

Questions received at the EMJM kick-off (updated - December 2023)

This document aims to clarify a number of practical questions raised during the kick-off meeting for the ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT MASTERS calls. We remind you that the Programme requirements are detailed in the Programme Guide and the Grant Agreement, which remain your first reference documents. In case of doubt, please contact your project officer.

The subsequent programme guides remain the source of reference:

- EMJM 2021: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-09/2021-erasmusplus-programme-guide_v3_en.pdf
- EMJM 2022: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-01/2022-erasmusplus-programme-guide-v2_en_0.pdf
- EMJM 2023: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-04/ErasmusplusProgramme-Guide2023-v3_en.pdf

The event pages of the kick-off are as follows:

- For EMJM 2021: https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/erasmus-mundus-joint-masters-kick-meeting-2022_en
- For EMJM 2022: <https://emjmkickoffmeeting2022.eu/>
- For EMJM 2023: [Support for new projects | Erasmus Networks Platform \(europa.eu\)](https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/support-for-new-projects-erasmus-networks-platform)

1. Should consortia cover the mandatory visa and national registration costs for the scholarship holders?

According to the Programme Guide, “The scholarship will be a contribution to the costs incurred by the beneficiary students and shall cover travel, visa, installation and subsistence costs.” Therefore, costs related to visa (applications), residence permits and registration in the country/region, are to be covered by the scholarship holders.

Note that the Programme Guide also specifies that: “projects cannot charge tuition fees or other mandatory costs related to student participation in the course to Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders”.

As a general rule, if a fee is to be paid to “*the project*” (consortium, i.e. the institutions involved in the project), then it is not possible to charge it to scholarship holders. If a fee is rather part of the general costs to be paid upon arrival (to a third party, e.g. registration in the municipality or a tax to be paid), then the students should be covering this.

Consortia are free to give an advance payment of the first monthly stipend to cover some costs like visa costs or guarantee for accommodation. This would be under the full responsibility of the consortia (e.g. in case of no show).

2. Can beneficiaries ask for paying language tests to student applicants?

Whereas it is not encouraged to require paid language tests to student applicants to demonstrate their language skills, there is no formal rule that prevents it. Such requirements need to be communicated clearly on the project website.

However, it is strongly encouraged to allow alternative means (interview, written online test, etc.) to demonstrate one's language skills.

Consortia are free to define in their admission criteria the linguistic competences expected from their candidates. However, as a general principle the Erasmus+ Programme shall not exclude potential applicants.

3. Can non-scholarship holders apply for Erasmus+ Key Action 1 mobility grants (KA131 and KA171) while studying under Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programmes?

Yes, this is allowed. Non-scholarship holders can benefit from Erasmus+ Key Action 1 mobility (KA131 and KA171) funds while they are studying at an EMJM programme.

4. How can reserve lists students be encoded in the Mobility Tool?

There is no possibility to encode 'reserve list students' in the mobility tool. Therefore, you should encode all selected students (scholarship and non-scholarship holders) in the Tool, even if they did not (yet) accept to start as non-scholarship holder.

At later stage, the status of students can be changed to 'scholarship holder' if a higher ranked student declined the scholarship. Applicants who do not start can be removed.

5. Are we allowed to accept self-funding students after 30/04?

Yes, this is allowed. The mobility tool shall be completed accordingly.

6. Under which conditions can EMJM beneficiaries make budget transfers?

Budget transfers are only allowed in specific cases and require authorisation from EACEA. The following budget transfers are NEVER possible:

- Transfers between budget Heading 2 and budget Heading 6 (targeted regions)
- Within Heading 6, transfers between IPA funds and NDICI funds
- Transfers between 'scholarships' and 'institutional costs' (both for Heading 2 and Heading 6).

It is possible to transfer the 'special needs' budget to 'regular scholarships' (Heading 2) and vice versa (towards the end of the project).

Note that any change within Heading 2 scholarships (between the envisaged number of Programme – Partner Country students¹) is not considered a 'budget transfer' and does not require the authorisation of EACEA. Also scholarship reallocations within the available budget (following reduced study periods and drop-outs), leading to more *students* benefitting from a scholarship than initially foreseen, are not considered 'budget transfers' and are not subject to prior authorisation. However, please note that your project officer should be kept informed on such changes.

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Please note that according to the 2022 Programme Guide, Programme Countries are Member States and Third Countries associated to the programme. By contrast, Partner Countries are referred to as third Countries not associated to the programme.

