

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

to establish the Euro League for Life Sciences, a framework of cooperation between

1. University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom
2. Universität für Bodenkultur Wien, Austria
3. Universität Hohenheim, Germany
4. The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Denmark
5. Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden
6. Wageningen University, the Netherlands

These institutions shall hereinafter be referred to individually as a Partner Institution or collectively as the Partner Institutions.

- Whereas the Partner Institutions have investigated the possibilities of establishing a framework of cooperation between the relevant universities and
- Whereas the Partner Institutions wish to intensify their cooperation in high quality education in the fields of Natural Resource Management, Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Life Sciences, Veterinary Sciences, Food Sciences and Environmental Sciences and
- Whereas this MOU focuses on the establishment of practical working relations in the fields of joint teaching and learning initiatives, student and staff mobility, quality assurance, policy development, strategy and internationalisation and
- Whereas the Partner Institutions have signed a Letter of Intent in September 2001 to confirm the above considerations,
- Now therefore the Partner Institutions agree to the following:

Article 0 – The name of the framework of cooperation

1. The framework of cooperation will be realised under the name of the Euro League for Life Sciences, hereinafter abbreviated as ELLS.

Article 1 – Purpose

1. The purpose of the framework of cooperation is to establish a network of leading universities in the fields of Natural Resource Management, Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Life Sciences, Veterinary Sciences, Food Sciences and Environmental Sciences. This network should enhance the position and capability of all Partner Institutions through the sharing of expertise and resources as part of the development and implementation of their degree programmes.
2. The focus of the framework of cooperation is on joint teaching and learning initiatives, student and staff mobility, quality assurance, policy development, strategy and internationalisation.

Article 2 – Duration

1. The framework of cooperation is established for an unlimited period. Participation in this framework of cooperation may be terminated at any time by any of the Partner Institutions after said Partner Institution has discharged all liabilities incurred by its participation. A half-year notice of termination is required. This notice shall be sent to the Task Force Chair. A member of the Euro League network can be expelled if all other members decide unanimously in a Board meeting. The decision to

terminate participation in the framework of cooperation shall not affect students who are at that time participating in any ELLS activities or study programmes.

Article 3 – Internal organisation

1. There are four levels of internal organisation:
 - the Board of Rectors/Principals/Presidents (hereinafter referred to as the ELLS Board)
 - the Task force (TF)
 - the Operational teams, for example staff team or International Relations Officers
 - the Euro League Student Association (ELSA) – see Article 9
2. The ELLS Board holds at least one meeting per year (preferably in the autumn). The ELLS Secretariat is responsible for organising the content of the ELLS Board meeting; the host institution is responsible for the logistics.
3. The Task Force members are mandated by their home universities to prepare and make presentations to the ELLS Board concerning strategic and policy issues which require a final decision by the Board. The members of the Task Force coordinate the general activities of ELLS; in this capacity they communicate with individuals at their home universities who are authorised to plan and implement activities within the scope of ELLS. They are also responsible for the Plan of Cooperation which their home universities are required to submit to the TF (see Article 3.6).
4. Both the ELLS Board and the TF shall be chaired by a representative of one of the Partner Institutions. That Partner Institution will also host the ELLS Secretariat. The Chair will rotate every 12 months. The ELLS Board shall appoint the Chair; during each rotation cycle, all Partner Institutions hold the Chair once. The Chair shall be supported by the previous Chair and the subsequent Chair. Wageningen University will be the first Chair and will hold this office from the formal beginning of ELLS until 1 September 2003.
5. Each Partner Institution has one vote on the Task Force and one vote on the ELLS Board. ELSA also has two votes on the TF and one vote on the ELLS Board. New Partner Institutions can be accepted only by a unanimous vote. Other matters will be decided by a majority of votes. In case of a tie vote, the Chair casts the deciding vote.
6. Each Partner Institution that takes the lead in each thematic subject will submit an annual Plan of Cooperation to the Task Force. This Plan will comprise the strategy and policy for the coming calendar year as well as information on specific activities. The Task Force will draft a general Plan of Operations (including a budget) for the coming year with an overview of the individual Plans of Cooperation. The Plan of Operations will be discussed and agreed upon by the ELLS Board during their meeting at the beginning of each calendar year. It is also possible to begin new activities that have not been specified in the Plan of Operations. The Task Force will coordinate the approval procedures for such activities.

Article 4 - Position in Higher Education

1. The ELLS Chair is responsible for developing and maintaining relations with other inter-university networks and international bodies.
2. ELLS Chair is authorised to sign Memoranda of Understanding or Letters of Intent with other university networks if they have been agreed upon by the other members. Such documents must be signed by all ELLS Partner Institutions.
3. The ELLS Partner Institutions shall establish an ELLS Consortium with the aim of making agreements with other consortia and funding agencies, sharing resources and offering joint programmes to third parties.
4. Participation in the ELLS Consortium will not preclude the ELLS Partner Institutions from making bilateral agreements or taking part in other consortia.

