



**Management of Joint Programmes and  
Recognition of Joint Degrees**

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**Main challenge: realizing a course of study among different HED systems**

*Developing a joint multilateral programme is a long and difficult path requiring extra efforts, costs and institutional commitment. It requires the involvement of different actors at institutional level:*

A joint programme is NOT a “regular” programme

*A Joint Degree is a final qualification or a method of issue of the national final qualifications within a Joint Programme:*

We have to focus our attention to the Joint PROGRAMME



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# Terminology



## Definition of a Joint Degree

### Official reference documents:

- (i) The **Erasmus Mundus Programme Guide (EMPG)** – European Commission
- (ii) The **Recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees (RJD)** - Committee of the LRC

**EMPG Joint Degree definition:** *“a single diploma\* issued by at least two higher education institutions offering an integrated programme and recognized officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located”;*

**RJD Joint Degree definition:** *“should, for the purposes of this Recommendation, be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions”...“a joint degree may be issued as:*

*a joint diploma\* in addition to one or more national diplomas,*

*a joint diploma\* issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma,*

*one or more national diplomas\* issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.”*

**\*Diploma:** the official document attesting the qualification.



## Definition of a Double/Multiple Degree

### Official reference documents:

- (i) The **Erasmus Mundus Programme Guide (EMPG)** – European Commission
- (ii) The **Recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees (RJD)** - Committee of the LRC

**EMPG Double/Multiple Degree definition:** *“two or more national diplomas\* issued by two or more higher education institutions and recognised officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located.”*

**RJD Double/Multiple Degree definition:** the RJD does not make any distinction between joint degrees e double/multiple degrees.

\***Diploma:** the official document attesting the qualification.



## Definition of a Joint Programme

**Joint Programme:** *A study programme developed and/or provided jointly by two or more HEIs, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions, leading to the award of a double, multiple or joint degree.*

(**JOIMAN** and **TUNING** Glossary)

There are not any direct definitions of JPs in the (i) **Erasmus Mundus Programme Guide (EMPG)** - European Commission - and in the (ii) **Recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees (RJD)** - Committee of the LRC.

According to the Erasmus Mundus Programme, a Joint Programme has to respect some specific characteristics.

This is valid only in the framework of this EU Programme and not for every JPs

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Other JPs organized outside Erasmus Mundus have not to respect those elements



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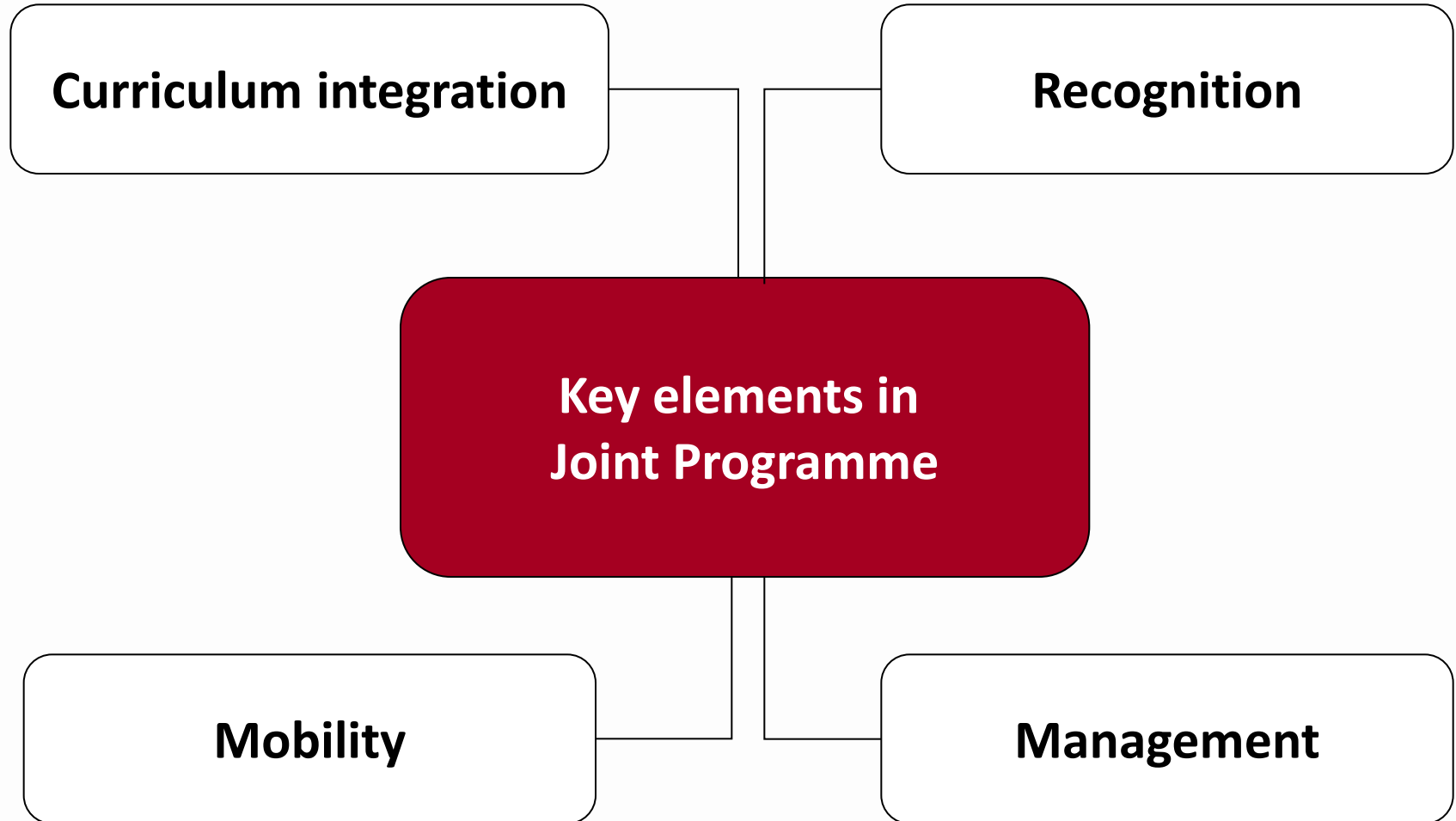
## Why terminology is important?



