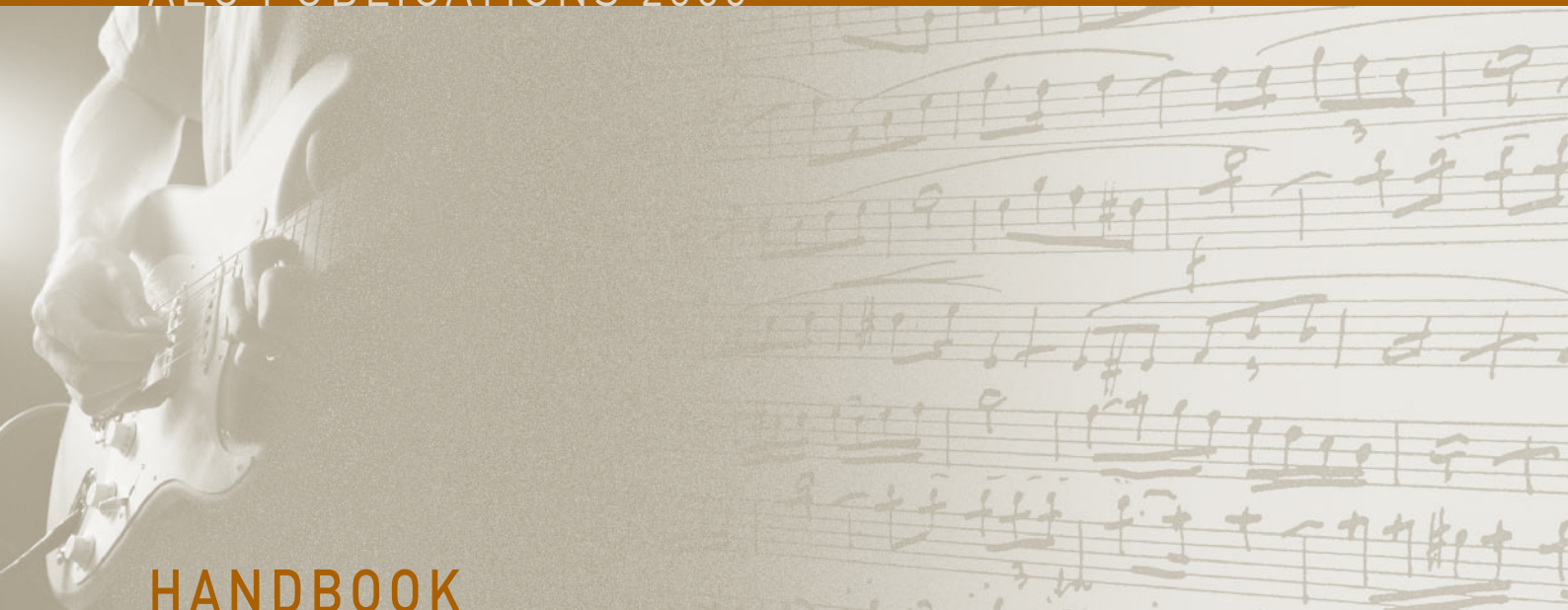


AEC PUBLICATIONS 2006



HANDBOOK

HANDBOOK FOR ERASMUS COORDINATORS IN HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

'POLIFONIA' INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COORDINATORS WORKING GROUP



Association Européenne
des Conservatoires,
Académies de Musique
et Musikhochschulen (AEC)

ERASMUS THEMATIC NETWORK FOR MUSIC

polifonia



MALMÖ ACADEMY
OF MUSIC
Lunds University

ERASMUS THEMATIC NETWORK FOR MUSIC

polifonia

A free electronic version of this study is available through www.polifonia-tn.org.



Education and Culture

Socrates

Erasmus

The Polifonia project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of its authors and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which might be made of the information contained therein.

Foreword

This handbook has been developed in the framework of the ERASMUS Thematic Network for Music 'Polifonia'. This project, coordinated by the Malmö Academy of Music and the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), has as the main aim to study the implications of the Bologna Declaration Process for professional music training in European higher education and, in addition to its work focusing on higher education, to collect information on music education levels other than higher education and on the music profession. More information about this project can be found on the extensive project website www.polifonia-tn.org.

As mobility is one of the main issues in the Bologna Process, this handbook has been developed with the aim to support and promote the mobility between institutions for professional music training at European level. It consists of the following parts:

- Part A contains the 'Ten Steps on how to Implement your ERASMUS Exchange Programme in the Field of Music'
- Part B contains the 'Ten Golden Rules for International Relations Coordinators'
- Part C contains 'Code of Good Practice for ERASMUS Coordinators in European Institutions for Professional Music training'
- Part D contains a set of standard ECTS forms

Whereas the 'Ten Steps' document is especially useful for new ERASMUS coordinators, the other documents are meant for both new and experienced coordinators as daily reference tools. The standard ECTS forms are meant to facilitate the organisation of student mobility, as they give the higher music education sector the possibility to use the same forms instead of forms by each institution separately, which greatly enhances transparency and efficiency.

This 'Handbook' can be found on the 'Polifonia' website, but also features prominently on the 'Do-Re-Mi-Fa-SOCRATES' website (www.doremifasocrates.org), which is aimed at the promotion of and dissemination of information on European cooperation in professional music training in the framework of the SOCRATES Programme and which has a substantial section with documents and practical information for international relations coordinators in the field of music. On the 'Do-Re-Mi-Fa-SOCRATES' website the various part of this handbook can also be downloaded separately. With the emergence of the new Lifelong Learning Programme that will replace SOCRATES in 2007, all these documents will have to be updated in due course.

The 'Polifonia' International Relations Coordinators Working Group drafted the first version of the document. Subsequently, it was edited and a large amount of additional information was added by 2 highly experienced international relations coordinators: Mrs Sabine Roth at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna and Mrs Rima Rimsaite at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre in Vilnius. The document has also been circulated to several other international relations coordinators for feedback and comment. The 'Polifonia' Steering Group and the AEC would like to extend its sincere gratitude to Mrs Roth, Mrs Rimsaite and all those international relations coordinators that have contributed to the final version of this document, and to the European Commission for supporting this work.

PART A:

***‘TEN STEPS ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT
YOUR ERASMUS EXCHANGE
PROGRAMME IN THE FIELD OF MUSIC’***

January 2006

Ten Steps on How to Implement Your ERASMUS Exchange Programme in the Field of Music

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FOREWORD

The following ‘Ten Steps’ are designed to help European institutions in the field of professional music training in higher education to develop, implement, and sustain their exchange activities in the framework of the ERASMUS Programme, the chapter for higher education in the SOCRATES Programme of the EU. This list does not pretend to cover every possibility: individual institutions may need to adjust the order or add additional components, depending on specific situations and needs. Some points might appear to be obvious, others less so: this list is simply an attempt to give guidance, especially to those with little or no experience. It will also serve as a practical resource for new members of staff taking over the task of dealing with international exchanges. One characteristic, however, makes this advisory paper unique: it addresses the special characteristics and needs of professional music training.

The main activities in the ERASMUS exchange programme can be summarized as follows:

- The exchange of individual students (SM) and individual teaching staff (TS)
- Joint curriculum development (CD)
- Joint intensive programmes (IP)

These activities can take place at different levels of intensity: they can range from small-scale bilateral one-to-one exchanges with an informal character to long-lasting cooperation initiatives that include several types of activities and are supported by formal agreements. The needs and capacities of the institutions involved determine the type of activity and the level of intensity. Please note that for the organisation of mobility (OM) and for the introductions of the ECTS system financial support can also be received in the framework of ERASMUS.

These ‘Ten Steps’ are intended for institutions interested in initiating a broad range of activities, something beyond incidental exchanges. This does not mean that informal exchanges are less valuable. However, for institutions wishing to be engaged in activities that demand a more structured approach, such as regular, long-term student exchanges, the ten steps provide a useful set of issues and questions to consider.

Please note that this document mainly deals with the exchanges of students and staff in music performance programmes. In relation to exchanges in music teacher training programmes, many of the ten steps will also be applicable, but additional care will have to be taken in relation to the academic courses that music teacher training students will need to follow. This means that it is particularly important to finalise the negotiations relating to the completion of the learning agreement (see step 5) before the student leaves for the exchange.

The ‘Ten Steps on How to Implement Your Erasmus Exchange Programme’ can be divided into three phases: the **preparatory**, **implementation**, and **exit** (reporting and evaluation) phases. The target audiences for this list of practical steps are administrative or teaching staff dealing with international relations in European professional music training institutions, the so-called ‘International Relations Coordinators’ (IRCs). Although the general international policy of the institution will be the responsibility of the rector, dean, director, or principal, the practical aspects will be usually delegated to another staff member.

This document has been developed in the framework of the ERASMUS Thematic Network for Music ‘Polifonia’. This project, coordinated by the Malmö Academy of Music and the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), has as the main aim to study the implications of the Bologna Declaration Process for professional music training in European higher education and, in addition to its work focusing on higher education, to collect information on music education levels other than higher education and on the music profession. More information about this project can be

found on the extensive project website www.polifonia-tn.org. As mobility is one of the main issues in the Bologna Process, this 'Ten Steps' document has been developed with the aim to support and promote the mobility between institutions for professional music training at European level. It is part of a 'Handbook for ERASMUS Coordinators in Higher Music Education Institutions', which has been developed in the 'Polifonia' project and which will include other documents, such as 'Code of Good Practice for ERASMUS Coordinators in European Institutions for Professional Music training', and a set of standard ECTS forms. This 'Handbook' can be found on the 'Polifonia' website, but also features prominently on the 'Do-Re-Mi-Fa-SOCRATES' website (www.doremifasocrates.org), which is aimed at the promotion of and dissemination of information on European cooperation in professional music training in the framework of the SOCRATES Programme and which has a substantial section with documents and practical information for international relations coordinators in the field of music.

The 'Polifonia' Team drafted the first version of the document. Subsequently, it was edited and a large amount of additional information was added by 2 highly experienced international relations coordinators: Mrs Sabine Roth at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna and Mrs Rima Rimsaite at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre in Vilnius. The document has also been circulated to several other international relations coordinators for feedback and comment. The 'Polifonia' Steering Group and the AEC would like to extend its sincere gratitude to Mrs Roth, Mrs Rimsaite and all those international relations coordinators that have contributed to the final version of this document, and to the European Commission for supporting this work.

Institutions interested in collaboration and exchanges with institutions in the United States should be informed that a similar 'Ten Steps' document has been developed with a specific focus on transatlantic exchanges in professional music training in the framework of the EU/USA project 'Music Study, Mobility, and Accountability'. This document can be downloaded from the extensive 'Music Study, Mobility, and Accountability' project website at <http://msma.arts-accredit.org>

The 'Ten Steps' document and the 'Handbook for International Relations Coordinators in the Field of Music' are excellent examples of how the 'Polifonia' project can support mobility and cooperation in the professional music training sector in Europe. It also shows the continuous commitment made by the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), one of the main partner organisations in 'Polifonia', to this aim. The promotion of mobility and cooperation at European level has always been one of the main objectives of the Association and one that has been supported by various activities the AEC has initiated, ranging from the organisation of the Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators in the Field of Music and the development of information documents and websites, to the successful establishment of several European projects funded by EU programmes, such as the ERASMUS Thematic Network of Music 'Polifonia' (see for more information on the AEC and its activities: www.aecinfo.org).

PREPARATORY PHASE

Preparation is critical to success. Five steps are devoted to it. This reflects a central principle in international exchange: once students/teachers start to travel, most of your work will have to be completed.

1. Develop A Clear International Policy

1.1. A discussion at senior management level should take place about *why* your institution would like to be engaged in international cooperation. Carefully weigh the pros and cons, the expected benefits (see also the document '*Why Professional Music Training Institutions Should Be Involved in International Exchange*') and how various possibilities might affect your institution. It will also help if your initiative can be linked to the overall objectives and goals of the university or the higher education institution of which your department/faculty is a part.

