

International exchanges guide for Management Engineering students

Document prepared by the International Commission of the Study Programme in Management Engineering

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1 Introduction

Politecnico di Milano – as part of its internationalization strategy - offers to its students different exchange and international mobility experiences, from the traditional Erasmus program (recently re-launched as Erasmus+), Double Degrees in collaboration with prestigious foreign offices, or special programs (e.g. ATHENS, QTEM, UNITECH, Alliance4Tech, etc.). The details of all these mobility programs are available on the University website (<https://www.polimi.it/en/services-and-opportunities/experience-abroad/>).

The Management Engineering degree fully falls into the strategy of the University, by offering exchange programs to almost 300 students every academic year, resulting as one of the courses with the highest level of exchanges of Politecnico.

Given these relevant numbers, the Course of Study Council (CCS) in Management Engineering has nominated a dedicated team (Internationalization Commission), delegated for the management of evaluation procedures, planning and validation of the mobility programs. The Commission carries out its activities under the mandate received from the CCS, in collaboration with different offices responsible for the international mobility programs (e.g. Studesk), which manage administrative procedures, in compliance with the guidelines set by the Industrial and Information Engineering School.

Five members, or CCS professors with operational powers, organized in “Geographical Areas” of exchange and in “Disciplinary Areas” of competence, compose the Commission:

- Sergio Terzi, Commission Coordinator, “Special Programs” (e.g. Double Degree, ATHENS, UNITECH, PoliTong, QTEM, Alliance4Tech) Geographical Area Contact Person, as well as Geographical Area Contact Point for “Asia” area (China, Japan, Korea, India etc.), and also Disciplinary Area Contact Person, ✉ sergio.terzi@polimi.it, ☎ 2803.
- Stefano Elia, “France and United Kingdom” Geographical Area Contact Person, as well as Disciplinary Area Contact Person, ✉ stefano.elia@polimi.it, ☎ 2756.
- Anna Paola Florio, “Scandinavian countries, Baltic countries, Russia” Geographical Area Contact Person, as well as Disciplinary Area Contact Person, ✉ anna.florio@polimi.it, ☎ 2754.
- Simone Franzò, “Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland” Geographical Area Contact Person, as well as Disciplinary Area Contact Person, ✉ simone.franzo@polimi.it, ☎ 4869.
- Luca Gastaldi, “Extra Europe Countries” (Africa, America, Australia) Geographical Area Contact Person, as well as Disciplinary Area Contact Person, ✉ luca.gastaldi@polimi.it, ☎ 4758.
- Angela Tumino “Spain” Geographical Area Contact Person, as well as Disciplinary Area Contact Person, ✉ angela.tumino@polimi.it, ☎ 9551.

¹ This document is still under development. For any feedback, comment and suggestion on this guide, please email to: sergio.terzi@polimi.it

2 The process of international exchange and mobility

Whatever the international exchange of interest for a student (Erasmus, Double Degree, others), the process does not change, and it is structured into four phases (Figure 1): (i) application to a mobility call and selection/admission, (ii) exchange scheduling (with study plan processing), (iii) exchange period abroad, (iv) validation of the obtained results during the exchange period, after his/her back to Italy.

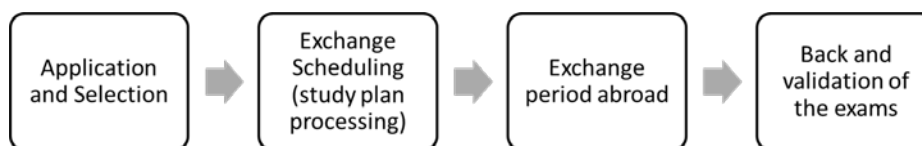


Figure 1 – International mobility process phases

2.1 Application to mobility calls, selection and admission

Mobility programs are presented and managed by dedicated offices (through the Studesk operative structure). Each program is sponsored by a proper call, with a related deadline. The application to a mobility program is mandatory for accessing it, according to the rules described in the specific call. Approximately, the participation in a mobility call must be done a year before the period of the desired mobility. More information about the programs and their calls can be found here:

<https://www.polimi.it/en/services-and-opportunities/experience-abroad/>

Candidates selection takes place on the base of merit credits, declared in specific calls (usually, inspired by the concept of “grade”, a synthetic index able to evaluate the student’s career, both in times and obtained results terms). It must be said that the overall responsibility of the selection and admission process is in the hand of the international mobility offices. To them, the Commission adds the following rules that make text for the selection of candidates admitted to exchange programs:

- For students enrolled in the second year of BSc degree who intent to perform their mobility period during the third year of BSc degree:
 - The inspiring principle of the selection is to allow the exchange to valuable students, able to schedule their activities and maintain the rhythm of their studies at an adequate level, or to do not cause consistent lags in their learning path. To practical aims, all the students that have acquired an average number of credits for semester are admitted to the exchange project – starting from the enrolment date – equal or higher than 20, whatever is the grades mean.
 - It is not possible to start an exchange abroad before the second semester of the second year. In any case, the real start for an international mobility is subjected to the rules defined by Politecnico di Milano. For any details, please see the international mobility call.
- For students enrolled in the third year of BSc degree, intent to perform their mobility period during the future MSc degree:
 - As said before, all the students that have acquired a medium number of credits for semester are admitted to the exchange project – starting from the enrolment date – equal or higher than 20, whatever is the grades mean.
 - Furthermore – always to respect the previous principle – it is required that the student's curriculum is such as to give reasonable assurance that the student will meet all the requirements for admission to the next level within the terms of inclusion set by Politecnico di Milano. The Commission will evaluate – in its sole discretion – the entire history of the candidate, with the aim to evaluate, with a

certain level of confidence, the existence of this reasonable certainty, by verifying study times and obtained credits. The chance to perform the exchange period during the MSc degree eventually acquired will depend from the whole satisfaction of enrolment constraints that the student must have fully accomplished within times determined by Politecnico di Milano and, in any case, before starting his/her mobility.