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# Models



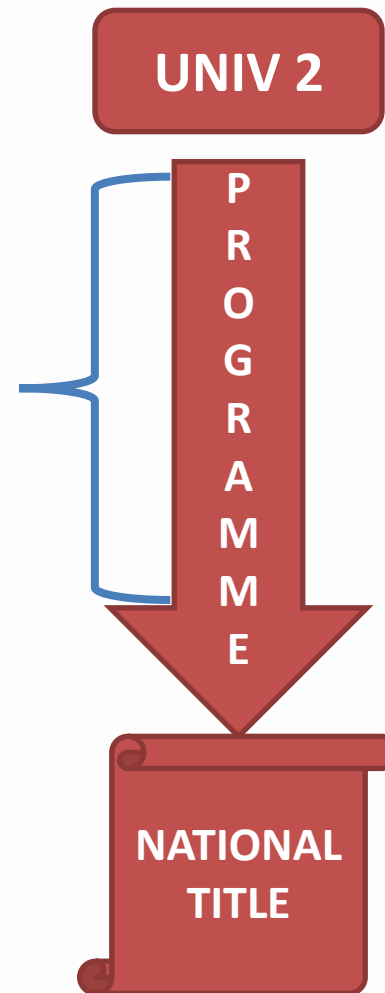
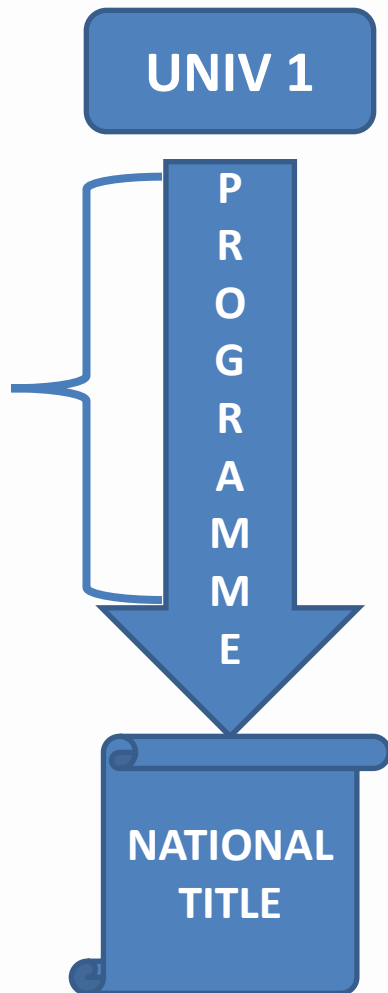