1.2. Decide *what kinds of activities* you would like to and can be engaged in. Would you like to exchange students or teachers or both, would you like to initiate a project or develop one or more aspect of your current programme with a foreign partner? Would you like to do all these activities at the same time or in a series? Set goals over a number of years, preferably starting small and expanding each year as aspirations and conditions warrant. Work according to a plan.

1.3. Decide specifically *with whom* you would like to cooperate.

a) Make an inventory of all international informal personal contacts that already exist among your teaching faculty. Your teachers may have personal contacts in institutions abroad that might be useful when shaping your international contacts and activities. Many teachers have contacts on international level, but beware of the following:

- o Individuals who see international exchanges primarily as a way to promote their own master classes, performance opportunities, or research agendas abroad. There can be problems of sensitivity to the exchange principles and operational plans of your ERASMUS activities.
- o A scope of action that is beyond your capacity to manage. Make priorities according to your international policy. Focus your efforts on specific countries or regions. However, if a teacher offers an interesting contact in a country with a lower priority in your international policy, always consider it carefully.

b) It can also be helpful to use contacts that already exist in the community in which your institution is located: contacts in the framework of town twinning and contacts through local ethnic populations or business networks can turn out to be very useful. Another valuable source of information could be alumni who have moved abroad.

c) It also may be important to inform yourself in more detail about the national system for professional music training of the country in which your potential cooperation partner is located with the aim to gain understanding of how this institution is working and in which structure it is placed. The AEC has developed such national descriptions of professional music training systems and music teacher training systems in 30 European countries, which can be found on the AEC 'Bologna' website at www.aecinfo.org/bologna/nationaldescriptions

1.4. Consider the *number of partner institutions* you would like to work with, but be realistic: remember that some institutions might not be interested in yet another cooperation partner, as they might have several already. They may not be willing to add your institution to their portfolio of

international activities unless you have something that interests them, such as specific expertise or a specific teacher. Try to inform yourself about institutions abroad. The following criteria will help you in your research:

- o Purposes: mission, goals, and objectives
- o Size
- o Local, regional, national, or international profile
- o Educational structure: kinds of departments, courses, curricula, etc.
- o Artistic character: kinds of musical activities, levels, approaches, styles, etc.
- o The unique selling points of your institution and the extent to which they are or could be of interest to a particular prospective partner institution

Ideally, an institution will have a mixed portfolio of partner institutions with a variety of sizes, profiles, and educational approaches in order to profit from the various types of expertise and backgrounds of these institutions. However, experiences show that, in general, similar institutions work better together.

1.5. Consider a number of *issues associated with level and quality* for the exchange activities:

- o Specific subject matter, repertoires, techniques, technologies, disciplines, or issues to be addressed.
- o Personnel responsible for delivering instruction, evaluating results, and overseeing the fulfilment of goals and objectives.
- o Content, methods, and perspectives to be used to reach goals and objectives regarding subject matter, techniques, technologies, disciplines, or issues.
- o Specific expectations regarding breadth and depth, including degree of specialization.
- o Expectations regarding problem setting and solving.
- o Aspirations for specific artistic and intellectual engagement.
- o Based on the first five items in this list, the specific level of competence that is expected with the content to be studied upon (a) entry and (b) completion.
- o Mechanisms used to assess student achievements and competencies against expectations.
- o Means for reporting and documenting expectations and achievements for students returning to their home country.
- o Guidance, counselling, or mentoring services available to ensure that students stay on track.

1.6. Do research on *existing examples of good practice*. Avoid reinventing the wheel by contacting colleagues who already have experience with ERASMUS exchanges (for example: university offices at central level of large universities or higher education institutions, or colleagues at other institutions that already have established such an exchange programme) and look for useful websites. Consult existing documents and publications, such as the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org).

1.7. Make sure that a **budget** is allocated to international programme development. International work is time consuming and therefore requires resources, particularly staff. At the same time, during the preparatory stage, experience shows that the budget for travel need not be very high. During this preparatory stage, you must also start exploring possibilities for financial support for the exchange activities themselves: collect information about the ERASMUS Programme, but also on national and regional (such as NORDPLUS and CEEPUS) international cooperation programmes that could be used to finance your activities. In any case, always keep in mind that the ERASMUS Programme (similar to many other programmes) will never cover all your costs and are based on the co-financing principle. It will therefore be necessary for your institutions to reserve some budget for the international exchange activities.

1.8. **Assess possibilities** in your own institution and the community in which your institution is located **regarding practical issues**. Will housing be available for exchange students? What kinds of support mechanisms for international work are already in place; for example, at the central university or higher education institution level? What are the views of the student administration officers on international exchanges? Is there an organisation locally that could help you with some practical support in developing and operating exchanges? What support is there for language study?

1.9. When you decide to participate in the ERASMUS Programme, your institution has to apply to the European Commission for an **ERASMUS University Charter** (EUC – see for more information:

http://www.socleoyouth.be/static/en/overview/overview_erasmus_ic_reform/erasmus_university_charter_info.htm). When awarded the EUC, it will give your institution the right to:

- o Participate in the ERASMUS programme for the life time of the generation of the programme (for the current SOCRATES II this is until the end of the academic year 2006/07)
- o To apply to your ERASMUS National Agency (NA) for funding for the decentralised ERASMUS activities (student mobility [SM], teaching staff mobility [TS], the organisation of mobility [OM] and the Introduction of the European Credit Transfer System [ECTS] and ECTS visits)
- o To apply to the European Commission in Brussels for centralised activities (Curriculum Development projects [CD], Intensive Projects [IP]), if applicable.

The EUC application form contains in part A several general questions about your institution, in part B you are invited to write a European Policy Statement (EPS – see below for more information), in part C questions are posed on the implementation of the mobility actions within your institution and in part D the full text of an approved EUC can be found. Your institution is invited to submit your EUC application on-line, with two signed paper copies being sent to the European Commission by 1 March. The application can be written in any of the official languages of the European Union.

The European Policy Statement, which is an integral part of the EUC application, should describe the following issues:

- o The current situation of your institution's international cooperation
 - o A description of its present strengths and weaknesses and the institution's aims and priorities within the SOCRATES programme
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- o Your efforts to ensure high quality in both student and staff mobility and within the ERASMUS cooperation projects.

In answering these questions you should also explain how internationalisation is included in your institutional strategic development plan, mention quality assurance and evaluation measures, explain the internationalisation of your programme, administrative staff, your teachers and your students, explain your institutional policy on issues related to the Bologna Declaration and its implementation, and to describe measures taken by your institution to combat inequality, racism and xenophobia. More general information about the European Policy Statement can be found at: http://www.socleoyouth.be/static/en/overview/overview_erasmus_ic_reform/european_policy_statement.htm. Those international relations coordinators having to develop such an EPS for the first time are advised to contact colleagues in institutions already having an EUC or the AEC to obtain examples of already existing European Policy Statements.

1.10. Once your application is approved by the European Commission and your institution is awarded an EUC, you can start with:

- o Negotiating with potential partner institutions to sign bilateral agreements (see section 2.4.4.)
 - o Applying to your ERASMUS National Agency (for a list of all ERASMUS NAs, please visit the links section of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC: www.doremifasocrates.org) for funding for the decentralised ERASMUS activities (such as OM, SM, TS and ECTS) by signing a so-called “Mobility Contract” with the NA between 1 March and 31 May of that year (exact deadlines will vary from country to country). Consequently you will be receiving a separate document (‘Contract with the Beneficiary’) for each action. In this document, the NA will (among others) inform you about the allocation of the grant, its financial management rules and deadlines, and give you samples on the implementation of the action including rights and duties of both parties and others. The NA should normally make pre-financing payments within 45 days of receipt of the signed contract from the beneficiary. Payments are made in Euro. If the total contractual amount (for SM, TS, OM and ECTS) is more than 5.000 Euro, a first pre-financing payment shall not exceed 80 % of the total grant. A second pre-financing payment can be made following to the submission of an Interim Report from the institution.
2. Applying to the European Commission for centralized activities such as Intensive Programmes (IP), Curriculum Development Programmes (for the development of joint programmes [PROG] or modules [MOD]) or dissemination (DISS) activities before 1 March of each year. More information about these ERASMUS actions can be found on the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org).
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3. Develop Your International Contacts

2.1. Once the international policy is developed and your institution has been awarded an EUC, you are ready to *begin or continue your search for suitable partner institutions*. You can inform yourself about potential international cooperation partners through the following means:

- a) Your own internal inventory of already existing contacts in your institution.
- b) Meeting representatives of other institutions at events that bring together large groups of conservatoire officials, such as the Annual Congress and the Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators organised by the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) (please visit the AEC website www.aecinfo.org for more information about this annual event).
- c) Visit websites with useful information on institutions you are interested in. Links to websites with useful information on individual member institutions can be found on the website of the AEC (www.aecinfo.org).

2.2. Once *one or more institutions have been chosen, a first formal contact should be made*, usually *by exchanging letters and information* (brochures, study guides, recordings, etc.) at the level of the senior management or the head of the institution. This formal contact will indicate the interest of the partner institution. If an institution clearly shows no interest, it is wise to look for an alternative immediately.

2.3. As a next step, institutions are strongly encouraged to *arrange visits* to establish closer personal contacts with colleagues in the institution abroad. It is vital to stress that successful international relations between institutions are strongly dependent on the personal relations between conservatoire leaders, international relations coordinators, and/or teachers. Do invest in this personal connection by making a visit to the institution or, if budgets and time are limited, meet in person during another occasion, such as a congress or a similar event. Another good way to establish a first contact is to send a student ensemble to the institution to give a performance and make a visit to the institution.

2.3.1. For a *first visit*, it is important to prepare well in advance, particularly to ensure meetings with key people. Relevant printed information (brochures, study guides, recordings, etc.) should be exchanged beforehand. During a first visit, make sure you:

- a) Ask for appointments with as many people as possible: officials dealing with international relations at all levels (not only departmental level), heads of department, teachers, etc.
 - b) Try to make an appointment with the director, even if you are not a dean or principal yourself. Knowing the senior management might be useful in the future.
 - c) Always ask for a tour of the building, so you can get an impression of the local infrastructure (concert hall, library, studios, practice facilities, student facilities, etc.)
 - d) Attend performances of students and/or teachers, if available. Visits should preferably be held during a period when the institution is in full operation, so that an impression can be gained regarding the overall dynamism of the institution.
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- f) Try to exchange questions beforehand and inform yourself in which field you are particularly interested in for a future cooperation so that you and your colleague in the institution you are visiting are able to give answers to these questions during the visit.
- g) Make clear that you have vital interest in cooperation to avoid the impression of realizing a 'pro-forma' visit without any consequences but 'stealing time' from the host institution.

When having discussions with your colleagues during the visit, take note of the following:

- a) Make sure that both partners profit from your visit: offer information material on your home institution and exchange information on general (e.g. country related) and particular (specific to your institution) issues.
- b) Exchange information on curriculum matters: how is your institution similar to and different from the potential partner institution? If there is an interest to follow academic courses as part of the study abroad: how will this be dealt with during the exchange?
- c) Discuss the types of activity you would like to initiate.
- d) Ask about practical issues: housing, use of language, finances, selection procedures, semester timing, and recognition issues. Detailed information about housing arrangements for exchange students is critical.
- e) If both institutions express their interest in working together, discuss if and how you would like to formalise your activity. For example: has the institution been awarded an Erasmus University Charter (EUC) by the European Commission? Who will be signing the formal bilateral agreement?
- f) Agree on a clear structure of communication: a direct contact between only two officials (one on each side) responsible for a particular exchange works best. If an official in one institution has to deal with several officials in the other institution, things might get complicated and mistakes could be made.
- g) Always take cultural differences seriously: the partner institution will work differently from the way you do in your home institution, which is the reason why you want to send students or teachers. Be very sensitive to cultural differences and avoid judgemental remarks or unfavourable comparisons.

