

Evaluation Template for Joint Programmes

Based on the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes

Introduction

This operational tool (evaluation protocol) is to be used by the experts appointed by ANVUR to evaluate an international joint programme based on the criteria of the European Approach.

It offers clarity on how to assess compliance with the nine standards outlined in the European Approach, and provides guiding questions and examples based on common practices.

Sources used are: European Approach (2015), ESG (2015), ANVUR Guidelines (2024).

1. General Information

Item	Description
Programme title	
EQF level	
Degree awarded	Joint / Multiple /Double Degree
Coordinating institution	
Partner institutions	University X (Italy), Universität Y (Germany), Université Z (France)
Programme duration (in years/semesters)	
120 ECTS/180 ECTS	
Evaluation panel	
Dates of evaluation	

2. Evaluation Framework

The evaluation shall follow the 9 standards set by the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. For each standard and criterion key areas of assessment, evidence and some guiding questions have been identified.

The decision of accreditation/ accreditation with conditions / non accreditation follows the criteria below.

Decision	Definition
Accreditation	Full accreditation granted. All standards are fully met.
Accredited with conditions	Some standards are not yet met. Accreditation granted only if their improvements are considered feasible within a set time (max 3 years).
Non-accredited	Accreditation denied. Either none of the standards are met, or improvements are not feasible within the set period.

Standard 1 – Eligibility

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard:

- Legal recognition of all partner institutions as higher education institutions
- Institutional capacity to award joint degrees in accordance with national legislation
- Existence and adequacy of a comprehensive cooperation agreement covering governance, responsibilities, degree awarding, assessment procedures, financial arrangements, and mobility

Evidence: Consortium agreements, legal documentation, statutes

1.1 Status

The institutions that offer a joint programme should be recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries. Their respective national legal frameworks should enable them to participate in the joint programme and, if applicable, to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree(s) should ensure that the degree(s) belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.

Guiding questions:

- Are all partner institutions officially recognized HEIs in their countries?
- Are all partners of the consortium entitled under national legislation to award joint degrees?
- Are the degrees recognized in all jurisdictions involved?
- What type of degree(s) is awarded upon completion of the programme? In the case of double or multiple degrees, do all awarded qualifications correspond to the same level within the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?
- Are mobility paths clearly defined and guaranteed for all students?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

1.2 Joint design and delivery

The joint programme should be offered jointly, involving all cooperating institutions in the design and delivery of the programme.

Guiding questions:

- How is the delivery of the study programme(s) developed, implemented, and organized? How is the joint programme designed and continuously developed?
- What is the role of each partner and the coordinating institution and how does each partner contribute to the curriculum?
- What added value does the joint delivery bring compared to individual offerings?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

1.3 Cooperation Agreement

The terms and conditions of the joint programme should be laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement should cover the following issues:

- Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme
- Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income etc.)
- Admission and selection procedures for students
- Mobility of students and teachers
- Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.

Guiding questions:

- Is there an agreement that clearly defines roles and responsibilities?
- Is the cooperation agreement signed and complete?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/ partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance with STANDARD 1

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years' time).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 1

Standard 2 – Learning Outcomes

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard.

- Alignment of intended learning outcomes (ILO) with the appropriate qualification frameworks (e.g., EQF Level 7).
- Appropriate consideration of national frameworks
- Clear outcomes in knowledge, skills, and competencies
- Evidence that learning outcomes are effectively achieved by students upon completion across all modules and partner institutions

Evidence: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) matrix, assessment results, Qualification Framework (QF) - EHEA referencing

2.1 Level [ESG 1.2]

The intended learning outcomes should align with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications framework(s).

Guiding questions

- Are the ILOs aligned with EQF levels?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/ partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

2.2 Disciplinary field

The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills, and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).

Guiding questions:

- Are the ILOs relevant to the disciplinary fields?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

2.3 Achievement [ESG 1.2]

The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Guiding questions:

- Are the ILOs demonstrably achieved?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially - not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 2

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 2

Standard 3. Study Programme (ESG 1.2)

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard:

- Coherent and integrated curriculum jointly developed and delivered by all partners
- Balanced distribution of credits using the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
- Clear articulation of student workload and mobility pathways
- Co-designed, integrated curriculum with consistent mobility paths
- Alignment of teaching, learning, and assessment methods with outcomes

Evidence: Course syllabi, ECTS mapping, teaching plans

Formal requirements regarding the length and content of studies based on national regulations must be checked and specified.

