Regulations on Student Mobility and Academic Recognition of Mobility Periods Abroad

Basic Provisions

Article 1

Regulations on Student Mobility and Academic Recognition of Mobility Periods Abroad (hereinafter: Regulations) regulate basic principles and procedures in regards to international student mobility being achieved at a College of Vocational Studies which is a member of the Academy of Vocational Studies which supports and promotes student mobility as an integral part of the process of internationalisation of higher education, in accordance with legislation requirements and generally accepted European standards. Rules regarding international student mobility stipulated by these Regulations can also be analogously applied to student mobility within the Republic of Serbia. Criteria and conditions of student mobility as well as the recognition of mobility period abroad are regulated by the general act of a college or by a mutual agreement of colleges within the Academy.

Basic Terms

Article 2

Student Mobility - Study period and training which students realise at universities, i.e. institutions abroad.

Sending/Home Institution - An institution of higher education (university, i.e. faculty) sending the student on exchange. In regards to rights and obligations towards the outgoing student (in terms of these Regulations, if not otherwise specified) sending/home institution is considered to be the college that sends the student on exchange, i.e. the college where the student is studying at, except in cases when the study programme the student is attending is realised under the direct jurisdiction of the Academy, in which case the Academy is to be considered the home institution in regards to the rights and obligations towards the outgoing student.

Receiving/Host Institution - Institution of higher vocational education, or another institution where the student realises mobility. In regards to the rights and obligations towards an incoming student (as well as in terms of these Regulations, unless otherwise specified), receiving/host institution is the college at which the foreign student realises mobility, except in cases where the study programme which the student attends on exchange is realised under the direct jurisdiction of the Academy, in which case the Academy is to be considered the host institution in regards to the rights and obligations towards the incoming student.

Outgoing Student - A student who realises his/her mobility (studies or training) at a another institution of higher education abroad.

Incoming Student - Student of higher education institution from abroad who realises his/her mobility (studies or training) at a higher education institution of the Academy of the Applied Studies in Serbia.

Mobility Period - Time period during which the outgoing/incoming student is on exchange, i.e. training abroad.

Study Visit Plan - A document with which the student, while applying for an exchange programme, suggests courses he/she plans to take, or suggests other academic activities (research, etc.) he/she plans to realise at the host institution. If the student is accepted on exchange, a Learning Agreement is
concluded based on the Study Visit Plan. It is obligatory for the Study Visit Plan to be signed by the student and the authorised person at his/her home institution.

**Learning Agreement** - Contract determining obligations and academic activities of the student of Bachelor, Specialist or Master Studies, which he/she will realise at the host institution. The Learning Agreement is trilateral, and it is concluded between the home institution, the host institution, and the student participating in mobility.

**Study and Research Plan** - Contract determining obligations and academic activities of the student of the second degree studies, which he/she will realise at the host institution. The Study and Research Plan is trilateral, and it is concluded between the home institution, the host institution, and the student participating in mobility.

**Training Agreement and Quality Commitment** - Contract arranging the training programme at an institution abroad for an individual student.

**Transcript of Records** - A document through which an institution of higher education provides detailed data regarding the achieved academic results (grades, ECTS credits) of the student.

**Transcript of Work** - A certificate with which an institution provides detailed data regarding the realised training and achieved results of the student.

**Academic ECTS Coordinator** - Person authorised by the Academy, i.e. a college, to sign documents on mobility, to conduct proceedings regarding the academic recognition of the period of mobility and adopting the Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period.

**Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period** – A procedure with which a decision is made regarding the recognition of passed exams, ECTS credits and grades the student had acquired on exchange.

**Equivalent Grade** - The grade determined in the process of academic recognition of the mobility period to be the equivalent to the grade the student received at the host institution.

**ECTS Grading Table** - Recommendation of the European Commission regarding the interpretation and understanding of the results the student achieved on exchange and their conversion into ECTS credits and grades at the home institution.

**ECTS Grading Scale** - Recommendation of the European Commission for the interpretation and understanding of the results the student achieved on exchange and their conversion to ECTS credits and grades at the home institution. ECTS Grading Scale is a transitional solution to be utilised until the transition to the use of the ECTS Grading Table.