Usually, a first personal visit forms a good basis for further development of the collaboration. However, be realistic: if, after your discussions, you have the feeling that the institution is not really enthusiastic about working with you, consider looking for another partner. Finding a partner committed to cooperation from the beginning is the key to success.

2.4. At this stage, it is critical to *start deepening mutual trust*. The most important factor in achieving overall programme success, and in developing successful recognition of study periods abroad, is establishing strong professional trust between partners. Think of the following issues:

2.4.1. This matter requires coordination and reciprocity among faculty colleagues and programme administrators.

2.4.2. Trust is built on a clear understanding of one another's educational and artistic goals and contexts, assessment procedures, credit point systems, and educational methods.

2.4.3. Regular contact by e-mail and telephone is essential; telephone calls are more personal than e-mails. Participants also need to have background knowledge regarding the cultural and historical differences among countries, differences that shape institutional and individual thinking and practice.

2.4.4. If information and aspiration sharing, programmatic investigations, and trust building have gone well, institutions are encouraged to develop a **bilateral agreement**, negotiate about its content as necessary, and have the agreement signed by authorised officials. A model bilateral agreement form developed by the AEC for use by professional music training institutions can be found in the section for international relations coordinators in the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org).

For all mobility activities (SM, TS) a valid bilateral agreement is a *conditio sine qua non*. Each of the two partners is advised to hold an original of the document. In order to avoid extra work, it makes sense to agree first on the contents of the agreement (number of students and teachers to exchange bilaterally or unilaterally; amount of months for the study abroad, deadlines for submitting students application to partner institution, minimum number of teaching hours during the visit) and then fill in the form. Ideally, the bilateral agreement is made out in two originals by one of the two partners, who then sends the two originals (after having them signed and sealed by the representative of his/her own institution) to the partner with the request to have the agreements signed and sealed. This partner subsequently sends back one of the two documents to the institution that originally made out the agreements.

2.5. When you have concluded bilateral agreements with your partner institutions, your application to your ERASMUS National Agency for funding for decentralized ERASMUS activities has been approved, and a financial contract with your National Agency has been signed, you may start implementing your ERASMUS students and teachers mobility and other programme activities.

In order to do this properly, you might appreciate beforehand to have some advice on how to build up internal support, how to develop the subsequent internal and external procedures, and how to implement the planned international activities. This will be discussed in the following steps.

4. **Build Up Internal Support**

3.1. It is critical to ***build broad support within your institution for the international activities*** you agree to pursue. Think of the following strategies:

3.1.1. Make sure you have the **full backing of the senior management** for the details as well as the concept, especially if support was given in earlier stages, when the institution's international relations policy was developed.

3.1.2. In addition to obtaining the backing of senior management, **engage** as many **faculty members** and heads of departments as possible to develop an institutional culture that **supports exchange at departmental level**. Programme success and sustainability, as well as student involvement, require a critical mass of faculty committed to a culture of internationalisation in your institution. Find allies. Convince students and teachers of the benefits.

3.1.3. Do not be afraid of opposition or scepticism. Here are some typical responses from students, teachers, and administrative staff regarding an international exchange programme:

- *“Why these international programmes: aren't we already international enough?”*

Because a conservatoire has many foreign students, it does not necessarily have an active international exchange policy. Just as it is important to *receive* students, it is also important to be able to *send out* students and teachers.

- *“Exchanges do not work in professional music training because of its highly individual character!”*

The individual character of professional music training can make working with exchanges more complicated, especially with regard to long-term exchanges. However, students and teachers have been exchanged between conservatoires for many years. This shows that the exchanges can work and produces a basis for confidence in higher levels of cooperation among institutions.

- *“Our students come to study with a specific teacher, so they are not interested in studying abroad”*

Although it is true that students often come to study with one particular teacher, this should not necessarily mean that in the course of their studies (three, four, or five years) they should not be stimulated to go abroad for a study period. It is healthy for students to have contacts with different approaches and perspectives.

- *“How can we control what the student is doing when he/she is abroad? We cannot support academic tourism!”*

Student exchanges are based on mutual trust among participating institutions: before the student is sent somewhere, the institutions must be in close contact about the content of study period. The institutions should always be able to show what is being studied, how participating students will be evaluated, and how time abroad will be spent.

- *“Our institution cannot support another administrator dealing with an exchange programme!”*
-

It is true that exchange programmes can produce additional administrative burdens. However, an additional full-time administrative official is not always necessary, except for large institutions. Often, the officials dealing with exchange programmes are teaching or administrative staff with other duties.

- *“The student will never come back!”*

Normally, students return to their home institution after the period abroad. In fact, experiences seem to indicate that exchange students return, graduate, and then sometimes enrol in the foreign institution at a later stage as a regular student. In some countries, where student numbers are dropping and where there are fears that participation in exchange programmes will lower the numbers even further, student mobility becomes an issue. If a student suddenly decides to transfer to a different institution at his/her own initiative, the home institution simply loses; however, if students are widening their horizons within an exchange programme, the home institution keeps them, since the exchange is organized by the home institution and students remain registered there. Students are also encouraged to return to the home institution after the study abroad period according to the basic principles of the ERASMUS programme.

3.2. Another vital point is to ***make a clear connection to existing activities within your institution.*** As a basic principle, there should always be a clear connection among international activities, existing study programmes, and regular activities. If this connection is not achieved, the international programme activities will always have the reputation of being luxurious, expensive, and not really necessary.

3.2.1. Make sure as soon as possible that the **international activities become part of regular activities** or part of already scheduled operations and projects, such as ensembles or master classes.

3.2.2. **Use all public relation tools** at your disposal to disseminate information about your plans and expected outcomes. Discuss your plans with students, teachers, and administrative staff and ask for their advice and opinions. Adjust your plans as necessary.

5. Develop Internal Procedures

Having informed everyone what is about to happen now is the time to think carefully about *internal procedures*. The following internal procedures are relevant:

4.1. *Internal selection procedures for your students who want to go on an exchange.*

4.1.1. In collaboration with your partner institutions abroad, develop a standard *application procedure*, exchange/update your application deadlines and specific requirements and make sure that the rules relevant for the ERASMUS programme are respected. Although procedures and requirements will vary from institution to institution, a standard application should contain the following components:

- A standard ERASMUS application form (obligatory)
- A transcript of previously finished courses or qualifications obtained (obligatory)
- A learning agreement (obligatory)
- A Curriculum Vitae (if required)
- A audio or video recording or portfolio showing the artistic qualifications of the applicant (obligatory), including a confirmation of the authenticity of the material (if required)
- Letter of motivation (if required)
- Letter/s of recommendation (if required)

If there are any specific regulations in relation to the choice of study subjects (e.g. specific instruments), study year or a preference given to a live audition instead of a recording; make sure this information is circulated in time.

Cooperation partners are strongly advised to use the same application form for both institutions: it is strongly recommended to use the AEC model student exchange application form and the AEC model learning agreement form. These forms can be downloaded in the section for international relations coordinators of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org). Make sure students and teaching and administrative staff in your institution are familiar with these forms and know where to find and how to use them.

4.1.2. Once applications from students are received, a *selection* or a confirmation procedure takes place. Even if the actual number of applications is quite low, always be careful in making choices. Prepare information about internal requirements for outgoing ERASMUS students describing the eligibility for an exchange (e.g. study year, study progress, knowledge of foreign languages, etc), and internal application and selection procedure/s with their timeline.

Make sure that your institution has implemented the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and is ready to use all relevant tools like the ECTS course catalogue, the Learning Agreement form and the Transcript of Records form. As mentioned above, the AEC has developed model ECTS forms for use in the professional music training sector, which can be downloaded in the section for international relations coordinators of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org). If your institution is not using ECTS yet, you are strongly advised to start the necessary internal procedures to describe your study modules and learning outcomes, to develop valid transcript of records and to measure the students' workload. You may find more information on this issue in the ECTS users guide at http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/ects/doc/guide_en.pdf or you can apply to your National Agency for an ECTS introduction grant. ECTS is a useful

tool for facilitating ERASMUS student exchanges and a reliable means for qualified recognition of study abroad periods.

4.1.3. Once the student is pre-selected or confirmed for an ERASMUS exchange, start the external application procedure with the partner institution/s. In doing so, consider the following:

- o Who needs to approve the student's study abroad period? Normally, the principal study teacher must approve in any case, but is additional approval from senior management required? Here it is important to work out internally a procedure that involves all interested parties (student, main instrument teacher, head of department/institute) and academic bodies (registrar, dean, department for studies and examination, IRC). The procedure should be efficient, transparent and applicable for all exchanges within the ERASMUS programme.
 - o Is the student in the appropriate phase of his/her study to spend time abroad? Acknowledge that it might not be the right moment for the student to go. The opinion of the teacher will be important in this regard.
 - o Does the student possess sufficient language skills to manage in a country where the students' native language is not the main language? If the answer is no, investigate if there is something that can be done before the student leaves, or if the partner institution abroad offers short intensive language courses before or upon arrival. Take also in consideration the European Intensive Language Courses (EILC) organized for less taught languages (for further information, contact your SOCRATES National Agency or consult http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/erasmus/eilc/index_en.html).
 - o Are the wishes of the student in relation to the destination and the study programme realistic and appropriate? Consider differences in study programmes of both sending and receiving institutions and make sure that the outgoing student follows a similar or equivalent study course and cycle.
 - o The Learning Agreement is an important tool, which allows home and host institutions to agree beforehand on the student's study programme with the help of the relevant academic bodies; it is a formal document on which the exchange student can rely during the recognition process following the ERASMUS study abroad (for more information on the Learning Agreement, see section 5.2).
 - o What about practicalities in and outside the host institution? Make sure the exchange student's questions about accommodation, health insurance, residence permit and/or visa and others are answered, and provide sufficient information on studying/practicing facilities, activities of the students union (mentor system, pick-up service, (international) student card) and more.
 - o In addition to musical and instrumental skills, does the student possess sufficient personal attributes and social skills to 'survive' the study period abroad? Not all students will be able to handle the challenges connected to a study period in a foreign country.
 - o Will the student be able to serve as an 'ambassador' of your institution abroad? This could be an important point: you want to send out students who can make a good impression for your institution in many ways.
 - o Try to foresee all the possible conflicting interests. A student exchange could be opposed by a teacher or by the senior management. Teachers may take a very personal position
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regarding student exchanges: *"I have invested so much time in the student and now he/she wants to go on an exchange to another teacher!"* Senior management equally may have other interests: think of that good bassoon, viola, and bass trombone student you desperately need for your orchestral or big band concerts who has suddenly indicated interest in an exchange.

What to do? A student exchange should primarily benefit the development of the student. Since teachers and institutions do not 'own' students, denying a student an exchange possibility can be counterproductive. The student might simply leave your institution and never come back. After study abroad in the home institution's programme, the student will return (as he/she stays registered in the home institution), having learned a lot and usually being more committed to the home institution than if the possibility had been denied.

4.1.4. Once the student is selected for an ERASMUS exchange by the hosting partner institution (the letter of acceptance is received and the learning agreement is signed), a ERASMUS financial agreement has to be signed with the selected outgoing student for allocation and payment of her/his ERASMUS grant. The authority that signs this agreement (this could be the sending institution or the ERASMUS NA), as well as the amount of this grant varies from country to country. The amount of the grant also depends (among others) on the number of your projected mobility flows and periods agreed upon in your bilateral agreements and in the mobility contract with the ERASMUS National Agency, on the past performance in your previous ERASMUS activities and on the national strategy (the so-called National Plan [NP]) of the SOCRATES Programme in your country. According to European Commission requirements, an ERASMUS student grant should not exceed 5000 EUR for one academic year and 500 EUR for one study month. ERASMUS student grant should be paid to the ERASMUS student before he/she leaves for the study period abroad, although some institutions pay an 80% instalment at departure, with the remaining 20% being paid after the return of the student.

