

University of Copenhagen (UCPH)

Procedure regarding the accreditation of a new joint programme at UCPH

UCPH is subject to institutional accreditation, hence formal programme level accreditation is not required. However, the establishment of new programmes still involves a process of formal approval from the National Accreditation Board subject to submission of a pre-qualification application addressing some of the issues usually included in programme level accreditation procedures.

The core focus of any pre-qualification application is a comprehensive needs analysis showcasing a program's relevance to the Danish and international labour market. Approval hinges on demonstrating that the national labour market can accommodate the planned volume of graduates from the program expected to seek employment in Denmark. As part of the needs analysis, the generic competency profile(s) and composition of learning outcomes for graduates are presented and deliberated upon with expected employers during the curriculum development phase and the preparation of the pre-qualification application to be submitted to national authorities either in February or September. At UCPH thematic advisory boards are established comprising external stakeholders who convene twice a year to offer insights on all aspects of relevance for adjustments in competency profiles and learning outcomes for programs on offer, including new programs under development and review of existing programs. These semi-annual meetings are integral to the ongoing process for the development and approval of new programs, including joint programmes.

Though, when joint programmes are conditioned on courses established and offered within the framework of existing programs, it is possible to deviate from the formal approval process, which goes as follows when fast-tracked as an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programme at e.g. the Faculty of Science, UCPH:

Every year in October/November, the European Commission announces the call for proposals of Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters with an application deadline set for mid-February. The demonstrated cycle below has been adapted to these deadlines so that proposals for new Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programmes can be approved by the UCPH Rector in advance of an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master application being submitted to the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

Proposals for new Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programmes are presented to the UCPH Education Council (KUUR) as early in the development process as possible, i.e. before a formal commitment has been reached between UCPH and the partner universities. Please note that applications for national pre-qualification submitted to the Danish authorities and applications for Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters submitted to EACEA are done in parallel, which is in accordance with the recommendations from the Danish Ministry of Higher Education. In other words, it is not a ministerial requirement that one process must be completed before the other process can begin.

However, if completely new courses are included in the proposal for the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programme, these courses must be approved by the local study board and dean and be offered within the framework of an existing programme when submitting an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master application to EACEA. Such a parallel application process enables the programme

to be offered faster than with a sequential application process as in the latter approach the national pre-qualification application is submitted after the evaluation results are received from EACEA on the Erasmus Mundus application. Whereas in the parallel application, the pre-qualification application is submitted to the national authorities shortly before the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master application is submitted to EACEA, hence the evaluation result of both processes is aligned.

However, it is possible to seek approval sequentially if a Faculty wishes to receive the evaluation result from EACEA before committing workload towards submission of a pre-qualification application to the Danish authorities. However, the rector must still approve both the proposal that forms the basis for the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master application to EACEA and the prequalification application.

Please note that this annual cycle only applies to the approval of **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programmes**.

Prequalification February 2024	Responsibilities	Action
Ongoing - but before agreement with partner universities is signed Applies to parallel and sequential application	Faculties	Faculties send presentations of upcoming programme partnerships for new Erasmus Mundus programmes, cf. Procedure for the rector's approval of the creation of new programmes and Checklist for the development of new Erasmus Mundus programmes. Presentations should be sent to Education Services (US).
Ongoing - but before agreement with partner universities is signed. Applies to parallel and sequential application	Faculties	Faculties send presentations of upcoming programme partnerships for new Erasmus Mundus programmes, cf. Procedure for the rector's approval of the creation of new programmes and Checklist for the development of new Erasmus Mundus programmes. Presentations should be sent to Education Services (US).
Ongoing Applies to parallel and sequential application	Education Service (US)	US communicates KUUR's recommendations to the faculties.
Ongoing Applies to sequential application	Rectorate	US submits the programme proposals including KUUR's recommendations to the Rectorate. Rector decides on proposals for the development of new Erasmus Mundus programmes
Ongoing	Education Service (US)	US notifies the faculties of the rector's decision.