**Course Catalogue** – An overview of college courses (code, content, and number of ECTS credits, expected learning outcome following the successful mastering of pre-exam and exam obligations).

**Student Mobility**

**Article 3**

Student mobility in terms of these Regulations implies studying, or the realisation of training during the determined period at the host institution abroad, upon which the student returns to his/her home institution and continues the study programme originally enrolled.

Student mobility includes the study period, i.e. training, within the first or second degree studies. Student mobility is primarily realised within the institutional exchange programmes and on the basis of international agreements at the Academy, i.e. college level.

Student can realise mobility outside of institutional mobility from the previous paragraph (e.g. on the basis of interstate agreements, available exchange programmes and study possibilities at universities abroad, as well as on the basis of personal choice).

The Academy supports two-way mobility, which implies study periods/training of the Academy students, at a host institution abroad, as well as study periods/training of foreign students at the Academy or any college which is a member of the Academy.
Duration of the Mobility Period

Article 4

Terms of these Regulations are primarily applied on student mobility that is at least one semester in duration, which does not exclude their adequate application in cases of a lesser duration of the mobility period.

A student of the Academy can participate in mobility programmes several times during his/her studies, bearing in mind that the total duration of the mobility period at the same level of studies cannot be longer than half the total duration of the study programme the student is enrolled in.

Mobility Documents

Article 5

Key documents on which student mobility is based are:

1. Bilateral Agreements
2. Study Visit Plan
3. Learning Agreement
4. Study and Research Plan
5. Training/Research/Teaching Plan
6. Training Agreement and Quality Commitment
7. Transcript of Records
8. Transcript of Work
9. Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period

The documents listed in the previous paragraph do not exclude the possibility of different mobility documents existing within a specific exchange programme.

Study Visit Plan

Article 6

A Study Visit Plan is a document in which a student, while applying for an exchange programme, suggests the courses he/she plans to pass at the host university (or other academic activities that he/she plans to realise during the mobility period).

The Study Visit Plan is not an obligatory mobility document; it is composed in cases when it is required by a particular study programme.

The Study Visit Plan is of an orientational character and its purpose is to introduce the host institution with the planned academic activities of the student applying for exchange.

The Study Visit Plan is signed by the student and the authorised Academic ECTS Coordinator at his/her home institution and is composed prior to the student submitting his/her competition documentation for a particular mobility programme.

If the student is accepted on an exchange programme, the Learning Agreement will be composed on the basis of the Study Visit Plan.

Learning Agreement

Article 7

With the Learning Agreement the contracting parties (the student, the home institution, and the host institution) specify the subjects the student plans to pass, i.e. other academic activities (e.g. research), which the student plans to realise during his/her study period at the host institution.
The Learning Agreement is a mobility document for students of the first and second level of higher education.

The Learning Agreement, in its essence, should be in accordance with the submitted Study Visit Plan (if the Study Visit Plan was required by the competition documentation); necessary changes are, nevertheless, permitted.

By signing the Learning Agreement, the home institution allows the student his/her departure on mobility, as well as his/her attending of chosen academic activities, and guarantees the recognition of ECTS credits and grades received on exchange.

By signing the Learning Agreement, the host institution confirms that the agreed academic activities are part of the existing curriculum, expresses consent in accepting the student on exchange and, accordingly, approves attendance and realisation of chosen academic activities.

The Learning Agreement is composed in English and it is obligatory to state the following:

- Course Unit Code - if the host institution numerates its programme content;
- Course Unit Title, i.e. the activities the student has chosen;
- Number of ECTS credits each course, i.e. activity carries at the host institution.

The Learning Agreement of outgoing students is signed by the student, the Dean (i.e. Vice Dean), and the authorised ECTS Coordinator. In cases when the Academy is considered to be the home institution of the outgoing student, the Learning Agreement is signed by the authorised Academic ECTS Coordinator and the Vice Rector for Teaching and International Relations.

The Learning Agreement of incoming students is signed by the student, the authorised Academic ECTS Coordinator and the institutional coordinator (at the level of Academy or a College, depending on the terms of a specific Learning Agreement). In cases when the Academy is the host institution of the incoming student the Learning Agreement is signed by the authorised Academic ECTS Coordinator and the Vice Rector for Teaching and International Relations, if the Learning Agreement does not stipulate otherwise.

