at the Host HEI during the mobility period is not the same as that detailed in the Learning Agreement, then the Home HEI can either use the percentage or the cross-multiplication calculation.
- Example: (referring to Figure 19 above), a mobile student has, at the end of the mobility period, only earned and validated 12 Host credits B instead of the 18 credits B agreed on in the Learning Agreement.
  - Percentage calculation: 12 credits B for mobility out of 120 credits B to be earned upon graduation at the Host HEI leads to  $12/120 \times 100 =$  a 10% mobility percentage. Thus 160 Home credits A to be earned upon graduation at Home  $\times 10\% = 16$  credits A to be transferred to the Home HEI.
  - Cross-multiplication calculation: 12 credits B for mobility out of 120 credits B to be earned upon graduation at the Host HEI in relation to 160 Home credits A to be earned at the Home HEI,  $12/120 \times 160 = 16$  credits A to be transferred at the Home HEI.

### 4.4. Using the SHARE credit calculator and converter in the Preparation and Recognition Phases of the mobility process

#### 4.4.1. What is the SHARE credit calculator and converter?

- The SHARE credit calculator and converter is a tool available as an application on the SHARE platform (see Annex I) and in Excel format that comprises the percentage and cross-multiplication formulae (as explained above) so that the users - Home HEIs, Host HEIs and mobile students - can quickly and automatically obtain the number of credits and the conversion that they need.
- The SHARE credit calculator and converter can be used at any time but it is intended to be used principally in the Preparation and Recognition Phases of the mobility process.
- There are two options for data-entry: Home or Host HEI.
- **In the Preparation Phase**, two figures have to be input first: the expected number of credits at the Home and at the Host HEIs to be earned upon graduation. Then the user has the choice of entering either a mobility percentage, or the number of mobility credits set by the Home HEI, or the number of mobility credits required by the Host HEI. The resulting conversion is generated automatically.

- In the **Recognition Phase**, as for the Preparation Phase, two figures have to be input first: the expected number of credits to be earned at the Home and at the Host HEIs upon graduation. Then the user - the Home HEI and/or the mobile student - enters the number of credits earned and validated at the Host HEI during the mobility period. The conversion into Home credits is generated automatically.

The SHARE credit calculator and converter can be used at any time but should be used principally in the Preparation and Recognition Phases of the mobility process. It enables the users - Home HEIs, Host HEIs and mobile students - to calculate the number of credits and the conversion that they need quickly and automatically.

- SHARE Credit Calculator and Converter:

- Understanding the calculation formulae:

Table 3: Example with a fixed mobility percentage - Case 1

Case 1: The mobility percentage is fixed at 15% by the Home institution A (Home HEI A)

| HEI      | Programme associated credits | Mobility percentage fixed by HOME HEI | Credit conversion (rounded)   |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| HOME HEI | 160 credits A                | 15 %                                  | $160 \times 15\% = 24$ cdts A |
| HOST HEI | 120 credits B                | 15 %                                  | $120 \times 15\% = 18$ cdts B |

Table 4: Example with a fixed mobility percentage - Case 2

Case 2: The mobility percentage is fixed at 12.5% by the Host institution B (Host HEI B)

| HEI      | Programme associated credits | Mobility percentage fixed by HOST HEI | Credit conversion (rounded)    |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| HOME HEI | 160 credits A                | 12.5%                                 | $160 \times 12.5\% = 20$ cdt A |
| HOST HEI | 120 credits B                | 12.5%                                 | $120 \times 12.5\% = 15$ cdt B |

- Table examples with fixed “Mobility Credits”.

Table 5: Example with a fixed number of mobility credits - Case 1

Case 1: The number of mobility credits is fixed at 24 credits by the Home institution A (Home HEI A)

| HEI      | Programme associated credits | Number of mobility credits fixed by HOME HEI | Credit conversion rate calculation       |
|----------|------------------------------|--|--|
| HOME HEI | 160 credits A                | 24 cdt A                                     | $24/160 \times 100 = 15\%$               |
| HOST HEI | 120 credits B                | = 18 cdt B                                   | $120 \times 15\%$ or $24/160 \times 120$ |

Table 6: Example with a fixed number of mobility credits - Case 2

Case 2: The number of Mobility credits is fixed at 15 credits by the Host institution B (Host HEI B)

| HEI      | Programme associated credits | Number of mobility credits fixed by HOST HEI | Credit conversion rate calculation         |
|----------|------------------------------|--|--|
| HOME HEI | 160 credits A                | = 20 cdt A                                   | $160 \times 12.5\%$ or $15/120 \times 160$ |
| HOST HEI | 120 credits B                | 15 cdt B                                     | $15/120 \times 100 = 12.5\%$               |

#### 4.5. Using the SHARE mobility percentage system to develop partnerships and student mobility between the ASEAN Region and Europe

##### 4.5.1. Using the SHARE mobility percentage system for the conversion, transfer and recognition of credits for mobility between ASEAN and EUROPE

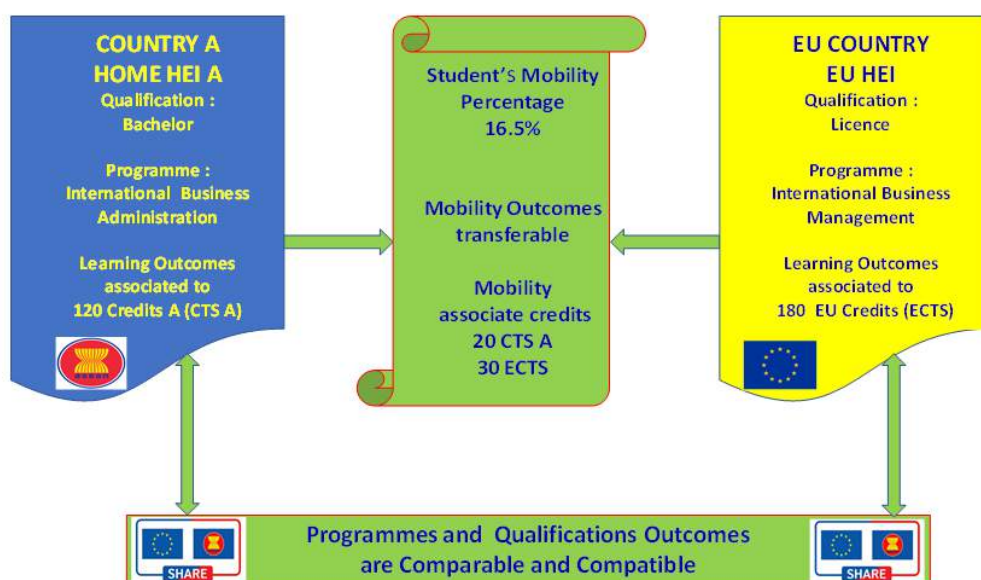
- The SHARE tools, instruments and processes, once implemented, together with national and regional qualifications frameworks, make it possible to compare and align the outcomes of programmes and qualifications from an HEI in an ASEAN country with those of an HEI located in a European country and *vice versa*.

- The SHARE tools, instruments and processes have been inspired by, and designed in accordance with those which underpin ECTS and Erasmus+ in the European context. Thus comparability and compatibility between the systems in both parts of the world is facilitated.
- The levels of qualifications and study programmes can be aligned with the ARQF and the EQF (see Figure 18).
- The mechanisms and calculations for the conversion, transfer and recognition of credits as demonstrated above and the examples for intra-ASEAN mobility remain the same for mobility between ASEAN and Europe.
- The key figures for calculation are the same, namely the number of credits to be earned upon graduation in both countries and the set mobility percentage or the number of mobility credits to be earned at the Home or Host HEI.
- In higher education in Europe, the credit system used (ECTS) is a common and inclusive credit system with common credit points, which has been designed to foster and facilitate the mobility of students. The use of the SHARE percentage system for the conversion, transfer and recognition has been designed so as ASEAN HEIs are able to use it with European counterparts.

The SHARE mobility percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits can be applied to any higher education mobility programme between the ASEAN region and Europe.

