



Credit Recognition Mechanism for Credit- Seeking and Degree Seeking Students

European Union Funding Disclaimer:

SMECC2E is Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Implemented by:



Document History

Version No	Date	Description
1.0	19 th May 2026	1 st Approved Version

Table of Contents

Document History	2
1. Objective	4
2. Guiding Principles	4
3. Credit Transfer Framework	5
3.1 Use of ACTS (African Credit Transfer System)	5
3.2 Course Equivalence and Mapping.....	5
4. Pre-Mobility Academic Recognition Arrangements.....	5
5. Monitoring During Mobility	6
6. Post-Mobility Recognition Process	6
7. Recognition of Partial Completion	6
8. Institutional Responsibilities	7
9. Quality Assurance Mechanisms	7
10. Dispute Resolution Mechanism	7
11. Documentation and Digital Tracking	8
12. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).....	8
Annex A - Grading Systems in Partner Institutions	9
Nigeria (e.g., University of Nigeria, Nsukka)	9
Ghana (e.g., University of Cape Coast)	9
Kenya (Moi University) (Masters)	9
Rwanda (e.g., University of Rwanda)	10
Sierra Leone (e.g., University of Sierra Leone).....	10
Zimbabwe (e.g., Lupane State University)	11

1. Objective

The SMECC2E Credit Recognition Mechanism is designed to ensure that all academic work completed by credit-seeking and degree seeking Masters and PhD students, during the mobility period is fully recognized by the home institution. This approach guarantees that students do not experience any loss of academic time or progress as a result of participating in mobility activities. By formalizing recognition procedures, the mechanism reinforces confidence in the mobility programme and encourages greater participation among students and partner institutions.

Furthermore, the mechanism promotes academic mobility and strengthens integration across African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) by ensuring transparency, consistency, and fairness in the credit transfer process. It supports the harmonization of curricula among partner institutions, fostering mutual trust and facilitating seamless academic progression for students across different educational systems.

2. Guiding Principles

The SMECC2E credit recognition mechanism is founded on a set of core principles that ensure its effectiveness and credibility across all partner institutions. Central to this framework is the establishment of mutual trust among participating Higher Education Institutions, supported by transparency in course content, learning outcomes, and assessment methods. This transparency enables institutions to clearly understand and evaluate the academic value of courses undertaken during mobility, thereby facilitating informed and fair recognition decisions.

In addition, the mechanism emphasizes the equivalence of learning outcomes rather than strict course-to-course matching, allowing for flexibility while maintaining academic integrity. It guarantees automatic recognition of agreed learning activities, provided they are successfully completed, thereby eliminating unnecessary administrative barriers. The system is further strengthened through the use of a standardized credit transfer framework, such as the African Credit Transfer System (ACTS) or its equivalent, ensuring consistency, comparability, and seamless academic progression across institutions.

3. Credit Transfer Framework

3.1 Use of ACTS (African Credit Transfer System)

Credits earned at the host institution will be transferred using the African Credit Transfer System (ACTS) or other compatible credit systems adopted by partner universities. This ensures a standardized and transparent approach to credit transfer across institutions, facilitating smooth academic mobility and recognition.

Within this framework, one academic year is equivalent to 60 credits (or its equivalent), with credits reflecting the student's workload, expected learning outcomes, and assessment requirements. This approach ensures that academic achievements during the mobility period are properly measured, comparable, and fully recognized by the home institution.

3.2 Course Equivalence and Mapping

Before mobility, courses at the host institution are carefully matched with equivalent or complementary courses at the home institution. This ensures that the academic content aligns properly between both institutions.

The mapping process takes several factors into account, including learning outcomes, course content, workload, and level of study. This helps guarantee that the selected courses are academically appropriate and comparable in rigor.

4. Pre-Mobility Academic Recognition Arrangements

1. **Learning Agreement (Mandatory for course work)** - Each credit seeking mobile student must complete a Learning Agreement (LA) before mobility, signed by the student, home institution coordinator and host institution coordinator. The Learning Agreement must include: List of courses/modules to be taken, Credit value of each course, Expected learning outcomes, Assessment methods, Recognition plan at the home institution
2. **Approval and Validation** - The home institution must formally approve the Learning Agreement before the mobility period. Once approved, it becomes a **binding document guaranteeing credit recognition**, provided the student successfully completes the courses. This approval ensures that the chosen courses and study plan meet institutional requirements.

5. Monitoring During Mobility

Any changes to the Learning Agreement must be properly justified and approved by both the home and host institutions. These changes also need to be formally recorded using a Learning Agreement Amendment Form to ensure transparency and accountability.

During the mobility period, academic progress is continuously monitored. This is done through mid-term reports, feedback from supervisors, and institutional monitoring systems, all of which help ensure that the student stays on track with their studies.

6. Post-Mobility Recognition Process

1. **Transcript of Records** - At the end of the mobility period, the host institution will issue an official Transcript of Records (ToR) indicating the courses taken, credits earned and grades obtained
2. **Credit Transfer Procedure** - The home institution will compare completed courses with the approved Learning Agreement, verify credits and grades and transfer credits into the student's academic record
3. **Grade Conversion (if applicable)** - A grade conversion table will be used to translate grades between institutions. Conversion will be based on Institutional grading scales (see Annex A) and/or ACTS/ECTS equivalence guidelines
4. **Automatic Recognition Guarantee** - All successfully completed courses listed in the approved Learning Agreement will be fully recognized, counted towards degree requirements, and reflected in the student's transcript.

