

Indicators

The indicators for eQuATIC are grouped in three clusters that shape quality of an international partnership: quality of the partner, quality of the information exchange, impact of the cooperation.

Quality of the partner

When looking at a partner and searching for indicators that assess its quality, it is highly useful to consider the performances of incoming and outgoing students. To assess the incoming and outgoing students performances, we identify the academic results of incoming and outgoing students. Other indicators regarding the quality of the partner could be found in student questionnaires. For Erasmus+ students the participant report from outgoing students (that is available via Mobility Tool) is a great source of information. The Mobility Tool+ allows users to generate participants reports, which contains valuable data regarding quality of partner. These reports come from individuals who have taken part in an Erasmus+ mobility and who are asked to give highly valuable feedback regarding their experience as an Erasmus student. The report is created through an online survey which the participants receive at the end of their mobility period. Through these reports, students share information regarding the support they received from the host institution, information on the facilities at the receiving institution, as well as their academic experience during their mobility. These reports thus contain key information on partner institutions which can help to assess the quality of partnerships. University rankings can be used as well as an indicator of the quality of a partner. They are based on several factors, including but not limited to: quality of education (learning environment, number of awards received by alumni and/or staff), research excellence and influence (research productivity and income, highly cited research), internationalisation (ability to attract students and faculty from all over the world) and industry income (ability to transfer knowledge to the industry). An institution that appears in the top-500 of several international rankings such as the Academic Ranking of the World Universities (ARWU), the World University Rankings from Times Higher Education (THE) and the QS University Rankings (QS) can see its appearance in these rankings as a proof of its quality. Amongst the previously cited rankings, two of them (THE and QS rankings) include an internationalisation factor in their methodology, by taking a look at international to domestic student ratio and international to domestic staff ratio for both rankings, as well as international collaboration (universities publications with international co-authors) for the Times Higher Education ranking.

- **Performance of incoming students (from the partner):** This indicator combines the study load and study success of incoming exchange students to the partner. Study load refers to the number of credits taken per semester. Study success is the ratio between the number of credits taken and the number of credits successfully completed.
- **Performance of outgoing students (to the partner):** This indicator combines the study load and study success of outgoing exchange students to the partner. Study load refers to the number of credits taken per semester. Study success is the ratio between the number of credits taken and the number of credits successfully completed.
- **Support and facilities at the host institution:** This indicator combines four elements extracted from the Erasmus+ participant reports: the level of satisfaction with support arrangements provided by the receiving partner institution; the level of satisfaction with how the receiving institution dealt with questions, complaints or problems; the level of satisfaction with assistance in finding accommodation; and how the student facilities were rated. Support questions count for 80% of the final score, the one on facilities for 20%.
- **Academic quality:** The indicator is the result of the appreciation of students about teaching methods, the quality of the content of the courses they attended and the learning support they received at the host institution. The information comes from the participant report from incoming students.
- **Rankings:** The indicator on rankings is based on the three major HEI rankings i.e. Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), THE World University Rankings and [QS World University Rankings](#). Institutions that are ranked among the top 500 in at least two rankings will receive a score for this indicator based on their position. Information on rankings is the same for all eQuATIC users. The data about rankings is uploaded once a year at a central level making it available for each eQuATIC user.

Quality of the information exchange

When engaging in a mobility abroad, students require a lot of information to ensure a successful mobility. The availability of information, its quality and its accessibility are key components of a quality partnership. Moreover availability and exchange of information is also an important element for staff facilitating student exchanges. Finding data that is available in order to indicate how information flows between universities is somewhat of a challenge. Two important elements could be considered as a proxy for quality of the information exchange. Both of them are based on student's assessment as part of the Erasmus participant reports: there is feedback regarding the course catalogue, the Learning Agreement, the Transcript of Records, etc. One of the most cumbersome processes in the context of student exchanges is the learning agreement. The availability of a high quality, up to date course catalogue is crucial for making this process more easy. The information in the course catalogue should include amongst others information about courses, ECTS credits, learning outcomes... needed to create a learning agreement.

The exchange of mobility documents, such as the Learning Agreement and the Transcript of Records, is also a valuable indicator to assess how easy documents are being exchanged. Apart from the content of the learning agreement that should come from the course catalogue, the document needs to be signed by the three parties involved in the exchange – the student, the sending institution and the receiving institution or organisation/enterprise. Based on the Erasmus+ participant reports one can monitor if the host institution did sign the learning agreement before the mobility. The Transcript of Records is another crucial document in the recognition process that should be delivered on time to the student and/or host institution. Another element that facilitates the recognition process is having the grade distribution table from a partner university available to support the grade conversion process. If grade distribution tables are available grade conversion is merely a statistical exercise leading to fair and transparent grade conversion. Having the information available in the Egracons makes the process even more easy as converting grades is, literally, only few clicks away. Therefore the availability of grade distribution tables in Egracons is taken into account.

- **Course catalogue information:** The availability of good quality information to prepare a learning agreement can make the learning agreement process a lot less cumbersome. This indicator refers to the information in the course catalogue at the receiving partner institution. It is based on the feedback from incoming students in the Erasmus+ participant reports. Students indicate whether the course catalogue was: up to date (+4); available in time (+3); complete (+2) and/or published on the website (+1).
- **Exchange of mobility documents:** The exchange of mobility documents indicator assesses whether the Learning Agreement was signed by the host institution (25% of the final score) and whether the transcript of records was received in time (25% of the final score). For this indicator it is also taken into account whether a grading table is available in the Egracons tool (50% of the final score). The data on available grading tables is uploaded for all eQuATIC users once a year.

Impact of the cooperation

A partnership is only a good partnership if both partners gain something from the cooperation. Therefore the final cluster is about impact of cooperation. The most obvious element when talking about impact of a partnership is student and staff mobility. If we conclude a partnership enabling mobility, our main goal is to send students and staff back and forth between both partner institutions. It goes without saying that if no mobility takes place in the course of a partnership (in the context of the Erasmus programme, agreements are typically signed for the duration of the whole programme) the impact is very low. However also other elements can be taken into account when talking about impact of cooperation. The involvement of different faculties and departments gives us a better idea about the interest in a certain university across the institution. Finally educational collaboration is also an important element to be taken into account. Having common projects funded by Educational development programmes (such as Erasmus+) or double/joint/multiple degree programmes with a specific institution lead to a higher impact of the partnership as a whole.

- **Mobility rate:** For the mobility rate indicator incoming and outgoing exchanges of student and staff is taken into account. The indicator does not take into account actual numbers but assesses if mobility took place over the years combined with an overall balance.
- **Involvement:** The indicator tells us something about the involvement of faculties/departments (defined using the ISCED broad fields of study) and the different programmes (as defined by the ISCED narrow fields of study) as indicated in the existing agreements with partner institutions.
- **Educational collaboration:** Educational collaboration combines project funded by Education programmes (such as Erasmus +) and double/joint /multiple degree programmes and graduates in those programmes.

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