

Quality management of the joint degree programme “European Master in Business Studies” (EMBS) of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Trento, Italy, the Institute of Management (IAE) of the University of Savoie Mont Blanc, Annecy, France, the Department of Economics and Business Administration of the University of Kassel, and the Faculty of Economic and Business Sciences of the University of León, Spain.

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1. Scope and Objective

This document describes the measures for quality assurance and development of the joint degree programme “European Master in Business Studies” (EMBS) of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Trento, Italy, the Institute of Management (IAE) of the University of Savoie Mont Blanc, Annecy, France, the Department of Economics and Business Administration of the University of Kassel, Germany, and the Faculty of Economic and Business Sciences of the University of León, Spain. It is guided by the overarching goal of ensuring and continuously improving the quality of the international study programme.

This joint quality document is implemented in alignment with the internal Quality Assurance systems and regulatory frameworks of each partner institution and the Standards and Guidelines (ESG) of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.¹ Therefore, the document supplements the statutes on the evaluation of studies and teaching at the University of Kassel² and takes into account the requirements of the Hessian Study Accreditation Ordinance³. For the University of León, this includes the University of León Quality Assurance System (SGC_ULE) coordinated by the Office of Evaluation and Quality (Oficina de Evaluación y Calidad - OEC).⁴ The Quality Assurance Framework of the University of Trento follows ESG 2015, which is embodied in Italian Ministerial Decree No. 987 of 2016 and the Guidelines issued by the National Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and Research (ANVUR).⁵ Regarding USMB, French higher education follows different reference systems developed by the HCERES (High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher

¹ https://www.hrk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/hrk/02-Dokumente/02-10-Publikationsdatenbank/Beitr-2015-03_Standards_und_Leitlinien_ESG_2.pdf

² <https://goto.uni-kassel.de/go/Evaluationsatzung>

³ https://www.akkreditierungsrat.de/sites/default/files/downloads/2019/HE_StakV.pdf

⁴ <https://calidad.unileon.es/sistema-de-garantia-de-calidad/>

⁵ <https://www.unitn.it/en/about-us/quality>

Education). HCERES is a member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education).

The special structure of the EMBS programme poses challenges for quality assurance, which this document addresses. The procedures and responsibilities defined here ensure that all components of the programme are covered by the quality control loops and that these loops themselves are closed and ensure systematic monitoring, joint reporting, decision-making, implementation, and documentation of improvement actions. This document represents a joint comprehensive and flexible framework for quality assurance and development across the four Universities. The combination of established instruments and specific measures enables continuous improvement in the quality of studies and strengthens the strategic international positioning of the programme through joint implementation.

2. Quality Objectives

The academic learning and qualification objectives of the EMBS programme are defined in the module handbook and examination regulation and serve as benchmarks for quality achievement. Building on these intended learning outcomes, this document defines programme-level quality objectives to ensure a coherent and continuously improving implementation of EMBS across all partner institutions, including the monitoring of learning outcome achievement, consistency of teaching and assessment standards, comparability of workload and ECTS allocation, quality of academic and administrative coordination, student satisfaction and study progress, and the systematic follow-up of improvement measures. While the implementation of these objectives lies with the relevant departments and teaching staff at each partner university, joint monitoring and coordinated quality enhancement are ensured through the programme governance structures and instruments defined in this document.

3. Quality Instruments

The quality management of the EMBS uses proven instruments established in the evaluation statutes of the four Universities (such as course evaluations, module evaluations, study programme surveys, graduate surveys, study progress monitoring, teaching reports) and supplements them with specific measures to address the unique study structure.

3.1. Application and Expansion of Established Instruments

a. Course and Module Evaluation:

The standard questionnaires used by the four universities for course and module evaluations are applied to all courses within the EMBS. The consolidated results are reviewed by the Joint Quality Assurance Board (see point 3.3.) and reported to the Management Board, enabling the identification of strengths and targeted improvement measures. Each partner university conducts periodic surveys to monitor students' opinions on the quality of teaching and final examinations.

b. Course surveys and study progress monitoring:

Regular surveys are conducted to assess overall student satisfaction and the quality of academic processes. Study progress is closely monitored, including examination performance, dropout and graduation rates, study duration, and time to completion. All monitoring activities are aligned with national regulations and jointly evaluated by the consortium to inform targeted interventions and policy decisions.