7. Recognition of Partial Completion

In cases where a student does not complete all the planned courses or withdraws from the mobility period early, the home institution will still take the completed academic work into account. This means that the student will not lose all progress made during the exchange.

Instead, the home institution will formally recognize all successfully completed modules and award partial credits where applicable. This ensures that students are fairly credited for the work they have completed, even if the full Learning Agreement has not been fulfilled.

8. Institutional Responsibilities

Home Institution - The home institution is responsible for approving Learning Agreements before mobility begins, ensuring that academic plans are valid and suitable. It also guarantees credit recognition for completed studies, maintains accurate academic records, and provides ongoing academic guidance to support the student throughout the mobility period.

Host Institution - The host institution is responsible for delivering the agreed courses and assessments, as well as providing academic supervision and support to the student. At the end of the mobility period, it issues official transcripts and evaluation reports documenting the student's performance.

SMECC2E Project Coordination Committee - The SMECC2E Project Coordination Committee ensures that recognition procedures are properly followed across all institutions. It monitors the implementation of agreements and processes to maintain consistency and quality. In addition, it acts as a mediator to resolve any disputes or inconsistencies that may arise between institutions.

9. Quality Assurance Mechanisms

A Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) will be established to strengthen and oversee the quality of academic processes. This committee will ensure continuous improvement and consistency across institutions involved in the programme.

Regular reviews will be carried out to evaluate course equivalence, credit transfer practices, and student feedback. In addition, standardized tools will be used, including Learning Agreements, transcript formats, and grade conversion tables, to ensure fairness, transparency, and comparability across institutions.

10. Dispute Resolution Mechanism

In cases of disagreement, the process begins when the student submits a formal complaint to raise the issue officially. This ensures that concerns are properly documented and addressed through the agreed procedures.

The complaint is first reviewed jointly by the home institution coordinator and the host institution coordinator, who attempt to find a resolution. If the issue remains unresolved, it is escalated to the SMECC2E Steering Committee, which provides a final level of review and decision-making.

11. Documentation and Digital Tracking

All processes will be supported by an online mobility management system that centralizes and streamlines administrative and academic procedures. This digital platform enables efficient coordination between institutions and reduces reliance on paper-based processes.

Through this system, key documents such as Learning Agreements, transcripts, and reports can be submitted digitally. This ensures full traceability of actions, greater transparency in decision-making, and improved overall efficiency in managing student mobility.

12. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) focus on ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the credit recognition process. A primary target is that 100% of approved credits are successfully transferred, guaranteeing full academic recognition for completed work.

Additional KPIs include achieving zero loss of academic time for students, maintaining high levels of student satisfaction with the recognition process, and ensuring the timely issuance of transcripts and recognition decisions. Together, these indicators help monitor quality, fairness, and operational efficiency across the system.

Annex A - Grading Systems in Partner Institutions

The commonly used grading systems in the participating countries is presented below. It should be considered when converting grades from one University to the other, in the process of recognizing credits.

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

(Grading is the same for Masters and PhD)

Nigerian Score (%)	Local Grade	GPA
70–100	A	5.0
60–69	B	4.0
50–59	C	3.0
<50	F	0.0

University of Cape Coast

Ghana Score (%)	Local Grade	GPA
80–100	A	4.0
75–79	B+	3.5
70–74	B	3.0
65–69	C+	2.5
60–64	C	2.0
50–59	D	1.5
<50	F	0.0

Moi University

Masters-Degree

Kenyan Class	Score (%)	GPA
Distinction	≥75	4.0
Credit	65 -74	3.5
Pass	50– 64	3.0
Fail	<50	0.0

PhD-Degree

Kenyan Class	Score (%)	GPA
Distinction	≥80	4.0
Credit	70–79	3.5
Pass	60–69	3.0
Fail	<60	0.0

University of Rwanda

Rwanda Score (%)	Local Grade	GPA
80–100	A	4.0
70–79	B+	3.5
60–69	B	3.0
50–59	C	2.5
40–49	D	2.0
<40	F	0.0

University of Sierra Leone

Score (%)	Local Grade	GPA
70–100	A	4.0
60–69	B	3.5
50–59	C	3.0
45–49	D	2.0
40–44	E	1.0
<40	F	0.0

Lupane State University

Class	Score (%)	GPA
First Class	≥70	4.0
Upper Second	60–69	3.5
Lower Second	50–59	3.0
Class	45–49	2.0
Pass	40–44	2.0
Fail	<40	0.0

Key Notes for Implementation

- The system is guided by a fairness and non-disadvantage rule, meaning grade conversions must never negatively affect students. The closest equivalent performance band must always be applied. This approach applies to credit-seeking and degree-seeking mobility students, as well as to transcript evaluation and credit transfer processes.
- Some flexibility is allowed to reflect institutional grading differences and nuances. However, any adjustments must be clearly documented and formally approved by the SMECC2E Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to ensure consistency and accountability.