7. What is to be considered the 'starting date' and 'end date' of the study period in the mobility tool? What kind of documentation do we need to keep?

To be considered for funding a student must be enrolled in the study programme.

The first date of the first 'mobility declaration' you encode in the Mobility Tab will be considered the **starting date** of the study activities. This is usually the first day of the academic programme (including possible preliminary official events such as an induction week). However, in order to allow the students to accommodate (and cover the related costs) in due time, a starting date of maximum up to 2 weeks prior to the official starting date of the programme activities can be accepted.

Please keep documentation (e.g. travel documentation) proving the student's presence on the starting date introduced in your tool, and the relation to your programme (study activities).

If no travel documentation is available (such as in case of blended learning) the 'starting date' will need to be documented via an (online) attendance confirmation of the respective student in the programme activities.

Similarly, for the **end date**, we would expect that you enter the last day of the academic programme (being either the graduation date or latest the day of the graduation ceremony). A maximum of up to 2 weeks after the mentioned last day of the programme can be accepted (in order to ease the return of the students to their home countries). In this case, please keep again documentation (e.g. travel documentation) proving the student's departure on the date introduced in the tool. Otherwise (and again in case of blended learning) the last day of participation of the student will need to be documented via an (online) attendance confirmation of the student.

In any case, the maximum duration of the scholarship (12, 18 or 24 months) cannot be exceeded and only costs incurred within the project's eligibility period will be accepted.

In terms of **documentation**, in case of an audit beneficiaries need to be able to demonstrate/document also the following aspects:

- The student's residence (to verify whether (s)he adhered to the minimum mobility requirements, see further)
- The student's nationality (to verify whether the geographical balance was respected)
- For all students: proof of enrolment, participation, graduation (if applicable)
- For scholarship holders: proof of payment of the claimed/declared scholarship amounts
- For the special needs: see further.

8. Can the tuition fee, charged to non-scholarship holders, change from one edition to another for non-scholarship holders?

Yes. In so far as this is clearly announced on the project website for student applicants, it is possible to change the tuition fees from one edition to another.

Whereas projects cannot charge tuition fees or other mandatory costs related to student participation in the course to Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders, consortia are free to set the level of these fees/costs for non-scholarship holders.

9. Are we allowed to pay during academic holiday periods (considering the pro-rata payments)?

Students must continue to be paid during their enrolment in the programme. This includes academic holiday periods, during which the scholarship payments cannot be interrupted.

We would expect the continuous enrolment to be reflected in the Mobility Tool. Holiday periods must be included in the corresponding study period.

10. As the residence is considered *at enrolment stage*, how can we know the students' residence when they apply? How shall we prove the residence of students from countries where they do not issue official proof of residence?

Since residence is considered only at enrolment stage, please do not ask for any 'proof' to applicants. Note that 'residence at enrolment stage' should be understood as a stable residence in the months before enrolment. You will need to explain to all students the minimum mobility requirements: if they will study in their country of residence, they need at least two other physical mobility periods of 30 ECTS each, one of them in a Member State or country associated to the Programme.

Documentation to prove the residence should only be asked to selected students.

Please keep therefore documentation to prove the residence of a student at enrolment stage:

- a residence certificate issued in accordance with the candidate's municipality normal registration rules;

- a certificate from the candidate's place of work, study or training issued by the employer or institution in question.

Otherwise, alternatives such as renting contracts, phone and electricity bills, flight ticket can be asked for. In the absence of a clear and satisfactory evidence, the beneficiaries should keep a Declaration on honour approved and signed by the student, as final reassurance.

11. If an EMJM programme has a mobility track of 2 study periods of 1 year, are the student residents of these two hosting countries eligible for a scholarship?

The consortium must ensure that all students (scholarship holders or not) fulfil the minimum mobility requirements.

Programmes with only two study periods should foresee an (optional) alternative mobility period (internship, placement, thesis research, etc.) of minimum 30 ECTS (integrated in one of the two study periods) to allow these students to fulfil the minimum requirements.

12. What documentation shall we keep to prove declared 'special needs' unit costs?

Following a student request including the necessary certification and documentation, beneficiaries will apply the respective unit cost in accordance with the Programme Guide, based on the cost estimation provided by the student.

Towards EACEA, beneficiaries do not have to request prior authorisation to apply the unit costs, nor systematically submit supporting documentation to claim them. Similar to the institutional and

scholarship unit costs, beneficiaries will be reimbursed based on the number of special needs units declared (through the FTOP Mobility Tool).