**ASEAN-EU mobility:** Figure 20 below shows that the SHARE mobility percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits can apply to mobility between ASEAN and Europe

Figure 20: The SHARE mobility percentage system for the recognition, transfer and conversion of credits between ASEAN and Europe





### Examples of calculation formulae for a mobility period between a Home HEI A in ASEAN and a HOST HEI in the EU

- The number of mobility credits is fixed at 20 credits by the ASEAN Home institution A (Home HEI A)

Table 7: Example 1 of the calculation formula for a mobility period between a Home HEI A in the ASEAN and a Host HEI in the EU

| HEI      | Programme associated credits | Number of mobility credits fixed by HOME HEI | Credit conversion rate calculation         |
|----------|------------------------------|--|--|
| HOME HEI | 120 credits A                | 20 cdts A                                    | $20/160 \times 100 = 16.5\%$               |
| HOST HEI | 180 credits EU               | = 30 cdts EU                                 | $180 \times 16.5\%$ or $20/120 \times 180$ |

- The number of mobility credits is fixed at 30 credits by the Host institution in the EU (Host HEI EU)

Table 8: Example 2 of the calculation formula for a mobility period between a Home HEI A in ASEAN and a Host HEI in the EU

| HEI      | Programme associated credits | Number of mobility credits fixed by HOME HEI | Credit conversion rate calculation         |
|----------|------------------------------|--|--|
| HOME HEI | 120 credits A                | = 20 cdts A                                  | $120 \times 16.5\%$ or $30/180 \times 120$ |
| HOST HEI | 180 credits EU               | 30 cdts EU                                   | $30/180 \times 100 = 16.5\%$               |

#### 4.6. Transferability and non-transferability

The SHARE common credit system aims to facilitate student mobility and to support the recognition of students' achievements during the mobility period abroad. Recognition via the transferability of students' learning outcomes and the credits earned for these is the ultimate goal of the mobility process.

Mobile students sometimes take additional courses at their Host HEI that are not provided at their Home HEI and/or that are not always related to their study programme. In this case, it may be difficult to 'transfer' the allocated credits.

In an instance in which the credits earned are not considered as transferable by the Home HEI and cannot count towards graduation, they should at least be recognised as being elective in the Learning Agreement. They should also be referred to in the Transcript of Records and in any Mobility Certificate.

The Diploma Supplement, when existing, is the appropriate document in which to record such additional courses.





## 5. FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AECS

Effective mobility is supported by the use of the AECS and by the implementation of the processes and mobility tools as described in the previous chapters. Implementing the AECS is likely to boost mobility provided that the Home and Host institutions also undertake additional actions. Detailed below is a set of key recommendations which could increase the effectiveness of the AECS.

### 5.1. Implementing an internationalisation strategy

#### 5.1.1. Why does this matter?

- Internationalisation can help students to achieve their goals, to obtain a quality education, and to pursue research. Mobility, as part of an institution's internationalisation strategy, gives students an opportunity for “real world, real time” learning in areas that simply cannot be taught at the Home institution.
- HEIs can reap benefits from mobility when this is part of an institution-wide internationalisation strategy. HEIs may have priorities in terms of teaching and research areas that could incite them to develop partnerships with certain geographical areas or specific institutions. HEIs might be seeking influence in their regions and offer mobility opportunities for students and academics to cross-fertilise practice, knowledge and scientific experience. Alternatively, an HEI might explore how academic mobility could add value to its programmes and research.
- Any decisions made in relation to mobility should be grounded in an internationalisation strategy, which has been designed and is supported by the HEI and diffused across its faculties, departments and programmes.

#### 5.1.2. How to implement an internationalisation strategy?

- Explore the added value of any internationalisation-related activity, including, but not limited to, mobility.
- Build an institution-wide consensus on the reasons why internationalisation should be developed by the institution, for which benefits and for whom.
- Connect the internationalisation strategy to the institutional development strategy which should remain the overarching strategy driving the whole institution and its components.
- Make priorities explicit and share them with a vast community of stakeholders. Priorities can be either geographical, thematic (e.g. mobility associated with the research-orientations of the HEI) or student-specific (e.g. mobility favouring the acquisition of specific skills to be gained abroad).

## 5.2. Organising mobility

### 5.2.1. Why does this matter?

- Well-managed mobility can yield a range of benefits for HEIs, for example in terms of reputation and attractiveness amongst students and academics throughout ASEAN and beyond.
- The success of mobility lies however in the capacity of HEIs to implement and make good use of the CTS (their own and the AECTS). In that respect, there are processes to be secured in order to guarantee the effective operationalisation of mobility. In addition, skilled staff should ensure the smooth development and enforcement of mobility abroad. This concerns staff who deal directly with students, and also academic staff who are responsible for the design of programmes and courses - and especially learning outcomes. The organisation of mobility relies on two pillars: academic and administrative staff.
- Efficient organisation will activate the quality assurance process in order to ensure that all of the steps related to effective mobility are completed. Quality assurance and internationalisation must work in partnership.

### 5.2.2. How to implement mobility?

- Set up an International Relations Office sufficiently staffed to facilitate outgoing and incoming student mobility and to provide the quality support that the participating students need.
- Involve as many academics as possible in the internationalisation of programmes and courses and in the designing of a clear, easily accessible Course Catalogue, detailing the learning outcomes and student assessment methods.
- Make sure the IRO and academics work in partnership in the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the mobility period. Academics should not be involved only in the signature of the Learning Agreements but rather should be fully involved in their preparation.
- Enlist the HEI's quality assurance unit to help the IRO to properly manage academic mobility and use the appropriate quality assurance tools. Cooperation with quality assurance staff will also alleviate the burden on the IRO, as they will assist the IRO with the identification and activation of existing quality assurance tools.
- Mobilise others with responsibility for areas of relevance to mobility, such as housing, insurance, or campus life. The IRO should work across the institution.

## 5.3. Managing institutional partnerships

### 5.3.1. Why does this matter?

- Cooperation between HEIs at regional and international levels is increasing across ASEAN and with other higher education areas. As a result, the number of cooperation agreements is also on the rise. However, many are not operational. The number of partnerships tends to obscure the reality of the actual commitment.
- Active partnerships allow Home and Host HEIs to identify their international priorities and to refine their mobility processes. Trust is built when HEIs have a long-standing relationship that includes the regular exchange of students, as well as other types of cooperation (scientific projects, joint programmes, etc.).

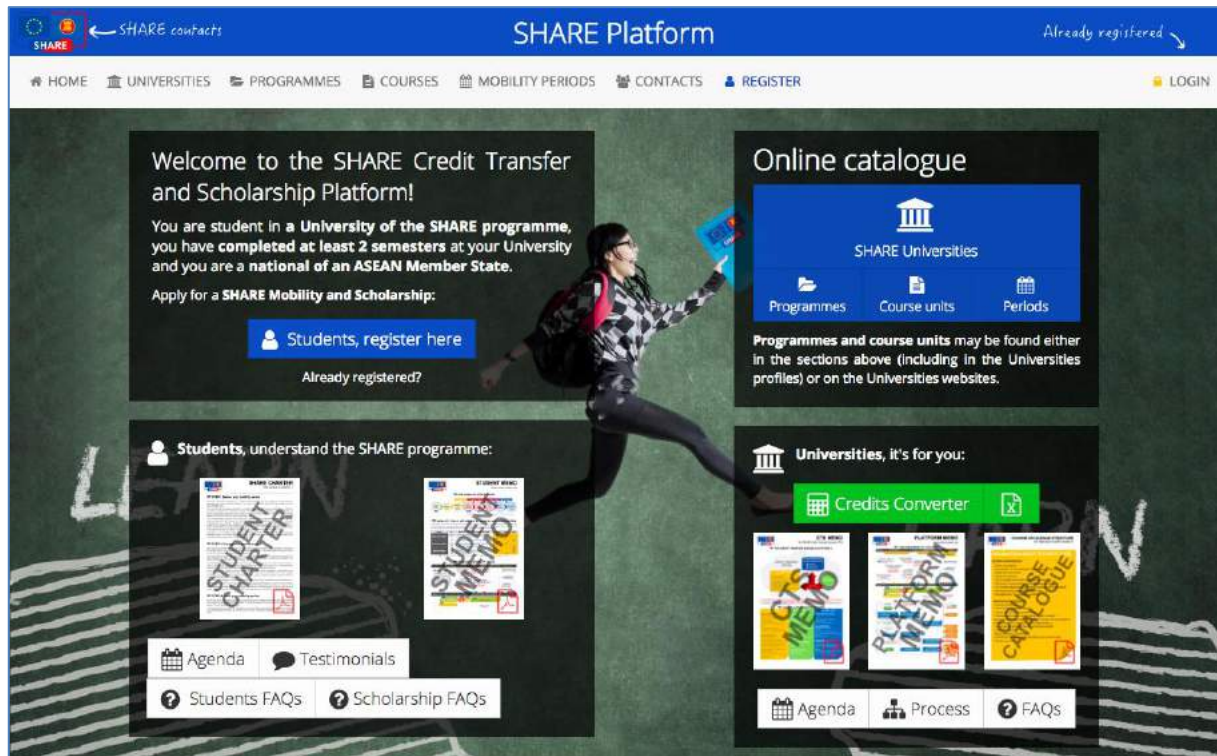
### 5.3.2. How to implement institutional partnerships?