3.1 Curriculum

The structure and content of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Guiding questions:

- Is the curriculum logically structured and coherent?
- Are the modules and courses logically sequenced?
- Is the programme structure consistent across institutions and transparent for students?
- Are courses/modules aligned with the ILO?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

3.2 Credits

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly, and the distribution of credits should be clear.

Guiding questions:

- Are all components of the curriculum credited based on the ECTS?
- Are ECTS correctly applied?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

3.3 Workload

A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits¹; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the QF-EHEA)²; for joint doctorates there is no credit range specified. The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.

Guiding questions:

- Does the programme integrate academic and professional relevance?
- Is there a clear progression from admission to graduation?
- Are student workload and mobility pathways clearly planned and realistic?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 3

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 3

¹ For recognition in Italy, the reference value is 180 ECTS-credits.

² For recognition in Italy, the reference value is 90 ECTS-credits.

Standard 4 – Admission and Recognition (ESG 1.4)

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard.

- Diversity and inclusiveness in pedagogical approaches.
- Transparent and consistent assessment criteria and methods across all partner institutions.
- Transparent and joint admission criteria.
- Fair recognition of prior learning and credits across institutions.

Evidence: Admission regulations, credit recognition policy

4.1. Admission

The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate considering the programme's level and discipline.

Guiding questions:

- Are the admission criteria clearly stated and harmonised?
- Do partners apply the relevant EHEA recognition tools (e.g., LRC, ENIC/NARIC practices)?
- Is student selection consistent across partner institutions?
- Are credits gained at any partner automatically recognized by the others?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

4.2. Recognition

Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies (including recognition of prior learning) should be applied in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.

Guiding questions:

- Is recognition of prior learning and qualifications transparent and consistent?
- Do all partners agree on recognition procedures for prior learning?
- Are national and international recognition tools (e.g., Lisbon Recognition Convention) applied?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 4

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 4

Standard 5 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ESG 1.3)

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard.

- Teaching and learning methods should be appropriate to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.
- The study programme(s) handle(s) a potentially diverse student body and their needs.
- Evidence of the implementation of a student-centred teaching methodology is provided

Evidence: Teaching strategies, exam formats, rubrics

5.1 Learning and teaching

The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially in view of potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.

Guiding questions:

- Are innovative and student-centred teaching methods used across institutions?
- Are teaching methods adapted to diverse learning environments?
- Is student-centred learning implemented consistently?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

5.2 Assessment of students

The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.

Guiding questions:

- Are assessment methods clearly defined and appropriate?
- Are assessment methods aligned with learning outcomes and applied consistently?
- Do students receive timely and constructive feedback?
- Are students informed of assessment criteria in advance?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 5

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 5

Standard 6 – Student Support (ESG 1.6)

The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should consider specific challenges of mobile students.

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard.

- Availability and accessibility of academic, administrative, and social support for mobile and international students.
- Functionality of mentoring and career services.
- Access to digital learning environments (if provided) and practical information.

Evidence: Orientation plans, mentoring system, housing options, linguistic services

Guiding questions:

- Are support services provided (logistics, academic, linguistic)?
- Is academic counselling and career support available?
- Is mobility support adequate (housing, insurance, logistics)?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially/ not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 6

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 6

Standard 7 – Resources (ESG 1.5 & 1.6)

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard.

- Adequate resources must be available for successful delivery of the programme
- Sufficient and qualified academic and administrative staff with relevant international and interdisciplinary experience.
- Adequate learning facilities and digital infrastructure to support delivery and mobility.

Evidence: Faculty CVs, staffing plans, LMS infrastructure

7.1 Staff

The staff should be sufficient and adequate (qualifications, professional and international experience) to implement the study programme.

Guiding questions:

- Are academic and teaching staff qualified and sufficient in number (considering student numbers and programme requirements)?
- Are administrative staff qualified and sufficient in number (considering student numbers and programme requirements)?
- Are staff training and development opportunities provided?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

7.2 Facilities

The facilities provided should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes.

Guiding questions:

- Are facilities and digital infrastructure (if provided) adequate and accessible?
- Are library, labs, and online resources appropriate and shared across partners?
- Are financial resources shared and managed transparently?
- Are budgets sustainable and clearly distributed among partners?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 7

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 7

Standard 8 – Transparency and Documentation (ESG 1.8)

Relevant information about the programme (like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures etc.) should be well documented and published by considering specific needs of mobile students.

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard:

- Clear and accessible documentation of programme information, including curriculum, assessment, and student rights.
- Availability of programme materials online, including thesis publication and course catalogues.