4.2. *Internal selection of teachers* wanting to go on an exchange.

Teachers might be interested in your ERASMUS programme, as they are often eager to travel. The question, *"Can you organize master classes for me abroad?"* will be often asked to international exchange officials (for a list of Frequently Asked Questions [FAQs] for teachers interested in an exchange, please visit the section for music teachers of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC: www.doremifasocrates.org). Although it could be a part of your ERASMUS programme to organize teaching abroad for the teaching staff, this does not necessarily have to be in the form of a high profile and well-paid master classes, especially if organised in the framework of the ERASMUS programme. Therefore internationally famous teachers might be less interested in this kind of exchanges. Think also of excellent teachers (for example: young assistants) who have not yet reached 'celebrity status', but who are nevertheless challenged by the idea of teaching at a different institution for a specified period.

It is important to realise that during an ERASMUS exchange teaching fees are usually not paid at all; often only travel and accommodation costs are covered or reimbursed. However, at times, even renowned musicians are willing to teach a class of a colleague for a day or so without receiving a fee. Sometimes exchanges present a solution to the problem that develops for institutions when teachers are on tour: a substitute teacher can be arranged, whose travel and accommodation costs are covered by the exchange programme. However, it is vital to be clear about these unfavourable financial conditions at an early stage. Do remember that co-financing is a "conditio sine qua non"

in the ERASMUS teaching mobility programme, as the ERASMUS grant will not cover all your costs. Carefully consider therefore your financial, structural and personnel resources.

The minimum requirements for the implementation of a teaching mobility under ERASMUS (for example: the presence of a 'contract' between teacher and home institution, a minimum period of at least 8 working hours or 5 working days, the requirement that the teaching exchange should be integrated in the curriculum of the host institution and the reporting rules) must be respected. More information can be found in the FAQs for teachers in the section for music teachers of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org). All ERASMUS teacher exchanges must be based on a valid Bilateral Agreement.

Be prepared that not all teaching exchanges you are suggesting are going to be realised in the end. It might occur that partner institutions are not showing the expected enthusiasm for the person or the subject that you are offering to exchange.

Whenever an institution sends out a teacher in an exchange programme, consider how the institution (or the outgoing teacher, his/her colleagues or non-mobile students) will benefit:

- o Will the teacher exchange be reciprocal, and if so, within what kind of time limit?
- o Will the teacher exchange lead to other activities, such as student exchanges?
- o Can the exchange be part of a larger continuing professional development or a research assignment for the teacher?
- o Can the exchange be connected to a specific task in relation to curriculum development?
- o Can the exchange promote a certain studio, department, or the institution as a whole, possibly attracting future (exchange or regular) students? At the same time, be careful/sensitive about 'recruitment' aspects of such teacher visits and consider possible consequences for the reputation of your institution and the maintenance of mutual trust with your partner institution.
- o What are the financial arrangements?

Answering such questions might define the character and length of teaching staff exchange. Experience shows that teachers of performance mostly favour short visits, because they best accommodate teaching and other professional engagements.

4.3. Internal selection and placement procedures for incoming exchange students.

It is essential to develop a transparent mechanism, which will ensure that whenever an **application** package arrives from the partner institution abroad, the institution is able to notify the partner institution in a relatively short time whether or not the student can be accepted. Relevant issues are:

- o Does the student show sufficient technical and musical ability to be admitted to your institution? Even when a strong mutual trust has been developed between the partners, institutions are advised to ask for audio or video recordings of the potential exchange students; live auditions should be asked only in exceptional cases or if asked for by applicant.. Decisions must be made about who will assess these recordings: will an individual teacher or a selection committee do this? Ideally, institutions are advised to involve both individual teachers and the responsible academic and management staff in decisions about student placements.
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- o If the student asks in the application form for a specific teacher, will this teacher have space in his/her studio and be willing to accept the student? If not, an alternative should be offered and the student should be notified about this as soon as possible, and certainly before arrival.
 - o How are internal placement procedures organized? As a result of the individual character of music training, problems often occur with student exchanges because of the numbers of students in a certain class or studio. This is especially relevant in institutions that pay teachers for the actual number of students in their class. If this is the case in your institution, determine beforehand how to deal with this situation. Some institutions have a special budget for paying teachers extra for the study period of an exchange student. Other institutions might favour one-to-one exchange: one student goes out; another one from the same class comes in. This does not necessarily have to be at the same time or even in the same class. Much will depend on the capabilities of the institutions involved. One-to-one exchanges, however, are often difficult to realise, but when both collaborating institutions make a special effort could also work out well. In some institutions, when teachers are given a fixed sum independent of the number of students they teach, teachers might not mind taking on an extra student for a period of time. Negotiations between the teacher and the institution resolve these questions. It is vital to decide how to deal with the placement of the exchange student in your institution. In any case, institutions should be aware that the ERASMUS programme does not allow institutions to charge any tuition fees to incoming exchange students.
 - o Can the institution fulfil the needs of the student in terms of specific courses the student asks for on the application and/or on the Learning Agreement form (more information about the Learning Agreement can be found in section 5.2.)? For example: if a student asked specifically for chamber music or ensemble work, will the institution be able to organize this? If not, the student should be notified about this as soon as possible.
 - o Does the student possess sufficient language skills to be able to follow the courses he/she is asking for? Are there any classes in the local language as a second language, and, if not, could a short intensive course be offered to the student? Organise language support for incoming exchange students and contact your National SOCRATES Agency about the European Intensive Language Courses (EILC) where applicable.
 - o Can the institution fulfil the necessary requirements regarding the recognition of the study period? Will a transcript of records (for further information on the transcript of records, see section 5.3) been made in time at the end of the exchange period? Will credit points be used and, if so, are the numbers of credits required by the student comparable to the numbers of credits in the study plan you can offer, and in case of differences, who will be answering questions related to this issue and take a commitment?
 - o Is the time period in which the student would like to come appropriate? Avoid holidays or examination periods, leaving the exchange student with very little to do. Ensure that your academic calendar is known at your partner institutions.
 - o How are internal procedures for practical matters organized? Who will be responsible for housing? Who will deal with applications with regard to student life? Think also of all the services regular students receive and find out if and how all these could be offered to exchange students as well (e.g., library, sports facilities, student cards, computer accounts, practise rooms, recording studios). Make a list of items including the names of officials responsible for these items, so that whenever an exchange student arrives, the relevant people are informed and practicalities are prepared. Once you have made an inventory of all the steps to be made internally and a list of responsible persons, it helps to make a diagram that
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lays out the various steps to be taken (a) once an application form is received and (b) when students arrive.

- o Who will be responsible for informing the partner institution about the outcome of his application? Should this notification be sent to the student directly with a copy to the IRC in the partner institution or to the IRC only? Will this answer be binding to all involved parties inside your institution? Who should be contacted before sending out an official letter of acceptance or refusal?
- o How is the exchange student going to be registered? What will be his/her **internal admission status**? It is critical to develop an internal mechanism to ensure that foreign exchange students, once they have been selected, will be fully registered and eligible for the benefits of full registration. In some cases, exchange students are officially registered as regular students (even when they come for a short period of time). In some cases, some kind of 'special' status is developed. In other cases, the students will only be registered in the home institution. Approaches might differ from institution to institution, but it is important that, as much as possible, the exchange students, regardless of their status, receive the same benefits that regular students have and that they are given access to all services of the institution.

It might be necessary for the official responsible for the exchange programme to consult with his/her colleague abroad about these issues several times. Remember that the more issues regarding the students' study period are clarified beforehand, the greater the chance of success.

6. Develop External Procedures

In cooperation with the foreign partner, external procedures need to be developed to facilitate the exchange of students and teachers. When doing so, please keep in mind the following issues:

5.1. It is important to develop common standard forms, starting with a standard **application form**, as already mentioned. Standard forms promote clarity and will keep bureaucracy to a minimum. Please note that the AEC has developed several model forms to facilitate student exchange, including a student application form that can be downloaded at the section for international relations coordinators of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org).

5.2. Partners are also strongly advised to jointly use a learning agreement form that formalizes all details regarding the actual content of the study programme the student will be following. It is strongly recommended to use the model AEC learning agreement form (this form can be downloaded at the section for international relations coordinators of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC: www.doremifasocrates.org). A well-designed learning agreement form should not only list the courses, but also the amount of credit points, in order to facilitate the recognition of study period. The learning agreement should ideally be sent with the application form, being one of the fundamental formal components of a complete ERASMUS application. The (ECTS) course catalogue of the host institution should enable the applicant to choose subjects appropriate for his study abroad. In case of acceptance of an ERASMUS candidate, the receiving institution might wish to revise the list of subjects available for the exchange student in the learning agreement and send it back to the sending institution along with a letter of acceptance. The sending institution and the exchange student will then accept the offer or start negotiating on further course opportunities. Once an agreement is concluded, the Learning Agreement should be handed to the student, possibly before his/her departure. During the first weeks of the exchange study period any necessary changes can be made at the request of the student after approval by the sending institution. The final version of the learning agreement should reflect what is confirmed later in the transcript of records form given to the exchange student out at the end of his/her study period.

5.3. At completion of the study period abroad the mobile student should be provided with a **transcript of records** in order to facilitate the recognition of the study results achieved during his exchange period. It is strongly recommended to use the model AEC transcript of records form, which can be downloaded in the section for international relations coordinators of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org). The transcript of records includes: information on the sending (home) institution and on the student's personal data, the receiving (host) institution, a list of the courses taken, the duration of the course unit, ECTS credits awarded and a course assessment (pass/fail).

5.4. It is strongly recommended to set **clear and compatible deadlines on both sides**, taking into consideration the time the internal procedures will take for the selection and admission of the student.

5.5. Regularly exchange **information on selection requirements and procedures** making use of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC.

5.6. Frequently update your **information on courses, teachers, and other** relevant information. The ECTS course catalogue may (among others) serve as a tool to do this.

5.7. Develop **procedures about important practical issues** such as housing, insurances, visa or residency permit requirements.

5.8. **Agree on recognition issues:** will you be using credit transfer points (the recognition tool increasingly in use in exchanges) or will you achieve recognition of the study period through a comparison of course content, e.g. for exchanges with institutions not yet using ECTS?

5.9. Within the AEC, a '*Code of good practice for European programme management in European conservatoires*' has been developed to facilitate exchanges between institutions for professional music training. It has been specifically designed for use in the ERASMUS exchange programme of the EU and can be downloaded in the section for international relations coordinators of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC.

5.10. Following the regulations of the programme, higher education institutes participating in the ERASMUS Programme are obliged to report back to their ERASMUS National Agencies. Be aware that the European Commission may consequently authorize the ERASMUS National Agency to check the financial procedures and documents, and to undertake monitoring and audit visits to a certain number of institutions. You must therefore keep all original documents 5 years after the submission of your final ERASMUS report.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

7. Public Relations

Once many of the technical issues and procedures are in place, it is time to start to *advertise your ERASMUS exchange activities*. The success of the ERASMUS exchange programme will depend in part on how well you inform various constituencies about the possibilities offered. This can be done by:

7.1. Printing a **small brochure with short relevant information on exchange opportunities**. This brochure should ideally contain the following information:

- First points of contact;
- Types of exchange opportunities;
- Institutional eligibility;
- Reasons for considering exchanges (e.g. personal development, cultural awareness, new learning environments, assess future employment opportunities, improve languages etc.);
- Duration of studies;
- Overall costs;
- Information on arrangements related to recognition: ECTS, Learning Agreement, etc;
- Application processes;
- Current exchange partners;
- What is expected of the student following the exchange.