- Review the list of partners and systematically assess the value of each partnership.
- Set up governance and managerial arrangements for the implementation of partnerships, including, but not confined to, academic mobility.
- Provide the IRO with the equipment and resources needed to meet or exchange with their counterparts on a regular basis, rather than confining cooperation to the implementation of Learning Agreements.
- Embed the SHARE Inter-Institutional Agreement in a wider framework for institutional cooperation.
- Take stock annually of the progress of partnerships and report to the management committee of the HEI for regular discussions.
- Activate existing quality assurance tools for a proper management of the partnership.

## ANNEXES

### Annex I: Online Platform for the SHARE Credit Transfer System and Mobility Scheme

The Platform can be consulted at: <https://www.share-asean.org>



## Foreword

The SHARE online Platform is presented in this Annex. The Platform is an important tool that has been built following the Credit Transfer System's recommendations and whose objective is to facilitate credit recognition.

## The SHARE online presence

The Platform is part of a wider online eco-system that also contains:

- The SHARE institutional website at [www.share-asean.eu](http://www.share-asean.eu)
- A Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/SHAREprogramme](https://www.facebook.com/SHAREprogramme)
- Two Twitter accounts at [www.twitter.com/SHARE\\_ASEAN](https://www.twitter.com/SHARE_ASEAN) and [www.twitter.com/sharescholar](https://www.twitter.com/sharescholar)
- An Instagram account at [www.instagram.com/sharescholarship](https://www.instagram.com/sharescholarship)
- A Youtube account at [www.youtube.com/channel/UCKlQ1-wor9YqXBYjmEdwYYw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKlQ1-wor9YqXBYjmEdwYYw)

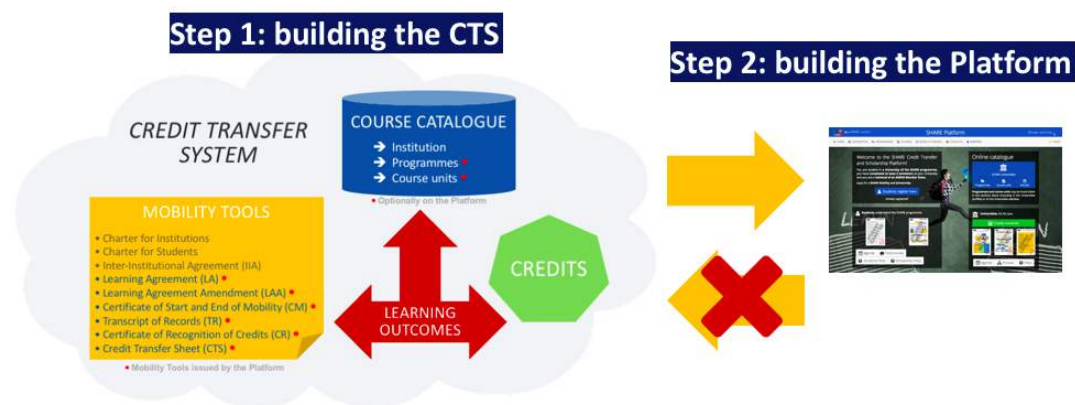


- A Flickr account at [www.flickr.com/photos/143373061@N04](http://www.flickr.com/photos/143373061@N04)

### A tool developed specifically for the SHARE project

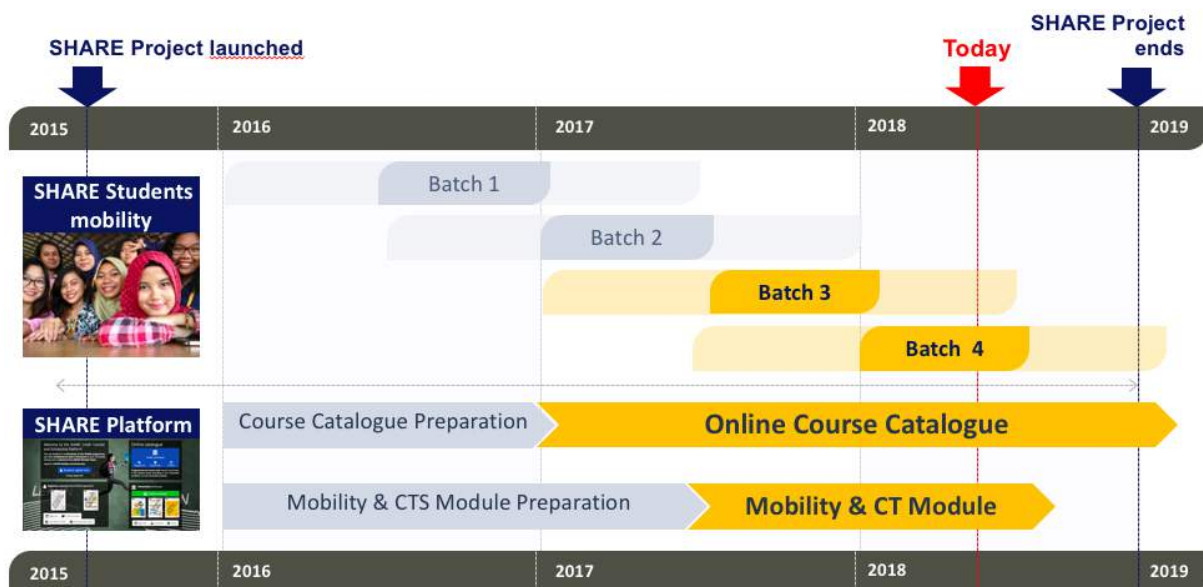
The Platform was built specifically for the SHARE Credit Transfer System, as described in this Handbook.

The Platform didn't pre-exist the SHARE project; it is rather the result of the SHARE Workshops held with ASEAN and EU experts and is based on feedback from ASEAN Universities and students.



### The Platform timeline

The work on the Platform started in 2016 and the tool was launched in early 2017, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> batch of SHARE scholarship holders. The Platform was developed once the AECTS had been established. For the CTS to function it doesn't necessarily require an online tool. However, the Platform plays an important role in supporting the CTS and the mobility processes.





