

EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PEDAGOGICAL DESIGN



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With this Education Policy, EPICUR consolidates its long-term education strategy for developing undergraduate and graduate based learning within the Alliance. The Alliance's strategy for Lifelong Learning is outlined in a separate policy document.

This policy paper outlines EPICUR's vision, strategic objectives and principles for advancing European higher education by implementing learning experiences that are innovative, inclusive, and internationally relevant. Enrico Letta (2024) envisions alliances as the "fifth freedom" within Europe, "the freedom of investigating, exploring and creating for the benefit of humankind without disciplinary or artificial borders and limitations" (Letta, 2024, p.7). A vision which resonates with EPICUR's commitment to widening and deepening students' learning experiences, fostering unique collaborative academic environments that span disciplines and leverage novel pedagogies throughout the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT phase (see: Annex 9.9: 59).

The document presents EPICUR Education's **Strategic Objectives**, each a building block for a cohesive Alliance that enhances both student and educator engagement through enriched educational pathways and shared resources. These objectives are designed to:

- Offer to EPICUR students a unique opportunity for a meaningful European learning experience through diversified learning formats making study mobility accessible to as many EPICUR students as possible;
- Shape an innovative cooperation framework which highlight and support the transformative ambition of internationalisation of each universities;
- Define and implement procedures for creating and Alliance-wide recognition of courses, pathways and programmes that incorporate best practices and are recognised by various university bodies and national authorities;

- Design a distinctive and internationally recognised EPICUR offer by transforming institutional learning offers towards innovative, international and sustainable pathways or curricula including research or challenge-based teaching;
- Develop an international community of teaching and learning by widening and deepening faculty engagement across the Alliance;
- Leverage collective resources through joint shared services and tools;
- Digitalise the management and delivery of the Alliance's learning offer as well as the use of collective resources.

The policy paper then goes on to outline **EPICUR's Educational Principles** — foundational to its pedagogical design and operationalised through dynamic learning formats and cross-institutional cooperation. These principles offer a cohesive framework that bridges individual university curricula with EPICUR's collaborative vision, providing students with open and integrated learning experiences that reflect European values of diversity and accessibility.

The paper also details the qualities of an **EPICUR learning experience**, an umbrella term for EPICUR- provided educational opportunities for **students** enrolled at EPICUR universities. These co-developed initiatives and outputs are chronicled here.

EPICUR International Values are an integral part of the EPICUR Educational Principles and support EPICUR's strategic objective to guide learning experiences to be unique and meaningful and to add value to students' curricula. The values — also referred to as the 6 Is' — shape the learning experience as intercultural, international, inclusive, interdisciplinary, interactive, and innovative. Through these values, EPICUR strives to build a dynamic, cross-European educational framework. This approach reinforces EPICUR's role as a pioneering alliance within the European Higher Education Area, one dedicated to enriching the academic and personal growth of students whilst supporting the evolving demands of our interconnected world.

This policy paper lays out EPICUR Principles in three sub-headings:

- Why – rationale and values guiding EPiCUR’s principles, based on the ‘6 Is’,
- What – core components, objectives, and methodologies of EPiCUR learning experiences,
- How – steps for recognising and integrating EPiCUR to add value for each Alliance partner.

In the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT phase, student and educator interest is growing, with a broadening range of diverse learning opportunities now accessible through the EPiCUR Course Catalogue. EPiCUR supports educators by fostering collaboration in course development across partner institutions, encouraging European specialisations that offer meaningful mobility experiences. With expanded course options and study-programme-integrated specialisations, EPiCUR aims to provide more students with rich curricular and extra-curricular pathways, empowering them as future agents of change in European and global contexts.

Institutional Disclaimer: A partner may disclaim its institutional responsibility when institutional alignment with EPiCUR documents cannot be guaranteed, due to national and institutional quality directives or regulatory constraints.

2. INTRODUCTION

The European University Alliances (59) initiative is reshaping European higher education through multilateral educational and research collaborations.

EPiCUR strategic goal and vision for education

EPiCUR’s ultimate vision is to equip its students and educators with truly European skills, enabling them to thrive in a globalised, interconnected, and complex world.

EPiCUR places education at its core, envisioning a collaborative effort to shape a sustainable, peaceful, and healthy European future. By offering new

generations of talented students and learners the chance to engage in unbounded European learning experiences, EPiCUR stands as a beacon of innovation in education. The Alliance has pioneered the development of a joint inter-university campus, constructed around the concept of flipped mobility. This innovative approach encourages and facilitates collaborative and cooperative teaching and learning among EPiCUR partners, while also enabling mobility opportunities for students and educators alike. EPiCUR's primary focus to date lies in dramatically increasing the non-degree mobility offerings, with a view to empowering all groups of learners, in particular underrepresented groups in traditional mobilities. With its transnational dimension, EPiCUR breaks down barriers to learning, expanding access for all students to intercultural, international, inclusive, interdisciplinary, interactive and innovative learning experiences.

Thanks to the commitment and joint resources of its nine partner universities, EPiCUR can tap into the distinctive strengths, infrastructures, regional expertise, and creative potential of each institution to realise unique and meaningful European learning experiences that mobilise and unite educators and learners across borders and disciplines. Through integration into EPiCUR universities' study programmes or contributions to new Alliance-wide curricula, with opportunities for specific individual learning outcomes, EPiCUR creates disruptive, enriching, accessible learning experiences strengthening awareness to a shared set of European values and know-how for international contexts for all EPiCUR learners.

The current document outlines EPiCUR's strategic educational objectives as well as principles, plans and procedures to realise these objectives:

- **Chapter 3: EPiCUR Education – Strategic Objectives.** EPiCUR's Education Strategy outlines 10 strategic objectives. These include providing unique and meaningful European student experience, fostering an international community of teaching and learning, and ensuring the sustainable, innovative development of curricula. By integrating research-based teaching, promoting digitalisation, and leveraging collective resources, EPiCUR is positioned to not only widen

faculty engagement but also strengthens its ties with other European University Alliances, further enhancing the European Higher Education Area.

- **Chapter 6: EPiCUR Education - Principles, Pedagogical Design & Procedures.** To realise these objectives across nine diverse institutions, EPiCUR's educational offer is grounded in its International Educational Values (Chapter 4.1.1), content and deployment frameworks, and flexible pedagogical approaches that collectively shape the EPiCUR learning experience (Chapter 4.1.2). This integrated model, operationalised in the Deployment Framework, translates core educational principles into practice across partner institutions.

EPiCUR's educational offer continues to focus on demanding global challenges within its initial Priority Areas: Sustainable Transformation, European Values, Global Health, Future Intelligence and Transversal Skills. Such an endeavour requires interdisciplinary approaches and strong connections with regional academic and socio-economic ecosystems. EPiCUR's priority areas suggest interdisciplinary possibilities of shared strategic interest to all Alliance partners.

Beyond Priority Areas, EPiCUR fosters unique collaborative and intercultural learning experiences where students can develop, among others, EPiCUR International Learning Competences that will equip them with the required skills to tackle global and local challenges and become change-makers of tomorrow.

3. EPiCUR EDUCATION – STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

EPiCUR's main goal and vision is to equip its students and educators with truly European skills, enabling them to thrive in a globalised, interconnected, and complex world. EPiCUR places education at its core, envisioning a collaborative effort to shape a sustainable, peaceful, and healthy European future. By offering new generations of talented students and learners the

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Development of the European Education Area

EPICUR Education - Strategic objectives are in line with the policy objectives of the [European Education Area](#) (EEA) which focuses its efforts on improving quality and equity in education and training; educators, trainers and school leaders; digital education; green education; the EEA in the world. Moreover, EPICUR is particularly committed to explore experimentation with the European Degree Label as a common tool to work towards joint degrees in the Alliance's educational offerings, in line with the [Blueprint](#) issued by the European Commission on the 27th of March 2024.

To realise its vision, the EPICUR Education Strategy prioritises the following strategic objectives:

3.1. Ensure a Unique and Meaningful European Learning Experience

Strategic objective 1: Offer to EPICUR students a unique opportunity for a meaningful European learning experience through diversified learning formats making study mobility accessible to as many EPICUR students as possible

EPICUR ensures unique and meaningful European student experiences by immersing students in a truly European educational journey from their first

year. EPICUR will equip students with the conceptual skills and operational tools needed for future transitions through a systemic approach that creates and deploys joint, flexible, and innovative curricula and learning opportunities Alliance-wide, based on use-cases piloted within the Alliance.

EPICUR is also dedicated to fostering a community for all students and staff that encourages creativity, interaction, and personal development, ensuring adherence to all nine institutional Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion plans. This commitment is complemented by Alliance-level actions for current and future training offers and collaborative structures.

Key characteristics of the EPICUR learning experience include:

- alignment with the EPICUR Educational Principles which comprise Values, International Learning Competences and a content framework (Annex 1);
- inter- and transdisciplinary approaches across all disciplines;
- immersive European multilingual classroom experiences;
- and accessible physical, virtual, and hybrid pedagogical formats.

EPICUR endeavours to provide attractive learning opportunities for students at all educational stages **diversifying learning formats to make study mobility accessible to as many EPICUR students as possible.**

3.2. Develop Frameworks for EPICUR Teaching and Learning

Strategic objective 2: Shape an innovative cooperation framework which highlight and support the transformative ambition of internationalisation of each university

EPICUR enhances opportunities by creating flexible and accessible learning experiences and pathways. These are integrated within the existing study programmes of its members or form part of new Alliance-wide curricula to offer both undergraduate and graduate students accessible and inclusive European experiences across the Alliance's five priority areas and beyond.

EPICUR's educational offer is classified within two categories:

1. **Open learning experiences**, open to all on the basis of individual student choice,
2. **Integrated collaborative learning experiences**, embedded into study programmes of collaborating universities.