- The real start of an international mobility is subjected to rules defined by Politecnico di Milano. For any details, see the international mobility call.
- As said before, it is impossible to ask for Erasmus scholarships more than one time.
- For students enrolled in the MSc degree who intent to perform the mobility period during the ongoing MSc degree:
 - To have access in the MSc degree, the CCS of Management Engineering defined very stringent rules, evaluating the entire history of the candidate and his/her results, by following merit principles. Hence, a strong a-priori selection is done during the admission to the MSc degree. However, during the mobility call selection, the International Commission has the right to evaluate with care the history of the candidate, even by considering his/her recent results (positive, negative and/or null) at Politecnico di Milano with the aim to award the most worthy ones, by considering at the same time the student's profile normally required by partner universities selected by the student.
 - Even because of times needed for the call, selection and scheduling, who participates to selections during the MSc degree, can perform, without doubts, his/her mobility period starting from the second year of MSc degree. As said before, the real start for an international mobility is subjected to rules defined by Politecnico di Milano. For any details, see the international mobility call.

At this stage – for each type of mobility – the Internationalization Commission aims the selection of suitable candidates for each mobility path. The guiding selection principle is related to merit: among the applications received, excellent students (defined by number of credits earned, achievements, studies time, and training plan) should take precedence. The Commission also has the mandate to ensure the consistency of the course of studies defined by the CCS, in order to produce competent students, aligned to the draft project that Management Engineering CCS intends to train. Finally, the Commission has the duty to consider adequately the prestige and the resulting expectations of international foreign partners, at which to direct the best students.

The statements above are also used to assess the candidates to other exchange programs, subject to the requirements of the satisfactions possibly established by individual calls. Then, applicants considered as suitable will be placed in the ranking. Candidates considered suitable will have the option of choice for any exchange location. The scrolling rules of the list of suitable candidates are encoded also by the related mobility calls and managed by the internationalization office in charge. Candidates, who have accepted the mobility proposal arising from the selection, will be invited to draw up a Study Plan, according to recommendations and rules expressed in the following part of the document. The application and selection sub-process is described in the following Figure 2.

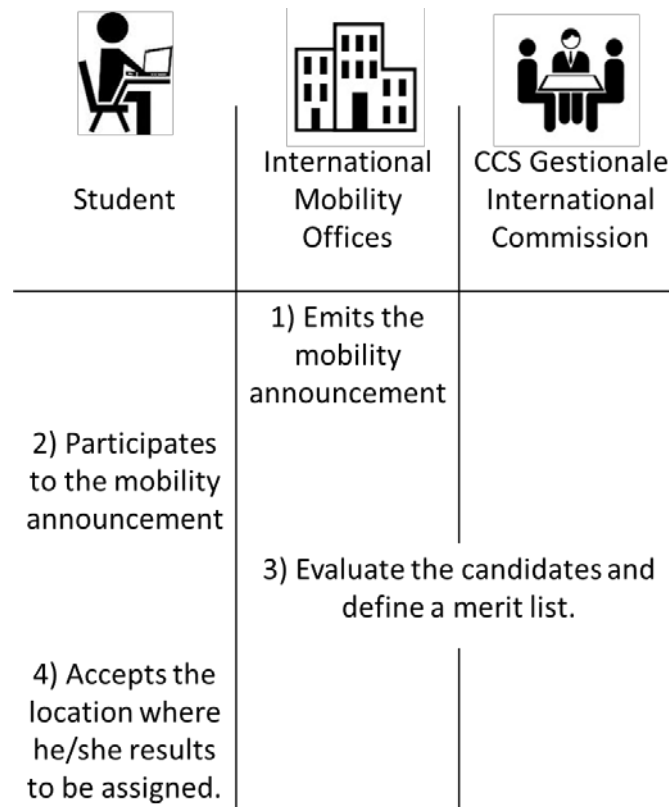


Figure 2 – Synthetic scheme of the application and selection sub-process

2.2 Mobility exchange scheduling

Once admitted to an exchange program, it is up to the student to draw up a Study Plan compatible with the Management Engineering degree (BSc or MSc), by following directions of the International Commission. The Study Plan Commission, established for both BSc and MSc degrees, must approve the plan too.

In order to help as much as possible the selected students, Management Engineering CCS has organized the duties of members of the International Commission according to Geographical Area proxies. Each member acts as Coordinator of a specific geographic area in which to organize the exchange. Each Coordinator is in charge of evaluating the curriculum proposed by the student abroad, approving in advance the equivalences between courses that will be taken abroad and the courses in the study plan of the Management Engineering drawn up by the student. The student is required to enter within the mobility scheduling only teachings equivalent to those in the Study Tracks beforehand approved (PSPA – Piano di Studi Preventivamente Approvato) which the student is enrolled in, and is required to choose these lessons so as to respect the constraints imposed by the Academic Regulations for that Study Track. If deemed necessary, in assessing the equivalences the Geographical Area Contact Person may direct the student to one or more Disciplinary Area experts, just to have their opinion about the programs of detail. The Disciplinary Area expert is identified always in one of the members of the International Commission, which then operates as a dedicated task force.

Unlike what happened in the past - and it still happens in other CCS - it is not necessary to refer to individual teachers of the courses that you intend to frequent outside, but the assessment is left entirely to the members of the International Commission, organized as Disciplinary Area experts following the tables in section 4. The planning process is described in the next section.

2.2.1 Exchange scheduling process and Study Plan elaboration

The preparation of the mobility Study Plan has specific characteristics depending on whether the exchange is done during BSc or MSc degree. The double degree programs have additional features

to be observed, as other special programs (e.g. TIME, UNITECH, Double Degree, Alliance4Tech, QTEM, etc.). Please refer to the following sections for any details.

To facilitate the work of the CCS International Commission and make the scheduling process (described in Figure 3) faster, the student is required to draw up a first hypothesis of Study Plan, in accordance with the Study Track (PSPA) chosen and according to the following rules (in particular regarding the maximum number of credits replaced with foreign exams), to be discussed later with the Geographical Area Coordinator. The student is asked to research and carefully study the educational offer of the host university, in order to identify a coherent set of courses, which require equivalences to the Italian courses. In this research, the student can also help himself/herself by studying the list of courses that have been approved in the past on that occasion, available on-line in the international mobility application. He/she may also ask for directions to the Studesk, which - although not having teaching skills - has a long history of international exchanges. But be careful to consider only previous experiences; often it happens that courses recognized in the past with other students no longer exist or have been modified significantly in contents. However, in some locations where a few students have gone, the real supply of the partner university could result to be larger than that so far seen by Politecnico di Milano past-students. In summary, experience shows that the website of the host institution is the source of far more reliable and up to date, from which to build their own mobility plan.