In terms of personal development, students' advancement is supported by regular meetings with a mentor, selected among EMBS teachers. Each student is assigned a mentor who will take care of them throughout the EMBS programme.

c. Graduate Survey

The EMBS-specific graduate survey is conducted annually right before the graduation ceremony. It serves to retrospectively evaluate the success of studies and in particular:

- overall programme satisfaction
- feeling that the programme has equipped graduates with the achievement of ILOS
- personal and professional development
- networking and professional relationships
- internship experience
- programme support and satisfaction
- Employment status and type of job

d. External Sources

Feedback from external stakeholders, including practice partners, advisory board members, and accreditation bodies, is collected and incorporated into the quality assurance framework. These external perspectives provide additional validation, ensure the programme's relevance to professional practice, and support continuous strategic development.

3.2. EMBS Specific Instruments

a. Semester Report

The EMBS programme employs semester reports (see Appendix I) as a key complementary evaluation instrument designed to compensate for the heterogeneity inherent in the four distinct student evaluation systems already adopted by the four partner universities.

The semester report is conducted by the respective students at the end of each semester in the respective country, which reflects all positive and critical impressions without strict structuring requirements. The student representatives are responsible for ensuring that the report accurately reflects the feedback of the whole respective cohort. The semester reports allow for systematic comparison of the four semesters, for instance, in terms of programme coherence,, achievement of the ILO's, workload, support services of the different facilities, and the overall experience of the EMBS.

b. Exchange formats (international corporate seminar and alumni interaction)

To enhance reflective feedback and programme development, the consortium establishes structured exchange formats, in particular during the international corporate seminar, involving students from different cohorts, alumni, academic coordinators, and administrative staff. These formats support dialogue on programme strengths, improvement needs, and employability-related insights and complement quantitative evaluation instruments.

c. Establishment of a Quality Board

The programme has substantially strengthened its quality assessment process by establishing a dedicated Quality Board with clearly defined tasks and responsibilities. The revised system is based on a structured, comprehensive process of internal data acquisition that integrates student evaluations of individual courses, semester reports, final reports from graduates, and qualitative feedback from teachers. These inputs are systematically analysed and translated into recommendations by at least two independent Qualitative Representatives (constituting the Quality Board), ensuring coherence and critical distance in the evaluation process. The Management Committee uses the evidence generated by the Quality Board to inform decisions on programme modifications and continuous improvement.

Assessment of the programme is done periodically based on the students feedback and initiated whenever the following critical factors are identified by the Management Committee: (i) recommendations from the Advisory Board, alumni, and companies with EMBS links; (ii) findings from

experience or information regarding other programmes; and (iii) remarks/complaints of any other stakeholder.

3.3. Responsibilities

Unless otherwise specified in the descriptions of the respective instruments, responsibility for implementing and executing quality assurance measures rests with the participating universities and the teaching staff. The results of university evaluations and semester reports are used by the Management Committee to further develop the programme, to conduct discussions with members of the teaching and administrative staff, to engage in dialogue with students, and to implement adjustments where necessary. In detail, each country coordinator is responsible for reporting the recommendations from the management board to the respective teaching staff and coordinating the local advancement of quality.

In the following, the responsibilities are described further:

a. Management Committee

The Management Committee consists of the four programme directors of each country and meets at least four times a year. It determines the strategy of the programme and is responsible for all major decisions connected with it. The Management Committee holds the overall strategic responsibility and decides on curricular adjustments, resources, and measures upon receiving information from the different stakeholders (programme coordinators, administrative staff, student representatives, and the Quality Board) and implements approved measures. The Committee supervises the work of the Administrative Committee. Members can also be part of the Admission and Examination Boards.

b. Administrative Committee

The Administrative Committee coordinates administrative processes (admission, enrollment, mobility organisation, examination administration), provides direct administrative support to students, and implements any required administrative improvements. The Administrative Committee regularly reports to the Management Committee and implements its decisions. The members are in permanent contact and are responsible for coordinating the programme delivery, all other administrative matters. Some or all members may attend the Management Committee meetings.

c. Advisory Board

The Advisory Board consists of two persons from each country (one academic and one company representative) and two alumni. The Advisory Board meets at least once a year. It provides guidance on the further development of the programme and on other strategic issues, helping integrate external views into major decisions.

d. Quality Board

The Quality Board is responsible for assessing all quality evaluation data and reports to the Management Committee (see 3.2.c).

e. Academic Programme Coordinator

The Academic Programme Coordinator is responsible for implementing local specific measures and informing all relevant stakeholders. The EMBS has a coordinator for each partner organisation. Each Academic Programme Coordinator is part of the Management Committee.

f. Student Representation

The student representatives (two students nominated per semester) are responsible for the communication between the student cohort and the local Academic Programme Coordinator, and participate in the Examination Board. They coordinate the preparation and writing of the Semester Reports and are responsible for sharing the received feedback with their cohort.

g. Admission Board

The Admission Board consists of members from all four countries, with the Management Committee also being represented. The Board is responsible for the student admission process and all decisions related to the selection stages and final admission.

h. Examination Board

The Examination Board consists of representatives from all four countries, including the Management Committee, the Administrative Committee, and the student representation. The board decides all matters related to examination questions, including exceptions, complaints, and student conflicts.

i. Alumni Association

The Alumni Association meets at least once a year during the International Corporate Seminar and provides advice, especially from the perspective of the graduate market. Through its two representatives on the Advisory Board, it is directly connected with this body.

j. Faculty Representation

The Faculty Representation consists of at least one faculty representative from each country. They report on their experience and give advice to the Academic Programme Coordinator.