## The three objectives of the Platform

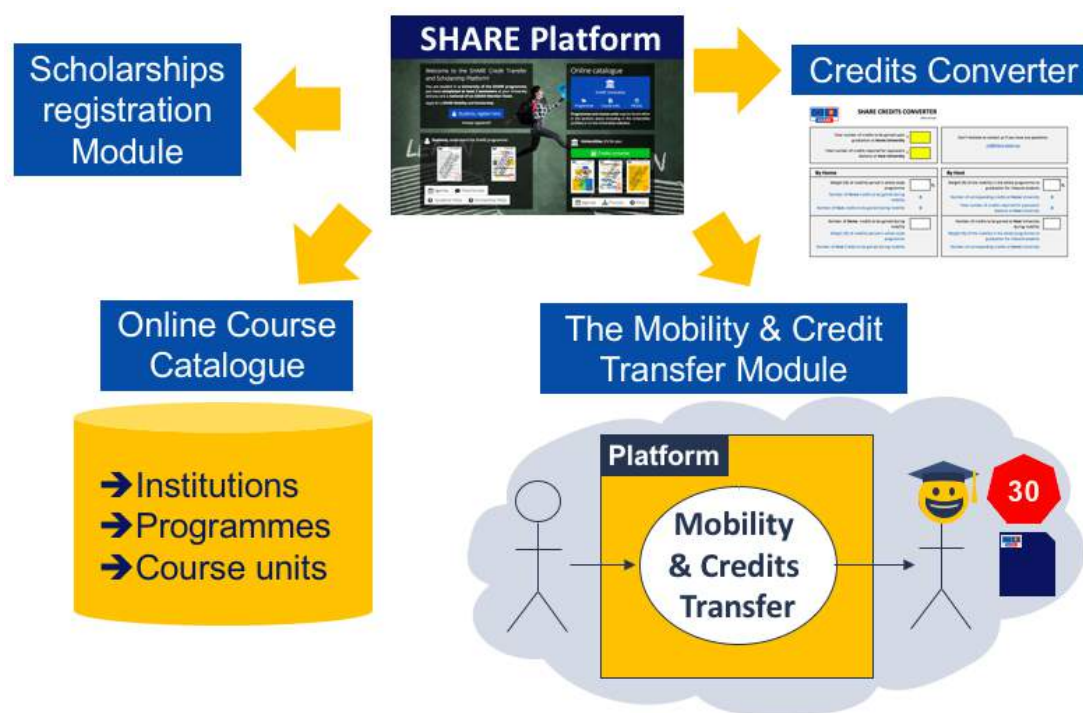
The SHARE Platform was designed with three objectives in mind:

1. To facilitate the mobility and credit transfer processes for students, Home and Host Universities: The Platform is a “**Facilitator**” of the CTS
2. To be a **pedagogical tool** to apply the concepts introduced by the CTS
3. To help the SHARE team **monitor** the process

## The three components of the Platform

The Platform is made of four independent components:

1. The **Scholarship Registration** module
2. The **Online Course Catalogue**
3. The **Mobility and Credit Transfer** module
4. The **Credit Transfer Converter**



The Course Catalogue is publicly available at [www.share-asean.org](http://www.share-asean.org). The Mobility and Credit Transfer module is protected by password and is accessible to stakeholders involved in the mobility process.

The Credit Transfer Converter is publicly available at [www.share-asean.org/converter](http://www.share-asean.org/converter) and can also be downloaded as an Excel file.

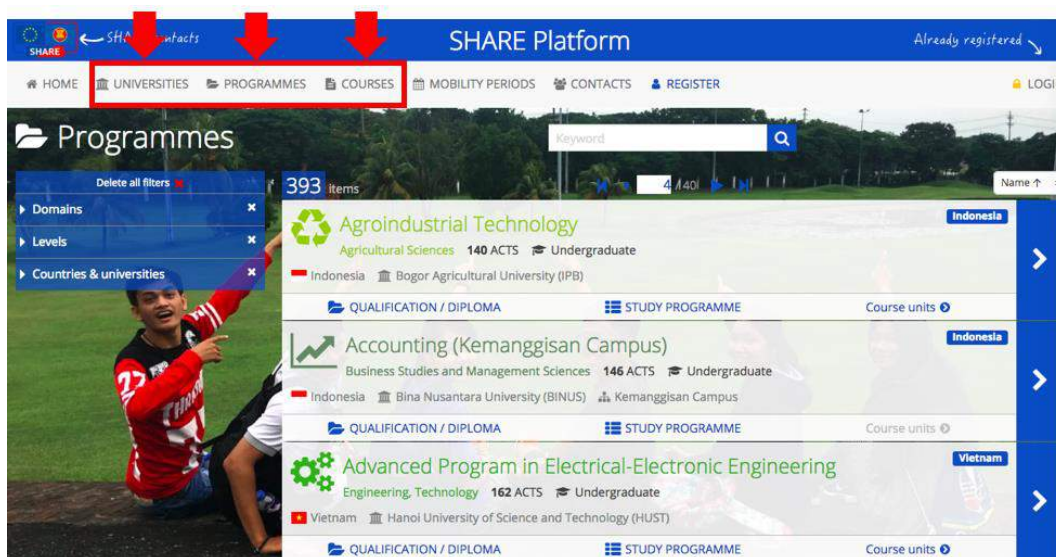
## The Scholarship registration module

This component is the simplest. It consists of a registration form and a Backoffice module for the SHARE Scholarship team.

## The Online Course Catalogue

The Online Course Catalogue is divided into three parts:

1. The **list of institutions** participating in the SHARE project (both Home and Host Universities)
2. The **list of programmes** proposed by the Host Universities
3. The list of course units for each of the programmes (for Host Universities)



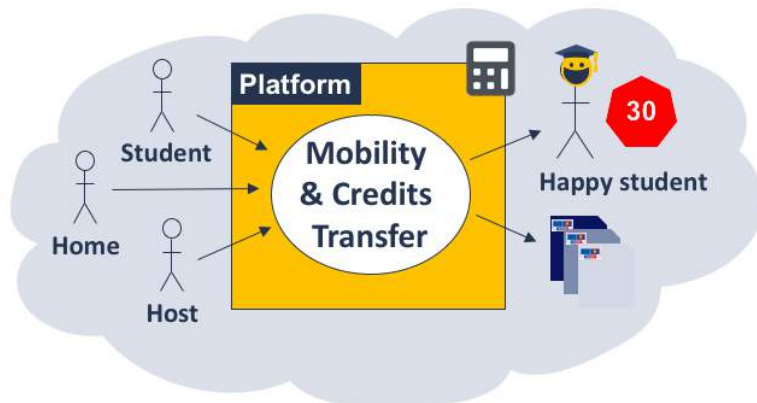
The SHARE Course Catalogue was developed since:

- It is a crucial element of the recognition process (especially through the Learning Outcomes);
- Some universities didn't already have an online Catalogue;
- It was designed as a pedagogical tool;
- The Catalogue's structure, which is derived from the ECTS Users' Guide and was adjusted for SHARE, is an important element.

Some HEIs haven't yet adopted the SHARE course catalogue since it takes time to develop or because they already had their own existing catalogue.

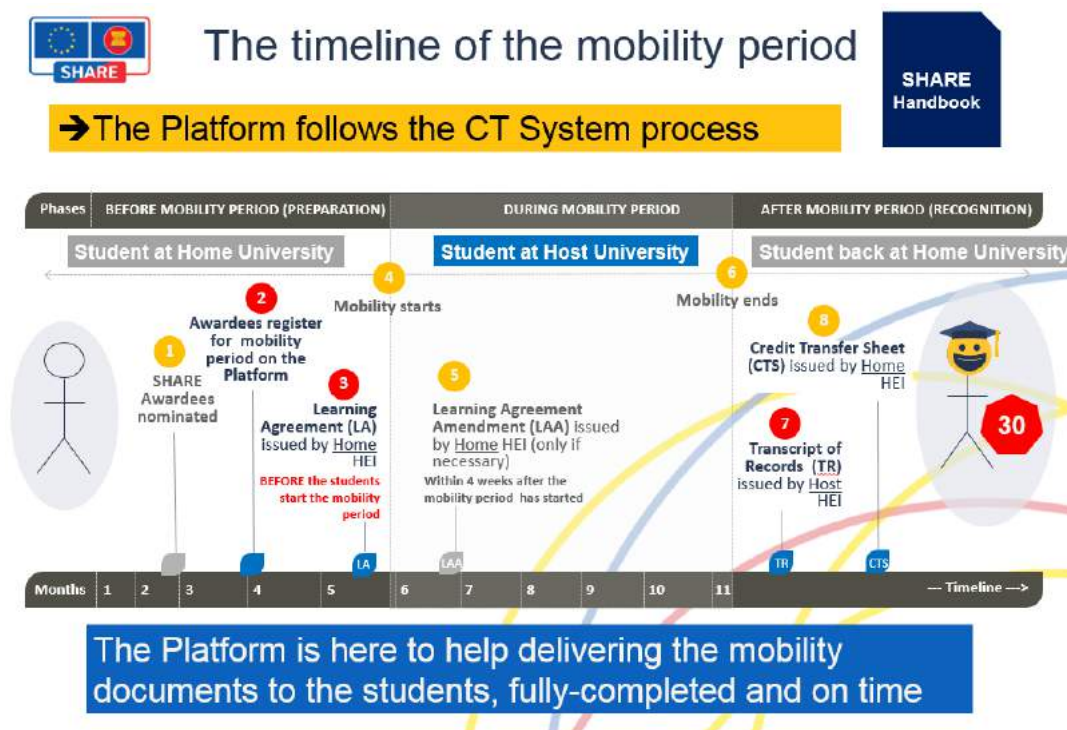
## The Mobility & Credit Transfer Module

The objective of the Module is very simple: It aims to help the Home and Host Universities to prepare and deliver the Mobility Tools fully-completed and on time to students, following the Credits Transfer System process recommendations.