In most cases, if the Study Plan has been well planned, the procedure is resolved with a simple and quick interview with the Geographical Area Coordinator, which applies in advance the submitted plan (by signing the so-called Learning Agreement, a formal document which plans the exchange). If the Geographical Area Coordinator is not able to assess the equivalences of some exams, the student is sent back to a specific colleague (Disciplinary Area Expert). The Disciplinary Area Expert - which is always a member of the Commission - evaluates the content of the course/s required by the student and - where appropriate - gives to the student a first confirmation of validation of examination/s. This activity is performed usually face to face, by requesting an appointment to the delegate teacher who receives the student, studies the material presented to him and countersigns the proposed validation. At discretion of the teacher, this activity can also be performed asynchronously and through electronic media (e.g. e-mail), especially for situations (plans and/or approvals) simple and standard.

Once collected validations (by hand or by mail), the student asks the Geographical Area Coordinator for the final check and the sign of the Learning Agreement. The Learning Agreement is the official document that allows the student to begin the exchange, which must be signed by the Geographical Area Coordinator, being in effect a training contract with the host institution. Then, the signed Learning Agreement must be given to the offices (Studesk), up to proceed with the submission of formal practices to the foreign host university.

To facilitate the management of the process, the student is asked to prepare appropriate documentation, according to the attached template ("Format Dossier International Mobility.docx"), consisting in a collection of personal data, a series of endorsement modules, a summarized list of courses for which the student requires equivalences. This dossier is needed to manage the different practices of recognition and it is appropriate that the student fills it out properly, then using it throughout the process.





 Student	 International Mobility Office (Studesk)	 CCS Gestionale Geographic Area Reference contact person	 CCS Gestionale Discipline Area Expert
<p>2) Studies regulations of both the universities and makes a first hypothesis of study program. Hence, he/she contacts the Geographic area reference person.</p> <p>4) Collects the information and formulates an adequate plan. Collects the endorsements of equivalences and asks to the Geographic Area Reference Contact Person the plan validation.</p> <p>6) Delivers the learning agreement to the Studesk.</p>	<p>1) Gives initial information and explains the bureaucratic steps to the student.</p> <p>3bis) Collects the learning agreement and compiles the final documentation.</p>	<p>3) Acquires from the student the hypothesis of study program and evaluates it. If needed, addresses the student to the Discipline Area Expert.</p> <p>5) Verifies the plan and signs the learning agreement.</p>	<p>3bis) Acquires from the student the hypothesis of equivalence of the exam and validate it. If needed, asks for changes.</p>

Figure 3 – Synthetic scheme of the exchange scheduling sub-process (elaboration of the mobility Study Plan)

2.2.1.1 Exchange scheduling process times and deadlines

The definition of a Study Plan consistent and aligned with the regulations and the availability of more university bodies is inherently a complex activity, which costs attention, time and even a little “hard work”, but it opens the door to a human experience, intellectual and professional - based now on twenty years of experience - is sure to be interesting and rewarding. In short, the time spent to draw up a proper plan worth the experience abroad!

The student is required to study carefully his/her exchange project, by considering that in the middle there are also legal and bureaucratic issues (in Italy a degree is a legal title, with rules defined by the State) that have to be strictly observed. Politecnico, in all its operating units, both technical and didactical, has the best intentions of allowing a profitable experience, in compliance with the existing limits. To everyone involved is required both flexibility (adaptation, depth, etc.) and rigor (given by a bureaucratic process that you cannot bypass).

For all these reasons, the time required to instruct this stage of the process are not immediate, but in the order of months. The scheduling documents must be delivered and placed before departure. Given the large numbers of students, it is necessary that deadlines have to be fixed, which allow - although not observed in detail - at least not to slow down the process too.

In the process, there are involved some actors (professors and researchers) taken by many other institutional activities (teaching, meetings, projects, periods abroad, etc.), whose agendas are often very intense. For this reason, it is necessary that the students do not come to the last and do not claim to solve complex issues in a few minutes. In peak periods, it is not uncommon that a teacher is not able to receive a student before 2-3 weeks. The International Commission is organized according to a task force of strong skills, though composed by people in charge of many other tasks. Hence, it is very important that the student moves on time and to avoid last-minute situations, in his sole responsibility. Approximately, for mobility call the time-line is more or less the following (approximate):

- December/January: Issuance of notice
- February / March: Ranking of suitable candidates
- March-May: definition of the study plan to be taken abroad
- Up to September / Before departure: formalization and finalization of the Learning Agreement

For most of locations and mobility projects, the Studesk requires that the Learning Agreement (the formal document containing the list of courses that are expected to follow abroad) will be both completed and delivered. For traditional Erasmus exchanges, typically this document, which must be countersigned by the Area Coordinator, must be delivered by a certain date (usually around mid-May). Experience shows that sometimes by that date the student has not yet managed to define the complete and final list of courses with lots of equivalences confirmed. Usually, this is not a problem: the list of courses to be entered in the Learning Agreement is indicative, not strictly binding and subject to changes, to be closed before the departure (it can also be changed later, as described in section 2.3). The signature can also occur asynchronously, simply leaving the document at the DIG reception, to the attention of the Geographical Area Coordinator, and then picking it a few days later. Everything would be better to happen after agreement with the teacher via email contact.

2.2.2 Elaboration of the mobility Study Plan performed during the BSc degree

Generally, students stay one semester abroad, getting 30 credits. You cannot acquire these credits related to teachings already frequented, which have not yet been taken the exam. The student cannot start before the second half of the second year (normally, given the time of the calls for mobility, start in the third year).