To address complex questions through a European perspective, EPICUR's educational offers must add value to students' education by enabling competence development within a framework that reinforces the inherent value of international collaboration and cooperation.

Based on the development of joint EPICUR services and common tools, the Alliance aims to propose a wide range of EPICUR learning formats:

- Equaliser courses to develop relevant academic and digital skills for pre-Bachelor students;
- Horizontal courses to reinforce transversal skills to complement disciplinary education, especially with a view toward sustainability and digital transitions;
- Open courses and learning experiences for all EPICUR students;
- Open EPICUR specialisations for all EPICUR students;
- Collaborative learning and teaching activities;
- Integrated EPICUR courses and learning experiences;
- Integrated EPICUR pathways;
- Joint programmes between some Alliance members, which can lead to European degrees;
- Professional development and entrepreneurial skills training for PhD students.

3.3. Define Alliance-wide Recognition Procedures

Strategic objective 3: Define and implement procedures for creating and Alliance-wide recognition of courses, pathways and programmes that incorporate best practices and are recognised by various university bodies and national authorities

EPICUR cooperation is based on mutual trust among its nine member universities. This facilitates recognition based on jointly defined Quality Assurance procedures, taking into account the reliable and transparent processes at each member university.

- Every mobility, whether it be a course, short learning experience or training, may be recognised after successful completion, regardless of the size and duration.
- Course recognition shall be automatic as long as the course aligns with the EPICUR Quality Assurance process and is in compliance with the provisions of a student's home programme study plan/curriculum structure.
- Recognition is fully supported by interoperable common digital tools.

In addition to recognition, certifying all EPICUR learning experiences is essential to providing added value to students, thereby also supporting their access to future training at academic institutions and employability when entering the job market.

- Ready-made courses opened to EPICUR students by the different EPICUR members should allow learners to earn ECTS (Open EPICUR courses).
- EPICUR members agree to work with a method of “pre-approved” courses and pathways for integrated collaborations following the defined EPICUR Quality Assurance process (Integrated collaborations).
- EPICUR shall analyse the potential of micro-credentials and other types of rewards (including badges) to either complement ECTS recognition or as an alternative option and incentive.

3.4. Transform & Internationalise Curricula through EPiCUR

Strategic objective 4: Design a distinctive and internationally recognised EPiCUR offer by transforming institutional learning offers towards innovative, international and sustainable pathways or curricula including research or challenge-based teaching

EPiCUR prioritises inclusive and accessible learning delivered through hybrid, blended, online, in-person classroom experiences that are designed to enhance interaction, flexibility and a challenge-based approach. To ensure sustainability of the educational offer, EPiCUR focuses on transforming existing institutional offerings with a medium-term goal of neutral cost.

The Alliance guarantees the complementarity and added value of these offers through a robust quality assurance monitoring process managed by an EPiCUR-level Quality Assurance Unit, following the FOCI — Future-proof Criteria for Innovative European Education — project’s standardised quality process methodology, whose results were presented to the European Commission in March 2024.

Based on the European Commission and United Nations Environment programme, the EPiCUR education offer promotes trans- and interdisciplinary approaches to understand real-world problems and societal challenges. This research-based approach benefits from the complementary research policies and strengths of EPiCUR’s nine members.

To realise research-based teaching, EPiCUR prioritises active and experimental pedagogies (e.g., course activities, assessment, and team-based tasks among others) across its course offer, not only in specifically research- and transfer-oriented courses. EPiCUR’s course offer promotes international collaborative projects and research-based experiences, to encourage reflexivity and adaptation to intercultural approaches, in full respect of EPiCUR Values, the ‘6 Is’.

EPiCUR promotes the development of incentives to enhance cooperation and synergies linking education and research between its nine partner institutions.

3.5. Cultivate an International Teaching Community

Strategic objective 5: Develop an international community of teaching and learning by widening and deepening faculty engagement across the Alliance

Collaborative learning and teaching activities between Alliance partners create unique European learning experiences for students.

Teaching staff require support to transform their offerings into the EPiCUR European environment. EPiCUR resources shall enable teaching staff to discover, test and develop new ways of collaborative teaching and learning. This contributes to EPiCUR's aim to facilitate seamless, accessible mobility to all learners with the help of shared resources.

An organised Community of Practice, along with structured guidance on EPiCUR teaching and learning, helps develop contributing educators' competences to integrate EPiCUR's International Educational Values and Learning Competences into the Alliance's teaching and learning practice.

By creating a dedicated virtual International Teaching and Learning Centre, EPiCUR is already providing resources, events and training for teaching and pedagogical support staff across the nine Universities of the Alliance. The Centre also includes a networking platform to meet like-minded educators and initiate collaboration.

EPiCUR members will incentivise their faculties to participate in the EPiCUR teaching and learning offer through a synergetic approach.

They will develop four-year plans aligned with their institutional priorities, outlining how they will contribute to the learning offerings and engage their students in EPiCUR educational opportunities. Performance indicators at both the institutional and Alliance levels will be used to monitor the implementation of these plans.

EPiCUR partners will develop synergies with institutional incentives to encourage the uptake and the scale- up of institutional participation in the

EPICUR educational offer. Where relevant, EPICUR may set-up joint schemes that ensure a more efficient allocation of resources than if each university were to create independent incentives for collaboration within EPICUR.

3.6. Leverage Shared Resources and Services

Strategic objective 6: Leverage collective resources through joint shared services and tools

EPICUR combines the strengths and resources of its partner institutions to create shared tools, methods, and services that support the operational implementation of its educational policy. These joint units and services coordinate Alliance level activities and maintain strong links with relevant institutional services.

To support the implementation of the EPICUR educational offer, EPICUR shall feature:

- An international Teaching and Learning Centre;
- A Hybrid Classroom network across all member campuses;
- An interoperable digital inter-university campus (EPICURUS) interconnecting local Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Campus Management Systems (CMS) with a shared registry of teaching staff, students and courses among the partner universities;
- An EPICUR Quality Assurance process and unit;
- An Alliance-wide mobility service;
- An Educational deployment framework;
- An informal Course Management Office;
- An impact observatory.

3.7. Digitalise Learning Management and Resources

Strategic objective 7: Digitalise management and delivery of the Alliance's learning offer as well as the use of collective resources

Digitalisation simplifies and streamlines the deployment of EPiCUR's educational programmes, from registration to recognition. EPiCUR views the digitalisation of student mobility management as a revolutionary step in simplifying university processes.

EPiCUR offers mobility support aimed at recognising engagement in new types of mobilities and seamless automatic recognition, aligned with existing administrative and evaluation frameworks at the member universities, through its unique digital infrastructure (EPiCURUS—EPiCUR Unified System), which is based on interoperability and mutual trust.

EPiCURUS is interoperable with external ecosystems and EU initiatives such as the EUROPASS European Learning Model (ELM), European Student Identifier of the European Student Card (ESC) Initiative, MyAcademic ID, EDUGAIN, and the EU Micro credential scheme. Furthermore, the EPiCUR partners cooperate with national authorities to achieve policy objectives of the European Education Area, such as micro-credentials.

4. WHY – EPiCUR EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES: SCOPE AND CONTEXT

EPiCUR's Educational Principles comprise the Values, International Learning Competences, thematic scope, and Deployment Frameworks. Together, they provide operational guidelines for the Strategic objectives (Chapter 3) towards a sustainable and impactful educational model for institutions, learners, and stakeholders. The 10 Strategic objectives are referenced throughout this

chapter, highlighting their interconnections with relevant aspects of the Educational Principles and operational guidelines. These principles guide both internal stakeholder (students, researchers, university personnel, etc.) and external stakeholder (partners, the European Commission, the academic community) participation in EPiCUR education. Additionally, EPiCUR’s pedagogical design formats define delivery modes and teaching approaches that align with these principles.

4.1. Educational Values and Competences: Foundations and Pedagogical Implications

4.1.1. EPiCUR International Educational Values

EPiCUR Values communicate to all stakeholders what EPiCUR education stands for, as well as how EPiCUR partners’ educational and research resources enhance and are enhanced by Alliance membership. These Values will be reviewed as determined by the EPiCUR Education Committee and other

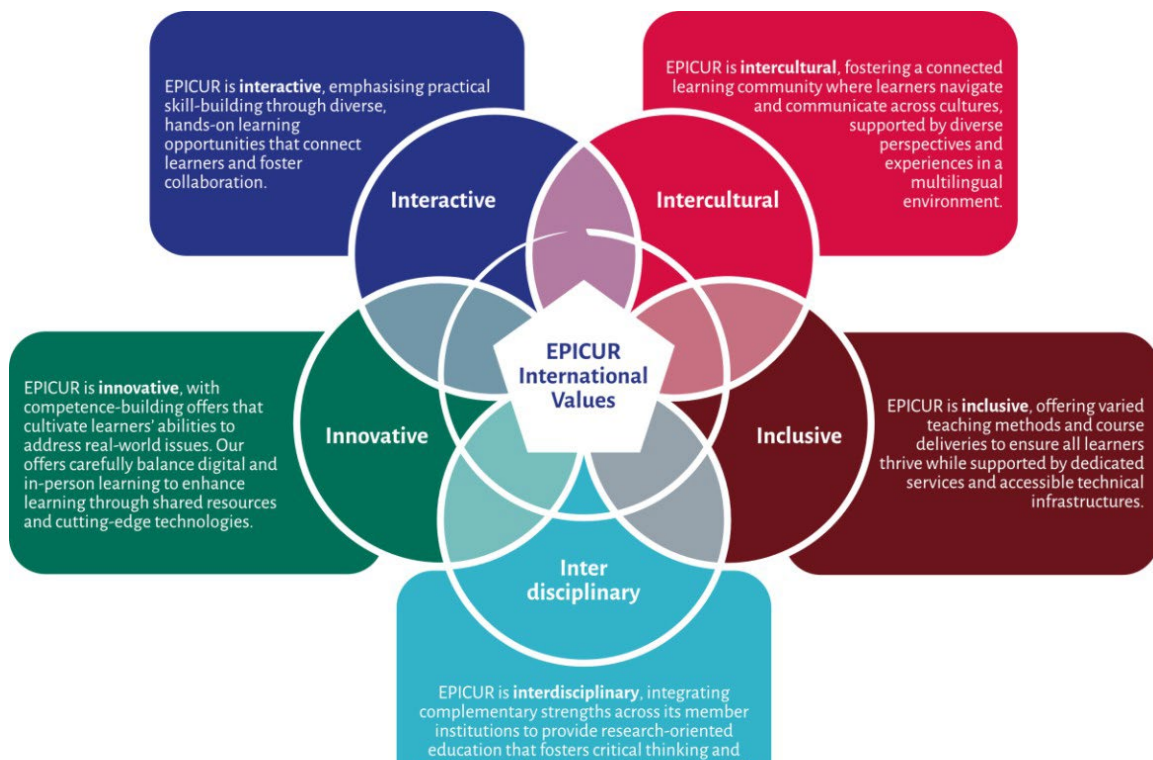


Figure 1: EPiCUR International Educational Values

EPICUR Governance levels to ensure their ongoing relevance in guiding EPICUR activities.