The contracting parties, as a rule, sign the Learning Agreement prior to the student leaving on exchange, unless the host institution decides otherwise.

The Learning Agreement can be subsequently amended only with the consent of all the signatories, and all changes must be submitted in written form.

The changes to the Learning Agreement are an integral part of the Learning Agreement, completed and signed only in situations the student subsequently suggests changes and if an agreement is reached regarding the aforementioned by all the contracting parties.

The changes to the Learning Agreement consist of the following data:

- Course Unit Code, if the host institution numerates its programme content
- Course Unit Title, i.e. activities
- Deleted Course Unit, or an Added Course Unit
- Number of ECTS Credits.

Study and Research Plan

Article 8

With the Study and Research Plan the contracting parties (the student, the home institution, and the host institution) specify academic obligations and activities the student of Doctoral Studies will realise on exchange.

The terms of Article 7 of these Regulations regarding the Learning Agreement are analogously applied on the Study and Research Plan.
Training/Research/Teaching Plan

Article 9

The Training/Research/Teaching Plan is a document with which the students suggest activities they plan to realise during the period of exchange at the host institution.

The terms of Articles 6, 7, and 8 of these Regulations are analogously applied to this document.

Training Agreement and Quality Commitment

Article 10

With the Training Agreement and Quality Commitment, the student, the home institution, and the host institution specify the content and the quality of student training.

This document determines the outcome of training regarding acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies, a detailed programme of training, trainee tasks, the monitoring and evaluation plan.

By signing the Training Agreement and Quality Commitment, the home institution is obligated to define outcomes of training, to assist the student in the choice of host institution, to select students on the basis of clearly defined and transparent criteria, to provide logistical support to students regarding travel, accommodation, visas and insurance cover, to give academic recognition of the students' mobility period and to evaluate with each student the achieved personal and professional development during their mobility period.

By signing the Training Agreement and Quality Commitment, the host institution is obligated to enable the realisation of training in the manner stipulated by the Agreement, to draw a contract or another legal document relevant for student training in accordance with the requirements of the national legislation, to appoint a mentor to the student on training, provide practical support to the student regarding insurance cover and facilitate adaptation to the new environment.

By signing the Training Agreement and Quality Commitment, the student is obligated to successfully realise training, abide by the rules of the host institution, communicate with the home institution regarding changes to the Training Agreement and submit a report on the achieved training.

The terms of Article 7 of these Regulations in regards to the competent authority for signing the Learning Agreement are applied to the signing of the Training Agreement and Quality Commitment.

Transcript of Records

Article 11

Transcript of Records is a certificate on passed exams issued by the home institution in the shape of a formal document.

Transcript of Records, other than the data regarding the student, must contain data on the titles of passed exams, received grades, and the number of ECTS credits achieved per course, data on the duration of the study programme, as well as other additional information if it is considered relevant.

The Transcript of Records should include an explanation of the manner of grading and credits (National Grading System).

When the mobility period is finalised, colleges (i.e. the Academy, in cases when it is considered the home institution) are obligated to issue the Transcript of Records to incoming students as proof of realised academic activities, in English, if possible.

In order to apply for mobility programmes, colleges (i.e. the Academy, in cases when it is considered the home institution) are obligated to issue the Transcript of Records to their students when requested to.
Transcript of Work

Article 12

Transcript of Work is a document with which the host institution provides data on the realised training and achieved placement results of the student.

Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period

Article 13

Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period is a single legal act with which the authorised ECTS Coordinator determines the manner of recognition of passed exams, i.e. ECTS credits and grades the student achieved during the mobility period.

Obligatory elements of the Decree from the previous paragraph are:
- data on the student, the host institution, and the home institution
- courses the student passed at the host institution (with acquired ECTS credits and received grades)
- courses at the home institution which will be replaced with the courses that the student passed at the host institution
- courses the student passed on exchange and which cannot be replaced, but merely entered in the Diploma Supplement as elective activities/courses.
- the manner of grade equivalence
- remaining obligations the student must realise to fulfil scheduled obligations for the relevant semester, i.e. academic year (in cases when the student did not acquire a sufficient number of ECTS credits on exchange)
- remaining data which the authorised ECTS Coordinator considers important in a specific case.