For courses characterizing each track (sectors ING-IND / 16, 17, 35, ING-INF / 05) "stringent" matches (in terms of contents) have to be found in the host university. For courses not

characterizing each path, a matching at level of subject area is authorized, just in case of inability to identify a close correspondence.

As an indication, the equivalence of a 10 credits exam (equivalent to 10 ECTS) is allowed in front of a teaching load at the host university of at least 7.5 ECTS, including also more courses. For courses of 5 credits, generally 4 ECTS are asked to be performed abroad. Therefore, for a total teaching load of 30 credits replaced with foreign exams, the teaching load at the host university must therefore vary between 27.5 and 32.5 ECTS credits. For a total teaching load of 30 credits replaced with foreign exams, the teaching load at the host university must vary somewhere between 27.5 and 32.5 ECTS credits (and so, in proportion to climb even higher loads in special programs). Any additional talks are not possible, but the equivalences with foreign courses must be achieved according to the directions above.

2.2.3 Elaboration of the mobility Study Plan performed during the MSc degree

With the academic year 2014-2015, the Master of Science in Management Engineering has been re-designed, according to the diagram reported in the programmatic Figure 4.

The new structure present a well-defined first year and a highly directed second year, organized in 9 "streams" or Tracks. Students – within the Study Plan - have to choose between these Tracks.

In drafting a comprehensive plan of the exams carried out abroad, the consistency of the stream chosen should be as strongly maintained, requiring recognition of exams with courses from the content very close to those provided by the Italian degree. This is particularly relevant for the subjects of the first year, which can be converted with courses provided abroad as long as the content of the foreign teachings have a large overlap with the Italian ones, being the latter the basic teachings (in general, they should be widely available courses in foreign schools). For courses of the second year, it is generally required that at least 30 credits (including courses held in Italy and abroad) have a strong correspondence with the main courses characterizing the chosen stream, so as to ensure strict adherence to the curriculum chosen.

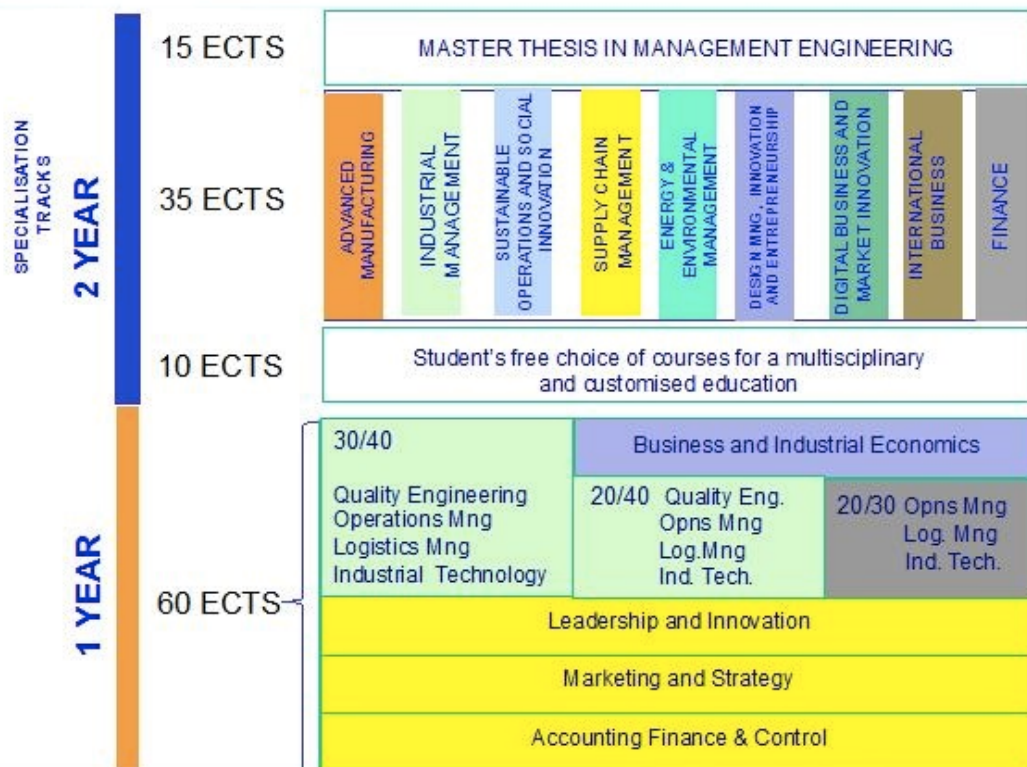


Figure 4 – Master of Science organization synthetic scheme

The credits placed in the plan for "Free" courses can be chosen - as regulation - among all the courses run by Politecnico, as long as they are consistent with the program and the teaching order in force. To this aim, all of the educational courses of the MSc are considered as valid, of course apart from those already chosen. For the recognition of the equivalences of these "Free" courses with foreign exams a coherence of area is required, provided that you do not incur in already incurred trainings.

Given the new structure, the student is required to enter into the mobility scheduling only equivalent teachings to those in the Study Track, which the student is enrolled in, and is required to choose these lessons up to respect the constraints imposed by the Academic Regulations for his/her Study Track. In case of the student performs exams that do not meet the constraints of the Study Track he/she is enrolled in, these exams will be referred to as "overdue", thus not contributing to the achievement of the 120 credits required for the Master degree.

As for the Bachelor of Science, as an indication, is allowed the substitution of a 10 credits exam (equivalent to 10 ECTS) in front of a teaching load at the host university of at least 7.5 ECTS, including also more courses. For 5 credits, 4 ECTS abroad are generally needed. For a total teaching load of 30 credits (the typical semester) replaced with foreign exams, the teaching load at the host university must be somewhere between 27.5 and 32.5 ECTS credits (and so in proportion to climb even higher loads in special programs). Supplementary interviews are not allowed.