4. Processes

The consortium maintains a robust annual quality cycle designed to ensure academic excellence, coherence, and continuous improvement, materialized in the module handbook and through the general teaching and learning environment. In the first initial step, teaching and assessment plans are aligned by the local coordinators and they are communicated to all stakeholders through the EMBS website. Ongoing monitoring enables early identification and resolution of potential issues. At the end of the semester, local module evaluations are conducted, semester reports are compiled, and data are submitted to the Quality Board for comprehensive analysis.

The Quality Board synthesizes these inputs and suggests recommendations and areas for improvement and directly communicates them to the Management Committee who approves and mandates appropriate actions. The programme coordinators together with the Administrative Committee support and oversee their implementation, timelines, and documentation. Students receive written feedback on the semester reports, complemented by direct communication, given the small cohorts.

A fundamental principle of the consortium's approach is dual evaluation: each module undergoes both local assessment at the respective institution and consortium-wide evaluation via the semester report. Both sources are mandatory and jointly inform evaluation, decision-making, and action planning, ensuring a holistic and evidence-based approach to continuous quality improvement.

To ensure continuity of support and effective transmission of student-related information across semesters and host institutions (Trento, Annecy, Kassel, and León), the EMBS joint degree programme relies on a structured but lightweight coordination process embedded in existing institutional roles. Each student is assigned a dedicated academic mentor who follows them throughout the entire two-year programme and serves as a stable point of reference across mobility phases (see 1.1. b). At the beginning of every semester, dedicated induction sessions are organised at the host university to familiarise students with local academic regulations, administrative procedures, support services, and facilities. In parallel, each semester has clearly identified academic and administrative coordinators at the hosting institution, who are responsible for monitoring students' progress and addressing emerging academic or personal needs. Relevant information on student issues, learning progress, or specific support requirements is shared, when necessary, among professors, coordinators, and administrative staff through regular coordination exchanges, ensuring continuity of care without creating additional programme-specific structures. Students have full access to the standard support services of each host university, and the combination of mentoring, local coordination, and systematic induction activities ensures that students are continuously supported and never left to manage transitions on their own.

5. Conflict management

The study programme has a clearly defined and institutionally embedded conflict management system as part of its internal quality assurance framework. It aims to identify potential conflicts in teaching, learning, and programme administration at an early stage, address them transparently, and ensure sustainable solutions.

a. Students

Conflicts involving students are initially addressed informally. Students can contact teaching staff, programme coordinators, or administrative staff directly. Student representatives also serve as low-threshold points of contact. Students may contact their assigned academic mentor as well, who provides continuity of guidance across semesters (as described above). Where necessary, relevant offices at the host universities (e.g., ombudspersons or central advisory/complaints offices) may be involved.

b. Teaching Staff

Conflicts involving teaching staff are addressed in the first instance through direct dialogue. Programme coordinators play a key mediating role in negotiations involving teaching staff. In the event of conflicts involving the coordinators, the department/faculty director, or the dean intervenes. If the issue remains unresolved, in exceptional cases, the relevant governance bodies of the partner universities may be involved. Throughout the process, the principles of transparency, fairness, and confidentiality are strictly upheld.

c. Programme Coordinators

Conflicts involving programme coordinators are addressed in the first instance through direct dialogue, where appropriate, with the relevant institutional bodies of the partner universities, ensuring impartial resolution and full compliance with shared governance and quality assurance standards.

d. Administrative Staff

Disagreements or conflicts involving administrative staff are addressed in the first instance through direct dialogue. In case of no solution, programme coordinators are responsible for seeking a resolution in collaboration with the management committee. If the issue remains unresolved or involves the programme coordinators or the management committee, the relevant governance bodies of the partner university may be involved. All conflict management procedures are based on confidentiality, transparency, and fairness.

e. The Consortium

The following procedures govern the cessation of a partner's participation in the EMBS consortium, ensuring academic continuity for students and the long-term stability of the programme. To prevent a unilateral withdrawal and ensure the stability of the Joint Degree, the partners agree to a multi-level "Escalation" process for any conflict related to the management, funding, or academic delivery of the EMBS. Any dispute shall first be addressed within the Management Committee. The representative members from University of Trento, University of Kassel, University of Léon, and University of Savoie Mont Blanc, must seek an amicable solution. The Rectors and Presidents (or their designated delegates) of the four universities must hold a high-level meeting. A withdrawal is only possible as defined by the Memorandum of Cooperation.