As visualised in Figure 1, the Values comprise ‘6 Is’: international, intercultural, inclusive, innovative, interdisciplinary, and interactive, with ‘international’ at their core, emphasising this fundamental aspect of collaboration across the Alliance. These Values guide the pedagogical designs and educational partnerships among EPICUR universities and ensure unique and meaningful European learning experiences (Chapter 3.1, Strategic objective 1). The EPICUR International Learning Competences further promote these Values by providing educators and students opportunities to practise and apply them in various learning experiences.

4.1.2. EPICUR International Learning Competences

EPICUR International Learning Competences (henceforth, “Competences”) are conceptualised in accordance with the [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#) and informed by the [European Skills, Competences, Qualifications Occupations \(ESCO\)](#) skills pillar and the [European Council’s eight competences for lifelong learning](#). The EQF defines competence as ‘the ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the EQF context, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy’ ([ESCO.ec.europa.eu](https://esco.ec.europa.eu)).

EPICUR Competences (Table 1) are transversal and align with EPICUR Values. They are integrated across all education areas, with competence development present in every EPICUR offer. These Competences shape learning objectives and course outcomes, defining what learners should know, understand, and be able to do after completing an EPICUR learning experience. The aim is to display the relevant competences in EPICUR recognition documents, as outlined in Chapter 6.1.

The codes below in Table 1 (e.g., K.2) are provided for eventual index/reference purposes in the EPICURUS system.

Methods & Approaches	Communication & Collaboration	Knowledge & Expertise	Transfer & Application
M.1 Interactivity Engage with interactive approaches to learn about complex and evolving issues.	C.1 Interculturality Work and collaborate effectively in intercultural teams.	K.1 Scientific Knowledge Pursue knowledge and/or expertise in one or more EPICUR Priority Areas.	T.1 Interdisciplinarity Integrate perspectives, knowledge, and skills from different disciplines to identify and engage with real-world issues.
M.2 Innovativeness Engage with innovative pedagogies and methodologies.	C.2 Cultural Sensitivity Engage sensitively with others, drawing on an understanding of cultural influences on yourself and others.	K.2 Geopolitical Expertise Recognise how geopolitical relations, diversity, and power dynamics impact the negotiation and resolution of real-life issues.	T.2 Social Agency Demonstrate agency for social justice in local to global contexts.
M.3 Criticality Analyse and evaluate the credibility of information, taking into consideration biases in norms, practices and opinions.	C.3 Communication Present ideas and information clearly and effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes, using appropriate modes of communication (written, oral, visual, kinaesthetic).	K.3 Implementation Demonstrate the capacity to implement theoretical approaches and/or innovative methodologies across one or more EPICUR Priority Areas.	T.3 Environmental Agency Demonstrate agency for environmental justice in local to global contexts.
M.4 Self Reflection Reflect critically on your values, perceptions, biases and actions.	C.4 Multilingualism Demonstrate communicative competence in more than one language.	K.4 Ethical Research Engage in ethical research practices.	T.4 Futures Recognise the need to understand, evaluate, and/or navigate multiple futures including the possible, probable, and desirable.
M.5 Inclusivity Practise inclusive approaches in diverse situations.	C.5 Digital Literacy Demonstrate informed and ethical digital literacy when researching and disseminating ideas and information.	K.5 Impact Critically reflect on research outcomes and their impact on stakeholders and environments.	T.5 Lifelong Learning Engage with opportunities for your own lifelong learning.

Table 1: The EPICUR International Learning Competences, core to all EPICUR learning experiences.

4.1.3. Pedagogical Implications of EPiCUR's Values

Whilst not every EPiCUR learning experience must explicitly embody all six Values equally—interculturality, inclusiveness, interdisciplinarity, innovativeness, interactivity, and internationality—they are foundational to the EPiCUR Alliance, which aims to foster an environment where these Values are celebrated and leveraged as a strength. Embodying these principles in EPiCUR's pedagogical practices is fundamental to dynamic and meaningful European learning experiences (Chapter 3.1, Strategic objective 1).

In the EPiCUR Alliance:

- Internationality is central, fostering cross-border collaborations between European institutions and enhancing global understanding. By connecting diverse students and staff, EPiCUR breaks geographical, geopolitical, linguistic, and cultural barriers to create rich international learning experiences.
- Interculturality reinforces EPiCUR's international orientation and is embraced through curriculum integration and promoting cross-cultural cooperation. EPiCUR encourages students and staff to engage with different cultures and languages, preparing them to thrive in an interconnected world.
- Inclusiveness ensures equal access to international learning for all students, regardless of background, identity, or ability. EPiCUR provides accessible learning materials, infrastructure, and supportive environments, guided by the EPiCUR Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Fundamentals (see EPiCUR EDI resources).
- Interdisciplinarity drives EPiCUR's approach to education, blending knowledge from multiple disciplines to tackle complex real-world problems. The broad scope of EPiCUR's priority areas invites interdisciplinary collaborations and learning experiences among students and educators.
- Innovativeness in pedagogy is a hallmark, incorporating cutting-edge technology, project-based learning, and alternative formats like hybrid classrooms that transcend traditional lecture-based teaching. This

commitment ensures that learning remains relevant, creative, and adaptable to modern demands and is backed up by EPiC TLC-provided resources and visible in EPICUR's Course Catalogue.

- Interactivity is emphasised through group work and active participation, ensuring that courses are designed for hands-on, collaborative learning, equipping students with communication and teamwork skills for professional environments. Course design is described for offers EPICUR Course Catalogue, with many offers emphasising group work and active participation.

4.2. Content Framework

The Content Framework lays out the wide and deep thematic scope of EPICUR learning experiences. It includes EPICUR's five interdisciplinary Priority Areas and wider curricular opportunities embraced by EPICUR.

4.2.1. EPICUR Priority Areas

The EPICUR European Alliance equips students with relevant, in-demand competences by leveraging the strengths of its nine partner universities and their regions (EPICUR-SHAPE-IT Grant Agreement). EPICUR prepares change-makers to tackle challenges identified in current megatrends ([European Commission, 2024](#) and [United Nations Environment Programme, 2020](#)).

EPICUR's interdisciplinary focus on its five Priority Areas — Sustainable Transformation, European Values, Global Health, Future Intelligence, and Transversal Skills (Table 2) — empowers students to address major societal challenges with contemporary research-based knowledge and skills.



European Values

European Values refers to ideals, beliefs, and norms that are considered to be fundamental to European societies and their cultural, social and political development. Whilst there is no definitive list of European values, some commonly recognised values include Human rights, Democracy, Diversity and Tolerance, and Solidarity.



Sustainable Transformation

Sustainable Transformation denotes the endeavour of creating and ensuring a viable future by anticipating the need for and realising profound shifts in economic, social and environmental systems. This involves transitioning to more sustainable living and business practices that account for the planet's finite resources and seek to minimise environmental impact whilst ensuring social equity, economic development and stability.



Global Health

Global Health refers to the science and practice of addressing health challenges, protecting and improving well-being, and achieving equity in health outcomes on a global scale through the promotion of healthy behaviours, the prevention and control of diseases and injuries, and the assurance of access to high-quality healthcare products and services.



Future Intelligence

Future Intelligence explores how to create intelligent systems and technologies with abilities that include and go beyond today's AI systems. A main focus is the creation and evolution of intelligent systems and technologies that remain human-centred and serve the needs of society.



Transversal skills

Transversal skills, also known as transferable skills or soft skills, are competences that are valuable across different professions, industries, and contexts, and can be applied and transferred to various situations and environments. This includes digital competences, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, leadership, cultural competence, and entrepreneurship, among others.

Table 2: EPiCUR's Priority Areas and descriptions

4.2.2. EPiCUR learning experiences beyond the Priority Areas

Whilst the five Priority Areas are central to EPiCUR's learning and teaching strategy and provide an EPiCUR signature for its open course portfolio available to all EPiCUR students (see Chapter 5.1), EPiCUR concurrently encourages learning experiences outside these areas. EPiCUR invites

collaborations between educators at inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary levels which in turn lead to integrated learning experiences, which are offered via collaborating study programmes (see Chapter 3.2 for Strategic objective 2, Chapter 3.5 for Strategic objective 5, and Chapter 5.2).