Generally, students stay abroad for one semester, getting 30 equivalent Italian credits. To this, there are some exceptions:

- If the student wishes to prepare abroad his/her final thesis, it can be considered the participation in programs lasting one year, with the number of credits for exams that will still have to respect the constraints of credits to be achieved at Politecnico di Milano. Credits related to the thesis carried out abroad will not be directly transferred anyway, but will be acquired only during the presentation in the graduation session in Italy. The rapporteur will still be a teacher of Politecnico, while the supervisor of the host university could result as co-rapporteur and will send his judgment in writing.
- If the student has in the curriculum more than 120 credits (for example, due to surplus credits) the limit of CFU can be overcome without violating the constraint of credits to be achieved at Politecnico di Milano. In this case, it may be considered participation in programs lasting one year, with a number of credits that will depend on the curriculum of the student, but that will still have to comply with the above constraints.
- For students participating in special programs that generally provide for a year abroad, the minimum number of to be acquired at Politecnico di Milano is 60. It is an indication to perform training strongly aligned to the chosen stream. This exception can be allowed to students particularly excellent participating in Erasmus in prestigious.
- For students participating in Double and Dual Degree programs, first of all, make text the rules established in the joint degree. As a general rule, these agreements provide that the student must achieve 180 credits (for a Master of Science in exchange), by selecting 60 credits at Politecnico di Milano and 120 abroad. By considering the Italian degree, the student is required to pursue a course of training highly consistent with the stream of PSPA chosen, by selecting 60 CFUs held abroad with strict equivalence with the courses of Italian PSPA of pertinence (among these 60 CFUs is possible to consider the preparation of the thesis, for the corresponding of 15 Italian CFUs).

For students who, at the moment of the enrolment, have had the eventual validation of credits earned at another location, they will have, however, to perform at least 60 credits at Politecnico di Milano. However, it would be possible to spend a semester abroad, acquiring plausibly a

number of credits lower than 30, and possibly dedicating part of the period for the preparation of the thesis.

2.3 Period abroad

The real moment of exchange begins when abroad. The experience begins with the journey and continues all months stay long. Certainly, when arriving the host university will welcome students with proper forms and methods. All the mobility projects (from Erasmus to TIME) are based on principles of acceptance, and all the involved actors are available to make the best experience possible. Of course, problems do exist and cannot be hidden, but must be managed. Below, a list of potential issues is, with the first aids to act.

Sit.	Possible issue	How to manage it
A	One of the foreign exams changed the name.	1) Inform promptly the Italian representative (Geographical Area Coordinator). Just email him. 2) Inform immediately the Studesk of Politecnico di Milano to check for any bureaucratic changes to be made.
B	One of the foreign exams does not exist anymore, but it is possible to select a new equivalence for the same Italian course.	1) Inform promptly the Geographical Area Coordinator and (1.bis) contact the appropriate Disciplinary Area Expert teacher, to show the program of the new foreign course/s. In fact, it is possible to have equivalence with the new course. All this can be done simply by email. On the way back, it will be appropriate to remind the Referent teacher this change, possibly by carrying with you a supporting documentation (e.g. printed emails, any updated dossier, etc.). 2) Inform immediately the Studesk of Politecnico di Milano to check for any bureaucratic changes to be made.
C	One of the foreign exams does not exist anymore, and there are no possible substitutions.	1) Inform promptly the Italian representative (Geographical Area Coordinator). Just email him. 2) Inform immediately the Studesk of Politecnico di Milano to check for any bureaucratic changes to be made. 3) It is, then, possible to try to find an Italian course compatible with your Study Plan that admits counterparts courses at the host university. (3bis) Up to receive the recognition, it is necessary to agree with the Geographic Area Coordinator, and any appropriate Disciplinary Area Expert lecturer, about the above procedures. It should be correct to keep all the

		exchanged documents (e.g. emails, documents, etc.) up to quickly solve the recognition of the exams once back, at the time of meeting with the Geographical Area Coordinator.
D	One of the foreign exams cannot be followed because of a relevant overlapping in the timetable.	When substitutes exist, please behave as in the above situation B. When substitutes do not exist, please behave as in the above situation C.
E	One of the foreign exams cannot be followed because is held in a not understandable language.	When substitutes exist, please behave as in the above situation B. When substitutes do not exist, please behave as in the above situation C.
F	Other difficulties.	For all the other cases, it is best to immediately notify the Geographical Area Contact Person in Italy, to ask for directions on what to do. Even the Studesk structure is available to help with any problems, especially the bureaucratic ones.

It could happen that you are not able to perform all the exams abroad. It happens and it is not a big issue, you can always get the missed exam in Italy, when you will be back. It could happen that you did some of courses, but not enough for having your full equivalences. In this case, you can discuss with your Geographical Area Coordinator, to check if there is any possibility to make some exceptional exams for on some of the missing credits. In this case, the final grade of the missed exam will be decided by the teacher of the course doing an average (weighted) of the grade obtained abroad (that will be communicated by the contact person) and the one obtained at Politecnico. The exam will figure as fully performed at Politecnico, and recorded with grade.

2.4 Return and validation of exams

After your return, the validation of the exams is not automatic. First, the host university is required to send to Politecnico di Milano the final certificate of experience held by the student abroad (the so-called Transcript of Records). This document is scanned and recorded by the appropriate offices (e.g. Studesk) and loaded in the information systems of Politecnico. Once loaded in the system, the process requires that the student will contact the Geographical Area Coordinator to proceed to a formal validation. Here, the task of the Referent teacher is, in fact, to assess the adequacy of the activities and to formalize the validation of the exams. All this can be done with an appointment, or even asynchronously, through a simple email exchange, at the discretion of the teacher. Objective of the contact is to formally close the exchange experience, by proceeding with the final acceptance of the exams (through an application on line, of responsibility of the Referent teacher). This validation must be done for any exchange project. Conversion rules have been defined by Politecnico di Milano and they are available here: http://www.ingindinf.polimi.it/fileadmin/files/pdf_scuola/Regole_mobilita_Scuola.pdf.

As said, the evaluation is carried out by the Geographical Area Coordinator during the validation meeting with the student. To make the best practice, the student is required to bring to the meeting all the documents in his/her possession (Transcript of Records, but also any letters/documents demonstrating the obtained results, also in comparison to colleagues), so as to show clearly their results. The Commission is constantly looking for the best method of evaluation, therefore revises cyclically parameters of the partner universities, in order to build the best value for the recognition of the experience abroad. To date, there are no strict equivalence tables but each Geographical Area Coordinator is responsible for assessing the equivalence of the exams marks as correctly as possible, by using historical data (e.g. from previous exchanges), partly encoded in some comparison tables (but are still under test), any marks distribution curves (sometimes provided by the partner universities).