Disseminate the brochure several times a year and leave sufficient copies in strategic places (library, public spaces, etc.). Producing a poster with information helps too.

6.2. The production of your institution's **Study Guide** or **ECTS Course Catalogue**. The distribution of this guide/catalogue among partners is necessary for the successful organisation of ERASMUS student mobility. The Study Guide and the ECTS Course Catalogue could be the same document, provided that the information required by the ECTS system is provided in your guide. The information required can be found in the general ECTS user's guide at http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/ects/doc/guide_en.pdf

6.3. Posting **information on** the institution's **website** and local and institutional networks.

6.4. **Talking to as many people as possible:** heads of departments, students, teachers, administrative staff, etc. Be everywhere, present benefits and successes.

6.5. Liaising with colleagues from other national higher education institutes and those from supporting professional organisations (e.g. the DAAD, NUFFIC or the Austrian Exchange Service) in order to **be present at national and international education fairs**.

6.6. Making sure that you have sufficient **information about your foreign partner institutions, and your partners having the same information about your institution**. This information should include general information brochures, course descriptions, ECTS course catalogue, lists of teachers and information about concert and project activities. Even in this age of Internet and beautiful websites, it is good to have materials at hand whenever a student or teacher comes for more information.

6.7. Offer access to reports of realized mobility and/or to résumés of successful completed projects.

6.8. Include written **information about the ERASMUS exchange programme** in the institution's **study guide**, catalogue, and information brochures. Make sure you agree with your partner institution abroad about the exact content of this information. Be truthful: advertise what is possible, do not exaggerate possibilities.

6.9. Using every opportunity to **contribute** a short **text** about the ERASMUS exchange programme **to internal and external publications**.

6.10. If your institution has a **public relations office**, it should be able to **provide assistance**. Try to be clear in all your public relations efforts that **you** are not intending to create additional work but to **offer unique opportunities** for students, teachers and administrative staff with long lasting and positive effects.

8. Assist Internal Applicants

To assist interested students and teachers wanting to participate in an exchange, you should:

7.1. **Help** students and teachers in your institution **with the application procedure**. Remind them of the deadlines and selection requirements; help them with filling in the forms (including the Learning Agreement form); stay in touch with your colleagues abroad about specific questions and needs. Watch for problem areas: for example, students tend to be especially late with the production of sound recordings. If necessary, comment on the student's or teacher's prospective destination: based on your knowledge of partner institutions, you might be able to give advice on whether or not the institution is suitable for the needs and wishes of the student or teacher.

7.2. **Take time to talk to students about their questions and wishes:** a study abroad period is a major undertaking for them and they will want to prepare it well. Expect many questions regarding the study programme, but also about practicalities such as housing, visa requirements, and how students will be welcomed and helped upon arrival. Talk about the benefits, challenges, and pitfalls of studying abroad, reminding the student that he/she could experience his/her 'study abroad process' by going through various phases. These various phases can be described in chronological order of the study abroad period as follows: application anxiety, honeymoon stage, cultural shock, initial adjustment, mental isolation, integration and autonomy, departure phase, re-entry phase, reintegration. For a list of frequently asked questions for students, please visit the student section of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org).

7.3. **Be sincere** when confronted **with fears concerning delays of study progress after the return from a study abroad period**. Recognition is a complex matter and it might cause delays in completing the studies, although this is to be avoided at all costs.

7.4. **Be clear about the time-line for** various internal and external **selection** and application procedures. Try to indicate when the student should expect a decision regarding the study abroad period. Keep track of the application of the student you are sending during the selection process at the host institution.

7.5. **Expect the same types of questions from teachers:** How many students will I teach? What is the repertoire I am supposed to work with? Am I supposed to give a concert as well? Where will I stay? For a list of frequently asked questions for teachers, please visit the student section of the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website of the AEC (www.doremifasocrates.org).

7.6. At this point in the process, it is usually wise to **establish a direct contact between teachers** to discuss forthcoming study periods of students or teaching visits. If the contact between teachers already exists, this will make consultations even easier.

9. Assist External Applicants

Assist interested students and teachers wanting to come on an exchange by considering the following points:

Help your colleague in the partner institution by giving information on your deadlines, your selection requirements, and your study programmes for individual students and your teaching activities for individual teachers. If needed, refer interested persons to the relevant person within your institution, but always inform your IRC colleague that you have done so.

8.1. If an application for an incoming student arrives:

- a) Check the application for its completeness, for example: has the application been approved by the responsible persons in the sending institution and is the learning agreement form included?
- b) Start the internal procedure for the selection and admission of the applicant. Contact teaching and administrative staff regarding the application and urge them to give an answer relatively soon.
- c) Keep track of the application of the incoming student during the selection process at your own institution.
- e) Once you have received an answer from the internal procedure for selection and admissions, including an offer of subjects confirmed on the learning agreement form and signed by the responsible authority/ies of your institution, immediately notify your partner institution of the result.
- f) If the procedure is taking more time than usual, inform the partner institution why and indicate when you expect to be able to give an answer. There is nothing so unsettling for a student as sending an application for an exchange and not hearing anything for a long period of time.
- g) If a student is accepted, write a letter of acceptance to the sending institution (and copy it to the applicant) or send the letter of acceptance to the student (and copy it to the sending institution). This procedure may vary from institution to institution, but ensure in any case that the IRC in the sending institution is always informed about such decisions.
- h) If a student is accepted, send him/her a welcome package with general information.
- i) Exchange or, if necessary, negotiate with the partner institution the learning agreement with the participation of the student and his/her teacher.
- j) If applicable, give a deadline until when the applicant must definitively confirm whether he/she wants to accept the offered study place within the ERASMUS exchange.
- k) Start the internal procedure for the necessary formalities (enrolment/registration procedure) and make (preliminary) practical arrangements such as housing.

8.2. If a proposal for a teacher visit arrives:

- a) Collect details on the achievements of the teacher (e.g. curriculum vitae, recordings).
 - b) Discuss with the responsible senior management the extent to which the proposal fits the need of the institution in terms of subject area and timing. Timing is crucial. Normally, short-
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term visits should not take place at the same time when other important projects are scheduled (unless the teacher visit is planned to be part of such projects) or during an examination period.

c) Once the proposal is accepted, develop a clear division of responsibilities between you and whoever in your institution is responsible for projects and other similar activities. Think of the following items:

- ✓ Planning the contents of the teaching visit and its connection to the existing study programme.
 - ✓ Coordinating teaching rooms and teaching hours.
 - ✓ Advertising the teaching visit with the help of the public relations or event office (if available).
 - ✓ Planning a final concert or extra activities if required.
 - ✓ Arranging for accommodation and meals.
 - ✓ Organizing transportation and other logistic details such as airport transportation.
 - ✓ Informing guest teachers in time about all practical arrangements (accommodation, transfers, visiting address of the institution, etc), contact persons (including their availability) and her/his time schedule.
 - ✓ Discussing future cooperation projects.
 - ✓ Organizing meetings with senior management and with other teaching staff.
 - ✓ Keeping in contact if unexpected questions should arise during the visit.
 - ✓ Providing guest teacher with all required confirmations beyond arrival.
 - ✓ Meeting for an evaluation of the exchange activity.
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10. The Exchanges Are Taking Place

All forms have been exchanged, placements arranged, and practicalities prepared: the student and/or teacher arrives. Keep in mind that the success of the exchange will depend a great deal on the adequacy of advance preparation. However, even with perfect organisation, expect problems. This is not surprising: (often young) human beings are being placed in new and challenging situations. Always take into consideration that the quality of your services may considerably influence the success of the study period abroad. Some advice:

9.1. Be open-minded and flexible. The official dealing with ERASMUS exchanges will need to combine the knowledge and skills of an organizer, psychologist, counsellor, parent, trouble-shooter, and communicator. Keep in mind that for students this might be one of the most challenging experiences in their lives so far.

9.2. Be welcoming. Take time and resources to prepare an appropriate event in order to make students feel welcome. You could combine such an event with an activity already scheduled for regular foreign students (i.e. foreign students that are registered as regular students, not through an exchange programme). If you are planning such an activity, consider the following actions:

- o Invite senior colleagues to greet newcomers.
- o Offer a tour of the building and other facilities.
- o Provide written documents on your institution.
- o Encourage students to ask questions.
- o Show professional understanding of the particular situation of the incomings
- o Try to establish a non-intrusive but personal relationship.
- o Encourage exchange students to network.

9.3. Be reasonable about limits. Be aware that there is a maximum to what you can do. Students should learn to solve some of their problems on their own. Try to be available as much as possible in the first days/weeks to help students learn how to function in your environment, but also calculate your time (and money) resources before offering additional services.

9.4. Assist the exchange student in having his/her Learning Agreement updated and adapted to the actual study/learning situation (more information on this issue can be found in 10.1)

9.5. Be connected. Stay in close contact with your contact person abroad about the achievements of your students there and the foreign students in your institution. Always keep in mind the uniqueness of the internal culture of the institution seen from an outside perspective. If a serious problem occurs, contact the home institution immediately. Also keep an eye on the exchange students in your institution: if you never see him/her, it is either because he/she does not need your help or is totally lost. Like domestic students, some exchange students need additional attention, others less. Talk to the relevant teacher(s) and departments about the progress and achievements of the exchange students, taking the learning agreement as the basis.

9.6. Keep smiling!

EXIT, EVALUATION AND REPORTING PHASE

11. Assessment And Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation will need to be done throughout the exchange programme on the following levels:

10.1. The assessment and evaluation *of the individual **incoming student** during and at the end of the study abroad period.*

a) Check periodically with the relevant teacher(s) or department to determine whether the student is fulfilling his/her study programme and if the number of credit points (if applicable) originally mentioned in the learning agreement is being earned. Try to discover and understand any deviations from the original learning agreement and think of ways to resolve these deviations early in the programme. At the end of the study period, fulfilment of credits must be verified and not much can be done if the student has not made sufficient progress.

b) Inform yourself about assessment. Have the relevant individual teachers assessed the student only or has he/she performed for a jury/committee? In this context it is important to stress a basic principle: in a well-developed exchange programme, the assessment of the student's study period should normally be done in the host institution. This not only requires understanding of each other's assessment procedures and levels, which should have been discussed in the preparatory phase of the exchange programme, but also a certain amount of trust between the partner institutions that the assessment of the student has been competent and fair. Avoid, almost always, the situation in which students come back into the home institution and then take an examination in order to prove sufficient progress. This practice counters a basic principle of partnership and may put the student into the unpleasant situation of having to lose study time because of problems with recognition of his/her study abroad.

c) Make sure you are fully informed about study and credit recognition requirements at the partner institution in order to assist leaving exchange students to get the necessary documents (confirmed period of study visit, transcript of records, etc.) from your institution before or in right time after his/her departure.

d) Invite exchange students to evaluate their study stay and ask about merits and shortfalls before they return home.

e) Answer incoming exchange students' inquiries about possibilities of continuing their studies at your institution with great care. Do not use exchanges as a recruitment mechanism. *Always* be open about this matter to your colleague in the partner institution, and work within guidelines and protocols accepted by both institutions involved.

f) Find a direct and individual way to say goodbye to your incoming exchange students.

g) Encourage incoming exchange students to stay in contact with your institution and with future exchange students in their home institution.

10.2. The assessment and evaluation *of the individual **outgoing student** at the end of the study abroad period.* You may consider the following points:

a) Check with your partner international relations coordinator to determine whether the student has fulfilled his/her study programme and if the number of credit points (if applicable)

originally mentioned in the learning agreement will be or has been awarded. Clarify the reasons for any deviations from the original learning agreement.

b) Inform yourself about assessment. Have only relevant individual teachers assessed the student or has he/she performed for a jury/committee? Here, the same principle applies as in the case of the assessment of an incoming exchange student.

c) Make sure you fully inform your partner institution about your own recognition in order to assist exchange students to bring the necessary documents (e.g. confirmed period of study visit, transcript of records).

d) Make sure that your institution has done the recognition and assessment of the study period of your returning student and has converted the students' credits and grades into the national system, where applicable.

e) Invite your exchange students returning to your institution to complete their studies to evaluate their experience; ask them about merits and shortfalls. Often students are asked to write a report. If applicable and helpful, exchange these reports or summaries with your colleague in the host institution abroad and keep these reports on file for future reference.