Evidence: Website, brochures, programme regulations

Guiding questions:

- Are the programme structure and learning outcome documentation available to students and stakeholders?
- Are learning outcomes, courses, and mobility paths documented?
- Are Diploma Supplements issued in a joint and understandable format?
- Is public information accurate and regularly updated?
- Are responsibilities and procedures clearly described and communicated?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially/ not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 8

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 8

Standard 9 – Internal Quality Assurance (ESG 1.1)

The following key areas must be assessed to ensure that the joint programme meets the required quality standard:

- Existence of a joint internal quality assurance system aligned with ESG 2015 standards.
- Regular monitoring, stakeholder feedback, and mechanisms for continuous improvement.
- Implementation of a quality cycle (Plan–Do–Check–Act).

Evidence: QA board, QA manual, reports, improvement plans

Guiding questions:

- Are internal QA procedures in place at consortium level?
- Are there mechanisms for monitoring and improving quality?
- Are stakeholders (including students) involved in QA?
- Is there evidence of using QA outcomes for improvement?
- Is the programme subject to regular monitoring and revision?

Assessment

Conclusion: fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled/not applicable

Level of compliance of the STANDARD 9

Level	Definition	Panel conclusion
Compliant	The standard is fully met.	
Compliant with conditions	The standard is mostly met. Improvements are needed but achievable within a defined time (e.g., max 3 years).	
Non-compliant	The standard is not met and cannot be improved in a reasonable timeframe.	

Recommendation on Standard 9

3. Summary of evaluation and Follow-up

Strengths	
Critical Issues	
Summary of Recommendations	
Conditions (if any)	

4. Final Judgment

Based on the compliance level of individual standards, the joint programme shall be proposed as:

Decision	
Accredited	X
Accredited with conditions	
Non-accredited	

Validity PERIOD of accreditation: 6 years (with mid-term follow-up after 3 years) without conditions. If conditions are issued, after two years a mid-term progress report must be sent by the Consortium to the QA agency responsible for the accreditation decision and a new site visit must be performed (by the same QA agency in charge for first accreditation). Accreditation can be confirmed for further 4 years or can be withdrawn.

5. Required Attachments

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER)
- Cooperation Agreement
- CVs of academic staff
- Course brochures and website screenshots
- Sample assessments
- Institutional statutes and regulations

Evaluation Grid According to the 9 EA Standards

Experts should complete the following summary after assessing all standards:

EA Standard	Key Evaluation Focus	Criterion Assessment			Compliance Level of the STANDARD	Comments / Evidence/Recommendations	
Standard 1 – Eligibility	Legal recognition of institutions, active joint design & delivery, cooperation agreement completeness	Status	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable			[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
		Joint design and delivery	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
		Cooperation agreement	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
Standard 2 – Learning Outcomes	Alignment with QF-EHEA/NQFs, shared definition among partners, assessment tools and graduate proof of achievement	Level	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable			[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
		Disciplinary fields	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
		Achievement	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
		Regulated professions	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				

EA Standard	Key Evaluation Focus	Criterion Assessment			Compliance Level of the STANDARD	Comments / Evidence/Recommendations	
Standard 3 - Study Programme (ESG 1.2)	Curriculum logic, partner contributions, ECTS implementation, workload monitoring	Curriculum	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable			[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
		ECTS	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
		Workload	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
Standard 4 - Admission and Recognition (ESG 1.4)	Joint admission policies, recognition of prior learning and periods of study, equity in access	Entry requirements	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable			[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
		Credit recognition	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				
Standard 5 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ESG 1.3)	Appropriate methods, student diversity consideration, consistent assessment practices	Teaching and learning methods	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable			[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
		Exams	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable				

EA Standard	Key Evaluation Focus	Criterion Assessment		Compliance Level of the STANDARD	Comments / Evidence/Recommendations
Standard 6 – Student Support (ESG 1.6)	Availability of guidance, counseling, mobility support, access to services for all students	Student services	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable	[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
Standard 7 – Resources (ESG 1.5 & 1.6)	Adequate staff and facilities, international experience, digital infrastructure	Staff ³	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable	[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	
		Facilities	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable		
Standard 8 – Transparency and Documentation (ESG 1.8)	Public availability of programme information, joint diploma supplement, accurate data management	Public information	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable	[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	

³ Italian universities must provide evidence of the positive preliminary check on legal teaching requirements, as mandated by national law.

EA Standard	Key Evaluation Focus	Criterion Assessment		Compliance Level of the STANDARD	Comments / Evidence/Recommendations
Standard 9 – Internal Quality Assurance (ESG 1.1)	Joint QA processes in line with ESG, stakeholder engagement, continuous improvement cycles	Joint internal QA	Fulfilled Not Fulfilled Not applicable	[...] Compliant [...] Compliant with conditions [...] Not Compliant	