Note that the exams not eventually taken abroad (compared to what originally planned in the Learning Agreement) will not be considered in the conversion process (of course, the student will have to perform them as any missing exams in Italy).

3 Frequently Asked Questions

3.1 I want to go in Erasmus. How does it work the international exchange program?

For starting information, please see the institutional website and ask to the Studesk structure (<https://www.polimi.it/en/services-and-opportunities/experience-abroad/>). Read the first part of this document to better comprehend the process.

3.1.1 What are the exchange programs and locations?

For all the information about the programs and the possible locations of the exchange, it is best to ask to the Studesk, after consulting the website of the university. The Management Engineering CCS representatives are available to provide some general guidelines, although it must be clear to the student who can start building their own exchange program only when it will result assignee of a location, downstream of the selection process of the mobility call.

3.1.2 What are the selection criteria and how can I participate to a mobility call?

For all of this information, please refer to the call issued by the mobility offices (e.g. the Studesk) and to information given in this guide. The selection process is under responsibility of the international mobility offices, which we refer to for any possible bureaucratic issues.

3.1.3 How does the call work? How can I define my "grade"?

For these questions, refer to the call description, provided by the Erasmus offices. The commission doesn't have anything to deal with these details.

3.1.4 What are the best locations for Management Engineers?

Politecnico has agreements with many locations, and many of these are proposed to Management Engineers, as they have similar courses. Every year the list of proposed sites is available at the international exchange office. However, no one is actually able to provide detailed information on each location: in theory, every exchange agreement has a promoter that should be familiar with that particular location, but no one has a complete 360 degrees view. Furthermore, many venues have an "institutional" promoter (typically, Prof. Spinelli), which bases his decisions on general reputation indicators of the institution, but not on a fine knowledge of it. However, all locations with which we have agreements were examined and are considered a good level in their respective countries. So, wherever one goes, the experience should be valid (obviously bad luck could play, given that not all courses of a good place have the same quality level). To make the choice, you should inquire from the relevant authority (Studesk) for a list of active opportunities for Management Engineers, select the geographic area according to your preferences, and to get an idea of the training offered by each locations, going to look at the websites of the universities of the area/areas. Note that, in applying, you must indicate the preferred location in order of preference, and it is not guaranteed that this preference would be respected (there is an algorithm that assigns firstly top students in their preferred location, though this has still places, if not moves to the second and so on).

3.1.5 How to choose the foreign university?

In general, comments above apply also to this question. The call is complex, and the venues are many, all very interesting and important. The call of Politecnico is very competitive, there is a strong selection. At the same time the call allows you to present the request on many different locations (even up to 10, 15, depending on the calls). So, the result of the selection is anything but obvious. Initially, there are no big problems/doubts arising, just do a check on the type of university which you are applying for (just see the website) to get an idea of the didactics, and understand if it is interesting and sufficiently aligned to your expectations and, then, try to

participate in the call. You should also reflect about what kind of experience you want and you can do, by making even a little budget (e.g. life in Northern Europe is very expensive and the only Erasmus grant is not enough, certainly must think about a minimum budget support). Once accepted to the selection, you will have the opportunity and time to build your own curriculum.

3.1.6 What is the best location where following a didactic path that better matches my Track?

See also the answers above. Politecnico has many exchanges, constantly reviewed and updated. However, the foreign institutions - such as Politecnico - often modify their programs. Therefore, the best thing to do is to study the University website for which you want to apply and check for alignments. If you pass the call, you will see how to build your own plan in an appropriate way, putting together all the constraints. Please, remember that the Tracks of Management Engineering have different margins of flexibility (e.g. courses to put as FREE) that can be used to build your own exchange program.

3.1.7 What are the relevant issues of the foreign universities? How can I know if my profile matches (e.g. language skills) with their programs?

For these details, you might check the website of the specific universities. Studesk offices could support you in this.

3.1.8 Is it possible to leave as “free mover”, by reaching a location without any accord with Politecnico?

In general, it is technically possible, provided that the selected location is absolutely excellent, the exchange does not entail costs for Politecnico and the venue is available to issue an official transcript with the exams results. In fact, it is then possible, but to the total exposure of the student. Under these conditions, the exchange is operated substantially as a normal exchange. It is good to remember that top universities tuition fees, even for single courses, are often very high and it is not guaranteed that the application to a course will be accepted: these aspects must be verified independently by the student. Instead, in locations with which Politecnico has an agreement of mutual exchange (e.g. the famous Erasmus) there are no entry fees in addition to those who already you pay in Politecnico. If you want to proceed in this direction, it is appropriate and highly recommended to start building your plan and ask all permissions very early, even one year and a half before the alleged mobility. In any case, it should be clear that this exchange should be totally at your risk.

For being eligible for a free mover experience, you should be compliant with the following rules (approved by the Management Engineering Study Council on July 2016):

- If you are at bachelor level, your average should pass 24/30 (at least on 60 credits)
- If you are at M.Sc. level, your average should pass 25/30 (at least on 30 credits)
- The university that you have selected should be well ranked among top universities (>150 in Qs)
- You should present a feasible study plan to the Coordinator of the International Commission well in advance
- Your proposal should be approved in advance by the Central Commission of the School, after a request of the Coordinator of the International Commission.

It should be said that Politecnico di Milano is not accepting incoming Free Mover students.

3.1.9 Is it possible to make some summer schools and/or workshops?

Yes, obviously it is possible and Politecnico di Milano is promoting many of them. However, these experiences can not be recognized instead of official courses in your study plan.

3.2 I passed the selection. Now, what I have to do?

First, read well the above guide. Then, consult also the remaining FAQ. Then, begin to draw up your study plan and contact the proper Geographical Area Coordinator to confirm your plan.