10.3. The *evaluation of the individual teacher exchanges*:

a) Invite incoming exchange teachers to evaluate their stay and ask about merits and shortfalls.

b) Invite comments on the exchange teacher's visits from the relevant department, teachers, and students. You may even consider handing out evaluation forms, although the outcomes of these should be handled with great care. Exchange the information with your colleague in the host institution abroad, if appropriate.

c) Invite your returning exchange teachers to evaluate their stay abroad and ask about merits and shortfalls. In some cases, teachers may be asked to write a short report, which could be helpful for evaluation.

10.4. The *overall evaluation* of the ERASMUS exchange programme.

a) Make sure that in the case of long lasting partnerships; you take time to evaluate the programme after a certain period (e.g. every two years). Be aware that a thorough evaluation is your best tool for increasing the quality of exchanges, both for the follow-up and for learning about partner institutions.

b) Make use of exit interviews of incoming students and teachers participating in the exchange programme.

c) Make use of evaluation interviews and reports of outgoing students and teachers participating in the exchange programme and keep a file of these reports.

d) Pass on praise and criticism to the relevant individuals and groups. Be ready to consider changing approaches/procedures, if these approaches/procedures are frequently criticised.

e) Encourage the creation of alumni networks and tutor systems, through which the contacts with partner institutions can also be continued.

f) Try to benefit from synergy effects: for example, an exchange of teachers may have a positive effect on student exchanges or a lasting implication for curriculum development.

g) Evaluate the functioning of the bilateral relations, reflect on an extension or suspension of these relations, and start a dialogue, when needed.



CODA

At first sight it may seem quite a challenge to go through these Ten Steps. However, professionals working in the field of international exchanges know that once the internal and external procedures and contacts are well established, contacts can become relatively easy and the process almost automatic. At the same time, there will always be (un)pleasant surprises, which is why working with international relations is both rewarding and challenging.

In addition to the 'Ten Steps', the following documents are available on the DoReMiFaSOCRATES website (www.doremifasocrates.org) with additional information:

- 'Frequently Asked Questions: Music Students Interested in an Exchange'
 - 'Frequently Asked Questions: Music Teachers Interested in an Exchange'
 - 'Code of Good Practice for European Programme Management in European Conservatoires'
 - A model application form for student exchanges
 - A model learning agreement form
 - A model transcript of records form
 - A model bilateral agreement
 - Various documents on the recognition of studies and qualifications
 - An on-line database of realised music projects in the framework of SOCRATES
-

PART B:

***‘TEN GOLDEN RULES FOR
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
COORDINATORS’***

January 2006

Ten golden rules for International Relations Coordinators

The 'Ten Golden Rules for International Relations Coordinators' mainly concentrate on the mobility of students, as this is a subject which both beginning and advanced international coordinators are mostly dealing with.

- 1. Insist on a clear, realistic short/term/long/term internationalisation strategy that reflects the ethos of your institution and is coherently structured. Develop it in collaboration with decision makers who are experienced in international matters and have an understanding of administrative priorities**
 - Motivation and aims: why do you want to become international, with whom and why, why now?
 - Priorities: are there any specific interests in geographical areas?
 - Quality parameters and "turn even"-point: where is the point where it costs us in working hours and in needed facilities?
 - Observe: if you have a strategy of internationalisation, it should be transparent and your colleagues and students should be able to read it somewhere, there should be a balance of benefits for the institution, its staff and students. It should give the institution the possibility to identify, to be proud to show their institution.

 - 2. Establish an infrastructure and internal procedures (administrative and decisional structures) that will enable you to drive the institutional strategy forward**
 - Staff
 - Office facilities, rules and functions
 - Services and info-guidelines for clients
 - Decision making (internal procedures, hierarchy)
 - Administration and management procedures outside your office where cooperation is required
 - Networking and lobbying inside your institution
 - Evaluation tools for yourself and colleagues, from time to time you have to check if what you are doing is fitting into the strategy of the institution.

 - 3. Broaden your knowledge of (potential) partners and other relevant authorities**
 - Inform and keep yourself informed on major developments and requirements in the exchange programmes (new programme generation such as Socrates III, Erasmus Mundus; new "entry conditions" such as EPS, EUC)
 - Where possible, become an active participant in key topics (Bologna Declaration, ECTS) and their developments
 - Build up contact with foreign governmental and diplomatic offices; they have a lot of experiences, facilities to help you in your work
 - Maintain a regular dialogue with partner institutions about each others specific practices regarding the implementation of common exchange programmes (deadlines, area of major interest faculty particularities)
 - Agree with partners on how to handle recognition issues (Learning agreement, ECTS, etc)
 - Try to be as direct in your contact as possible and be sensitive to different approaches and cultural diversities. Communicate any problems always directly to the international coordinator.
 - Keep bureaucracy to a minimum wherever possible (Bilateral agreements)
-

4. Assist interested outgoing (and incoming) students during information and application phases

The information process, application process, selection process, decision process and nomination process with students include challenges and individual solution.

- Promote exchange possibilities in the best suitable way (observe: easy access, completeness, clarity, reference opportunities, atmosphere, information booklet)
- Be clear about application procedures and nomination requirements (observe: equal opportunities, fairness, transparency)
- If applicable, inform about specific selection procedures on both sides
- If asked for, comment on decision for destinations
- Offer time to reflect and contact references (reports, former exchange students or incomings)
- Talk about benefits, challenges and pitfalls of studying abroad process (remember: “Study abroad process” with different phases such as application anxiety, honeymoon stage, cultural shock, initial adjustment, mental isolation, integration and autonomy, departure phase, re-entry phase, reintegration)
- Assist in preparing applications (make your life and that of your colleagues easy: use one common application form!)
- Be clear about time-scales in terms of nomination and admission

5. Keep track of the applications of outgoing students during the selection process

- Double check if application is complete and submitted in time
- Make sure that the application reaches its destination
- If contract quota has been exhausted, contact the International Relations Coordinator to agree whether application can be considered
- Liaise with host institution about their decision-making process and time table for making selection
- Consider vacation periods at the partner institution
- Ask applicant to contact you after a certain period of time in order to press for a decision
- Keep national deadlines and other specific requirements in mind
- Provide applicants in time with necessary information and documents
- If applicable, inform the IRC at a partner institution as soon as possible about any withdrawal by student
- Insist on receiving placement decisions (letter of acceptance) in written form to your office
- Ensure that some form of learning agreement is drawn up

6. Keep track of the applications of incoming students during the selection process

- Keep a copy of the application (even if you subsequently pass it on to another department/professor)
 - If the application is unclear, incomplete or seriously delayed, contact the IRC and/or the applicant to solve the matter or to decide how to proceed further
 - The same is true if the contract quota has been already exhausted and in case of unexpected situations in the receiving institutions
 - Insist that your professors make their decisions as soon as possible if long delays are to be expected, inform the IRC at the partner institution
 - Keep internal rules and requirements in mind before sending an official letter of response
 - Inform IRC at partner institution immediately about any decision
 - Consider vacation periods at partner institution
 - Provide the IRC at the partner institution and/or the applicant with an official letter of acceptance
-

- Ensure that some form of learning agreement is drawn up
- 7. Ensure that the IRC acts as focal point for all activities during the nomination process, work out a system with check lists and corrective mechanisms including deadlines**
- Provide yourself with updated information on national nomination rules, internal decision processes, availability of finances, requirements by partner institution
 - Work towards all necessary deadlines and ensure that decision making processes synchronise properly to meet these requirements; communicate to partner institutions what the conditions are
 - If the applicant is asked to confirm the Erasmus study place, make sure that it is done and done in time
 - Work out a procedure of how to handle learning agreements and sign them when possible
 - Provide the student with comprehensive documentation whether sending or receiving students:
 - Inform about financial details and scholarship requirements, studies and enrolment
 - Prepare information packs and international guides for students (visa & residence permits, health care, contact with local IRC)
 - If applicable, assist in finding housing
 - Advise on working opportunities
 - Advise on re-entry conditions (national study law, preserve study place & accommodation and jobs)
 - Answer individual questions
- 8. Establish the International Relations Coordinator as a central support/advise point for incoming students. Be aware of the importance of the first contact, consider that the quality of your services may considerably influence on the success of the study abroad.**
- Take time and resources to prepare an appropriate event in order to make students feel welcome:
 - Invite high-ranking representatives to greet newcomers
 - offer a tour of the building/s
 - use other than the official language – if not English
 - prepare written documentation on the University
 - encourage students to ask questions
 - show understanding for the particular situation of the incomings but remain professional
 - try to establish a non-intrusive but personal relationship
 - give perspectives for the near future
 - Encourage exchange students to network
 - Be available as much as possible in the first days/weeks and steer students in the right direction
 - Be connected in your institution (=be informed about competencies of staff regarding relevant issues)
 - Calculate your time (and money) resources before offering additional services
 - Find out about specific interests of the students before organizing events
- 9. Show your professionalism, flexibility and creativity in the exit phase**
- Find a direct and individual way to say goodbye to your incomings
 - Invite leaving students to evaluate their study stay (ask about merits and short falls)
 - Keep informed about recognition requirements at partner institutions in order to assist leaving students properly to get the needed documents (confirmed period of study visit, transcript of records) from your institution (before departure)
-

- If applicable, inform incomings about possibilities to continue their studies at your institution, but be open about this matter with your colleagues International Relations Coordinators
- Encourage incomings to stay in touch as Erasmus students and with your institution

10. Be aware that a good follow-up is your best tool to evaluate your work, to learn about partner institutions and to improve the quality of exchanges.

- Evaluation during exit phase (exit interviews)
 - Evaluation back home (keep file of reports)
 - Use key dates of the reports for updating your database
 - Pass praise and criticism on to concerned body
 - Enquire for changing approaches/procedures if frequently criticised
 - Share results of evaluation with your partners
 - Make full use of existing resources (personnel, knowledge and enthusiasm of former exchange students) and encourage the creation of alumni networks, tutor systems, regular meetings and continuing contacts with partner institutions
 - Try to benefit from synergy effects; a lot of students come back having in mind a very good teacher they learned about when they were abroad
 - Evaluate functioning of bilateral relations, reflect on extension or suspension where applicable, and start a dialogue when needed.
-

PART C:

***‘Code of Good Practice
for ERASMUS Coordinators
in European institutions for Professional Music
Training’***

January 2006

**Code of Good Practice
for SOCRATES-ERASMUS Coordinators
in European institutions for Professional Music Training**

Although sharing many similarities music institutions, whether integrated into a university or acting as free-standing conservatoires, often take a diverse approach in the administration of their international operations. In order to assist international staff, it is hoped that this Code of Good Practice will help to provide a way forward, ensuring that our various administrations adopt a set of complementary procedures while always allowing for necessary flexibility.

Particular care needs to be taken with regard to the exchange of music students. Pastoral considerations aside, the ethos of the 'master-apprentice' relationship that exists between teacher and pupil provides special challenges where exchange opportunities are concerned. Furthermore, the variation in professorial contractual arrangements between institutions can complicate matters. Therefore, institutions are asked to be clear from the outset about what they can realistically offer through any SOCRATES-ERASMUS agreement and what limitations there might be. By doing so the job of the international co-ordinator will be made much simpler.

1. INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATORS

- **All SOCRATES/ERASMUS activity should be directed through the international co-ordinator who must act as the single point of contact;**
- **Students and teachers wishing to participate in any SOCRATES-ERASMUS activity must liaise with the international co-ordinator in the first instant;**
- **Where certain areas of activity need to be passed onto other offices/officers (e.g. housing, teaching arrangements, welfare, programme/course arrangements), the international co-ordinator must always be kept informed of developments and remain the first and last point of contact with the exchange partner;**
- **Co-ordinators should maintain a full list of other international co-ordinators and their contact details. Some co-ordinators only work part-time, so contact hours should also be made available¹;**
- **The role of the international co-ordinator and how s/he operates should be made clear to all students and staff within respective institutions.**

2. BI-LATERAL AGREEMENTS

- **All SOCRATES activity must be subject to a valid, stamped, Agreement which should be signed, or countersigned, by the international co-ordinators of both participating institutions and, where required, senior members of the institution concerned;**
- **The design of the Agreement should be the same for the entire sector;**
- **Only one institution need produce the Agreement (this should be determined in advance) with original copies lodged at both institutions;**
- **The duration of Agreements should be flexible, as should the number of participating teachers/students;**
- **Where institutions find it difficult to maintain bi-lateral relations, a suspension of mobility/activity will be acceptable provided both sides approve the reasons;**

¹ This information should be kept and updated on the AEC website.

3. PLACEMENTS

a) Students

Applications

- International co-ordinators must ensure that application forms are channelled through them at all times;
- Home institutions may wish to consider whether it would be reasonable to vet multiple applications before sending them to Host institutions rather than encouraging a 'free-for-all' approach. This may be particularly pertinent where the number of possible exchanges is limited;
- A common application form, containing the basic minimum level of information², is strongly recommended (see Appendix 2). To ensure that applications are channelled through co-ordinators, the forms should be countersigned by the international co-ordinator of the Home institution;
- A supplementary information form may be preferable for institutions requiring further information at source;
- Normally a tape/cd/video-recording should satisfy all application requirements, however institutions are asked to be sympathetic to those who additionally require live auditions. Such institutions are encouraged to waive the 'live' condition where a student applies for a short exchange period (e.g. 3 months);
- Once a contract quota has been fulfilled between two institutions, any further applications must be agreed between the relevant International co-ordinators.

Making offers

- Institutions have a right to request references as a condition of studentship;
- All placement offers must be made via the international co-ordinator³ although the letters themselves should be signed by a senior academic member of staff;
- Notice of when placement letters will be sent out should be given to the relevant International co-ordinators;
- Placement letters must outline the conditions attaching to the offer and state clearly that the offer is only for an 'exchange' period.

Following an exchange

- Host institutions are encouraged to undertake 'exit' interviews (to be conducted by the International co-ordinator);
- Students are required to issue a report to the home institution about the period of their exchange. International co-ordinators are encouraged to share this information with the host institution to assist in the feedback process.

b) Teachers

- All outgoing teachers should be approved by the relevant academic authorities of the sending institution;

² This should include deadlines for submission. Institutions should also ensure that this information along with other conditions (e.g. repertoire requirements) is advertised on the AEC website.

³ Institutions that are legally (contractually) bound to deal direct with the student should at least send a copy of the letter to the Home institution's international co-ordinator. Likewise, acceptance materials should also go via the international co-ordinator.

- **International co-ordinators should always be the primary point of contact regarding teacher exchanges. Proposals should include the following information⁴:**
 - **The proposed teacher for the exchange (suggesting any reciprocal arrangement if this is possible);**
 - **The required dates of exchange;**
 - **The proposed workload (i.e. type of work and hours per day);**
 - **The required outcome.**
- **International co-ordinators should provide outgoing teachers with comprehensive information relating to Teacher Mobility. An agreement should be signed by both parties in relation to the following:-**
 - **Obligations to the host institution (teaching etc);**
 - **Dates of mobility;**
 - **Arrangements that are in place for teaching of own pupils while away;**
 - **Financial arrangements;**
 - **Flights and accommodation.**
- **International co-ordinators are expected to liaise with each other regarding hosting matters and ensure that those actually taking responsibility for organising teaching and other arrangements have matters in hand at all times. The onus for ensuring a satisfactory outcome must ultimately rest with International co-ordinator;**
- **Teachers are required to issue a report to the home institution about their period of exchange. International co-ordinators are encouraged to share this information with the host institution to assist in the feedback process. It is further thought that an informal discussion with the teacher about his/her experiences will add to the understanding of the process and assist in the building of stronger ties.**

4. Learning Agreements

- **Institutions whose students go on an exchange should sign a Learning Agreement;**
- **Learning Agreements should be sent out by the Host institution asking students to outline a required menu of studies for the period of the exchange. The Home institution will then fill in this information, sign the form (via the international co-ordinator) and return it to the Host institution. When (final) agreement is reached, both institutions will sign the Agreement to indicate that the terms of the exchange are satisfactory to both sides. Copies will be held at both institutions;**
- **The Learning Agreement could, if necessary, be adapted to include details of any ECTS credit that might be gained;**
- **Implicit in the wording of the Agreement will be the need for institutions to issue transcripts (through the co-ordinators) on completion of a student's studies⁵**

5. Information for students

- **Institutions are encouraged to produce comprehensive booklets as follows:**

Information guide for students wishing to pursue an exchange year abroad

This should include the following information:

- **first points of contact;**
- **types of exchange opportunities;**
- **institutional eligibility;**

⁴ It is important that this is the case even if the minutiae of arrangements are subsequently devolved to departments.

⁵ Some institutions may be legally obliged to issue transcripts directly to students themselves. In such cases there must be an agreement between the Home institution and the student pursuing the exchange to produce the transcript as soon as the exchange period has come to an end.

- reasons for considering exchanges (e.g. personal development, cultural awareness, new learning environments, assess future employment opportunities, improve languages etc.);
- duration of studies;
- overall costs;
- Learning Agreements;
- application processes;
- current exchange partners;
- what is expected of the student following the exchange.

Information booklet for foreign students who are attending your institution

This should include the following information:

- any relevant visa information;
 - pertinent arrival information (documentation required etc.);
 - immigration information;
 - Police (or other official) registration, if necessary;
 - residency permits;
 - location details of your institution and surrounding area (inc. traffic and travelling);
 - climate and clothing requirements;
 - employment status (if wishing to work);
 - costs of living (i.e. accommodation, insurance, local taxes, travel, food, clothes, leisure);
 - banking opportunities;
 - tuition and other institutional costs;
 - financial assistance available (e.g. scholarships and bursaries);
 - health and welfare issues (e.g. signing on with a doctor/dentist, counselling);
 - social customs;
 - religion;
 - enrolment and acclimatisation issues;
 - academic term dates;
 - useful contacts and publications
-

PART D:

AEC Standard forms for ERASMUS mobility

January 2006

Explanatory note for the use of the standard ECTS-forms developed by AEC

PLEASE READ THIS NOTE CAREFULLY BEFORE STARTING TO USE THE FORMS!

1. The AEC has developed the following ECTS standard forms, which have been adapted to the needs of institutions for professional music training in higher education:
 - Student application form
 - Learning Agreement
 - Transcript of records (following an exchange period)
 - Bilateral Agreement
 2. These forms, except the bilateral agreement, have been based on both the standard ECTS forms developed by the European Commission and on feedback received and discussions held by international relations coordinators during the past few years. As a consequence, this is the current result of a long period of development and consultation. However, it is not the intention to see these forms as an absolute definitive version, as it is foreseen that the current versions will be evaluated within a few years.
 3. These forms have been sent to the European Commission for feedback during September 2005. During October 2005, these forms have been presented and discussed at a meeting of ECTS Counselors in Istanbul. Based on the discussions at this meeting, the European Commission was able to inform the AEC that these forms could be used by professional music training institutions and that the forms would also fulfill the requirements of an ECTS label procedure. Institutions wishing to apply for an ECTS label are therefore strongly advised to use these forms or the original generic ECTS forms developed by the European Commission. Institutions confronted in the framework of an ECTS label procedure or an ECTS visit with ECTS Counselors that are not informed about the status of these forms should contact the AEC Office immediately.
 4. The forms can be downloaded in WORD-format. Institutions are invited to print their own logo onto the form, if so required. In addition, if institutions find they need to adapt the forms to their own needs, they can do so by adding or deleting certain sections. However, in case of individual changes (other than formatting, adding institutional logos, etc), conformity with the ECTS guidelines cannot be assured (see 3.). Any individual adaptations should therefore be made with the utmost consideration. In case of doubt, institutions should contact an ECTS expert in their ERASMUS National Agency for further guidance.
 5. In relation to the Transcript of Records, it is important to know that the AEC is currently studying the use of the ECTS grading scale, which is creating challenges for use in professional music training institutions. Traditionally, institutions of higher music education only accept small amounts of students that fulfill the highest artistic standards. As a result, it is possible that certain subject areas have very small classes or no student is admitted at all. A calculation of grades related to the percentage of successful students would therefore not be realistic. The AEC will study and present solutions to this issue during the second half of 2006.
 6. In relation to the Bilateral Agreement, another issue that is connected to the individual nature of professional music training is important. Some institutions
-

prefer to include a statement in the agreement, drawing attention to the fact that the admission of ERASMUS students is depending on the availability of places within certain classes. As professional music training in certain musical genres is based on one-to-one teaching, the acceptance of an ERASMUS student could have substantial financial implications for institutions. The admission of an ERASMUS student can therefore never be automatically based on the bilateral agreement. At this moment, it is difficult to say whether or not it is advisable to add such a sentence on the bilateral agreement itself, as it is not clear if this formulation on the agreement would be within the principles of ERASMUS mobility. Institutions are therefore advised to consider drafting a 'side letter' that is attached to the bilateral agreement and that is signed by both partners, with a statement excluding any legal obligation to the agreed number of exchange students/teachers whenever staff or financial resources do hinder the acceptance of an exchange student by the host institution. Whenever evidence for a properly set up student and staff exchange would have to be provided to a National Agency or the European Commission, only the bilateral agreement itself could be shown.

BILATERAL AGREEMENT
Socrates/Erasmus activities planned for 20../20..
No _____

between

Institution: _____
Erasmus ID Code: _____
Name Erasmus coordinator: _____
Address: _____
Phone: + _____ Fax: + _____ E-Mail: _____

and

Institution: _____
Erasmus ID Code: _____
Name Erasmus coordinator: _____
Address: _____
Phone: + _____ Fax: + _____ E-Mail: _____

Please use full legal names of institutions in their national language

The above parties agree to cooperate in the activities shown below within the SOCRATES programme. Both parties agree to abide by the principles and conditions set out in the SOCRATES Guidelines for Applicants, the IC application forms and, if the application is successful, the financial agreement.¹

OM/S: student mobility

<i>ERASMUS subject area</i>		<i>Country</i>		<i>Total number</i>		<i>Application deadline date(s)</i>
<i>Code</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Student months</i>	
03.2	Music					
03.2	Music					

OM/T: teaching staff mobility (1-8 weeks)

<i>Subject Area code</i>	<i>Topic(s) taught</i>	<i>Name of the staff member (if available)</i>	<i>Home country</i>	<i>Host country</i>	<i>Duration in working days</i>	<i>Total number of teaching hours per working day</i>
03.2	Music					
03.2	Music					

Institution: _____ Institution: _____

Official representative: _____ Official representative: _____

Function: _____ Function: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Sign. Erasmus Coordinator: _____ Sign. Erasmus Coordinator: _____

(if different to representative)

(if different to representative)

Stamp

Stamp

¹ Please read the section about the 'Bilateral Agreement' in the '**Explanatory note for the use of the standard ECTS-forms developed by AEC**'.



Association Européenne
des Conservatoires,
Académies de Musique
et Musikhochschulen (AEC)

STUDENT APPLICATION FORM

Please attach a recent passport photograph

ACADEMIC YEAR 20...../20.....
Study Programme:
Principal study subject:

All applications for exchange programmes must be made through the International Exchange Co-ordinator in the home institution. This application should be completed in BLACK.