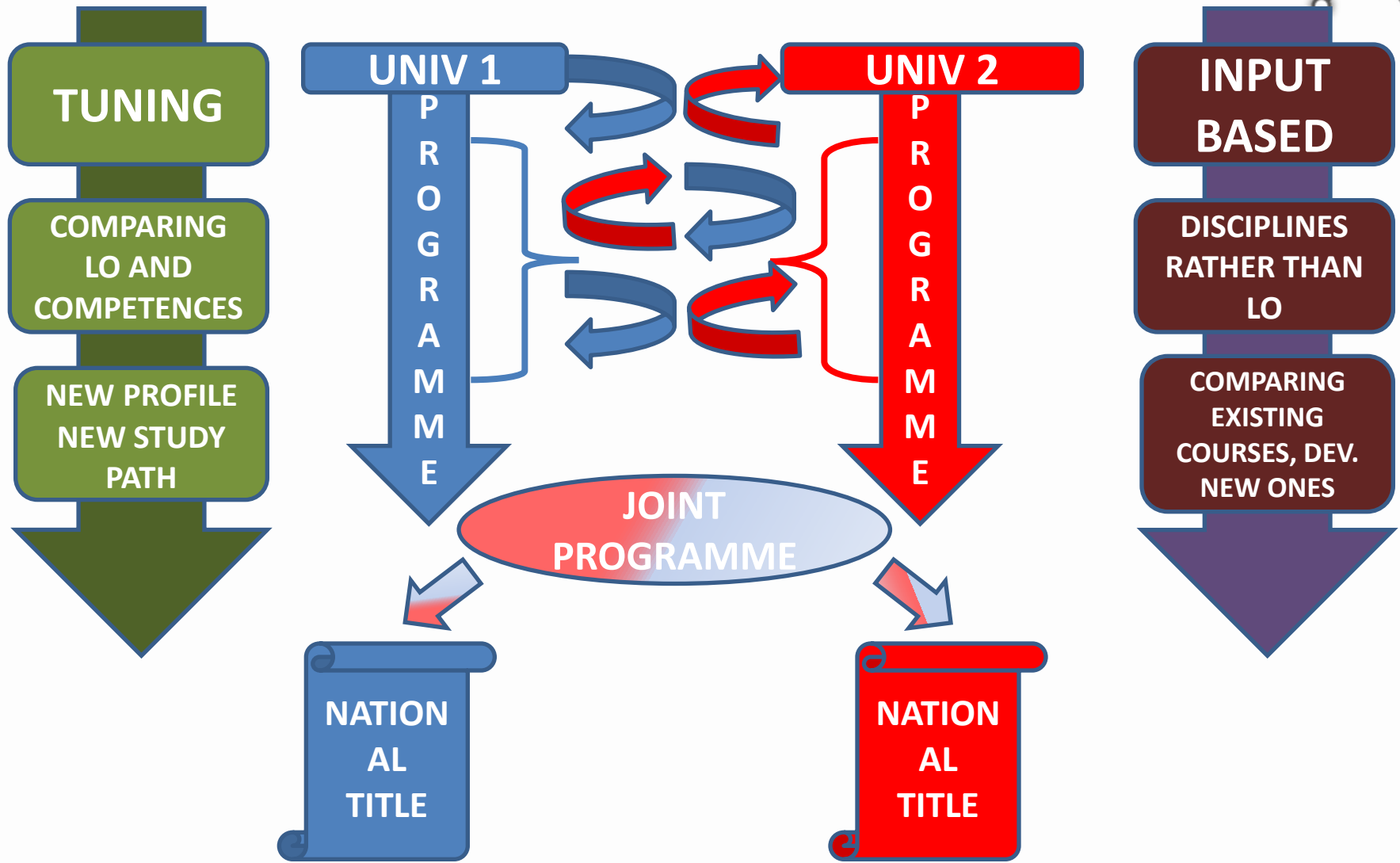


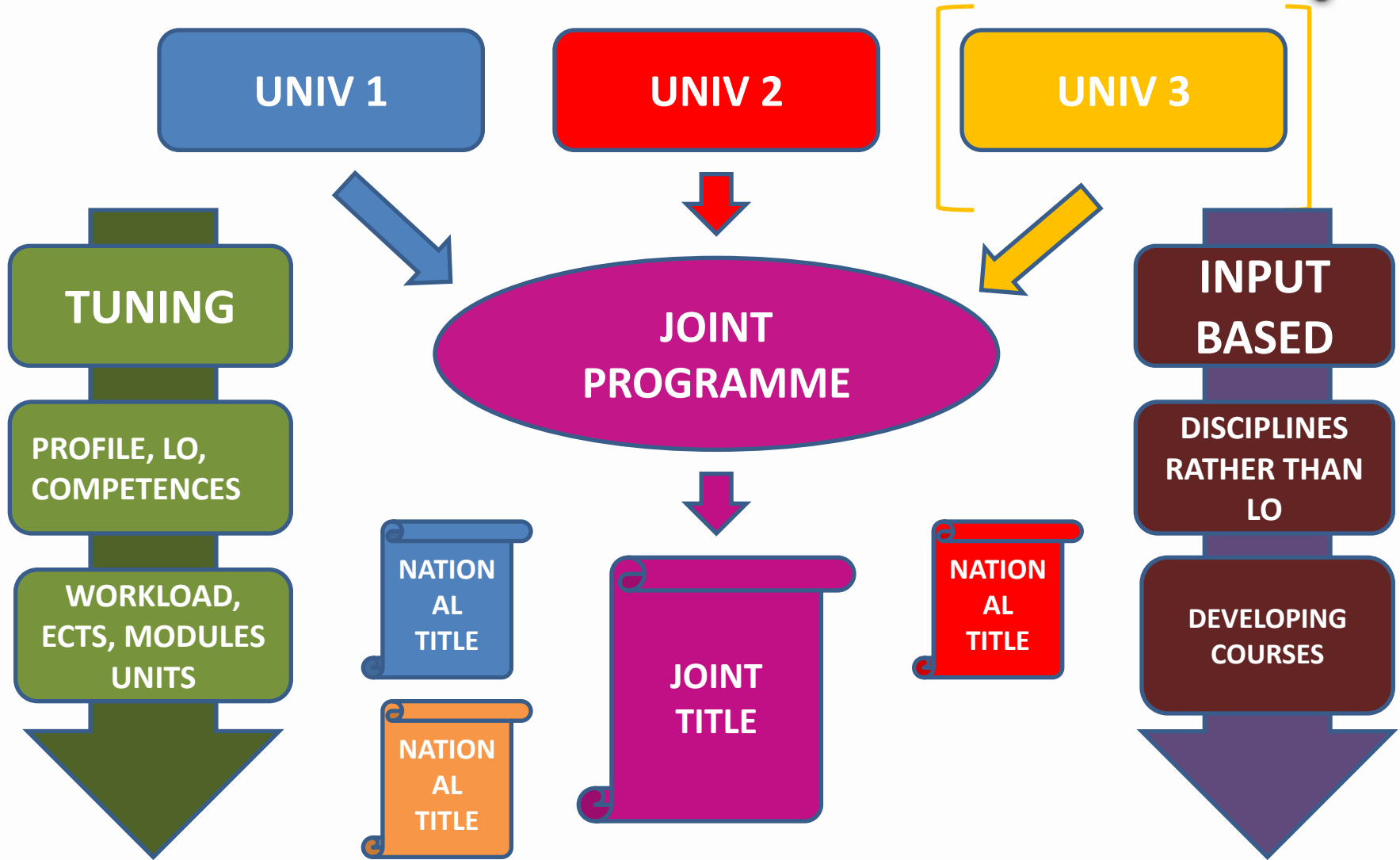
## Models of Joint Programmes

JOIMAN and JOI.CON projects, as well as many other EU funded initiatives (EMQA, JOQOR etc) collected information on existing JPs and they all concluded that **no universal models can be described.**

Models can refer to **curriculum, mobility schemes, governamce/management structures, delivery of final qualification.**









**Highest level of  
Integration  
(EM Model)**

**Multilateral mobility**

**Joint Administration of students and ad hoc services**

**Joint QA measures**

**Common budget and tuition fees**

**Jointly developed curriculum (new, learning outcomes based,)**

**Focus on international students**

**QA measures standards jointly agreed**

**Curriculum based on existing courses/ exploitation of excellences (Comparison of LO, new modules, paths)**

**Jointly agreed students' services and standards**

**Based on own institution tuition policies**

**Focus on local students**

**Bilateral mobility**

**Based on existing comparable courses (input based)**

**Lowest level of  
Integration  
(Structured mobility  
in Bilateral coop.)**



## Questions:

**What is the best model of joint programme?**

**What is the best mobility scheme?**

**What is the ideal target of students?**



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# Phases





## Main phases of a JP life cycle

### JOIMAN phases:

- Planning and Development
- Implementation
- Evaluation – Stabilization



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## Planning and Development

**THINK IN ADVANCE!!!**



## Planning

- Why?
- Institutional support
- Choose your partners
- Open discussion on obstacles
- Financial planning
- Create task forces and give force to tasks (academic, administrative, political)