Student Status During the Mobility Period

Article 14

While on exchange/training at the host institution, the student retains the status of a student of the Academy and the home institution (i.e. college).

During the mobility period the student does not interrupt his/her studies, nor is his/her status inactive at the home institution, as it is implied that the student realised their academic obligations at the host institution (unless this issue is not otherwise regulated in the general legal act of the faculty, of which the student should be informed in a timely manner).

For the students who decide on a mobility period that is shorter than one semester, the principle from the previous paragraph is applied, in proportion to the time period spent on exchange.

A student that is financed from the budget of the Republic of Serbia does not lose this status during the mobility period.

A student that belongs to the category of self-financing students continues to regularly pay in the established tuition fees to their home institution during the mobility period.

Upon written request of the student, the home institution approves their inactive status, in accordance to the general legal act of the home institution.
Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period

Article 15

A student who was on exchange on the basis of the signed Learning Agreement, reserves the right for his/her achieved results at the host institution to be recognised by his/her home institution following his/her return from exchange.

Academic recognition of the mobility period is a procedure through which the authorised ECTS Coordinator determines the results that the student achieved on exchange and decides on the manner of recognition of the passed exams (ECTS credits and grades), which is then confirmed subsequent to the finalised procedure by the Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period.

The student is under obligation to submit to the authorised ECTS Coordinator all relevant documents in connection to the realised mobility in a timely manner (written request, Learning Agreement/ Study and Research Plan/ Training Agreement and Quality Commitment/ Transcript of Records/ Transcript of Work/ document on the system of grading at the host institution (unless this data is not an integral part of the Transcript of Records), as well as copies of these documents).

The authorised ECTS Coordinator is obligated to issue a Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period in a time period of no later than 7 days prior to the start of the semester in which the student continues the programme at his/her home institution, as well as to send the aforementioned to the student and the Student Services so all the necessary administrative details in regards to the realised mobility can be regulated.

If the administrative procedure from the previous paragraph is not finalised within the time period stated above, the home institution is obligated to facilitate the continuation of the student's studies even without registering the listed data, as well as to finalise the said procedure in the shortest possible time.

Principles of Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period

Article 16

Recognition of results (ECTS credits and grades) acquired during the mobility period is based on the principles of transparency, flexibility, and fairness.

The principle of transparency implies that the Regulations on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period are publicly accessible (on the web page and the bulletin board of the Academy, i.e. college, etc.).

The principle of flexibility implies a realistic approach to the recognition of academic results achieved on exchange. A complete congruence in content of study programmes at the home institution and at the host institution is not possible. For that reason the chief manner of academic recognition of the mobility period is focusing on the similarities and the learning outcomes, and not on the differences between study programmes that are being compared. Emphasis is on knowledge in a particular field the student acquires on exchange that does not need to be identical, but rather akin to the knowledge they would acquire on a particular course at their home institution.

The authorised ECTS Coordinator is guided by the principle of fairness in the procedure of academic recognition of the mobility period, as a generally accepted legal principle.

Article 17

The essence of mobility is to enable the student to realise academic activities at the host institution and for his/her mobility period to be calculated as if it had been realised at the home institution.

The student that had not passed all exams at the host institution scheduled by the Learning Agreement, i.e. did not acquire the necessary 30 ECTS credits per semester, but had attended the appropriate
lectures, has the right to pass the exam/s at their home institution from the semester during which he/she was on exchange, without additional pre-exam obligations.

Comparison and Assessment of Study Program Similarity

Article 18

Comparison and assessment of similarities of courses at the home institution and at the host institution is done by the authorised ECTS Coordinator at the home institution, i.e. his/her organisational unit (department, chair...) and is guided by the principle of flexibility.

The faculties independently decide on the election of the ECTS Coordinator. In cases when the Academy is considered to be the home institution, the role of the Coordinator is performed by the Head of the specific study programme.

The ECTS Coordinator is exclusively authorised to sign key mobility documents (listed in Article 5 of these Regulations) and their possible modifications.