Through the often more specialised nature of learning experiences beyond EPICUR Priority Areas, it is important not only to promote them in the EPICUR Course Catalogue but also to ensure that the right students are matched to these opportunities. Identifying and engaging students with the specific background, interest, or skill set needed for these specialised courses enhances the learning experience, both for the individual and the group. This process requires increased student exposure, in addition to strategic communication and targeted outreach, ensuring that the course's specialised content aligns with students' academic goals and interests.

4.2.3. Pedagogical Implications of the Priority Areas and beyond

The Priority Areas reflect interdisciplinary areas of knowledge of European and global significance as conceptualised in current megatrends as defined by the European Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme. Focusing on these areas leverages the distinctive strengths of each EPICUR partner to then seek out and provide interdisciplinary learning experiences that can be both relevant and impactful. This offers students a broader range of learning experiences and specialist research-based knowledge than any single institution can provide.

EPICUR's Priority Areas promote interdisciplinary teaching, where students tackle complex issues like Sustainable Transformation, Global Health, or Future Intelligence by integrating and applying knowledge from multiple fields. Courses often use challenge-based learning (CBL), addressing real-world problems and societal challenges. EPICUR encourages educators to design assignments that require students to synthesise interdisciplinary insights and apply them in practical contexts.

Active, experiential learning methods are essential. For example, EPiCUR sustainability courses might involve simulations, collaborative projects with local or global stakeholders, or field-based experiences where students engage directly in transformation processes.

Even courses outside the Priority Areas benefit from these pedagogical approaches, particularly in collaborative and intercultural settings. Educators can use strategies like virtual exchange platforms, collaborative online international learning (COIL), and culturally responsive teaching to foster intercultural competences. These methods help students navigate cultural differences, build empathy, and engage in inclusive dialogue.

Such collaborative courses encourage reflexivity, prompting students to reflect on their learning and adapt to diverse perspectives and academic systems. Tools like reflection journals, peer feedback, and adaptive learning pathways enhance students' ability to learn and collaborate in varied contexts. They must be a strategic priority and hallmark for EPiCUR moving forward (Chapter 3.2, Strategic objective 2).

4.3. Pedagogical Design Formats

EPiCUR's pedagogical design embodies its Values, facilitating students' Competence development and offering alternative curricula. Each value is distinct yet interconnected; for instance, inclusion supports international and interdisciplinary learning, whilst interactive and innovative approaches enhance student engagement. By prioritising inclusion and accessibility, EPiCUR ensures equal opportunities for all students to benefit from its educational offers and responds to the diverse needs of its student population.

4.3.1. Pedagogical Implications of Modes of Delivery

To align with EPICUR's Values, EPICUR learning experiences must be accessible without requiring a full semester abroad, adding value to, and being distinct from, established mobility programmes like ERASMUS. This approach enables immersive, international and intercultural learning experiences for students with personal constraints and will increase overall mobility by encouraging longer-term mobility programmes in the future. By prioritising accessibility, EPICUR ensures equal opportunities for all students to benefit from its educational offers (Chapter 3.1, Strategic objective 1).

EPICUR courses and specialisation options must be inclusive for all eligible students, which can mean transforming traditional pedagogical formats (Chapter 3.4, Strategic objective 4). Collaborative activities and integrated learning experiences must be inherently accessible, with active measures taken to minimise barriers related to geography, finances, and technology.

To achieve geographic accessibility, EPICUR's delivery mode formats range from short in-person learning experiences, like summer schools, to asynchronous or synchronous activities with hybrid and blended components in between (see below). Table 3 outlines the options for duration in these formats.

Delivery mode	In-person	Hybrid	Blended	Online
Duration	Intense – consecutive days up to one or three weeks		The in-person component is recommended to last at least three days to make the trip through Europe worthwhile.	
		Total duration is flexible – could be a few classes or the duration of a semester.		

Table 3: Possible duration of EPICUR learning experiences depending on delivery mode to ensure accessibility

Table 3 specifically highlights that in-person, semester-long learning experiences are not accessible for EPiCUR students and thus do not meet the criteria for EPiCUR learning experiences.

Utilising opportunities to digitalise the delivery of EPiCUR learning experiences enhances interactivity and engagement whilst maintaining flexibility (Chapter 3.7 3.5, Strategic objective 7). Offering blended learning and flipped classroom concepts, and incorporating synchronous and asynchronous components enables student engagement in otherwise inaccessible learning experiences. Synchronous sessions allow for real-time discussions, immediate feedback, and community building, whilst asynchronous components—such as recorded lectures and self-paced assignments—enable students to engage with the material at their convenience. These transformations ensure students benefit from structured interactions and the flexibility to learn at their own pace (Chapter 3.1 and 3.2, Strategic objectives 1 and 2).

Hybrid

Hybrid learning experiences facilitate simultaneous online and in-person participation, offering flexibility and inclusivity. Most hybrid courses in EPiCUR have run on a regular schedule of 1-4 hours per week over a full semester, primarily delivered synchronously but often incorporating asynchronous components to enhance flexibility and accessibility. Within the scope of its EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT phase, EPiCUR is establishing hybrid-equipped classrooms at all partner universities, which will facilitate inter-university teaching and learning.

Blended

Blended courses combine short intensive in-person sessions with online activities. EPiCUR's blended pedagogical design formats include various configurations, like the Erasmus+ funded Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) which have specific requirements for the duration of in-person components (5 days minimum) and a minimum incoming student number.

Online

Online courses are delivered entirely online providing maximum geographical flexibility for students. They can be synchronous, asynchronous, or a mix of both. Examples of mostly asynchronous online courses include MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) or, with more synchronous and interactive components, SPOCs (Small Private Online Courses). EPiCUR already offers a variety of semester-long courses with regular online sessions.

In-person

In-person learning experiences are conducted entirely face-to-face, providing direct interaction between students and educators. In service of accessibility in EPiCUR, these courses are often intense, spanning consecutive days up to one or two weeks. Examples within EPiCUR are a variety of summer schools hosted by the University of Southern Denmark (SDU), Dutch language courses hosted by the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and the Entrepreneurship summer school hosted by Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) and coordinated by Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) which have already been successfully offered through the EPiCUR Course Catalogue. An example for an in-person collaborative field trip is a field trip to Strasbourg by students from UFR, UvA, SDU and UNISTRA who all integrated this field trip into their individual course design.

4.3.2. Pedagogical implications of approaches to teaching and learning

When designing EPiCUR learning experiences, educators should consider the diverse multicultural student group and the opportunities and challenges of different delivery modes. EPiCUR's strategic objectives encourage collaboration across faculties, requiring partners to be interculturally aware and open to negotiating meaning and understanding (Chapter 3.2, Strategic objective 2).

Accessibility is vital in course design, ensuring all students — regardless of physical, sensory, cognitive, or learning needs — can fully engage with educational materials. This includes making physical spaces and digital tools accessible, supporting various learning preferences, and ensuring technology meets accessibility standards. Additionally, cultural and linguistic inclusivity should be prioritised by providing materials in multiple languages and simplifying complex language where necessary.

Financial support is also crucial for accessibility. EPiCUR encourages students to contact their International office or Institutional Coordinator for funding opportunities. Starting in summer 2025, EPiCUR funds will further enhance financial support for EPiCUR participation.

By prioritising accessibility, EPiCUR fosters inclusivity and equal opportunities, ensuring no student is excluded from acquiring specialist knowledge and paving the way for greater mobility.

4.4. Educational Deployment Framework

The EPiCUR Deployment Framework operationalises EPiCUR's strategic objectives by ensuring that EPiCUR Educational Principles and pedagogical design formats are integrated in the actual delivery of EPiCUR learning experiences. It establishes a clear structure and transparent process for creation and deployment.

For more detailed information on the format of the framework and the deployment process, please refer to Annex 5, which contains the Deployment Framework document.

5. WHAT – EPICUR LEARNING EXPERIENCES

EPICUR-SHAPE-IT is designed to create a transformative educational framework that delivers unique and meaningful learning experiences (Chapter 3.1, Strategic objective 1) to meet the diverse needs of students whilst bolstering the quality and global competitiveness of European higher education. Through a range of innovative, accessible learning experiences, EPICUR promotes international collaboration, enriches academic engagement, and equips students to tackle future challenges in line with EPICUR's Values.

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the EPICUR learning framework, integral to achieving the Strategic objective 2 outlined in Chapter 3.2. EPICUR offers a broad spectrum of educational opportunities, from guest lectures to fully integrated joint degrees. Since its inception, EPICUR has prioritised the development of thematic courses and pathways, which allow for deeper specialisation in high-impact areas.

Organised within five core priority areas, these courses are available across Alliance institutions and delivered either individually or through collaborative teaching arrangements.

By enhancing flexibility and accessibility, EPICUR creates structured learning experiences that fit seamlessly within existing study programmes or form new, Alliance-wide curricula for undergraduate and graduate students alike. These experiences are categorised as follows:

- *Open learning experiences*, open to all based on individual student choice,
- *Integrated learning experiences*, embedded in study programmes of collaborating universities.

To address complex issues from a distinctly European perspective, EPICUR offers students value-added learning experiences that foster the development of essential competences within a framework promoting international cooperation.

In addition to open courses and specialisation options, EPICUR encourages multilateral collaborations for students enrolled in specific programmes, integrating these experiences directly into their curricula. These offerings extend beyond the five priority areas and involve faculties across all EPICUR institutions, including joint courses, pathways, and collaborative learning activities. These integrated learning experiences are exclusively available to students enrolled in the programmes of the collaborating parties. Annex 2: EPICUR Learning experiences details the various learning experiences that can be integrated into students' curricula.

All open and integrated EPICUR learning experiences uphold EPICUR principles. Figure 2 visualises open and integrated EPICUR learning experiences. In the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT phase, open learning experiences focus on the priority areas, whilst integrated learning experiences extend both within and outside these areas.