Home Institution

.....

Erasmus ID Code:	Tel: +
Coordinator:	Fax: +
	E-mail:

STUDENT	
---------	--

Family name: Date of birth: Age: Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female Current address: Current address is valid until: Tel.: + Fax: + E-mail:	First name(s): Place of Birth: Nationality: Permanent address (if different): Tel.: + Fax: + E-mail:
--	--

Previous/Current studies

Diploma/degree for which you are currently studying:

Professor in main field of study:

Number of higher education study years prior to departure abroad:

Please attach a transcript including full details of previous and current higher education study. Details not known at the time of application should be provided at a later stage.

Check List FOR OFFICE USE	
Host Institution Application received: <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Agreement, received: <input type="checkbox"/> Provisionally accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Result sent to coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded performance <input type="checkbox"/> Audition <input type="checkbox"/> Transcript, received: <input type="checkbox"/> Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Result sent to candidate

LIST OF APPLICATIONS

Please list the institutions which will receive this application form (in order of preference):

Institution	Preferred professor	Country	Period of study		Duration of stay (months)
			from	to	
1.
2.
3.

Please inform the other institutions **immediately** if you are admitted at an institution!

AUDITION

If the receiving institution requires you to send in a certified recording of your audition repertoire, please fill in the following:

I have included a certified* recording of my audition repertoire Yes No

List of pieces performed on your recording:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

*Please let the teacher of your main subject sign the recording to certify that the recording is your own performance.

FUNDING

Have you already been studying abroad with an ERASMUS grant? Yes No

Do you wish to apply for an Erasmus mobility grant to assist towards the additional costs of your study period abroad? Yes No

SIGNATURES HOME INSTITUTION

Student: Date:

Professor/Tutor: Date:

Head of Department: Date:

International Coordinator: Date:

Notes for Guidance¹

GENERAL INFORMATION

All enquiries and applications for exchange programmes must be made through the International Coordinator in your home institution.

To facilitate general procedures, please use e-mail until the point of mutual confirmation/signatures.

- **Application form and deadline**

Please complete the form as fully and as clearly as possible. The International Coordinator will inform you about the application deadline for your preferred host institution(s).

- **Other forms**

Some institutions may require extra documentation with your application; you may for example be asked to complete a second application form.

COMPLETING THIS APPLICATION FORM

Please write in BLOCK LETTERS – this will help the host institution to avoid mistakes when they process your form. You should complete each section.

STUDY DETAILS

- **Principal study subject**

Only state your principal study discipline, in which you wish to be auditioned. If you wish to audition for more than one discipline, you should complete a separate application for each one.

- **Transcript including full details of previous and current higher education study**

This has to be issued by the home institution, not to be mistaken with the final 'transcript of records' which will be issued by the host institution at the end of the exchange period.

LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

You will normally be expected to have some proficiency in the language used for tuition in the host institution and you will gain most benefit from your exchange if you have some proficiency in the country's native language.

¹ Please read also the '**Explanatory note for the use of the standard ECTS-forms developed by AEC**'.



Association Européenne
des Conservatoires,
Académies de Musique
et Musikhochschulen (AEC)

LEARNING AGREEMENT

ACADEMIC YEAR 20...../20.....

Study programme:

Principal study subject:

All applications for exchange programmes must be made through the International Exchange Co-ordinator in the home institution. This application should be completed in BLACK.

STUDENT/HOME INSTITUTION

Student's name:

Home institution:

Erasmus Code: Country:

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED STUDY PROGRAMME ABROAD

Host institution

Erasmus Code: Country:

Period of study		Duration of stay (months)	N° of ECTS credits		
from	to				
DD/MM/YYYY	DD/MM/YYYY		
Course unit code (if available)	Course unit title (as indicated in the information package)	Teaching method*	Assessment method**	Number of ECTS credits	Compulsory at home
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

* (1) One-to-one teaching, (2) Small group teaching, (3) Lecture, (4) Other
 ** (O) Oral test, (W) Written test, (P) Performance for commission, (M) Marked evaluation by teacher, (X) Other, namely.....

If necessary, continue the list on a separate sheet.

Student's signature: Date:

CONFIRMATION HOME INSTITUTION	
We confirm that the proposed programme of study is approved.	
Head of department/institution	Erasmus coordinator
Name:	Name:
Function:	
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

CONFIRMATION HOST INSTITUTION	
We confirm that the proposed programme of study is approved.	
Head of department/institution	Erasmus coordinator
Name:	Name:
Function:	
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

CHANGES TO ORIGINAL PROPOSED STUDY PROGRAMME/LEARNING AGREEMENT

In case of necessary changes of the above agreed study programme, please fill in the following:

Course unit code (if any)	Course unit title (as indicated in the information package)	Deleted course unit	Added course unit	Number of ECTS credits	Compulsory at home
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If necessary, continue the list on a separate sheet.

Student's signature:

Date:

CONFIRMATION HOME INSTITUTION

We confirm that the above-listed changes to the initially agreed programme of study/learning agreement are approved.

Head of department/institution

Erasmus coordinator

Name:

Name:

Function:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date:

CONFIRMATION HOST INSTITUTION

We confirm that the above-listed changes to the initially agreed programme of study/learning agreement are approved.

Head of department/institution

Erasmus coordinator

Name:

Name:

Function:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date:

Excerpt from the ECTS User's Guide on the Learning Agreement (February 2005)¹

The ECTS Learning Agreement has been developed for mobile students, spending a limited period of time at a university in another country as is the case in the Erasmus programme.

The Learning Agreement contains the list of course units or modules which the student plans to take. For each course unit/module the title, the code number and the ECTS credit are indicated.

The Learning Agreement has to be signed by the student, the person who has formal authority to commit the home institution, and by an equivalent authority in the receiving institution who thereby guarantees that the incoming student can study the planned course units/modules.

The Learning Agreement guarantees the transfer of credit for courses passed successfully by the student. The competent body or authority of the home university carries out the recognition on the student's return. The student does not need to negotiate recognition with individual professors. The Learning Agreement, together with the Transcript of Records is designed to guarantee complete recognition.

Of course, it may happen that a programme of study must be modified after the arrival of the mobile student. In such cases, the Learning Agreement must be amended as soon as possible and signed again by the three parties concerned: the home university, the host university and the student. Only in this way can complete recognition of study results be guaranteed.

¹ Please read also the **'Explanatory note for the use of the standard ECTS-forms developed by AEC'**.



TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS

ACADEMIC YEAR 20...../20..... Principal study subject:
--

HOME INSTITUTION							
Name:						Erasmus Code:	
Faculty/Department of:							
ECTS departmental coordinator:							
Telephone: +		Fax: +		E-Mail:			
HOST INSTITUTION							
Name:						Erasmus Code:	
Faculty/Department of:							
ECTS departmental coordinator:							
Telephone: +		Fax: +		E-Mail:			
STUDENT							
Family name:				First name(s):			
Date and place of birth:				Sex:			
Matriculation/Enrolment date:				Matriculation/Student number:			
Course unit code (1)	Course unit title	Teaching method (2)	Asses-ment method (3)	Duration of course unit (4)	Local grade (5)	ECTS grade (6)	ECTS credits (7)
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
to be continued on a separate sheet					TOTAL:		
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) see explanation on back page							

Date	Signature of registrar/dean/administration officer Host institution	Stamp of institution Host institution

NB : This document is not valid without the signature of the registrar/dean/administration officer and the official stamp of the institution.

Explanatory Notes and Description of the national grading system

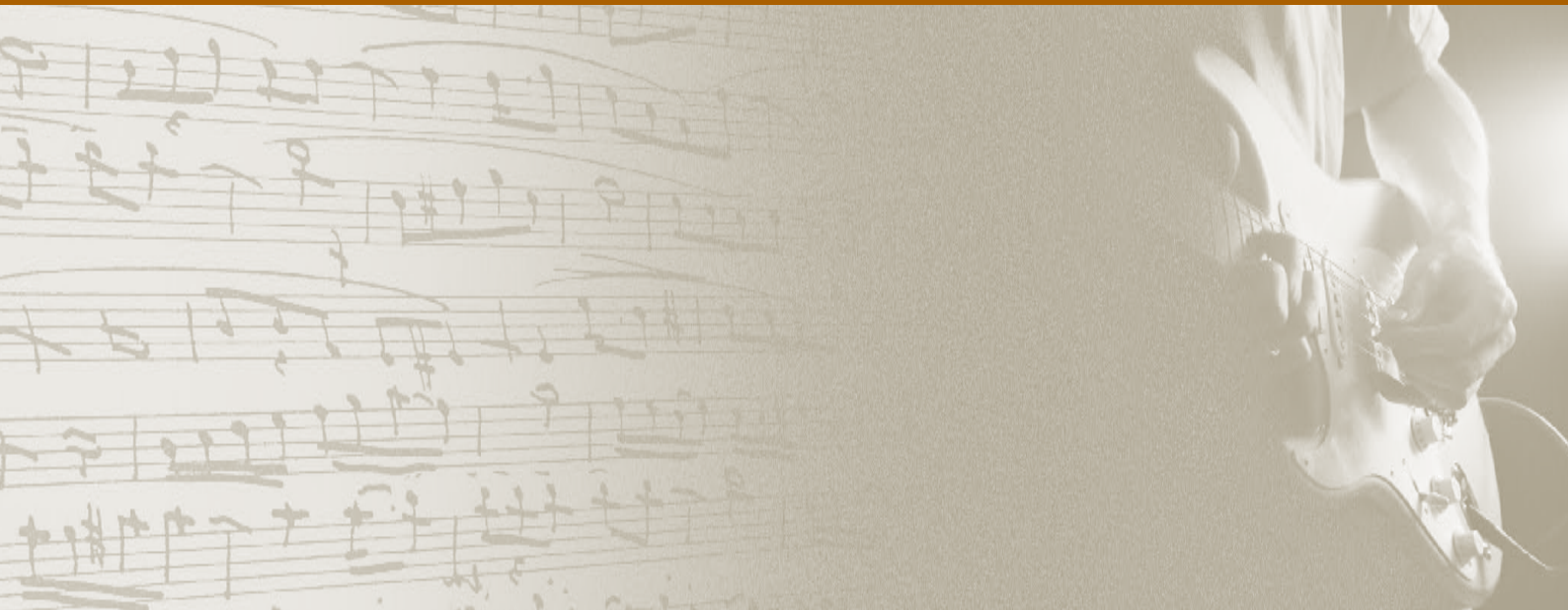
- (1) **Course unit code:**
Refer to the ECTS information Package
- (2) **Teaching method**
(I)One-to-one teaching, (II)Small group teaching, (III)Lecture, (IV)Other
- (3) **Assessment method**
(O)Oral test, (W)Written test, (P)Performance for commission, (M)Marked evaluation by teacher, (X)Other, namely.....
- (4) **Duration of course unit:**
Y = 1 full academic year
1S = 1 semester
2S = 2 semesters
1T = 1 term/trimester
2T = 2 terms/trimesters
- (5) **Description of the institutional grading system at the host institution:**
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

(6) **ECTS grading scale¹:**

ECTS Grade	% of successful students normally achieving the grade	Definition (only of failing grades)
A	10	
B	25	
C	30	
D	25	
E	10	
FX	-	FAIL - some more work required before the credit can be awarded
F	-	FAIL - considerable further work is required

- (7) **ECTS credits:**
1 full academic year = 60 credits
1 semester = 30 credits
1 term/trimester = 20 credits

1 Please read the section about the 'Transcript of Records' in the '**Explanatory note for the use of the standard ECTS-forms developed by AEC**' in relation to the ECTS grading scale.



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Education and Culture

Socrates
Erasmus