



unite!

University Network for Innovation,  
Technology and Engineering

# Framework agreement for Unite! Flexible Education Offerings

2023 - 2027

# Unite! Framework Agreement for Flexible Education Offerings

between

Aalto University Foundation sr operating as Aalto University, Finland;  
Institut polytechnique de Grenoble, France;  
Université Grenoble Alpes, France;  
KTH Kungl. Tekniska högskolan, Sweden;  
Politechnika Wroclawska, Poland;  
Politecnico di Torino, Italy;  
Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany;  
Technische Universität Graz, Austria  
Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal;  
Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Spain

hereinafter, jointly or individually, referred to as “Parties”/“Institutions” or “Party”/“Institution”.

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## Whereas

- The Parties form the European University Alliance Unite!, selected with support from the European Commission in 2019 and for the second phase in 2022;
- the amended Unite! charter signed in November 2022 declares that Unite!! will “EMPOWER students, staff and faculty ... in the development of flexible study paths..”, “DEVELOP a European University by sharing resources in services in education...” “PIONEER new concepts of education... by transdisciplinary approaches”, “EDUCATE a new generation of European students ... who actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge, European competitiveness and the development of solutions for societal changes” and “EXEMPLIFY the role of a (virtual and physical) European intern-university campus”;
- the Framework Agreement connects to the Unite! quality goals declared in the Unite! Quality Management Manual for non-degree mobility and to increase the number or attractive offers for short-term credit mobility;
- the Unite! mission statement for 2030 states that Unite!’s ambition is to:
  - realise excellence in education, research and innovation by creating unique new opportunities for students, academics, staff and further ecosystem partners
  - create and disseminate, jointly with the other European University alliances and with stakeholder organisations, pioneering innovations for the European Education and Research Areas.
  - actively contribute to European citizenship, as well as to European attractiveness, resilience and competitiveness on a global scale;
- Unite creates:
  - the hybrid (virtual, physical and blended) and multilingual Unite! trans-European Campus with easily accessible joint educational offerings, shared and pooled resources, efficient services and green mobility
  - state-of-the-art learning opportunities with innovative pedagogies for challenge-based approaches, student-centred learning, and high-quality interaction in digital, hybrid and face-to-face learning environments
  - a platform for the open exchange and the free circulation of talents and ideas, strengthening key skills and competencies, supporting diverse research and professional careers based on reformed research assessment, and offering unique opportunities for contributions
  - a community that engages students as equal partners, enables staff to collaborate and participate in professional development all across Europe, and integrates citizens, entrepreneurs, start-ups and innovators into co-creation, knowledge exchange and joint actions within the alliance.

the institutions named above agree to cooperate for exchange activities in the context of the European University Alliance Unite! as follows:

## Preamble

In 2021 the Unite! Framework agreement for Digital Courses and Virtual exchange activities was signed by the seven original partners. This new agreement aims to increase the scope of the activities, parties, and will co-exist with the said agreement until its expiration in 2025.

The Unite! strategy for Flexible Education Offerings is to support the objective of the partner institutions for enhancement of mobility at all levels within the partnership as well as the strategy of the European Commission in the renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education (2017). Flexible Education Offerings focus on enabling students and staff to boost their educational training or life-long learning path with skills valued for the future profession.

## 1. Scope of the Agreement

Flexible education offerings are eligible for all subject areas, including courses in language & culture and transversal courses. The activities can be designed for students at all levels (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle) as well as teaching and administrative staff. The framework agreement addresses activities with physical, blended and virtual teaching and learning components. The activities shall by no means replace long-term physical mobility but provide a complementary and inclusive option. It is further expected to support the concept of \*Internationalisation at Home. The purpose of this framework agreement is to encourage the development of strategies, establish a common vision, and create new physical, blended and virtual exchange activities whose implementation will be subject to specific multilateral agreements.

## 2. \*Quality goals and quality management

- The activities under this framework agreement supports the cross-cutting Quality Goals of Unite!,
- Quality assurance will follow the Unite! model process for quality management, as described in the Unite! Quality Management Manual.
- The partner institutions will work on further operationalisation of the goals and the implementation of the QM process.