The main documents to be delivered are the **Learning Agreement (LA)**, the **Learning Agreement Amendment (LAA)**, the **Transcript of Records (TR)** and the **Credit Transfer Sheet (CTS)**.

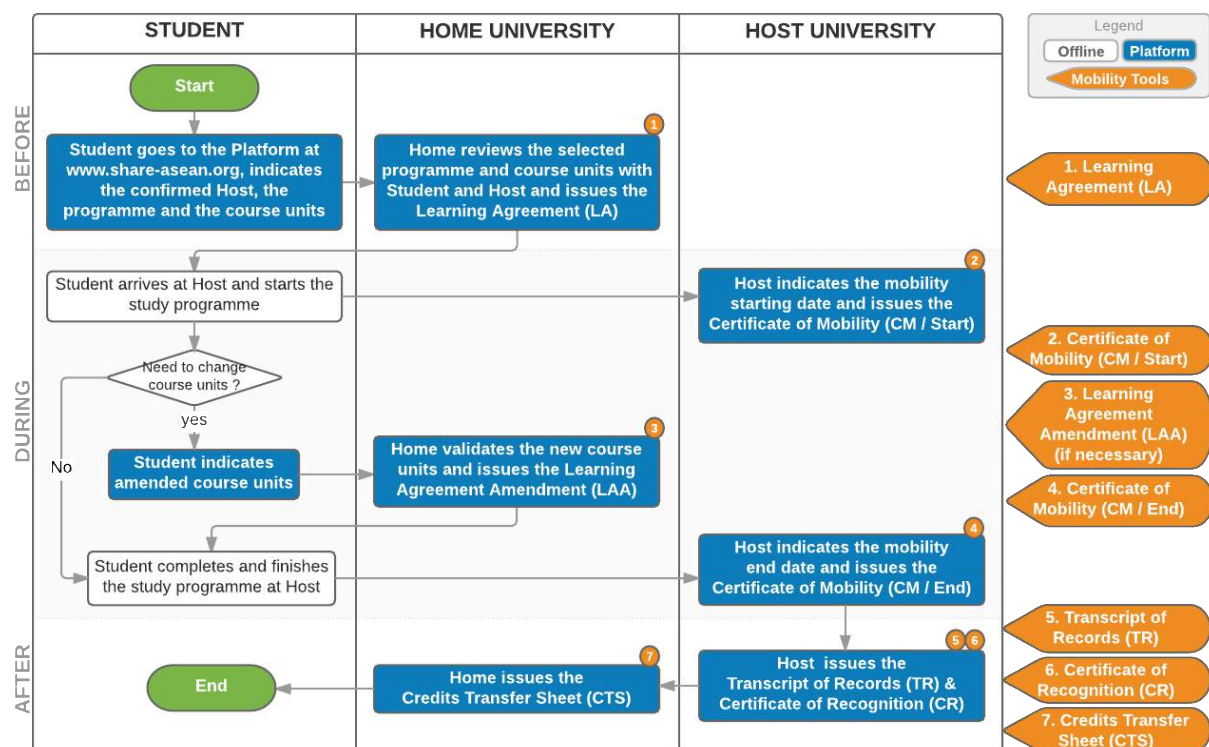
The CTS recommends delivering these documents according to the following **timeline**:



The timeline clearly identifies the three phases of the student's mobility period: The preparation phase, the mobility period itself and the subsequent recognition phase, as identified in the Credit Transfer System.



The CTS process followed by the Platform is described below:



The Mobility Tools available on the Platform are summarized below:

| MOBILITY TOOLS (MT) ISSUED BY HOME & HOST UNIVERSITIES |         |   |         |          |          |
|--|---------|---|---------|----------|----------|
| WHEN?  | MT      | MOBILITY TOOLS (MT) on the PLATFORM   | STUDENT | HOME HEI | HOST HEI |
| Before the mobility period                             | Charter | <b>Charter for Students</b><br>Your commitment to the SHARE mobility programme.<br><i>To read and agree to before the mobility period starts.</i>   | 👁️      |          |          |
|  | LA      | <b>Learning Agreement (LA)</b><br>Your study programme and your contacts. Initiated by you.<br><i>Must be issued before the mobility period starts.</i>                                   | ✍️      | ✅        |          |
| During the mobility period                             | CM      | <b>Certificate of Mobility (CM/start)</b><br>Your actual mobility start date.<br><i>Must be issued on the 1st week after the mobility period starts.</i>                                  |         |          | ✅        |
|  | LAA     | <b>Learning Agreement Amendment (LAA)</b><br><i>Optional.</i> Your study programme modified. Initiated by you.<br><i>Must be issued within 1 months after the mobility period starts.</i> | ✍️      | ✅        |          |
|  | CM      | <b>Certificate of Mobility (CM/end)</b><br>Your actual mobility end date.<br><i>Must be issued on the last day of the mobility period.</i>  |         |          | ✅        |
| After the mobility period                              | TR      | <b>Transcript of Records (TR)</b><br>Credits, marks and grades gained during the mobility.<br><i>Must be issued within 5 weeks after the publication of the results of the student.</i>   |         |          | ✅        |
|  | CR      | <b>Certificate of Recognition (CR)</b><br>Validates extra courses.<br><i>Must be issued once the TR is issued.</i>  |         |          | ✅        |
|  | CTS     | <b>Credits Transfer Sheet (CTS)</b><br>Your mobility recognized and credits transferred.<br><i>Must be issued once the TR is issued.</i>  |         | ✅        |          |

👁️ The Student must read and agree    ✍️ The Student must initiate the MT    ✅ MT issued by Home Univ.    🟩 MT issued by Host Univ.

## The Credit Converter

The SHARE Credit Converter, which is extensively described in this Handbook, is freely available online at: [www.share-asean.org/converter](http://www.share-asean.org/converter)

**SHARE Credits Converter**

**TOTAL CREDITS FOR DIPLOMA**

Total number of credits to be gained upon graduation at Home University \*

Total number of credits required for equivalent diploma at Host University \*

**MOBILITY BY HOME**

Weight (%) of mobility period in whole study programme

Number of Home credits to be gained during mobility

Number of Host credits to be gained during mobility

Convert by weight

Convert by credits

**MOBILITY BY HOST**

Weight (%) of the mobility in the whole programme to graduation for inbound students

Number of corresponding credits at Home University

Total number of credits required for equivalent diploma at Host University

Convert by weight

Convert by credits

**Excel Credits Converter**

Reset the form

## The Students' home page

Interested students need to create an account on the Platform in order to apply for both a SHARE scholarship and a mobility period abroad.

The following screen shots show an individual student's home page. In this example, the student, a SHARE beneficiary from Batch 3, is now back at his/her Home University and is waiting for the Home University to issue the Credit Transfer Sheet (CTS).

SHARE Platform

HOME UNIVERSITIES PROGRAMMES COURSES MOBILITY PERIODS CONTACTS MY ACCOUNT student1218

## Welcome

**Home**

- Apply for Scholarship
- Confirm my Mobility Programme
- Modify my Mobility Programme
- My Agenda
- My Profile
- Students FAQs
- Scholarship FAQs

**The SHARE mobility & scholarship explained**

1. Register in 3 steps (the steps will turn green once they have been completed) [view more](#)

1. Firstly, **select a mobility period**.
2. Indicate your **intended** Host/receiving University(ies) and upload the **Letter(s) of Acceptance**.
3. Indicate your **confirmed** Host/receiving University and your mobility programme **in coordination with your Home/sending University**.