3.2.1 What are the criteria to obtain courses' equivalence?

Courses can be converted as long as the content of the foreign courses has a large overlap with the Italian ones, and provided there is a reasonable match of effort (usually we accept the conversion of 10 credits with at least 7.5 credits held abroad – 4 ECTS for 5 credits' courses). Take care also of the number of total credits that you have to achieve (at least 27.5 foreign credits for 30 Italian credits).

3.2.2 What are the criteria to obtain the equivalence of BSc third year courses?

As above-mentioned, there must be a strong correspondence of content and effort. Speaking about standard courses, they should be readily available at foreign universities.

3.2.3 What are the criteria to obtain the equivalence of MSc first year courses?

As above-mentioned, there must be a strong correspondence of content and effort. Since the courses of the first year of Master of Science degree represent basic teachings, it should be easy to find correspondences in foreign schools.

3.2.4 Abroad there are no courses in the same semester in which are scheduled in Italy. How can I manage it?

This is not a problem. The student must define its own curriculum, indicating the courses to do in Italy. Then, he/she asks for the equivalence with a course to play abroad, in the period in which it will be in exchange. It is a normal advance/postponement possible in our study plan, which allows a good flexibility of scheduling. Moreover, some courses in Italy – at least at M.Sc. level – will be executed twice, one per semester. This will give you more flexibility for your plan.

3.2.5 Is it possible to obtain the equivalence of MSc second year courses? Given that some of them are not again available (because of the regulation transfer), when could I insert in my Study Plan and register the mark?

Certainly, you can accept the substitution of the Master of Science's second year courses, provided they fall within the area of the stream and provided they have significant overlaps with the other teachings that the student claimed the first year or will do in the second year. The programs of the new teachings of the Master of Science degree are available on the website of the Department of Management Engineering. Please, pay attention: given the move of the courses, to some exams could happen that, potentially, we could not record marks up to July 2016 (but for the majority of students leaving in 2015/2016 it should not be a problem).

3.2.6 For students enrolled under the old regulation: it is possible to insert in the Study Plan courses pertaining to the old regulation (with the aim to perform them once abroad)?

For students leaving during the next academic year (2015-2016) it is not possible. Students should have in their plan only courses of the new degree and they should find correspondences for that courses.

3.2.7 Is it possible to convert one of the Labs characterising the selected MSc stream with foreign exams?

Yes, you can. Since the lab is distinctive, it calls for appropriate matching of content, possibly taking into account the crosscutting with which the laboratory is designed for in Politecnico degree. It is preferable if these equivalences with laboratories are made with practical activities abroad (e.g. Project work) or a little articulated assignment with a final evaluation.

It should be noted that some laboratories will be carried out in Italy both the first and the second semester (in fact are replicated), precisely in order to facilitate students in their scheduling.

3.2.8 What is the didactic load (credits) that can be performed abroad?

As explained in the guide, the standard teaching load allowed for an exchange semester is 30 credits. There are levels of flexibility in achieving the 30 total credits (in the range of 27.5 to 32.5 credits mentioned in the guide) that can help the student in the composition of the study plan. Obviously, a student can perform and require the validation of even less than 30 credits. There are exceptions for the double and dual degree programs and other special programs (e.g. UNITECH) or situations.

3.2.9 How can I calculate the didactic load in locations not adopting the ECTS system?

To calculate the teaching load is necessary to check how much "work unit" (being those hours or "local credits" or other) must complete each year full time local students. The equivalence with our credit is obtained by placing the local annual load equal to 60 credits.

- **EXAMPLE 1:** In some locations the study cycle lasts three years and requires you to do 900 hours of lessons overall. So, in a year if they have to make 300 hours, then 300 hours = 60 credits (then an exam of 10 credits in that case is equivalent to 50 hours).
- **EXAMPLE 2:** In some locations the study cycle lasts two years and requires you to do around 50 "creditos". So in a year if they have to do 25 hours, then 25 "creditos" = 60 credits (then an exam of 10 credits in that case is equivalent to 4.16 "creditos")

In the creation of your own mobility plan, when you have to discuss with the Committee Coordinator, students who go at locations that use different approaches than ECTS must attach (or bring with them) a document outlining how they calculated the teaching load. Some details about the credits recognition are available here: http://www.ingindinf.polimi.it/fileadmin/files/pdf_scuola/Regole_mobilita_Scuola.pdf.

3.2.10 I need a reference letter from a professor, who can write it?

If possible, it is better that a teacher who well-knows the student has to write it. If not, it can be prepared by the contact person for international exchanges: of course, in the latter case, he can only bring objective data, such as the mean and the positioning based on the average in the ranking of the students of Politecnico.

3.2.11 Can I perform my MSC thesis abroad?

Yes, this is possible and it can be also a reason to ask for an extension of the period abroad (read what is written in section 2.2.3 of the previous guide). What is important to understand is that the thesis should be supported and discussed in Italy, with an Italian speaker. The student who intends to carry out his thesis abroad must, therefore, ensure that he/she has an Italian speaker who follows him and who "defends" the thesis in Italy. It is up to the Italian rapporteur to decide whether and how (e.g. thesis or report) to admit the candidate to the final dissertation.

There is, therefore, no automatic validation of credits eventually performed in thesis abroad, but the credits are recognized if and only if the student is admitted to the final dissertation. Any foreign teacher will appear as co-rapporteur of the thesis and may send to the Italian colleague its assessment, to support the candidacy of the student to the discussion. Normally the thesis/report should be written in English, with summary in Italian. Are also allowed other community languages, provided that there is always a summary in Italian and one in English. The title of the thesis must be either in Italian or English.

3.2.12 Can I perform my BS Business Game abroad?

Practically no. Only for special cases (e.g. Double Degree students) it is possible to evaluate how to make your Business Game abroad, even if it is not an easy task. In any case, you can always make your Business Game on distance, also if you are abroad.

3.3 I'm abroad. And now?

Study and enjoy your experience ☺

3.3.1 I'm abroad and I've some problems. How can I handle these?

See section 2.3 for details. Then, contact your Geographical Area Coordinator.

3.3.2 I'm abroad and I've to make my exams. So?

Study and pass your exams there. Then, when you will be back, you will have your results reported in a regular Transcript of Records.