Article 5 – Finance

1. Each activity or project of the Euro League will be regarded in financial terms as a separate activity. This means that for each activity or project, a project plan with a proposed budget will be submitted to the Task Force. Each Partner Institution is responsible for its own financial contribution.
2. The Chair can incur expenses up to €5000 annually for activities that are in the general interest of ELLS. These expenses will be reimbursed during the following year. Each Partner Institution is responsible for an equal share of these expenses. In case of activities that incur expenses higher than €5000, the Task Force must approve such expenditures in advance.
3. All expenses for travel/hotels/salaries will be paid by the Partner Institution which employs the members of staff who incur such expenses. Funding of such expenses from external sources is permissible.
4. The Plans of Cooperation shall incorporate a budget based on the total costs for each Partner Institution. The Partner Institutions are not liable in any way for costs incurred by other Partner Institutions who do not fulfil their financial obligations.
5. No tuition fees shall be charged to exchange students of ELLS Partner Institutions or those of external partners in the ELLS Consortium (the tuition fee will be paid at the home university) if such an agreement with the external partners has been made. If a student wants to follow an entire Master Programme at another Partner Institution, then the normal tuition fee will be charged. European regulations shall apply.
6. The home universities of students shall provide the necessary funds for travel/lodging to assure the participation of at least two students from their university in the annual meeting of student representation group.
7. The home university shall provide the necessary funds for travel/lodging to assure the participation of the two student representatives in the Task Force meetings.

Article 6 – Enlarging the ELLS network

1. The ELLS Board makes the final decision about the acceptance of new ELLS Partner Institutions.
2. The maximum number of Partner Institutions in the ELLS network will not exceed nine.
3. New Partner Institutions are required to meet the conditions of the prevailing ELLS MOU, in particular the conditions for the ELLS Quality Assurance System.

Article 7 – Quality Assurance System/quality enhancement

1. The ELLS Partner Institutions shall establish a Quality Assurance System for the ELLS network. The ELLS Quality Assurance System shall also aim for quality enhancement.
2. The ELLS Quality Assurance System is based on the national systems of the individual ELLS Partner Institutions.
3. Experts from Euro League universities can participate in a Quality Assurance Panel. This Panel will visit ELLS Partner Institutions for the purposes of comparison and evaluation of courses or programmes.
4. All Partner Institutions agree to submit to the ELLS Quality Assurance System. Before the evaluation will be carried out, all procedures, goals and other relevant aspects must be decided upon.

Article 8 – Joint Programmes/degrees

1. The Partner Institutions agree that the duration of a Bachelor Programme must be at least three years and that of a Master Programme at least one year.
2. Students can complete a BSc Programme at one ELLS university and continue on to an MSc Programme at another if accepted by the host university.
3. Students of ELLS universities can opt for a Euro League Certificate (ELC) which will be issued by the students' home university. To obtain such a Certificate, students need to acquire at least 30 ECTS. Modules or activities which are part of the ELC have to be acknowledged in advance by the teaching staff of the home university.

Article 9 – Euro League Student Association

- 1. The Student representation in ELLS is organised through the Euro League Student Association (ELSA).**
- 2. At least two student representatives from each Partner Institution shall be nominated. The student representatives will meet at least once a year.**
- 3. The ELSA Chair and the Chair of the ELLS Task force will come from different universities.**
- 4. ELSA will be represented at meetings of the ELLS Board and at meetings of the ELLS Task force by two ELSA representatives and by one representative of the university where the meeting is held. ELSA has one vote on the ELLS Board and two votes on the ELLS Task force (see Article 3.5).**
- 5. The costs for travel and accommodation for the aforesaid meetings will be reimbursed by the home universities of the representatives. For the meetings of the student representatives, each university will reimburse the expenses of at least two students.**

Article 10 – General Provisions

- 1. The participating universities agree to acknowledge credits (representing course magnitude) that have been received by students from Partner Institutions, assuming that such courses are compatible with the students' study programme. In situations where the number of credits does not conform to a particular university's system, the home university will find a solution fitting in the credit system of that particular university.**
- 2. The Partner Institutions accept English as the language of instruction for any joint programmes. If the Partner Institutions jointly develop new study programmes or parts thereof, the language of instruction will be English.**
- 3. The intellectual property resulting from joint programmes and research belongs to the universities that conduct the joint programmes/research. If necessary, for each project specific arrangements will be worked out in a separate agreement.**
- 4. Activities of each university are carried out in compliance with the national laws prevailing in that particular university's country.**

University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom
On behalf of Prof C. Duncan RICE, Principal and Vice Chancellor, Prof. Paul MITCHELL, Head of the School of Resources, Environment and Society

Universität für Bodenkultur Wien, Austria
On behalf of Prof. Dr. Leopold MÄRZ, Rector Magnificus, The Dean of Studies, Prof. Dr. Adolf ZAUSSINGER

Universität Hohenheim, Germany
Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter LIEBIG, Rector

The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Denmark
Prof. Per HOLTEN-ANDERSEN, Rector

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden
Prof. Ann-Christin BYLUND, Rector

Wageningen University, the Netherlands
Prof. Dr. Ir. L. SPEELMAN, Rector

With the support of the Euro League Student Association
Anna Marina Neuburger, Chair of ELSA

1st Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

as decided on the ELLS Board meeting on 14 November 2003 at Stuttgart-Hohenheim

The Euro League for Life Sciences is a framework of cooperation between

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Article 3 – Internal organisation

- Ad 4. The duration of the ELLS chair is prolonged from 1 to 3 years. The host institution for the ELLS Board meeting will change every year.