1 SHARE Batch 3 (Aug 2017 - Jan 2018)

2 Apply for a SHARE scholarship

**Congratulations, you are a SHARE scholarship awardee!**

Application for a scholarship is closed

3 Confirm your mobility programme...

**Your LA number is ID-632-471**

Preparation for the mobility is closed

[View agenda](#)

[Student Memo](#)

Help

**Your contacts as specified in the LA**

**Home/sending University**

The National University of Malaysia (UK M)

home\_iro@parisiyam.com

**Assoc. Prof.**

home\_la@parisiyam.com

**Host/receiving University**

Diponegoro University (UNDIP)

host\_iro@parisiyam.com

**Dr**

host\_iro@parisiyam.com

... and get your Mobility Tools online and on time!

The Mobility Tools are a set of documents issued by your Home/sending and your Host/receiving Universities.

| WHEN?               | YOUR MOBILITY TOOLS (MT)   | STUDENT | HOME | HOST |
|---------------------|--|---------|------|------|
| Before the mobility | <b>Charter</b><br>Charter for Students<br>Your commitment to the SHARE mobility programme.<br><i>To read and agree to before the mobility starts.</i>  |         |      |      |
|                     | <b>LA</b><br>Learning Agreement (LA)<br>Your study programme and your contacts. Initiated by you.<br><i>Must be issued by Home before the mobility starts.</i>                                   |         |      |      |
| During the mobility | <b>CM</b><br>Certificate of Mobility (CM/start)<br>Your actual mobility start date.<br><i>Must be issued by Host on the 1st week after the mobility period starts.</i>                           |         |      |      |
|                     | <b>LAA</b><br>Learning Agreement Amendment (LAA)<br>Optional. Your study programme modified. Initiated by you.<br><i>Must be issued by Home within 1 month after the mobility period starts.</i> |         |      |      |
|                     | <b>CM</b><br>Certificate of Mobility (CM/end)<br>Your actual mobility end date.<br><i>Must be issued by Host on the last day of the mobility.</i>  |         |      |      |
| After the mobility  | <b>TR</b><br>Transcript of Records (TR)<br>Credits, marks and grades gained during the mobility.<br><i>Must be issued by Host within 5 weeks after the publication of the results.</i>           |         |      |      |
|                     | <b>CR</b><br>Certificate of Recognition (CR)<br>Validates extra courses.<br><i>Must be issued by Host once the TR is issued.</i>   |         |      |      |
|                     | <b>CTS</b><br>Credits Transfer Sheet (CTS)<br>Your mobility recognized and credits transferred.<br><i>Must be issued by Home once the TR is issued.</i>  |         |      |      |

As soon as the Home or Host University issues a Mobility Tool, the corresponding button turns green on the student's home page and the student can download it by clicking on the button.

The screen also shows the persons the student can contact at his/her Home and Host Universities for assistance.

## The Home University's list of outgoing students

The following screen is the key screen that helps the Home Universities monitor their outgoing students:

[← SHARE contacts](#)

SHARE Platform

Credits Converter

HOME

UNIVERSITIES

PROGRAMMES

COURSES

MOBILITY PERIODS

CONTACTS

MY ACCOUNT

parislan01

APPLICATIONS FOR:

SHARE Batch 3 (Aug 21)

Quick search

Keyword

Delete all filters

Home branch

Application

Host country

Host University

Help

CTS Memo

Platform Memo

Universities agenda

Universities process

Outbound students

Your students

HOME

46 Items / 169

Timeline of the mobility

Before

← During mobility →

→ After →

| Name | Host University                            | LA         | Start    | CM         | LAA        | CM         | End      | TR         | CR | CTS         |
|------|--|------------|----------|------------|------------|------------|----------|------------|----|-------------|
| 19   | University of Groningen (UG)               | [PDF icon] | 01/09/17 | [PDF icon] | [PDF icon] |            |          |            |    |             |
| 20   | Diponegoro University (UNDIP)              | [PDF icon] | 14/08/17 | [PDF icon] |            | [PDF icon] | 15/12/17 | [PDF icon] |    | [Edit icon] |
| 21   | Phnom Penh International University (PPIU) | [PDF icon] | 05/10/17 | [PDF icon] |            | [PDF icon] | 28/02/18 |            |    |             |
| 21   | University of Santo Tomas (UST)            | [PDF icon] | 01/08/17 | [PDF icon] |            |            |          |            |    |             |
| 21   | Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP)      | [PDF icon] | 25/09/17 | [PDF icon] |            | [PDF icon] | 04/02/18 | [PDF icon] |    | [Edit icon] |
| 20   | Chulalongkorn University (CU)              | [PDF icon] | 15/08/17 | [PDF icon] |            |            |          |            |    |             |
| 20   | Universitas Indonesia (UIJ)                | [PDF icon] | 28/08/17 | [PDF icon] |            | [PDF icon] | 22/12/17 | [PDF icon] |    | [Edit icon] |

The screen is structured according to the three phases of the mobility period (before, during and after).

When a Mobility Tool is available, a PDF icon is displayed and allows the University to download it.

When the University needs to take action and issue a document, an orange button appears.

The following screenshot shows what happens when the Home University has issued the Credit Transfer Sheet, after clicking on the orange button:



SHARE Platform Credits Converter

HOME UNIVERSITIES PROGRAMMES COURSES MOBILITY PERIODS CONTACTS MY ACCOUNT parisiam01

Prof. Dr.

**Host/receiving University**

Programme prepared **Bachelor of Arts** (UA)

Mobility period from **14/08/17** (CM) to **15/12/17** (CM)

Duration of mobility **18 weeks** (TR) Credits required for graduation **220 ACTS** (TR)

Marking and grading systems Show/hide

Learning Outcomes and assessment methods Show/hide

Direct links to course units descriptions Show/hide

**Student's Transfer Table**

| Host/receiving University |   |                  |       | Home/sending University |                     |
|---------------------------|---|------------------|-------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Code                      | Course name                                   | Credits expected | Grade | Credits gained          | Credits transferred |
| SPI225                    | International organization and administration | 3                | 4     | 3                       |                     |
| SPI234                    | China Foreign policy                          | 3                | 4     | 3                       |                     |
| SPI237                    | Political behaviour                           | 3                | 4     | 3                       |                     |
| SPI241                    | Diplomacy                                     | 3                | 4     | 3                       |                     |
| <b>Total ACTS</b>         |   | <b>12</b>        |       | <b>12</b>               | <b>0</b>            |

**Credits given by Host**

Click the **[Save & Issue CTS]** button below to issue the **Credit Transfer Sheet (CTS)** (an automatic email is sent to the student). If you don't want to issue the CTS now, just click the **[Save]** button.

**WARNING:** Once the Credit Transfer Sheet (CTS) has been issued, it is impossible to modify it.

cancel Save Save & Issue CTS

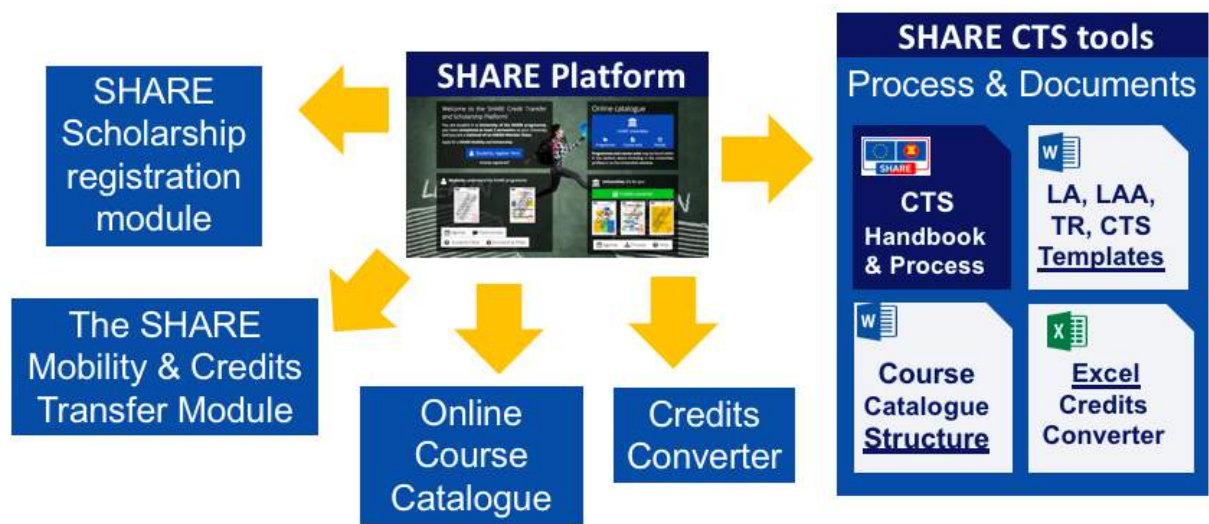
The column entitled 'Credits gained' indicates the credits that the Host University has attributed to the student at the end of the mobility period. In this example, it is time for the Home University to indicate the credits that have been transferred and the grades (and issue the Credit Transfer Sheet).