## 3. Valid signatures

This framework agreement is signed by the legal representatives of each Party. Subsequent agreements are signed in accordance with local regulations for each partner institution. The partner institutions accept electronic and digital signatures for this framework Agreement as well as the multilateral exchange agreements connected to it.

## 4. Process for adopting Unite! flexible education offerings

- For new initiatives to be labelled as a Unite! activity, they should be offered by a minimum of 3 collaborating partners. Participation in any activity is always offered to all partners. By decision

of the Unite! steering committee, exceptions can be made for activities with clear Unite! features aiming at fulfilling any of the Unite! quality goals.

- New proposals/activities that need more development are brought to the agenda for the relevant community or working group to:
  - elaborate on the possibility for more Unite! partners to join the activity,
  - elaborate on connection to the Unite! quality management goals or
  - suggest initiating a pilot, if needed. In such cases a working group is established.
- Approved Unite! Education offerings will be included in the Unite! Course catalogue.

## 5. Models for flexible courses and virtual exchange

### 5.1 Management of student exchange

Models for exchange activities can comprise of, and are not limited to:

- a) \*Virtual exchange agreements for \*full courses awarding credits from the hosting institution
- b) Intensive \*short-term courses, e.g., summer schools
- c) \*Blended learning, i.e., digital course with embedded physical mobility

Courses may be:

- based on the major subject
- transversal courses: e.g., \*language & culture, entrepreneurship

#### 5.1.1. General terms for management

- **The number of participating Unite! partners** vary, depending on the subject area and the scope of the activity. Details of the activity actions will be agreed upon in separate agreements including liability, dispute resolution and force majeure clauses.
- **The degree seeking student status** remains at the home institution, and the incoming students will have a non-degree student status at the host institution.
- **Tuition fees** are paid to the home institution only, unless a specific fee structure applies, see below.
- **Application procedure** and deadline are provided by the hosting institution.
- **Student nomination** is done by the home institution with respect to available positions, taking inclusive criteria into account. In case of a tie in the nomination process, it is recommended that priority is given to students who have not previously participated in a traditional mobility programme.
- **Admission of nominated students**, following a simplified application process for exchange students, is at the discretion of the hosting institution.
- **Registration at the \*host institution** must enable access to the learning platform during physical and virtual studies.
- **\*Automatic recognition** for credits achieved within the students' degree programme shall be assured by the home institution. Recognition of \*extra curricula courses is done according to the procedure of the home university. The assessment process done at the host institution is automatically recognized by the home institution.
- **Transcript of records** is provided digitally. Modes of seamless course recognition through digital standards for credit transfer are encouraged.

### 5.1.2 Specific conditions for:

- a. **Virtual exchange credit agreements**
  - **A Multilateral Agreement** is signed for Unite! Virtual Exchange activities in accordance with local regulations at each partner institution. The agreement includes, but is not limited to: general contact information, student nomination process, recommended language skills; grading systems and maximum number of credits a student can attend during one semester. For each specific subject, an operational addendum is attached to the multilateral agreement.
  - **The addendum, containing a course catalogue** is agreed on collaboratively, involving academic and administrative staff at each participating institution. The course catalogue provides information on, but not limited to: course relevant information such as title, level, credits, period taught, specific course requirements; a link to the course syllabus at the hosting institution; application procedures and deadline; the number of available positions for Unite! students and information on contact persons. The course catalogue is updated each semester.
- b. **Intensive short-term courses, e.g., summer schools**
  - At least one reserved position per partner is offered to Unite! students.
  - Course fee is paid by the student, if required by the hosting institution.
- c. **Blended learning, i.e., digital course with embedded physical mobility**
  - Separate agreements are made to define the course structure including delivering of course materials and examination, additional course costs and local fees.
  - No tuition fees are charged by the hosting university for participating students.
  - Student grants, if eligible for blended mobility, are managed by the home institution.
  - Arrangements are made to assure access to the university campus during the physical mobility.
  - The home institution is responsible for the travel insurance for the physical part of the blended mobility.