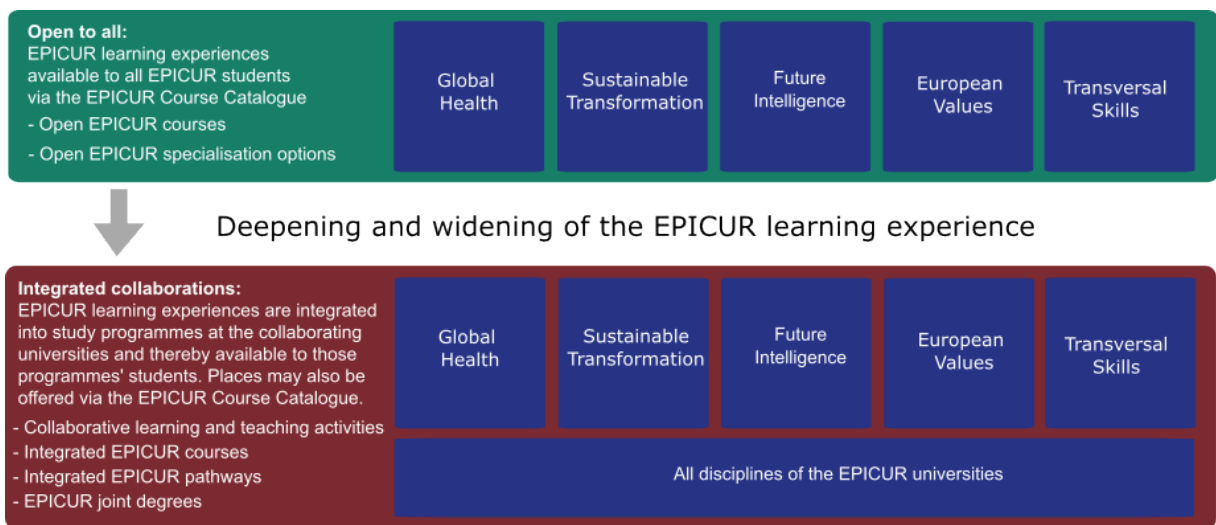


Figure 2: Scope of open and integrated learning experiences within EPICUR

According to EPICUR's educational vision and Strategic objectives (Chapter 3), EPICUR will focus on three educational schemes as visualised in Figure 2:

1. The open Course Catalogue focuses on the five priority areas and offers societally relevant, competence-oriented courses and pathways

accessible to all EPICUR students. Beyond the EPICUR- SHAPE-IT phase, open formats may be extended to include all disciplines offered at the EPICUR universities. This focus strongly supports EPICUR's Strategic objective 3. EPICUR also encourages integrated multilateral collaborations (courses, specialisation options, learning and teaching activities and joint degrees) within the priority areas, available to students enrolled in the collaborating study programmes, supporting EPICUR's Strategic objective 4.

2. Additionally, EPICUR is implementing a more global approach that includes all faculties/ disciplines of the EPICUR universities. Whereas the five priority areas form the core of EPICUR learning and teaching, EPICUR also welcomes multilateral collaborations beyond these areas. Through *integrated multilateral collaborations in all disciplines, specific study programmes can work together on their chosen topics*, offering their students an EPICUR learning experience and thus widen and deepen faculty engagement and the impact EPICUR has (Strategic objective 2).

5.1. EPICUR's Open Learning Experiences

EPICUR's open learning experiences include open courses and specialisations, allowing students to either choose complementary courses from the Course Catalogue or follow a semi-structured EPICUR learning pathway that combines courses. These offers are available to all EPICUR students through the EPICUR Course Catalogue.

Aligning open learning experiences with priority areas supports EPICUR's commitment to challenge-based learning on globally significant topics and addresses key graduate competences identified by employers, as outlined in the EPICUR policy paper on Work Skills Needs in the EPICUR Regions. Whilst many specialist courses in the catalogue have prerequisites that may limit accessibility and result in low enrolment, courses tied to priority areas tend to draw students from diverse disciplines, enriching their study programmes and learning journeys.

Once the open EPICUR offers are widely recognised among students and support for educators to align their courses with EPICUR Educational Principles is established, the scope of open courses can be expanded beyond the five priority areas. Currently, EPICUR already supports educational experiences outside these areas through integrated learning experiences, as explained in Annex 2: EPICUR Learning experiences.

The main Open Learning Experiences (detailed description in Annex 2) are:

- Pre-existing courses open to EPICUR students
- Newly designed EPICUR courses
- EPICUR semi-structured open learning pathways
- Sub-theme specialisations
- EPICUR's self-designed flexible pathways

5.2. EPICUR's Integrated Learning Experiences

In addition to the open learning offers available through the EPICUR Course Catalogue, EPICUR encourages multilateral collaboration on learning and teaching activities, as well as courses and pathways which are integrated into specific study programmes. In this way, students in those study programmes will experience integrated EPICUR learning. These integrated learning experiences may be in the form of elective or mandatory courses, minors or even joint degrees. Through these inter-university collaborations, where trusting relations between educators have space to develop, new constellations of educators and collaborative practices will evolve. It is envisaged that collaborations between educators can be facilitated through different networks like the EPICUR research hubs. These integrated learning formats have already been taking place within the EPICUR network. EPICUR is currently pursuing ways to record and publicise such integrated collaborations.

The main Integrated Learning Experiences (detailed description in Annex 2) are:

- Guest lectures
- Collaborative and intercultural learning and teaching activities
- Integrated EPiCUR courses
- EPiCUR Pathways- integrated into study programmes
- EPiCUR Joint Degrees

6. HOW – RECOGNISING AND INTEGRATING EPiCUR LEARNING EXPERIENCES

To enable deeper and wider integration of EPiCUR learning experiences and boost enrolment in this ambitious educational endeavour, EPiCUR continues to make great strides vis-à-vis technical infrastructure, administrative capacity, and educator training and development. The state of play for these endeavours is detailed Annex 7. However, on a strategic level, EPiCUR partners stand to benefit most from Alliance membership by taking bolder, more decisive steps to boost recognition of student engagement in EPiCUR learning and to integrate EPiCUR into their study programmes and curricula (Chapter 3.3, Strategic objective 3). With a concentrated and proportionate effort from each partner to this end, learner and educator engagement in EPiCUR activities can go beyond being a peripheral, low-yield, low-impact novelty with uneven participation and achieve its transformative potential.

The sections below detail some considerations for recognition and integration.

6.1. Recognition of EPiCUR learning experiences

Advocating for Alliance wide recognition of EPiCUR learning experiences is a crucial Strategic objective of EPiCUR (Chapter 3.3, Strategic objective 3). It is crucial for students as it validates their efforts and achievements both within and beyond their formal study programmes. This recognition can complement a student's degree and does not necessarily have to be associated with their primary field of study. Recognition also is an important student consideration when deciding whether to allocate time to participate in courses outside their own study programme.

In addition to student-driven recognition, study programmes can offer pre-authorisation for course recognition, which is communicated to students along with the Course Catalogue.

EPiCUR is committed to aligning with the European Learning Model to make learning experience recognition for students as seamless as possible. Recognition is typically automatic for integrated EPiCUR learning experiences. For EPiCUR courses, recognition options are available to ensure a seamless experience.

6.1.1. Student-driven course recognition with or without pre-approval

Upon completing an EPiCUR course, students can request legal Transcripts of Records via EPiCURUS. To have the ECTS from an EPiCUR course recognised in their study programme (e.g., as an elective), students must submit the EPiCUR Transcript of Records to their faculty's office or Board of Examiners within internal deadlines.

For pre-approval before the course starts, students can request Learning Agreements via EPiCURUS and submit them to their faculty for approval. A Learning Agreement outlines planned courses, agreed upon by the student, their home institution, and the host institution, ensuring ECTS recognition and

smooth credit transfer. If ECTS cannot be recognised, students can still enrol as an extracurricular activity and receive a Transcript of Records.

6.1.2. Programme-confirmed recognition of individual courses

Once the EPICUR Course Catalogue is finalised, study programme coordinators at all partner institutions review it and identify courses they pre-recognise. The study programme coordinators then communicate which EPICUR courses are pre-recognised to their students along with the EPICUR Course Catalogue. Feedback from study programme coordinators has been very positive, with several programmes highlighting the recognition of specific courses. After completing such a pre-confirmed course, students are still required to request an EPICUR Transcript of Records and submit it at their respective offices. The impact of this measure will be evaluated.

6.1.3. EPICUR recognition options currently under review

EPICUR course recognition is relevant for students and course developers. Students expect clear and informative documentation of their EPICUR achievements and course developers need clarity about micro-credentials and course recognition when designing and validating EPICUR courses.

The nine EPICUR partner universities agree on the importance of implementing credentials for students. Current discussions include:

- Micro-credentials at the pathway level: For semi-structured pathways, emphasising student achievements and outcomes.
- EPICUR certification at the priority area level: Recognising specialisation in one of the five priority areas with potential credentials at the priority area or sub-theme level.

- Institutional certifications: For students whose EPICUR learning experiences are not integrated into their degrees, an International Learning Certificate could be issued by the student's home university to recognise competences gained through EPICUR learning experiences.



Figure 3: EPICUR certificate proposal to acknowledge the gained competences of students that specialise in one of the EPICUR Priority Areas.

6.1.4. Pathway-recognition in study programmes

Study programmes may not only confirm the recognition of individual courses but also recognise EPICUR pathways. This allows students to have their EPICUR pathway courses credited as part of their degree programme, aligning with specific academic or professional goals. Study programme coordinators will determine how these pathways fit into existing programmes and communicate the options to students. This measure aims to provide students with a seamless integration of EPICUR pathways into their academic journey.

6.2. Next steps in strategic alignment and deep integration

EPICUR learning experiences require sustained collaboration between partners and institutions that are flexible and open to change. In view of this and to help cultivate lasting and trusting collaborations, EPICUR has created a modular approach for setting up collaborative learning experiences. This approach allows different levels of integration and commitment, depending on what each partner can offer.