If the Credit unit is not the same at the Home and Host University, the Credit Calculator can be used.

The Host Universities have very similar screens to monitor their incoming students.

### Sustainability and the future of the Platform after SHARE

The SHARE Platform, the Handbook, the Mobility Tools, the Course Catalogue and the Credit Converter are transposable tools and are intended to be used even after the end of the SHARE project by HE stakeholders in ASEAN.



## Annex II: Information sources

### ● ***ISCED***

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is the reference international classification for organising education programmes and related qualifications by levels and fields. It provides a classification framework for educational programmes according to levels which are comparable across countries.

Useful links:

- [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International\\_Standard\\_Classification\\_of\\_Education\\_\(ISCED\)](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED))
- <http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/international-standard-classification-education-isced>

### ● ***European sources***

The **Diploma Supplement** is a document accompanying a higher education diploma, providing a standardised description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies completed by its holder. It is produced by higher education institutions according to standards agreed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. It increases the transparency, readability and comparability of the qualification.

Useful link: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/resources/diploma-supplement\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/education/resources/diploma-supplement_en)

The **Dublin Descriptors** are the cycle descriptors (or 'level descriptors') adopted in 2005 as the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. They offer generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with awards that represent the end of a cycle or level.

Useful link: <http://ecahe.eu/assets/uploads/2016/01/Joint-Quality-Initiative-the-origin-of-the-Dublin-descriptors-short-history.pdf>,

The **ECTS Users Guide 2015** is a document offering guidelines for implementing ECTS and providing links to useful supporting documents. The previous version of the *Guide* dating from 2009 was revised in order to take into account developments in the Bologna Process such as the establishment of the EHEA, the consolidation of lifelong learning, the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred higher education, and the increasing use of learning outcomes.

Useful

link: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide_en.pdf)

The **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area** (2015) were initially adopted in 2005 and revised in 2015 in order to take into account the progress made by the Bologna group in terms of qualification frameworks, the recognition and promotion of the use of learning outcomes, and the paradigm shift towards student-centred learning and teaching.

Useful link: [www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/](http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/)

The **European Qualifications Framework** is a common reference framework linking different countries' qualifications systems in order to better compare them.

Useful links: <https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/en/content/descriptors-page>  
<https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/content/how-does-eqf-work>

**TUNING** is a project launched in 2000 and supported by the EU. It aims at designing, developing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing education programmes by linking the Bologna process with higher education institutions. It aims to support the convergence and common understanding of educational structures across Europe rather than advocating the uniformity of programme provision.

Useful link: [www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/](http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/)

### ● **ASEAN sources**

The **ASEAN Quality Assurance Network (AQAN)** is a membership-organisation created in 2008 which comprises representatives from ASEAN quality assurance (QA) agencies. Its mission is to promote and share good practice in QA, support capacity-building, share information on higher education, facilitate the mutual recognition of qualifications, and develop a regional quality assurance framework for South-East Asia.

Useful link: [aqan.org/](http://aqan.org/)

The **ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRf)** is a common reference framework which facilitates the comparison of qualifications of ASEAN member states. It aims to provide a common understanding while having a neutral influence on national qualifications frameworks.

Useful links:

- [http://ceap.org.ph/upload/download/20138/27222725873\\_1.pdf](http://ceap.org.ph/upload/download/20138/27222725873_1.pdf)
- [asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/asean-qualifications-reference-framework/](http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/asean-qualifications-reference-framework/)

**SHARE** has published a number of reports on the higher education landscape in ASEAN. These publications include:

- *ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework and National Qualifications Framework* (2015)
- *Student Mobility and Credit Transfer System in ASEAN: Mapping Student Mobility and Credit Transfer Systems in the ASEAN Region* (2015)
- *Higher Education Quality Assurance in the ASEAN Region* (2016)
- *Degree Structures in the ASEAN Region* (2016)

Useful link: <https://www.share-asean.eu/publications/reports>



## GLOSSARY

### A

#### *Accumulation of credits*

The accumulation of credits is the process of collecting credits awarded for achieving the learning outcomes of educational components in formal contexts and for other learning activities carried out in informal and non-formal contexts. A student can accumulate credits in order to:

- obtain qualifications, as required by a degree-awarding institution;
- document personal achievements for lifelong learning purposes.

#### *Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam joined on 7 January 1984, Vietnam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the ten Member States of ASEAN.

Education underpins ASEAN community-building. Education lies at the core of ASEAN's development process, creating a knowledge-based society and contributing to the enhancement of ASEAN competitiveness. ASEAN views education as the vehicle to raise ASEAN awareness, to inspire solidarity, and to create a sense of belonging to the ASEAN community and an understanding of the richness of ASEAN's history, languages, culture and common values. As the collective entity to enhance regional cooperation in education, the ASEAN ministers of education identified four priorities that ASEAN cooperation on education would address, namely: (i) promoting ASEAN awareness among ASEAN citizens, particularly youth; (ii) strengthening ASEAN identity through education; (iii) building ASEAN human resources in the field of education; and (iv) strengthening ASEAN university networking<sup>3</sup>.

### B

#### *Bologna Process*

Named after the Bologna Declaration of 1999, the Bologna Process is an intergovernmental process through which signatory countries agreed to a voluntary reform process of their

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<sup>3</sup> Source: [asean.org/asean/about-asean/overview/](http://asean.org/asean/about-asean/overview/)

higher education sectors. This led in 2010 to the creation of the European Higher Education Area, now comprised of 48 members' states. The current consultative members are: Council of Europe (CoE), UNESCO, European University Association (EUA), European Association of Institutions of Higher Education (EURASHE), European Students' Union (ESU), European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Education International (EI) and BUSINESS EUROPE. The process is supported by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES and includes ministerial conferences organised every 2-3 years and support structures such as the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

## C

### *Credits*

Credits express the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

### *Credit transfer*

Credit transfer is the process of having credits awarded in one context (programme, institution) and recognised in another formal context for the purpose of obtaining a qualification. Credits awarded to students on one programme may be transferred from an institution to be accumulated on another programme offered by the same or another institution. Credit transfer is the key to successful student mobility. Institutions, faculties and departments may make agreements which guarantee the automatic recognition and transfer of credits.

### *Credit Transfer System*

A credit transfer system is a system which helps to streamline the credit transfer process. Rather than the recognition of periods of study abroad being conducted on a case-by-case basis, the system supports a systematic approach to this.

### *ASEAN-AUN Credit Transfer System (ACTS)*

The ACTS was established in 2009. It is a student-centred system based on learning outcomes and students' workload. Learning outcomes are defined on the basis of an evaluation developed by AUN. Students receive a 'Certificate of Completion' signed by the AUN-ACTS Secretariat on behalf of the university upon completion of their study period abroad with information on the unit or modules, its duration, and the ACTS grading scale.

### *University Mobility in Asia-Pacific Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS)*

The UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) has been designed to facilitate student mobility between the 35 UMAP countries/territories (Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, Fiji, Guam, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Laos, Macao, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, People's Republic of China, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Reunion Island, Russia, Samoa, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, USA, and Vietnam), to be used by the 570 universities participating in UMAP's student-exchange programme. This programme was founded in 1991. It aims to ensure that the credits and grades earned during a study period

abroad are transferred from the host to the home university in a transparent manner by providing a credit conversion scale and an explanatory scale for grade equivalence between different higher education systems.