### 5.2 Management of staff \*training activities

- Training should be understood in a broad sense, including job shadowing and professional short mobility
- Virtual and blended staff training activities are encouraged to serve as a complement to physical training activities. **Unite! training sessions are open to all partners, offering at least one reserved position per partner.**
- **Offers are** collected by Unite! community for Staff mobility and distributed through the communication channels.
- **Depending on the setup of the training activity; participants contact the hosting university directly or are nominated** by the home institution to the Staff mobility community coordinators who will collect and forward the information to the hosting institution.
- **Prerequisites and required language skills** are checked by the home institution.
- **Documentation/certificates** are provided to the participants by the hosting institution.

### 5.3 Management of teaching exchange

Virtual and blended teaching exchange are encouraged to serve as a complement to physical staff exchange. For example:

- a. Visiting lectures
- b. Supervision of master's theses

c. Supervision of PhD students

The activity is certified by the host institution and recognized by the home institution towards the required teaching workload

## 6. Shared Unite! decisions and responsibilities

Shared decisions and responsibilities are managed collaboratively by staff appointed by the Unite! partner institutions for strategic management (steering committee/SC) and operational management (Unite! communities/CM). Shared decisions/responsibilities are, but are not limited to:

- Quality assurance management (SC).
- Monitoring of participation numbers (CMs involved).
- Information on available course offers at the Unite! promoted through Unite! news channels (CMs involved).
- Collecting offers of virtual courses for students (CM for student mobility).
- Collecting offers of virtual training activities for teaching and administrative staff (CM for staff mobility).
- Monitoring and administration of the Framework Agreement (CM for student mobility).

## 7. Responsibilities of each institution

- Deciding on number of places available for the Unite! partners and accepting the participants with respect to the agreement for the activity.
- Application process and admission/acceptance of inbound Unite! participants.
- Welcome information to inbound participants.
- Provide information on course registration.
- Delivering courses/training/ tutoring to be offered as part of this Framework Agreement.
- Granting access to the virtual study environment and course materials.
- Provide information on registrations for examinations and re-examinations.
- Providing transcript of records
- Internal advertisement and promotion for Unite! virtual study/training offers for students and staff.
- Outbound participant selection.
- Learning agreements, when required.
- Grants, when eligible.
- Process for automatic course recognition.
- Recognition of staff training achievements.
- Recognition of staff participation in virtual teaching exchange.
- \*GDPR and processing of personal data.
- Provide information on all applicable regulations.



## 8. Commitment to the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

The parties commit to respect the quality requirements of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education in all aspects related to the organisation and management of the exchange activities, in particular, in recognition of the credits awarded to students in the context of a learning agreement.

## 9. Communication

Available study/training offers are communicated by, but not limited to

- Unite! official website
- Unite! internal newsletter
- Local website and platforms at each institution
- Local communication channels to reach local students and staff
- Unite! Instagram page (and other relevant SoMe channels)
- Official Unite! social media channels

## 10. Disciplinary actions

In case of scientific misconduct or breach of code of conduct of the hosting university, disciplinary actions for students are handled in compliance with the laws and regulations at the institution being responsible for the course or part of education concerned. In case of disciplinary actions, the home institution should be informed without delay.

## 11. Processing of personal data

The Parties mutually agree that they know and enforce the current legislation on the processing of personal data within their own organizations, including primary and secondary law and the Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27/04/2016 (hereinafter referred to as the "GDPR"). The GDPR is applicable for processing personal data under this agreement. The contact details of the parties for the purposes of this article are as follows:

**For Aalto University** the Data Controller is Aalto University Foundation sr, located at Otakaari 24, 02150 Espoo, Finland, represented by its Vice President for Education. The contact details of the Data Controller: [dpo@aalto.fi](mailto:dpo@aalto.fi)

**For Institut Polytechnique de Grenoble** the Data Controller is Institut Polytechnique de Grenoble located 46 avenue Félix Viallet, 38031 Grenoble, France, represented by its President. The contact of the Data controller is the Data Protection Officer: [dpo@grenoble-inp.fr](mailto:dpo@grenoble-inp.fr).

**For UGA** the Data Controller is Université Grenoble Alpes located at Bâtiment DSIM Domaine Universitaire, 31 rue des mathématiques, 38400 Saint Martin d'Hères, France, represented by its President. The contact details of the Data Controller is: [dpo@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr](mailto:dpo@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr)

**For KTH** the Data Controller is Kungliga Tekniska högskolan, located at Brinellvägen 8, 100 44 Stockholm represented by its President. The contact of the Data controller is the Data Protection Officer: [dataskyddsbud@kth.se](mailto:dataskyddsbud@kth.se).