Figure 44 summarises the various levels of encouraged collaboration, as described throughout this section. Each level has its own importance and helps

create a well-rounded approach to improving the way international learning experiences are offered in higher education. Within EPiCUR, all forms of collaboration are beneficial. Figure 44 illustrates possibilities. It exposes the varying levels of commitment and depth of collaboration required to facilitate the broad range of EPiCUR learning experiences. The required commitment by all involved and depth of integration for integrated learning experiences are higher than for open offers. Furthermore, the commitment increases from offering collaborative learning and teaching activities to joint degrees.

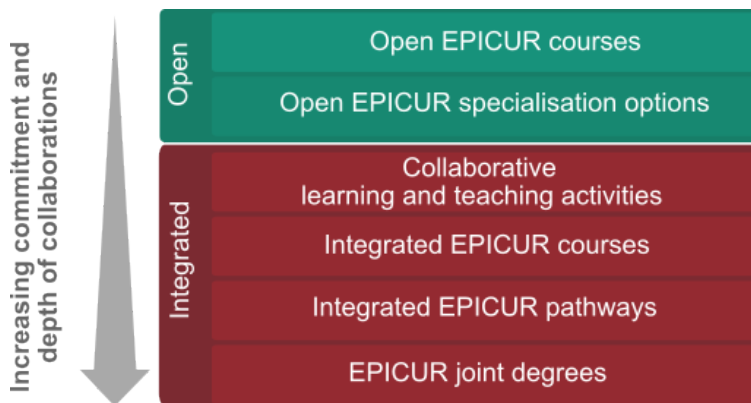


Figure 4: Levels of commitment and depth of collaboration required to facilitate the broad range of EPiCUR learning experiences.

Although EPiCUR recognises the importance of all these learning experiences and forms of collaboration, the primary focus has been on setting up open learning experiences, particularly courses and semi-structured pathways. These open courses and specialisation options are key steps towards building strong partnerships and promoting EPiCUR. However, moving forward, EPiCUR needs to focus more on integrating learning experiences at all levels. Although the EPiC TLC and workshops have started to encourage and support collaboration, there are still steps to take to fully support these efforts.

An essential element of the Alliance's education policy will be to develop mechanisms for integrating EPiCUR learning experiences i.e. the principle of recognising credits in programmes or as a complement to them. This action requires an agreement between the partners on the principles of recognition of EPiCUR credits and an action plan to achieve this. For an EPiCUR course to

be integrated into a partner's or EPiCUR's degree programme, it must go through an internal accreditation process. The Alliance's process must therefore be compatible with those of its partners. The work of aligning these processes will enable the definition of the Alliance's methodology for non-degree and future joint degree accreditation so that it is as effective as possible.

7. CONCLUSION

EPiCUR's Educational Objectives, Principles, and Pedagogical Design formats establish a common understanding and approach to cultivating and expanding EPiCUR learning experiences. This shared foundation facilitates contributions from the Alliance's diverse partner institutions and ensures that every collaborative effort is rooted in a Values-based mutual commitment to the Alliance's global strategy. Agreement on these tenets orients stakeholders to what EPiCUR stands for, helping to create interest and understanding of the added value of engagement with EPiCUR, both intra- and inter-alliance. Ultimately, this consensus is essential for fostering a seamless and inclusive European Education Area. To play a role in reshaping the educational landscape in the European Higher Education Area, EPiCUR will focus on building a transformational educational offer that:

- **Transcends the mere aggregation of educational offers** from its partner universities, instead fostering a dynamic **synthesis of education resources from across disciplines**.
- **Empowers learners from diverse socio-economic, academic, and professional backgrounds** to engage in **personalised European learning experiences** tailored to their goals.
- Provides distinctive, international learning experiences and combinations of learning experiences — **pathways** — **which complement and enrich learners' academic journey beyond what could be achieved solely through study at one university**.

- **Recognises learner commitment through a recognition scheme** that honours their dedication and engagement in international education.
- **Contributes to and learns from active collaboration** with other European Alliances to enhance the European Higher Education Area.

In order to integrate EPICUR Educational Principles and Pedagogical Design into the partner institutions, several challenges need to be overcome and opportunities taken. Whilst each university has its own established structures, curricula, and university-wide guidelines, this diversity presents an opportunity for creative integration of EPICUR's educational offers. Simpler forms of collaboration, like guest lecturing or opening courses to EPICUR students, are gaining popularity as they are easier to implement and require fewer resources to launch. Embedding intercultural modules in already established programmes is also gaining traction. These options provide an accessible starting point for educators eager to introduce international elements into their courses and programmes and set the stage for more transformative initiatives (e.g., multi-lateral joint degrees) in the future.

EPICUR can advance its global strategy by leveraging its layered model of collaboration, which fosters collective progress through varying levels of engagement. This approach allows all partners to contribute according to their capabilities, capacities, and institutional needs, nurturing a culture of trust and momentum. By valuing low-threshold engagement, EPICUR encourages innovative multilateral collaborations among educators, motivating participants to broaden involvement and establish a foundation for long-term cooperation and structural changes.

Whilst EPICUR's central support via the informal CMO, Mobility Service and EPiC TLC is vital for educational development, local strategic support from partner institutions is essential for enhancing collaboration at the course, pathway, and degree levels. This layered approach distinguishes EPICUR from other exchange programmes by facilitating multi-level collaborations of varying duration and scope that deepen commitment over time. To conclude EPICUR has the potential to ensure that all eligible students engage in international learning, supporting the EU's mobility targets and showcasing

the innovative potential of European University Alliances. This will be achieved by the following:

- **EPICUR Strategic Objectives and Educational Principles**, which form the foundation for a shared vision of unique and meaningful European learning experiences.
- **Pedagogical design** considerations, which are crucial for ensuring EPICUR learning experiences are accessible and inclusive.
- **Distinctive open courses and specialisations** and **integrated learning experiences** that provide new intercultural opportunities for diverse students and educators.
- **The global strategy's layered approach**, which is key to expanding EPICUR's educational offers across all faculties and disciplines.
- **Stakeholder commitment** that is essential for achieving EPICUR's educational aims and facilitating necessary changes at partner institutions.

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9. ANNEXES

9.1. Annex 1: EPICUR Education - Principles, Pedagogical Design & Procedures

EPICUR Alliance partners have agreed that to operationalise its Educational Objectives (Chapter 3), both constant communication and common ground/expectations are essential. This has led to the development of foundational EPICUR Educational Principles comprising:

- EPICUR International Educational Values (henceforth, “Values”),
- Refined definitions of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT’s five Priority Areas, and
- Content and deployment frameworks that guide the design, selection and delivery of EPICUR learning experiences.

Chapter 5 illustrates how Values, the Content Framework and Pedagogical Design Formats are inter- dependent and how, through the Deployment Framework, EPICUR learning experiences are actualised and guide their translation into pedagogical design and implementation. The Deployment Framework corroborates how the EPICUR Educational Principles are evident in the EPICUR learning experience.

This synthesis has strategic implications for how partner institutions integrate EPICUR's offer into their curricula and teaching practices.

EPICUR Educational Principles and Pedagogical Design Formats

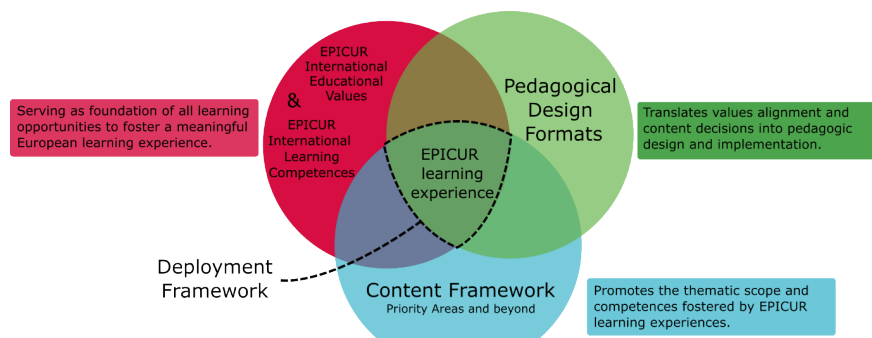


Figure 5: EPICUR Educational Principles and Pedagogical Design Formats

The EPICUR Educational Principles outline the Values, procedures, and structures guiding EPICUR's development. These aims are implemented through internationally focused curriculum designs at various levels, benefiting educators and learners alike. The EPICUR Education Team seeks to ensure all its programmes feature inclusive design, interactive learning, intercultural engagement, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Annex 1 explains the Alliance's educational foundation and pedagogical formats, offering insights into both the current and future EPICUR educational offers.

To facilitate comprehension of relevant terminology, this policy paper is accompanied by a detailed glossary (Annex 3).

Alignment with Strategic Educational Objectives

EPICUR seeks to educate new generations of European change-makers who will address significant challenges of a European society in transition. This requires a transformation in research and transfer practices across its partner universities. The policies and procedures outlined here hold strategic relevance for deepening and widening the EPICUR learning experience.

Unique and meaningful European learning experiences (Chapter 3.1, Strategic objective 1) and their design must align with a commitment to provide flexible, inclusive, and value-added opportunities for all students. These experiences must therefore enhance competence, deepen expertise for future challenges, and embody EPICUR principles. Most crucially, they should represent learning experiences that go beyond what students could access in their home programmes and be attractive and supported to increase engagement (Chapter 3.2, Strategic objective 2). Flexible formats — including short in-person sessions, hybrid, and asynchronous online options — facilitate access, increase student and educator participation, and help ensure the long-term viability and appeal of EPICUR Education (Chapter 3.4, Strategic objective 4).