6. Evaluation of the document

This QM document is itself subject to a process of continuous improvement. The quality document framework will be reviewed at least every four years and may be updated earlier if necessary to address emerging needs or challenges.

7. Entry into force

This joint Quality Management document shall enter into force on 01.09.2026 and shall replace previous regulations within the consortium.

Appendix

Appendix I - Semester Report Form



FINAL SEMESTER REPORT

Evaluation of: The **(first or second)** semester in **Trento/Annecy/Kassel/Leon**

We encourage you to evaluate your semester with a critical and reflective spirit. Your constructive feedback on the academic, organizational, and experiential elements of the programme is vital to the ongoing development of the EMBS.

1. Some general comments on ORGANIZATION

2. Some general comments on ACCOMMODATION (learning environment, university, etc.)

3. Some general comments on courses and other teaching activities

3.1. Course 1

3.2. Course 2

3.3. Course 3

3.3.1. Module 3.1

3.3.2. Module 3.2

3.4. Course 4

3.5. Course 5

4. Evaluation of the Intended Learning Outcomes

	KNOWLEDGE		SKILLS		ATTITUDES		INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE		BUSINESS WORLD		TRENDS IN SOCIETY		
	K1	K2	S1	S2	A1	A2	IP1	IP2	BW1	BW2	T1	T2	T3
Course 1													
Course 2													
Module 3.1													
Module 3.1													
Course 4													
Course 5													

Please fill the white cells with either: L (Low), S (Satisfactory) or E (Excellent)

In appendix you will find a reminder with a description of the ILOs

5. Evaluation of the workload

To what extent do you consider the workload of each course appropriate for achieving its intended learning outcomes?

	Much too Low	Slightly Low	Appropriate	Slightly high	Much to High
Course 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 3.1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 3.1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Some general comments on language courses

7. Some general comments on the students' experience and the EMBS group

8. Please evaluate how much you agree with the following sentences

	Not at all 1	2	3	4	To a very high extent 5
The dates of the exams have been given before the beginning of the lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The examination schedule is very tight, dense, and work-loaded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class material and syllabus are easily available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The study rooms are numerous and adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The canteen offers a good service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Student support services and accessibility

	YES	PARTLY	NO
Were you sufficiently informed about student support services (administrative support, wellbeing, disability support, counselling, international office, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Final comments

Class representative | EMBS XX

Name Surname

Name Surname

Appendix: ILOs description

Knowledge

Upon completion of the programme graduates will:

- K1: understand and be able to assess marketing and other managerial challenges for companies within a globalized and dynamic environment.
- K2: have learned to solve managerial problems by applying adequate methodologies in order to design strategies and their implementation, as well as corresponding processes.

Skills

Upon completion of the programme graduates will:

- S1: have acquired or developed personal skills such as analytical thinking, adequate communication and presentation skills, self-management regarding occupational and private challenges, finding creative solutions, and making decisions.
- S2: have acquired or developed interpersonal skills such as working in teams and negotiating successfully, motivating and convincing other people, solving conflicts, mutual but especially intercultural understanding, and empathy.

Attitudes

Upon completion of the programme graduates will:

- A1: have developed or reinforced a general open-mindedness regarding other views, persons, cultures, etc.
- A2: have become convinced of the need to consider ethical, environmental, and sustainability aspects when making managerial decisions.

International perspective

Upon completion of the programme graduates will:

- IP 1: have internalized an international perspective in considering their managerial strategies and decisions.
- IP 2: be able to work in (and lead) international teams in an adapted, flexible, and efficient way.

Understanding of the business world

Upon completion of the program, graduates will:

- BW 1: have learnt how to apply academic knowledge to practical problems.
- BW 2: have learnt how to communicate with business people and to organize practical projects.

Awareness of the broader trends in society

Upon completion of the programme, graduates will:

- T 1: be able to assess and deal with the global internet economy and technological change, understand the rising challenges for society, and take them into account in managerial decisions.
- T 2: be aware of the diverse impacts of changes in politics, economics, and culture on society, and consider them in management decisions.
- T3: be able to critically assess and implement digital transformation strategies, including digitization and AI-driven solutions, to better manage organizations