## Development

- Define the starting point (from scratch vs existing programme)
- Development/adjustment of the Programme (profile, LO, structure, ECTS, units)
- Mobility schemes
- Compliance to rules and laws
- Definition of administrative issues (procedures, approvals, documents ...)
- promotional plan and welcoming services
- approval processes at partner institutions and cooperation agreement



## Planning and Development: recognition issues

What sources we can use to get information on a HED system?

Partner HEIs but **NOT ONLY SCHOLARS!!!**

Involvement of the **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

**ENIC-NARIC centres and official bodies**

**Different cycles:** 3+2, 4+1, (2+3) 5 etc.

How to organize a JP between these systems?

Identify the target group: '**national**' students (students from the partner institutions), '**international**' students (from other systems) or **both**. HEIs can issue 'official' qualifications within their system, but these qualifications can be of '**different**' nature (academic, vocational, research).

The nature of a qualification depending on **the HEI status**:

- **Different types of higher education institutions within binary systems**
- '**Unofficial**' institutions which issue official qualifications
- '**Official**' institutions which issue non official qualifications
- **Unrecognized institutions which claim to be recognized: Diploma Mills**
- **Institutions which operates in a system but belong to another: TNE institutions**



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Complexity in the development phase:

Different professionalities (institution, consortium, external actors) are required to discuss issues which are not “consecutive” but which need to be tackled parallelly