The ECTS Coordinator is independent in assessing the similarity of courses the student had proposed to pass at the host institution within the appropriate mobility document, and, if necessary, he/she consults with the Dean, the relevant Vice Dean, and/or the professor in charge of a particular course, prior to the mobility period of the student.

A full recognition of courses the student had passed at the host institution is recommended, if they are replaceable with courses the student would have taken at his/her home institution. Replaceability implies a relatedness of scientific fields and acquired knowledge as the outcome of mastered course material (learning outcome).

Full recognition from the previous paragraph implies that the student, following their return from mobility, does not have additional academic obligations (as are, for example, writing a term paper, passing of tests/parts of exams, etc.) in a course that has been replaced, on the basis of the Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period, with the course the student had passed at the host institution.

Transfer and Recognition of Acquired ECTS Credits and Grades

Article 19

The chief criterion for transfer and recognition of ECTS credits and grades accumulated during the mobility period is the learning outcome, and in accordance to the following recommendations:

1. Recognition of the course the student had attended and passed at the host institution which is related, i.e. similar to a course at the home institution, is made in such a way that it will be interpreted as if the student passed the exam that had been required by the study programme of the home institution. The student will be awarded recognition of the title, ECTS credits, and the number of classes that the related course has at the home institution, regardless of whether the course that the student had passed on exchange carried a higher or lower number of ECTS credits.

2. The possibility of "replacement" of courses at the home institution refers to both compulsory and elective courses. In the Diploma Supplement the fact that a particular course was passed while on exchange at a relevant institution of higher education abroad will be noted in Section 6.1 (Additional Student Information) and the exact title of the course will be given (in the original language), the original grade, ECTS credits, and the grading system of the host institution, exactly as this data is stated in the Transcript of Records.

3. If the content of the attended and passed course on exchange, in regards to the learning outcome, differs significantly from its relevant course at the home institution, or if the course the student had passed on exchange does not exist at all at the home institution, then the data on the passed course exam and the achieved results at the host institution will be registered in the Diploma Supplement, in the
original language and in original form (in the section: "The following passed exams/activities that are not scheduled by the study programme for obtaining the diploma"). In Section 6.1 of the Diploma Supplement ("Additional Student Information") the fact that this course was passed on exchange will be indicated, as well as the name of the institution of higher education abroad, and the grading system, exactly as this data is stated in the Transcript of Records.

4. The student's grades achieved at the host institution will be recognised. If the grading systems at the host institution and the home institution are not identical, the grades are, through the process of harmonisation, converted into the grades of the home institution, in accordance with the ECTS Grading Table of the European Commission, i.e. the ECTS Grading Scale, according to Article 20 of these Regulations.

5. Equivalent grades from courses the student passed on exchange, and that are recognised as if the student passed them at his/her home institution, become a part of the grade point average at the home institution. Grades that the student received for courses that were not "replaced" with relevant courses at the home institution, but were rather noted in original form in accordance to Paragraph 1, Item 3, of this Article, are not calculated in the grade point average.

6. ECTS credits and grades from Paragraph 1, Items 1 and 2 of this Article are to be treated as any other course the student had passed at the home institution (ECTS credits are counted as ECTS credits acquired within the study programme).

7. ECTS credits from courses in Paragraph 1, Item 3 of this Article do not take part in the number of ECTS credits within the study programme, rather in the total number of the accumulated ECTS credits.

8. Instead of the method of replacing courses as described in Items 1-7 of this Article, the academic recognition of the mobility period for a student that had acquired at least 30 ECTS credits per semester on exchange can be accomplished with the method of replacing a semester for a semester. With this method, the student's ECTS credits acquired on exchange and the exams passed on exchange will be recognised in their original form and title, without replacing the course with a similar course at the home institution and without conversion of the grade into an equivalent grade of the home institution. ECTS credits the student had acquired on exchange are calculated in the number of ECTS credits within the study programme. Grades the student received on exchange are not taken into account when calculating the grade point average achieved during studies. The titles of courses the student had passed on exchange, ECTS credits and grades the student acquired on exchange are entered into the Student Report Card and the Diploma Supplement in their original form. Applying the method of replacing a semester for a semester, an assumption is made that the student carried out all obligations required at the home institution for the period he/she spent on exchange and following his/her return from exchange the student will not have any additional academic obligations at his/her home institution connected to their mobility period.