In view of the final report and a possible audit, you are advised to keep the following supporting documentation to justify the declared special needs units:

- Supporting documentation that the costs were *needed* and that the student's participation in the action would not be possible without the special needs items or services (a student declaration with an estimation of costs, communication to the students concerned on the availability of services and funds) ;
- Certification by a competent national authority of the long-term impairment of the concerned student;
- Proof that the concerned student was enrolled (records of the student's registration).

Moreover, beneficiaries will need to ensure that the special needs items or services were not already covered from another source (e.g. a declaration of the student, direct invoicing to the beneficiary etc.).

13. Which nationalities are eligible to apply for additional funds for students from targeted regions of the world?

Please note that the answer differs from one project generation to another.

Under the **2021 call**, the list of eligible countries is published in FTOP under the 2021 call documents: [List of eligible countries for the additional funds for students from targeted regions of the world](#). There are no restrictions in terms of the distribution of the scholarships per eligible region or country.

Under the **2022 and 2023 calls**, the list of eligible regions is published directly in the Programme Guide (section Erasmus Mundus). The distribution of scholarships per region and other specifications needs to be taken into account indicatively at project level, see also the dedicated slides in the 'student selection and scholarship management' presentation at the kick-off meeting.

For the list of countries per region, please refer to the Programme Guide (Part A, eligible countries).

14. Are EMJMD graduates eligible to apply for an EMJM scholarship?

Yes, they are. Only students who have previously obtained an EMJM scholarship are not eligible anymore to apply for an additional scholarship under the EMJM.

15. Can consortia award partial or part-time scholarships?

No, this is not possible. The scholarship is awarded for full-time enrolment (Grant Agreement, Annex V), and will cover the entire duration of the Master programme (i.e. 12, 18, 24 months). A reduced duration of the scholarship is only possible in case of recognition of prior learning (with a minimum scholarship duration of one academic year) leading to a shorter study period and in case of drop-outs.

Note that students who already enrolled the programme as non-scholarship holders cannot be granted a scholarship for the second year based on a 'recognition of prior learning'.

16. Can consortia recruit scholarship holders starting in the 6th academic year of the project?

According to the Programme Guide, *the scholarship is awarded for full-time enrolment, and will cover the entire duration of the Master programme (i.e. 12, 18, 24 months).*

As all projects have a duration of 6 academic years, this implies that it is not possible for a 24-month masters to award new scholarships to students starting in the sixth academic year, with the exception of validation of prior learning for one year.

17. Can the consortium decide to reserve scholarships only for Partner Country students or apply e.g. gender criteria?

In principle, this is NOT possible.

Consortia cannot refuse excellent students based on their residence/nationality/gender. Note however that under H2, not more than 10% students with the same nationality can be selected as scholarship holder during the grant agreement. Reserving scholarships for students with a particular nationality is only allowed for additional scholarships for targeted regions of the world (H6).

Gender balance criteria can only be applied in case of equal merit.

18. What are the minimum requirements linked to scholar mobility?

Scholar mobility and the contribution of guest lecturers is part of the minimum requirements. As such, your project application has been graded, based on what you promised at application stage under the relevant award criterion.

We assume that you implement your scholar mobility and teacher exchange scheme as you announced it in your application, and request to be notified of any change.

However, please note that in terms of number of scholars, duration of stay of scholars and definition of 'scholars', there are no minimum requirements anymore (as used to be the case under the EMJMD Programme Phase), and beneficiaries are not expected to enter scholar names and dates in the mobility tool.

19. How to calculate the final grant?

The final grant will be calculated at final reporting stage based on the number of scholarships awarded, the number of students enrolled AND the actual number of unit costs allocated for special needs. In any case, the total amount cannot exceed the maximum grant awarded.

20. Until when can students join a programme (late arrivals)

Since the covid-19 pandemic and its consequences, the possibilities to study remotely have significantly improved. Therefore, it is possible to apply some flexibility in the arrival date of students for reason beyond their control, such as lengthy visa applications, provided that they are able to follow classes remotely and the consortium estimates that they will be able to catch up with the other students when they arrive.

As a result, no permission from EACEA is needed for this. In view of potential audits, please ensure that the starting date you enter in the mobility tool is documented and justified (proof of attendance, correspondence, etc.). See also question and answer 7.

21. How can we bridge the gap between the last pre-financing and the Final Report?

According to the reporting and payment schedule in your Grant Agreement, you will receive up to 90% of your maximum grant during the project implementation. This implies that you are indeed expected to prefinance up to 10% of your total grant.

