

Open ARQUS mobility (OAM) – ARQUS network open mobility scheme

Explanatory note

Open ARQUS? What is it?

Seven longstanding comprehensive research European universities - Granada, Bergen, Graz, Leipzig, Lyon, Padova and Vilnius – established the Arqus European University Alliance in 2018. The Alliance has agreed on eight major goals for 2025 and six strategies enabling the partners to reach them.

Open ARQUS mobility (OAM) is a student and staff mobility scheme set and agreed on among the Alliance partners for creating the ground for seamless mobility based on partner knowledge, trust and common approaches within the network. OAM is a cross-cutting exchange scheme that helps to reach all eight major goals and directly responds to the four of them set in the ARQUS Mission statement as follows:

- **Integration** – *“to act jointly as a laboratory from which to move forward in the design, testing and implementation of an innovative model for deep inter-university cooperation”*;
- **Enabling people** – *“enabling a widely diverse student body and enhancing their learning experience; enabling a similarly diverse staff community”*;
- **Quality of student learning** – *“to share new forms of mobility and best practice for recognition of all kinds”*;
- **Multilingual university** – *“to promote intercultural communication competence amongst students and staff”*.

The OAM also gives life to one of the cross-cutting enabling strategies agreed on by the partners: *“the Alliance takes up the challenge of working towards seamless mobility of all kinds with full recognition for all members of the community...”*

What are the principles governing the OAM?

All the alliance members are the holders of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and OAM is an extension of the Erasmus mobility activities therefore it is governed by the same fundamental principles as set in the Charter and carried out under the same operational rules regarding implementation of the mobility (the use of Learning agreement; Transcript of Records, Grading tables for students and work programme for staff).

OAM is based on but not limited to the duration(s) of the mobility periods funded by Erasmus+.

The OAM agreement does not replace any agreements (Inter-institutional Erasmus+ or bilateral) existing among the institutions but is an agreement in its own right and supplements the existing ones by aiming at seamless mobility in all study cycles and all study areas for students and for increasing opportunities for any staff mobility.

The OAM agreement in principle opens up all subject areas for student and staff mobility offered at the partner universities.

Each Alliance university has the right to indicate restricted subject areas where OAM mobility will not be included in the selection calls and neither staff nor students from the Alliance partners will be accepted under the auspices of OAM. Nevertheless, it is hoped that such restrictions will be temporary and be applied more to the mobility numbers within the given subject area rather than subject area itself. The causes for restrictions should be analyzed and clearly communicated to the Alliance members.

Who can participate in OAM ?

All regular students enrolled at Arqus Alliance universities of all levels and subject areas who meet general and/or specific criteria set by the sending and receiving university and language requirements specified within the agreement.

All academic staff at Arqus member universities from all subject areas who are nominated by the sending university and have agreed on the relevant work programme with the receiving university.

All administrative staff who are nominated by the sending university and have relevant work programme at the receiving university.

How does OAM work?

All partners indicate a structure and a contact person responsible for the implementation of the OAM agreement.

The partners sign a tailor-made Erasmus+ agreement for the duration of maximum two years (until 2021) and fill in the Partner sheet which is annexed to it, indicating basic contact details, possible restricted subject areas, and the maximum number of students and staff they are ready to accept from each partner university per year.

The maximum accepted student and staff quota is indicated in the Partner sheet and is amended each year by July 1 for the upcoming academic year.

Each institution takes on the responsibility for analyzing the causes for the restrictions of some areas and looking for the solutions to open them up for the Arqus partners by 2025 at the latest.

If the sending university has more suitable applicants than indicated by the accepting institution, it is up to the staff responsible to negotiate the additional places. The OAM agreement does not pre-suppose exact balance in mobility numbers nor does it require keeping the count on either the number of mobile participants or months/weeks used by them over the years of the agreement in force.

The accepting university has the right to refuse nomination of the candidate (student or staff) in those cases where the goals of the Learning agreement or work programme cannot be met at the partner university.

How OAM can be financed?

Each university is free to establish its own approach to financing their student and staff mobility within the OAM.

Mobility periods that are in line with Erasmus+ mobility duration and, in the case of student mobility, can ensure study period recognition are encouraged to use Erasmus grants.

In the cases of longer or shorter mobility periods than allowed by Erasmus+ different funding options should be used:

- Sending/receiving university grant
- National/regional grant
- Zero grant