9. The method described in Item 8 can also be applied in cases when the student had passed free elective courses on exchange.

**Interpretation and Conversion of Grades the Student Received During the Mobility Period at the Host Institution**

**Article 20**

The student's grade achieved on exchange in a course that can be replaced with a course at his/her home institution will be recognised in such a way that the grade the student received on exchange will be converted into a grade that would be an equivalent to it at the home institution (the so-called "equivalent grade"), if the grading systems at the host institution and the home institution are not identical.

The process of grade harmonisation is performed in accordance with the ECTS User's Guide published by the European Commission, and these Regulations are in accordance to its instructions.
It is recommended that colleges, i.e. the Academy, perform the harmonisation of grades in accordance with the ECTS Grading Table.

Considering that the ECTS Grading Table is a new term in European higher education, the Academy will create models for the transfer and equivalence of grades for countries with which there is cooperation within mobility programmes, as support to colleges in the process of harmonisation and equivalence of grades the students acquired on exchange abroad.

It is recommended that the colleges, i.e. the Academy, utilise the National Grading System and comparison on the basis of the so-called ECTS Grading Scale as grounds for grade equivalence, until they commence the use of the ECTS Grade Table, as well as in cases for which the aforementioned model for transfer and equivalence of grades does not exist.

Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period

Article 21

Following the return of the student from exchange and submitting of the necessary documentation in accordance to Article 15, Paragraph 3 of these Regulations, the authorised ECTS Coordinator, without delay, issues the Decree on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period, and no later than the due date specified in Article 15, Paragraph 4 of these Regulations.

Recommendations for the Improvement of Student Mobility

Article 22

For the purposes of improving the process of internationalisation in the area of student mobility and the harmonisation of the administrative procedure, the recommended measures and activities are the following:

▪ Make the Regulations on Academic Recognition of the Mobility Period accessible to students (on the web page, bulletin boards of the Academy, i.e. college)

▪ Appoint an ECTS Coordinator on a college level, i.e. the level of his/her organisational unit (department, chair...) taking into account Article 18 of these Regulations

▪ Setting up of a web page in English with relevant information for potential incoming students (on studies, study programmes, contact persons, logistic data...)

▪ Publish the catalogue of courses, in Serbian and in English, on the Academy/colleges web pages (code, structure, purpose, aims, and the curriculum of study programmes, learning outcomes, information on competencies of graduate students).

▪ Publish a list of courses on the Academy/colleges web pages that were in previous instances replaced with relevant courses at institutions of higher education abroad, and update the list regularly. This will ease the job of the ECTS Coordinators, and it will also be easier for students to select courses for an integral element of the Learning Agreement, i.e. other mobility documents

▪ Issue the Transcript of Records to outgoing as well as incoming students with a Table of the Grading System in Serbia

▪ Employ at least one person at each college in charge of international cooperation, and, in time, establish an International Office at each college

▪ Colleges, i.e. the Academy, collect, process, and permanently store data on student mobility and the transfer of ECTS credits in order to keep records and issue public certificates

▪ Colleges regularly inform the Academy on the number and the profile of foreign students they have on exchange, study periods/training or full studies. Colleges that have a person in charge of international cooperation inform the Academy on foreign students through specialised central software that will be installed, and the rest of the faculties submit data on foreign students at the beginning
of each semester to the International Office of the Academy in the form of a printed or electronic document

- In cases of queries regarding the field of student mobility, the colleges can contact the Board for Integrated Research and International Cooperation of the Senate of the Academy for an opinion
- Relevant source for the implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is the ECTS User's Guide that can be downloaded from the official Internet page of the European Commission:
  

**Transitional and Final Provisions**

**Article 23**

The provisions of these Regulations regarding mobility in the form of a study period are analogously applied to student mobility in the form of training.

Appendixes to these Regulations are an integral part of them and serve as models of key mobility documents the faculties can adjust to their own requirements.

These Regulations take effect on the eighth day following their publication.

Regulations will be published on the Academy Internet page and will be distributed to the colleges within the Academy.

ACADEMY PRESIDENT

COLLEGE DEAN