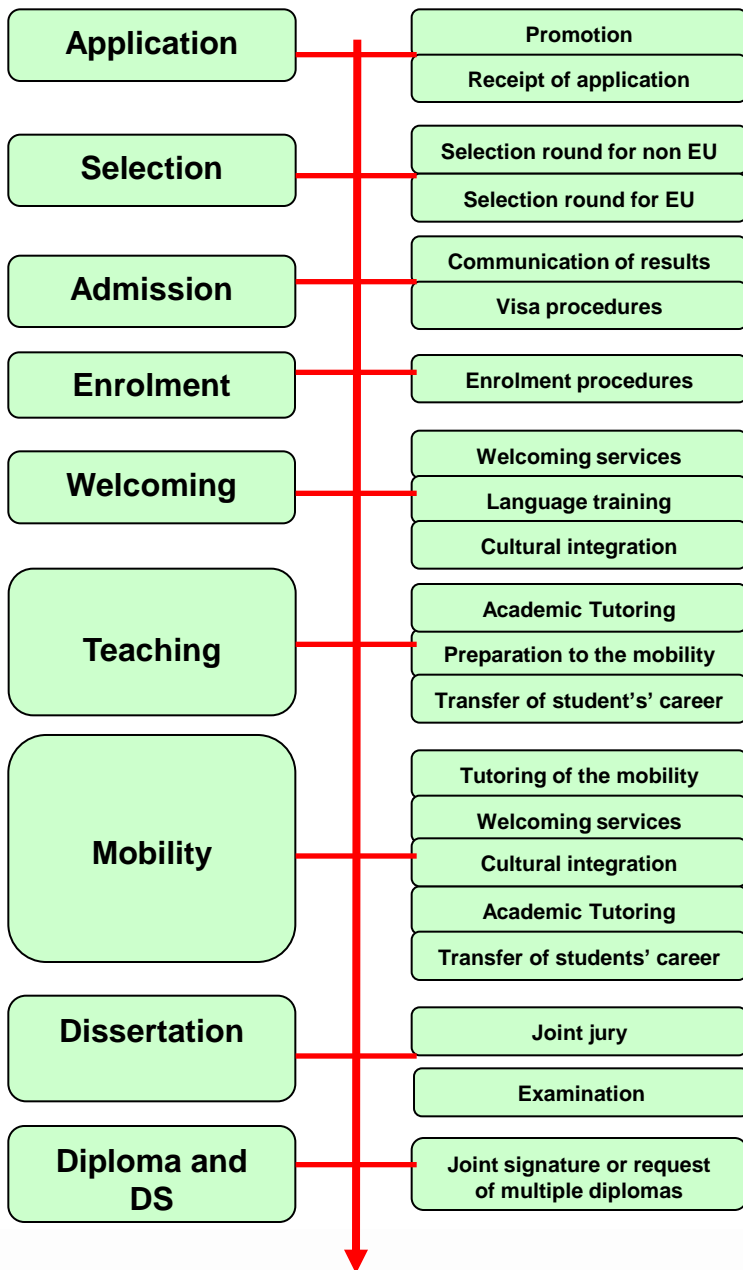


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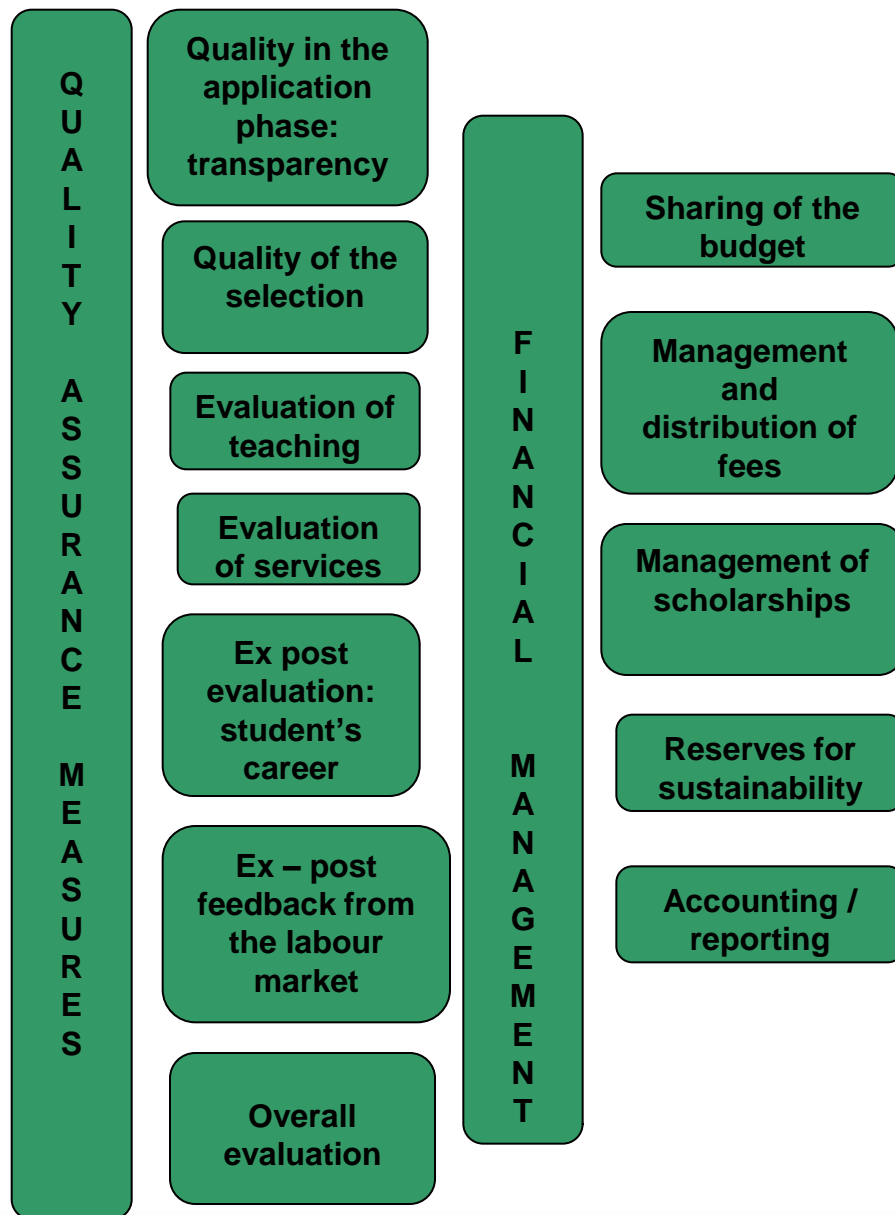
# Implementation

**BE FLEXIBLE!!!**

## Students' administration timeline



## Transversal processes





## Implementation: recognition issues

- Admission to the course without a formal qualification
- 'Recognition of prior learning'
- The concept of 'consequentiality of degrees'

### Elements of the qualification required for the admission

- (a) Minimum duration in years;
- (b) level/cycle and reference scale;
- (c) possibility of admission to the next courses in the reference foreign system;
- (d) nature of the qualification.