3.4 I'm back. And now?

See section 2.4 for details and act properly.

3.4.1 Who is going to check and validate my exams?

When you have your Transcript of Records, contact your Geographical Area Coordinator. Bring all your documents and ask for his/her check and validation. Then, everything will be run through an online web-based system. Conversions rule are described here: http://www.ingindinf.polimi.it/fileadmin/files/pdf_scuola/Regole_mobilita_Scuola.pdf

3.5 I'm an incoming student. What do I have to do?

At first, welcome! You are here for having a fantastic experience. Enjoy Milano and enjoy Politecnico. When you arrive, you have to meeting Studesk persons. They will give you all the details. Then, you need a signature on your Learning Agreement. The Coordinator of the Internationalization Commission should do this signature. You can just leave the document to be signed at Studesk employees. They will retrieve the needed signature.

3.6 Other questions

3.6.1 I was selected for an exchange program, but I have to decline. What should I do?

This could happen, don't worry. Just contact the Studesk. In any case it is a pity, you are wasting an experience, but you are old enough to decide. If you decline just after the selection, it is not a big problem; somebody will take your position. If you decline later, it will be a big waste, since nobody will have time to prepare his/her plan and your position will be lost. The world will not stop for this, but you see how this waste big is.

4 Disciplinary Area Experts

The professors of the International Commission are organized by geographical areas and disciplinary skills, to offer students an adequate service. As above-mentioned, once selected for mobility, primarily the student must apply to the Geographical Area Reference Contact Person to define his/her own mobility curriculum. If the Geographical Area Coordinator is not competent to recognize a course, the student is sent to one of the other colleagues, experts on the subject of which students require the equivalence. In fact, the Commission teachers are organized as below, dividing courses by disciplinary competence (for both MSc and BSc

Degrees). Where appropriate, the student must ask to one or more teachers the equivalences of his/her courses, by using the available Dossier documentation.

Bachelor	Expert
Automazione dei sistemi produttivi	Tumino
Analisi e progettazione dei processi aziendali	Gastaldi
Base di dati	Terzi
Disegno e fondamenti di meccanica applicata	Terzi
Economia dei sistemi agroindustriali	Gastaldi
Fisica Tecnica e sistemi energetici	Terzi
Fondamenti chimici per le tecnologie	Terzi
Gestione Aziendale A	Gastaldi
Gestione degli impianti industriali	Tumino
Gestione ambientale d'impresa e delle energie rinnovabili	Gastaldi
Laboratorio di impianti industriali	Terzi
Metodi e modelli matematici per l'ingegneria	Florio
Scienza delle costruzioni	Terzi
Sistemi Informativi	Terzi
Sistemi integrati di produzione	Tumino
Sistemi organizzativi	Gastaldi
Tecnologie dell'informazione per l'impresa	Tumino
Tecnologie meccanica e qualità	Tumino

Master of Science	Expert
Accounting, finance & control	Gastaldi
Additive manufacturing	Terzi
Advanced and Sustainable Manufacturing	Terzi
Advanced supply chain planning lab	Tumino
Applied Econometrics	Florio
Applied Statistics	Florio
Asset Life Cycle Management	Terzi
Branding & communication	Gastaldi
Business & industrial economics	Elia
Business in transformation: social and sustainability	Gastaldi
Business intelligente	Florio
Business models for internationalisation	Elia
Corporate Finance	Florio
De-Manufacturing	Terzi
Decision models	Florio
Design Management	Gastaldi
Design Management Lab	Gastaldi
Design Methods for innovation	Gastaldi
Design Strategy	Gastaldi
Design Strategy and Economic Innovation	Gastaldi
Designing digital business innovation lab	Gastaldi
Development economics	Franzò
Digital business innovation	Franzò
Digital technology	Elia
Economia dei servizi e delle reti I	Elia

Economic Innovation	Elia
Economics and Management of Multinational Enterprises	Elia
Economics of Network Industries	Elia
Energy economics	Franzò
Energy law	Franzò
Energy Management Lab	Franzò
Entrepreneurial Finance	Florio
Entrepreneurship economics and policy	Florio
Etica digitale	Gastaldi
Finance Lab	Florio
Finance Lab + Corporate Finance	Florio
Financial econometrics	Florio
Financial Markets and Institutions	Florio
Financial Markets and Institutions + Macroeconomics of Finance	Florio
Financial risk management	Florio
Global supply networks	Tumino
High-tech entrepreneurship	Franzò
Industrial Eco-efficiency	Franzò
Industrial Management Lab.	Tumino
Industrial Management Lab. + toolbox	Tumino
Industrial Management toolbox (models and tools)	Tumino
Industrial project management A	Gastaldi
Industrial technology	Terzi
International distribution	Tumino
International economics	Florio
International markets and european institutions	Elia
Invest in foreign markets	Elia
Invest in foreign markets lab	Elia
Investment Banking	Elia
Leadership & innovation	Elia
Logistics management	Tumino
Macroeconomics of Finance	Florio
Management control system	Gastaldi
Management of design and innovation projects	Gastaldi
Management of Energy and Sustainability	Gastaldi
Management of organizations and project	Franzò
Management of requirements	Terzi
Manufacturing system Engineering	Terzi
Manufacturing system Planning	Terzi
Multichannel Customer Strategy	Gastaldi
Operations management	Gastaldi
Operations Risk Management and Resilience	Terzi
Policy analysis	Florio
Product life cycle management	Terzi
Production for made in Italy lab	Terzi
Project and program management	Gastaldi
Project management: principles & tools	Gastaldi
Public Management	Gastaldi
Quality engineering	Tumino
Quality management	Tumino

Responsabilità sociale dell'impresa	Franzò
Safety Engineering and Management	Tumino
Social innovation	Franzò
Strategic Design	Franzò
Strategy & marketing	Franzò
Supplier relationship management lab	Tumino
Supply Chain and Purchasing Management	Tumino
Supply Chain Management 1 - 2	Tumino

If any course is missing, please contact the Coordinator, Sergio Terzi. He will be in charge of the definition of the possible equivalences.