**For PoliTo** the Data Controller is Politecnico di Torino, represented by its Rector, with statutory seat in C.so Duca degli Abruzzi, n. 24, 10129 Torino. The contact details of the Data Controller are: [politecnicoditorino@pec.polito.it](mailto:politecnicoditorino@pec.polito.it) (certified e-mail); information and inquiries: [privacy@polito.it](mailto:privacy@polito.it); Data Protection Officer: [dpo@polito.it](mailto:dpo@polito.it).

**For Politechnika Wroclawska** the Data Controller is Politechnika Wroclawska; Wyb. Wyspiańskiego 27, 50-370 Wrocław, Poland, represented by its Rector. The contact details of the Data Protection Officer: [iod@pwr.edu.pl](mailto:iod@pwr.edu.pl).

**For Technical University of Darmstadt** the Data Controller is Technical University of Darmstadt, Karolinenplatz 5, 64289 Darmstadt, represented by its president. The contact details of the data controller are Technical University of Darmstadt, The Data Protection Officers, Karolinenplatz 5, 64289 Darmstadt, [datenschutz@tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:datenschutz@tu-darmstadt.de).

**For TU Graz** the Data Controller is Graz University of Technology, Rechbauerstraße 12, 8010 Graz, Austria. The TU Graz [data](#) protection officer is x-tention Informationstechnologie GmbH, Römerstraße 80A, 4600 Wels. Information and inquiries: [datenschutz@tugraz.at](mailto:datenschutz@tugraz.at)

**For University of Lisboa** the Data Controller is University of Lisboa, Reitoria, Alameda da Universidade, 1649-004 Lisboa, Portugal represented by its rector. The contact of the Data Controller is the Data Protection Officer: [rgpd@ulisboa.pt](mailto:rgpd@ulisboa.pt).

**For UPC** the Data Controller is Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, located at Jordi Girona, 31 08034 Barcelona, represented by its rector. The contact details of the Data Protection Officer are: Plaça Eusebi Güell, 6, Edifici Vèrtex Planta 2, Porta 206, 08034 Barcelona, [proteccio.dades@upc.edu](mailto:proteccio.dades@upc.edu)

## 12. Visibility

The parties, in relation to this agreement, can publicly disclose information concerning the signatory parties, its object and term, the parties' obligations, including those of a financial nature, and any amendments thereof.

The Parties authorize the partner institutions to publish any information related to this Framework Agreement as well as related Agreements and Addenda on their official website.

## 13. Terms of agreement

This Framework Agreement is valid for 4 years from the date of the last signature, on the understanding that it may be terminated by any of the parties in writing at least six months in advance. In this case, commitments already in progress shall nonetheless be fulfilled and students/staff enlisted in the activity at that time will be allowed to complete the studies within the regular time set for the activity. This Framework Agreement may be amended by means of communication sent between the institutions. Any amendments approved by all institutions must be set out in a document signed by the parties. This document must then be annexed to this Framework agreement and the amendments shall be incorporated into the specific multilateral agreements that have been signed and are in effect and into the new agreement.

The Unite! task force for student mobility is responsible for monitoring this Framework Agreement. A review shall be made with one year of experience after signature or in Q4 2024 at the latest. Changes, if any, would be effective from the academic year 2025/26 including the preparation phase the previous semester.

This framework agreement is not intended to create binding or legal obligations on either party. As and when any of the above activities are developed mutually into concrete activity, such details will be agreed upon in separate agreements with reference to the terms indicated in this agreement.

## SIGNATURES OF THE PARTNER INSTITUTIONS (legal representatives)

The Document being signed within the time period December 2023 – February 2024.

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS	NAME/ FUNCTION	DATE	SIGNATURE
Aalto University Foundation sr operating as Aalto University	Vice President		
Institut polytechnique de Grenoble	President		
Université Grenoble Alpes (UGA)	President		
KTH Kungl. Tekniska högskolan	Vice President		
Politechnika Wroclawska	Rector		
Politecnico di Torino	Rector		
TU Darmstadt	President		
TU Graz	Rector		
Universidade de Lisboa	Rector		
UPC-Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya	Rector		