### Documents required for the admission

Establish in advance which documents will be required to prospective students: these documents must be shared by all the consortium (**'Achievable' Documents**).

- Curriculum vitae**
- Proof of identity**
- Diploma in original version or certified copy**
- Legalization of documents**
- Diploma Supplement, Transcripts or List of subjects**
- Certified translations**





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# Evaluation

**BE CONNECTED!!!**



## Evaluation

- evaluation and quality assurance of the program and the curriculum
- internal and external reporting
- revision of the agreements (if needed)
- Sustainability – stabilization
- **final format of documents/certificates/diplomas**



logo/seal of the University 1

logo/seal of the University 2

logo/seal of the University 3

Record number / Student registration number

**Joint Master Degree in Environmental Engineering**

[Name of the Joint Programme]

this is to certify that

[Name of student]

place & date of birth: xxx

having successfully completed the prescribed joint course  
of study since xxx until xxx

at the [Name of the Consortium or Network]

consequently, on behalf of the participating universities of this joint programme is awarded the

**Master Degree in Environmental Engineering**

[awarding date]

[final mark and credits]

University name 1

University name 2

University name 3

Legal representative

Legal representative

Legal representative

(official stamp and signature)

(official stamp and signature)

(official stamp and signature)

Official names of the national degrees corresponding to the Joint Master Degree:

Country 1: University name 1 and national degree name 1 (e.g Laurea Magistrale in ... - DM 270/2004 etc.)

Country 2: University name 2 and national degree name 2 (e.g Máster Universitario en ... - Real Decreto etc.)

Country 3: University name 3 and national degree name 3 (e.g Mestrado em ... - Decreto-lei etc.)

For further details on the present joint programme, please refer to the related Diploma Supplement

Also if more national qualifications are issued, within themselves it will be important to insert the **NAME of the JOINT PROGRAMME** and a note where it is explicitly specified that this national qualification is not the only one which was issued to the student for that course of study:

- ‘the XXX course is organised jointly by XXX consortium in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus programme’;
- ‘the present diploma is awarded in collaboration with other XXX higher education institutions according to the XXX joint programme’;
- ‘this is a double/multiple degree awarded in the framework of the XXX joint programme’.



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# Why knowing processes and life cycle is important?



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# Tools



## Consortium agreement

- 1. Description of the Programme**
- 2. Legal Framework**
- 3. Cooperation aspects** (coordinating institution, the boards, task forces etc.)
- 4. Promotion of the programme**
- 5. Student's administration** (student application form, criteria for admission, selection procedure, enrolment of students, academic progress and examination of students, mobility, students' rights and responsibilities, etc.)
- 6. Financial Management**
- 7. Services** (insurance obligations, prevention and safety, etc.)
- 8. Quality assurance**
- 9. Faculty and administrative staff exchange**
- 10. Duration**
- 11. Application of law and dispute resolution**
- 12. Intellectual property rights**
- 13. Confidentiality**



## **JOIMAN**

<https://www.joiman.eu>

Cooperation Agreement Template

Good Practice Report

Glossary

Guidelines

## **BRIDGE**

<https://http://erasmusmundus.it/descrizione/bridge-handbook-1.aspx>

Handbook: joint programmes and recognition of joint degrees

Lists of:

- HEIs
- NQFs
- QA Agencies
- Accredited programmes



## Messages

**1. Make sure your partner have your same understanding (terminology)**

**There is not a best model of Joint Programme. The best is the one that matches your institutional objectives, and which is feasible with the opportunities/means available**

**2. Know the life cycle and the processes/phases to start discussions in advance and to identify key external stakeholders**

**3. Adopt available tools in support to your efforts**





## **Ideal evolution (with funding)**

### **Intensive programmes (KA2 - Strategic Partnership)**

#### **1. Joint Programme development (KA2 – Capacity)**

- **WP – Curriculum development**
- **WP – Administrative procedures and Recognition**
- **WP – Accreditation**
- **WP – Implementation/testing phase – MOBILITY**

#### **2. Degree mobility – Joint Degree Courses (KA1, ex EM1)**



**THANK YOU**  
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