You therefore need to take this into account and foresee the necessary resources to ensure the continuity of your scholarship payments.

22. Can we anticipate the first periodic report if we reach our spending level earlier than in month 48?

This is technically possible through an amendment.

Please contact your project officer in due time if this is your intention, and make sure that in any case you spent more than 70% of your first instalment when you submit your periodic report.

23. Where can we find information on how to complete the mobility tool tab?

Firstly, please have a look at the presentation of the mobility tool, available on the event pages of the kick-off.

Secondly, and as mentioned in the presentation, detailed information with screenshots is available under the following link in IT How To (FTOP):

[Completing the Mobility tab for EMJM Unit Grants \(type of action: ERASMUS-AG-UN\) - IT How To - Funding Tenders Opportunities \(europa.eu\)](#)

In case of doubt, please contact your project officer.

24. How can we complete the section on 'fewer opportunities' in the student library? Where can we find more information on the categories applied?

The Erasmus+ regulation (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/817/>) defines 'people with fewer opportunities' as 'people who, for economic, social, cultural, geographical or health reasons, due to their migrant background, or for reasons such as disability or educational difficulties or for any other reason, including a reason that could give rise to discrimination under Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, face obstacles that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under the Programme'.

The Erasmus+ programme guide states that: “When designing their projects and activities, organisations should have an inclusive approach, making them accessible to a diverse range of participants”. Eight types of barriers in accessibility and outreach are identified, as follows:

- **disabilities:** This includes physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder someone’s full and effective participation in society on the same footing as others.

- **health problems:** Barriers may result from health issues including severe illnesses, chronic diseases, or any other physical or mental health-related situation that prevents from participating in the programmes.

- **barriers linked to education and training systems:** Individuals struggling to perform in education and training systems for various reasons, early leavers from education and training, NEETs (people not in education, employment or training) and low-skilled adults may face barriers. Although other factors may play a role, these educational difficulties, while they may also be linked to personal circumstances, mostly result from an educational system which creates structural limitations and/or does not fully take into account the individual’s particular needs. Individuals can also face barriers to participation when the structure of curricula makes it difficult to undertake a learning or training mobility abroad as part of their studies.

- **cultural differences:** While cultural differences may be perceived as barriers by people from any backgrounds, they can particularly affect people with fewer opportunities. Such differences may represent significant barriers to learning in general, all the more for people with a migrant or refugee background – especially newly-arrived migrants -, people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, sign language users, people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties, etc. Being exposed to foreign languages and cultural differences when taking part in any kind of programme activities may put off individuals and somehow limit the benefits from their participation. Such cultural differences may even prevent potential participants from applying for support through the programmes, thereby representing an entry barrier altogether.

- **social barriers:** Social adjustment difficulties such as limited social competences, anti-social or high-risk behaviours, (former) offenders, (former) drug or alcohol abusers, or social marginalisation may represent a barrier. Other social barriers can stem from family circumstances, for instance being the first in the family to access higher education or being a parent (especially a single parent), a caregiver, a breadwinner or an orphan, or having lived or currently living in institutional care.

- **economic barriers:** Economic disadvantage like a low standard of living, low income, learners who need to work to support themselves, dependence on the social welfare system, in long-term unemployment, precarious situations or poverty, being homeless, in debt or with financial problems, etc., may represent a barrier. Other difficulties may derive from the limited transferability of services (in particular support to people with fewer opportunities) that needs to be "mobile" together with the participants when going to a far place or, all the more, abroad.

- **barriers linked to discrimination:** Barriers can occur as a result of discriminations linked to gender (gender identity, gender expression, etc.), age, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or intersectional factors (a combination of one or several of the mentioned discrimination barriers).

- **geographical barriers:** Living in remote or rural areas, on small islands or in peripheral/outermost regions, in urban suburbs, in less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities) or less developed areas in third countries, etc., may constitute a barrier.

These eight types of barriers encompass barriers that may be faced by people of different ages and from diverse cultural, social and economic backgrounds, people with disabilities and migrants, as well as people living in less developed, remote and rural areas.

The implementation guidelines for inclusion and diversity are available under this link:

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/document/implementation-guidelines-erasmus-and-europeansolidarity-corps-inclusion-and-diversity-strategy>.

Note that the 'fewer opportunities' do not come with a special budget (unless in the case of 'special needs', see above).