Meaningful change in university curricula and programme delivery requires time and persistence. The policies here set EPICUR's strategic path for long-term sustainability and growth, aiming to integrate EPICUR learning

experiences across all faculties within its partner universities (Chapter 3.2, Strategic objective 2). Deep integration is vital to enhancing these experiences. And by offering flexible entry points, EPiCUR seeks to engage educators from all partner faculties, fostering collaboration and diverse pedagogical formats to ensure sustained growth.

Methodology – Development of Educational Principles and Pedagogical Design

The development of EPiCUR Educational Principles and pedagogical design formats is a collaborative, iterative process involving stakeholders from governance and operational levels at partner institutions. Each group offers insights to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach. Ongoing cooperation among the nine partner institutions shapes these principles and pedagogical designs.

In the following sub-sections, main stakeholder roles and responsibilities are explained.

Governance structure and stakeholder involvement

EPiCUR's governance - consisting of the Executive Board, Management Board, Education Committee and other thematic Committees, Student Board, and Early Career Researcher Board - guides the development and future direction of its educational offer, with all nine partner institutions contributing to strategic decisions, feedback, and expansion plans. The Education Committee, including senior academics and students, advises on strategic issues like course recognition.

EPiCUR's operational structures comprise diverse bodies and stakeholders providing multilevel feedback that shapes its Educational Principles. The EPiCUR Education Team, comprising representatives from all partner universities across these bodies, has collected iterative feedback on educational principles and development. Feedback from educators and students has led to expanded course offers, interdisciplinary pathways, and support for collaborative teaching through resources such as manuals, best

practice guides, and professional development opportunities provided by the EPiC TLC (see Annex 7: Operational Infrastructure).

Inclusive collaboration leading to the co-development of EPiCUR Educational Principles and pedagogical design

The co-development of EPiCUR's Educational Principles and pedagogical design formats incorporates five main activities: strategic alignment, co-develop, share, feed forward, and reiterate.

An EPiCUR Education Team sub-group co-developed the Educational Principles and pedagogical design formats, drawing on EU guidelines and recommendations including the [EU Blueprint for Joint Degrees](#), President von der Leyens' [Political Guidelines \(2024-2029\)](#) and [Mission Letter \(2024\)](#), EPiCUR's strategic goals, pilot outputs, and feedback from stakeholders, including students, educators, and governance bodies. This feedback shaped EPiCUR Values, specialisation flexibility, and the emphasis on integrated learning experiences.

The EPiCUR Educational Principles, including the Values (the '6 Is'), a Content Framework, and a Deployment Framework, now guide course design and ensure accessibility for diverse learners. Ongoing evaluation will support the strategic implementation of these principles across all partner institutions.

EPiCUR's Priority Areas, linked to societal challenges, form its interdisciplinary research-based core course offer (Chapter 3.4, Strategic objective 4). Though collaborations within these areas will grow, there will also be a focus on expanding beyond them to integrate and recognise EPiCUR learning in all study programmes (Chapter 3.3, Strategic objective 3). Key supporting structures include the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (EPiC TLC), which promotes innovative, intercultural teaching; the informal Course Management Office (CMO), ensuring integration across partner institutions; and the EPiCUR University System (EPiCURUS), streamlining digital and administrative processes for a seamless learning experience (Chapter 3.7, Strategic objective 7).

Quality Assurance and Evaluation Strategy

EPiCUR's quality assurance (QA) approach supports the implementation of its principles and pedagogical design. Each partner university follows established European QA standards, with EPiCUR's own Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) tasked with overseeing how institutional offers align with EPiCUR educational principles. Continuous feedback from students, staff, and relevant boards (e.g., the ECR Board) will ensure courses remain high-quality, relevant, and aligned with EPiCUR's effort to train learners to address our greatest societal challenges (Chapter 3.3, Strategic objective 3).

Challenges

EPiCUR's progress as an alliance of nine universities reflects a strong commitment to cooperative pursuit of [Letta's \(2024\)](#) fifth freedom to learn, study, teach and do research without boundaries across the continent despite their differing institutional structures, policies, and responsibilities. Whilst internationalisation and innovative pedagogical offers promote collaboration, they do not fully account for and overcome obstacles at strategic, operational, and pedagogical levels. For EPiCUR's educational strategy to have lasting impact, operational and pedagogical challenges must be continuously monitored and addressed.

EPiCUR Education's Strategic objectives (Chapter 3) outline a vision and joint commitment. The challenges below represent focal areas that, once overcome, will help in the realisation EPiCUR's objectives.

Full integration

EPiCUR is designed to 'disrupt' traditional practices and facilitate new learning and teaching experiences for students and staff, enabling wider choice and more personalised learning and professional development journeys. However, for such disruption to foster fulsome and sustainable change within the context of complex, established Higher Education Institutions, each partner institution must find its way forward whilst taking into account national regulations and funding opportunities. Sustainable strategic change

at this level requires buy-in by stakeholders and enabling operational structures.

Adopting operational guidelines

Creating flexible, inter-institutional learning pathways requires navigating institutional, national, and regional regulations affecting course validation, timetabling, and student recruitment (noted also during the A Blueprint for a European Degree event - Bruxelles, 29/04/2024) EPICUR welcomes the European Higher Education Package', presented by President von der Leyen, ([March 2024](#)), which offers relevant initiatives, including automatic recognition of qualifications, designed to advance transnational cooperation between Higher Education Institutions. Creating shared courses that align with recognition schemes in existing study programmes or evolve into specialisations with joint courses requires deeper integration and more support within EPICUR. Diverse degree structures, faculties, departments, and educational philosophies among the partners present significant operational challenges. This diversity requires focused attention and willingness to change to establish and institutionalise inter-faculty and inter-departmental offers through EPICUR.

The newly established informal Course Management Office combined with the EPICUR Mobility Service streamlines coordination, ensuring alignment across institutions whilst fostering collaboration and ensuring institutional interests are considered. These joint structures strengthen communication, help institutions manage courses and track student mobility. Developing incentives will be critical for deeper EPICUR visibility and integration across the Alliance.

Embracing (new) pedagogies

Before EPICUR, partner universities offered study programmes with international elements and engaged in bi- and multi-lateral collaborations. EPICUR expands these opportunities, but successful collaborations require time to incubate and develop trust among educators and programme leaders.

Initiatives like the EPICUR Forum on [Transformative Academic Teaching from June 2024](#), EPiCEduTalk & Cafès, and the online CoTeachConnector on the EPiC TLC facilitate this process (see Annex 7, section 9.7.3). However, time-pressed educators need lasting incentives to invest in collaboration. Support through EPICUR's pedagogical resources and professional development complement the work and resources of institutional educational developers. Ultimately, EPICUR governance must identify and lay out a plan to incentivise innovative course development, whilst programme and faculty leadership motivate educators to engage with, and integrate, EPICUR courses and collaborations.

Bringing students on board

EPICUR aims to provide accessible international and intercultural learning experiences for students who might not otherwise consider a longer study abroad. The positive response to EPICUR courses confirms the demand for inclusive pedagogic designs, such as short, intensive in-person sessions and online formats. However, many students at partner institutions remain unaware of EPICUR, and simply knowing about opportunities does not guarantee participation. The institutions are tasked with effectively publicising EPICUR and exposing their students to what the Alliance offers them by disseminating EPICUR learning offers and engaging a wider range of students. This increased exposure is essential for the growth and integration of EPICUR education.

The Student Board actively collaborates with the EPICUR Education Team, providing feedback that highlights the need for responsiveness to diverse student needs, ranging from light-touch online courses to short, intense programmes like EPIC Missions. EPICUR is facilitating multilateral collaborations and pathways among partners to create appealing course offers for heterogeneous student communities. By integrating EPICUR learning experiences into existing curricula, awareness and (low-threshold) participation can be increased, encouraging students to engage with both independent opportunities and integrated studies. Promoting unique approaches to internationalising curricula and offering unique and

meaningful European student experiences (Chapter 3.1, Strategic objective 1) will inspire more students to enhance their profiles through EPiCUR over time.

Overview of the results and outputs

EPiCUR's Description of Action outlines the plan to test and showcase innovative methods of sharing teaching and learning at the European level and to implement EPiCUR Education - Strategic objectives (Chapter 3), gradually working towards engaging most faculties and departments. Over the past 24 months, the course portfolio established during the pilot phase has been expanded to include several new and alternative collaborative formats. The current Course Catalogue (as of August 2024) features 64 courses from various study programmes across all nine EPiCUR universities.

EPiCUR's Best Practice Guide: Resources to support the design and delivery of EPiCUR Courses (Access via Annex 8) complements other EPiC TLC resources by leveraging joint shared services and tools (Chapter 3.6, Strategic objective 6) which support innovative pedagogical designs to support educators in creating and adapting courses for EPiCUR. Grounded in the EPiCUR Educational Principles, this guide offers resources for self- assessment and course proposals, enabling existing courses to be transformed into EPiCUR offers. To enhance EPiCUR learning experience accessibility to a large number of diverse students, EPiCUR promotes hybrid, online, and short-term blended learning formats, allowing participation in international courses without relocating.

Additionally, EPiCUR is developing personalised European specialisation options for meaningful mobility experiences. This policy paper outlines plans to expand beyond existing pathway models (see EPiCUR semi- structured open learning pathways).

Initially, EPiCUR offered open courses for all students who were responsible for securing ECTS recognition from their study programmes. As of October 2024, progress has been made towards integrating these offers into existing curricula, with several programmes in the current application cycle

encouraging student participation and providing course recognition pre-confirmations (see Chapter 3.2.2, Strategic objective 2 and Chapter 6.1).