### *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)*<sup>4</sup>

Designed early in the Erasmus mobility programme in 1989 to facilitate the recognition of credits that students earned during their studies abroad as part of their degree, ECTS evolved into a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer, based on the principle of the transparency of the learning, teaching and assessment processes. Its objective is to facilitate the planning, delivery and evaluation of study programmes and student mobility by recognising learning achievements and qualifications and periods of learning.

In the European Higher Education Area, credits express the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

### *European Higher Education Area (EHEA)*

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was launched on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bologna Process in March 2010 during the Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference. Building on the main objective of the Bologna Process since its inception in 1999, the EHEA aims to ensure more comparable, compatible, coherent and attractive systems of higher education in Europe.



### *Learner*

A learner is an individual engaged in a learning process (formal, non-formal or informal learning). Learners range from students enrolling in higher education for the first time, to Master students, PhD students, salaried students and life-long learners.

### *Learning outcomes*

Learning outcomes are statements of what an individual knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The achievement of learning outcomes has to be assessed through procedures based on clear and transparent criteria. Learning outcomes are attributed to individual educational components and to programmes as a whole.

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<sup>4</sup>Source: *ECTS Users Guide 2015 and Mapping student mobility and Credit Transfer Systems in ASEAN region*.



## *Mobility programmes*

### *Erasmus +*

This programme was reorganised in 2014 by merging 7 prior programmes. It is part of the EU's 2020 strategy for growth, jobs, social equity and inclusion, and supports the advancement of the goals of Europe's strategy for education and training for 2020. It aims to provide opportunities for students, interns, and staff as well as more broadly for any young person under 30 years of age with or without a diploma, to live in a foreign country in order to reinforce their competencies and increase their employability. It helps organisations to work in the framework of international partnerships and share innovative practices in the domains of education, training and youth. Study abroad within Europe is strengthened, at every stage of life, and for all levels of training, including those outside of the school context (exchanges, volunteering and training). Some of these higher education mobility periods can be carried out from and to Erasmus+ partner countries (countries outside Europe). The target groups include members of staff, students, young people on professional training courses, young people under 30 years old, professionals and decision-makers. Candidates apply through an organisation that participates in the Erasmus+ programme student has to obtain permission from his/her Home higher education institution.<sup>5</sup>

### *UMAP*

UMAP is a voluntary association of government and non-government representatives (e.g. umbrella organizations) of the higher education sector in the Asia-Pacific region. Initiated in 1991, UMAP promotes student exchange in the region. It comprises 438 member universities located in 23 countries, 7 of which are ASEAN member countries.

UMAP aims to achieve enhanced international understanding through increased mobility of university students and staff in the Asia-Pacific region. The UMAP Exchange Programme is open to all accredited public and private universities in countries/territories in the Asia-Pacific region.

UMAP offers 3 different programmes for students (one-two semesters, short-term or summer school) and one dedicated to research.<sup>6</sup>

### *AUN<sup>7</sup>*

The ASEAN University Network (AUN) was established in 1995. It is a policy-oriented governmental body and a leading organisation in the harmonisation process at the university network level. Part of the ASEAN organisation, the AUN is the only body that is able to put forward proposals to the ASEAN Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM) for the ASEAN Summit. It has been working with Japan, South Korea and the People's Republic of China in the ASEAN +3 cooperation framework since 1997. The 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN+3 Summit held in

<sup>5</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about_en)

<sup>6</sup>[umap.org/](http://umap.org/)

<sup>7</sup><http://aunsec.org/scholarships.php>

2007 led to the adoption of the Second Joint Statement on East-Asia Cooperation entitled “Building on the Foundations of ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation” and the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2007-2017). Under the Work Plan, AUN is tasked with promoting higher education, increasing linkages between universities and encouraging credit transfer in ASEAN+3 countries. The AUN network is composed of 30 higher education institutions (HEIs) in ASEAN as well as 5 HEIs in China, 10 in Japan and 6 in South Korea. The AUN ASEAN Scholarships Programme promotes student mobility within ASEAN at both undergraduate and graduate levels by providing scholarships to students to study at AUN member universities for a period ranging from one semester up to one academic year and also for full degree programme. The goal is to create common mechanisms to facilitate the recognition of qualifications and to increase student and academic mobility in ASEAN in order to contribute to the establishment of the ASEAN Community.<sup>8</sup>



## *Qualification and Qualifications frameworks*

### *Qualification*

A qualification is any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority attesting to the successful completion of a recognised programme of study.

### *National Qualifications Framework*

National qualifications frameworks encompass all educational or higher education qualifications, depending on the policy of the country concerned. They show what learners may be expected to know, understand and be able to do on the basis of a given qualification (learning outcomes) as well as how qualifications within a system relate to one another, that is how learners may move between qualifications in an education system. National qualifications frameworks are developed by the competent public authorities in the country concerned, in cooperation with a broad range of stakeholders including higher education institutions, students, staff and employers. In the European Union, these national qualifications frameworks are made compatible with the regional qualifications frameworks.

### *Regional Qualifications Framework*

A regional qualifications framework supports the understanding and convertibility between different national qualifications frameworks.

### *ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF)*

In ASEAN, the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) is a common reference framework that facilitates the comparison of educational qualifications across participating ASEAN member states. The AQRF is a hierarchy of levels of learning which use learning outcomes as the metric for the hierarchy. The descriptors in the AQRF aim to use learning outcomes to facilitate comparisons of and links between qualifications and qualifications systems across ASEAN. The level descriptors of the AQRF aim to provide a reference point for the levels in NQFs and national qualifications systems. To facilitate the

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<sup>8</sup><http://aunsec.org/scholarships.php>

referencing process, the AQRF is based on broad level descriptors, which include eight levels of complexity of learning outcomes. The level descriptors include the notion of competence, which is the ability that extends beyond the possession of knowledge and skills. It encompasses cognitive competence, functional competence (skills or know-how), personal competence and ethical competence. The level descriptors include two domains: 'Knowledge and Skills' as well as 'Application and Responsibility'<sup>9</sup>.

### *European Qualification Frameworks<sup>10</sup>*

There are two European Qualifications Frameworks: The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning of the EU (EQF-LLL). Both frameworks use learning outcomes to describe qualifications (e.g. Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate) and are compatible with each other as far as higher education is concerned. These qualification frameworks facilitate transfer between academic and vocational education. They are also used as common reference points to compare different national qualifications in order to help Europeans to study and work abroad.

The aim of the QF-EHEA is to organise national higher education qualifications into an overarching European-wide qualifications framework. Within this framework, qualifications are defined according to levels of complexity and difficulty (Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate). The QF-EHEA identifies four main cycles which are described by the 'Dublin Descriptors'. They offer generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with awards that represent the end of each of a cycle. The 'Dublin Descriptors' are described in terms of: applying knowledge and understanding, making judgments, communication skills, and learning to learn. The short, first and second cycles are also characterised by credit ranges.

The EQF-LLL describes levels of qualification (without indicating any credit ranges) - to provide a common reference framework which assists in comparing the national qualifications systems, frameworks and their levels. The EQF uses eight reference levels based on learning outcomes that are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. This signals that qualifications - in different combinations - capture a broad scope of learning outcomes, including theoretical knowledge, practical and technical skills, and social competences where the ability to work with others will be crucial. As an instrument for the promotion of lifelong learning, the EQF encompasses general and adult education, vocational education and training as well as higher education. The eight levels cover the entire span of qualifications from those achieved at the end of compulsory education to those awarded at the highest level of academic and professional or vocational education and training. Each level should in principle be attainable by way of a variety of education and career paths.

<sup>9</sup> Source: [asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/asean-qualifications-reference-framework/](http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/asean-qualifications-reference-framework/).

<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/docs/ects-users-guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/docs/ects-users-guide_en.pdf)



### *Workload*

Workload is an estimation of the time an individual typically needs to complete all learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements and individual study required to achieve the defined learning outcomes in formal learning environments.