Applies to sequential application		
Ongoing - beginning of January 2024 Applies to parallel application	Faculties	The faculties prepare final proposals for new Erasmus Mundus programmes: Application for pre-qualification (labour market needs and coherence in the education system). The faculties also prepare a research matrix and competency matrix. Education Service (US) provides assistance in connection with the design of the programme proposals. The faculties are responsible for involving relevant parties, including study boards, employer panels, any authorising authorities, etc.
Ongoing - beginning of January 2023 Applies to sequential application	Faculties	The faculties prepare the application to the EU Commission.
Beginning of January 2024 Applies to parallel application	Faculties	The faculties submit copies of pre-qualification applications to US for final approval by the rector. Research matrix and competency matrix are included.
End of January 2024 Applies to parallel application	Education Service (US)	US notifies the faculties of the rector's decision on approval.
1 February 2024 at 12.00 Applies to parallel application	Faculties	Application for prequalification must be submitted to the Ministry via the application module on the Ministry's website Please allow 10 weeks for processing.
Mid-February 2024 Applies to parallel and sequential application	Faculties	Application for Erasmus Mundus programmes to the European Commission
February 2024 Applies to parallel and sequential application	Education Service (US)	Proposal for the annual cycle for Erasmus Mundus programmes for 2024/25 is presented to UCPH Education Council (KUUR).
April 2024 Applies to parallel application	Education Service (US)	The Ministry's decision on prequalification is available. US informs KUUR and the Board of Directors of the Ministry's decision.
June/July 2024	EACEA	EU Commission approval of new Erasmus Mundus programmes

Applies to parallel and sequential application		
June-August 2024 Applies to sequential application	Faculties	Faculties prepare final proposals for new programmes: Application for pre-qualification (needs in the labour market and coherence in the education system). Prequalification guide Education Service (US) provides assistance in connection with the design of the programme proposals. The faculties are responsible for involving relevant parties, including study boards, employer panels, any authorising authorities, etc.
Beginning of September 2024 Applies to sequential application	Faculties	The faculties submit a copy of the application to US for final approval by the rector.
Mid-September 2024 Applies to sequential application	Education Service (US)	US notifies the faculties of the rector's decision on approval.
15 September 2024 at 12.00 Applies to sequential application	Faculties	Application for prequalification must be submitted to the Ministry. Calculate 10 weeks processing time, end of November 2023.
December 2024 Applies to sequential application	Education Service (US)	The Ministry's decision on prequalification is available. US informs the Board and KUUR.

Internal regulations or instructions, e.g. regarding the curriculum, mobility track, student's pathway or enrolment

The approach and regulatory framework prioritise a student and stakeholder perspective rather than focusing solely on the curriculum/content. It emphasises the generic competence profile and learning outcomes of graduates, structured around knowledge, skills, and competencies. There are no constraints concerning mobility tracks or student pathways. However, it's important to note that to prevent ambiguity in the legal status of students, it's crucial to ensure that individual students are admitted to only one of the participating institutions, whereas enrolment is taking place at each institution involved in a student's mobility-track. Admission

to multiple institutions and/or “the consortium” of partner institutions is not a legal option. It creates a situation which is legally uncertain for students.

Timeline for internal accreditation

See the schedule above, though a recommendation is to plan for at least 18-24 months of preparation, allocated for the pre-award phase – i.e. the duration of development, discussion, planning etc. in advance of the actual implementation/post-award phase beginning when announcing the call-for-applications from students who apply for admission to the programme.

Any specific requirements or challenges

In cases where the award of a joint degree is pursued additional administrative/legal obstacles may arise, and it is recommended to start any joint programme initiative with a double-degree/multiple-degree. Upon testing the ability to implement awarding the degree separately the next step may be to establish the award of a joint degree. However, to do so from the start is not recommendable. In particular not, if any of the participating institutions have not done so before.