In the past 24 months, EPICUR's international community of teaching and learning has further developed (Chapter 3.5, Strategic objective 5). Bottom-up initiatives (e.g., EPICUR's Forum, Alliance Coordination Group [ACG] agenda point on collaboration, the EPiC TLC CoTeachConnector) have fostered collaboration among educators, leading to increased EPICUR learning experience integration within study programmes. The goal is to embed these initiatives and resources into both existing and new curricula, enhancing structured support for international and interdisciplinary learning.

The establishment of an informal Course Management Office (CMO) signifies a shift from project-based approaches to a sustainable educational strategy integrated into partner universities' administrations (Chapter 3.6, Strategic objective 6).

9.2. Annex 2: EPICUR Learning experiences

9.2.1. Open EPICUR courses

Educators across the EPICUR Alliance are encouraged to submit courses to the EPICUR Course Catalogue that align with EPICUR Values and one or more of its five interdisciplinary priority areas. During the proposal process, they can also identify relevant EPICUR International Learning Competences, which, though optional, are frequently included by course proposers, reinforcing the EPICUR brand. These courses, validated by the host institution, may or may not offer ECTS and can be either pre-existing or newly designed for EPICUR students.

Pre-existing courses open to EPICUR students

Many pre-existing courses are opened to EPICUR students through the proposal process validated by Institutional Coordinators and the Management Board (and then subsequently integrated in EPICURUS). These courses must align with EPICUR's Educational Principles and design formats, although

some, like SDU summer schools and UvA's in-person Dutch language courses, already fit naturally. Modular courses and intensive workshops like summer schools also ensure flexibility and inclusivity.

Pre-existing courses that do not naturally align with EPiCUR's principles and pedagogical formats often require adaptation. This may involve changing the mode of delivery — especially shifting from in-person to blended, online, and hybrid models — or schedule to meet EPiCUR's accessibility standards. Critically, such adaptations then enable participation across Europe, including modular courses for asynchronous learning, and intensive formats like workshops and summer schools to enhance accessibility and inclusivity.

For example, the English Academic Writing course adapted to online delivery with interactive exercises and peer reviews to accommodate EPiCUR students. Due to high demand, this has been expanded to multiple online sections with different schedules, allowing more students to enrol and fit the class within their existing degree programme schedule. Similarly, the University of Haute-Alsace (UHA)'s Scrum Framework-Agile Method course adapted to align with EPiCUR's Educational Principles. Initially a local course, the educator restructured the group compositions and delivery (from Monday-Friday to Wednesday- Wednesday) to integrate both UHA and EPiCUR students, creating a more diverse, collaborative, and online exchange. These modifications ensure that courses not only maintain academic rigour but also reflect the values of accessibility, collaboration, and internationalisation central to EPiCUR's mission.

Newly designed EPiCUR courses

EPiCUR offers a range of newly designed courses that often feature collaborative teaching and aim to engage diverse, motivated students. These courses typically run outside regular academic schedules and leverage the diverse backgrounds of EPiCUR's nine partner institutions.

One example is the EPiC Missions, which offer immersive, challenge-based learning experiences addressing real-world societal challenges through

interdisciplinary collaboration and practical problem-solving. Students from across EPICUR universities work in diverse teams, applying knowledge from multiple disciplines whilst contributing to impactful societal issues. Designed in a blended format, EPIC Missions are particularly accessible and benefit from an intercultural, interdisciplinary student group. Other successful examples include KIT's Entrepreneurship Summer School and Digital Healthcare Entrepreneurship Winter School.

Newly designed, credit-bearing courses must be officially recognised as a university course at the host institution and evaluated through their internal evaluation procedures.

9.2.2. Open EPICUR specialisation options

By clustering courses innovatively, EPICUR allows students to deepen their specialisation and expand their academic opportunities beyond a single university. Currently, specialisation options focus on semi-structured learning pathways. EPICUR plans to introduce two more options: sub-theme specialisations and self-designed flexible pathways. Specialisation options are explained below.

EPICUR semi-structured open learning pathways

Semi-structured learning pathways open to all EPICUR students, like the Language and Culture Pathways, established in the Alliance's pilot phase pre-date EPICUR Priority Areas and sub-themes. The existing EPICUR pathways include Modern Greek, Nordic, and Slavonic studies, with exploratory initiatives in Sustainable Food Systems previously undertaken. These pathways are semi-structured, with specific requirements necessary for formal completion. Each Language and Culture Pathway (LCP) focuses on a specific European language and culture, and includes courses offered by one or more EPICUR university. Students choose from a selection of complementary language and culture courses as offered within each LCP following specific pathway rules. The LCP format prioritises accessibility and

flexibility, allowing students to pace their studies according to their personal schedules and academic aspirations whilst gaining pre-defined competences.



Figure 6: EPiCUR's established semi-structured pathways as displayed in the EPiCUR Course Catalogue.

These pathways are established and coordinated by two or more EPiCUR partner universities and help to conceptualise possibilities for articulation (embedding in existing programmes) whilst also communicating specific European challenges where EPiCUR partners (e.g., faculties, programmes of study) are collaborating.

As noted in Chapter 6.1.3, EPiCUR is currently exploring micro-credentials, with this form of recognition being especially relevant for students who have completed an open semi-structured pathway.

Sub-theme specialisations

Sub-theme specialisations allow students to focus on a sub-theme within a Priority Area by taking multiple related courses. Unlike semi-structured pathways, sub-theme specialisations have no predefined completion criteria and offer post-hoc recognition, giving students complete flexibility in how deeply they engage with a topic.

For students, sub-themes enhance awareness of EPiCUR's specialisation opportunities, enabling a personalised learning experience by making it easier to find and select related courses. For educators, sub-themes highlight related courses across institutions and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration.

They may also serve as a starting point for multilateral collaborations, such as minors or joint degrees. Table 4 in Annex 6 (section 9.6.1) summarises the benefits of the sub-themes for different stakeholders.

Current sub-themes under exploration include Entrepreneurship and Engagement within Transversal Skills, which already hosts several successful EPICUR courses. Additionally, Future Forests, Water, Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability and Resource Management, within Sustainable Transformation are in a more exploratory phase, with several partner institutions expressing interest in these areas.

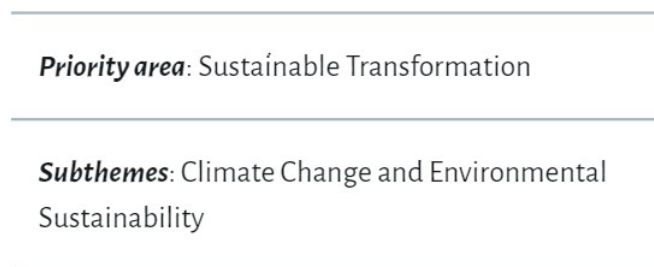


Figure 7: Priority Area and Sub-theme as currently featured in the EPICUR Course Catalogue

EPICUR's self-designed flexible pathways

EPICUR's self-designed flexible pathways are envisioned as a future offering, allowing students even greater flexibility in tailoring their academic experiences. These pathways reflect EPICUR's commitment to inclusivity and personalised learning, allowing students to create interdisciplinary academic journeys aligned with their interests and career goals, with post-hoc recognition of competences. These pathways complement semi-structured pathways like the Language and Culture Pathways (LCP), providing an additional layer of customisation within the EPICUR framework.

Proposed Features:

- **Interdisciplinarity:** Students would have the opportunity to create their own interdisciplinary pathway by selecting courses from various disciplines across EPICUR universities, allowing them to forge a

personalised academic path that aligns with their specific goals and interests.

- Detailed Proposals: Students intending to pursue a self-designed pathway would need to develop a detailed proposal outlining their planned coursework and how it meets their academic and career objectives. They should work closely with EPiCUR advisors to ensure that their pathway is rigorous and coherent.

As EPiCUR continues to grow, these pathways may evolve to incorporate new disciplines and emerging fields of study, further expanding the opportunities available to students. Overall, self-designed pathways offer a dynamic and flexible educational model that empowers students to take control of their learning, pursue their passions, and develop the competences they are seeking to complement their studies.

9.2.3. Collaborative Learning and Teaching Activities

Guest Lectures

Through EPiCUR, guest lectures can be more easily facilitated and coordinated, bringing renowned experts from different institutions to share their knowledge. This exposure to various perspectives and cutting-edge research enhances the learning environment and broadens students' horizons.

Collaborative and intercultural learning and teaching activities

A further dimension is provided by those courses which include intercultural learning experiences, through which students learn to negotiate educational and cultural norms as they work alongside students from different universities and different cultural backgrounds. This deployment of collaborative learning and teaching activities can greatly enrich the educational experience at universities by promoting engagement, critical thinking, and exposure to

diverse perspectives. Here are several collaborative activities that can be implemented:

- **Joint sessions and field trips**

EPICUR can support joint sessions to engage students from different classes in discussions and critical reflections. In joint sessions, students from different universities and disciplines can come together for discussions, workshops, and projects. These sessions can be virtual or in-person and facilitate the exchange of ideas and collaborative problem-solving and suggest a low-threshold entry point for collaboration.

Collaborative field trips bring together students from various institutions to explore relevant sites, such as historical landmarks, scientific research centres, or industrial facilities. This hands-on learning experience fosters cross-institutional bonding and shared learning.

- **Collaborative participation in international competitions and challenges**

Collaborative participation in international hackathons, case competitions, and innovation challenges where students collaborate to solve real-world problems encourage creativity, teamwork, and practical application of knowledge.

One example of an integrated collaborative learning and teaching activity in EPICUR is a multilateral collaboration between educators from History and European Studies organising a joint field trip and workshop entitled 'The return of the nineteenth century'. Through EPICUR, educators from the University of Strasbourg, UFR, UvA, and SDU have organised this joint field trip as part of their existing courses to bring together historians and specialists in European Studies in Strasbourg in January 2025. Five students from each of the study programmes and the collaborating educators will join the field trip. The students are advanced master students and research master students in History, European Studies and the History of International Relations. The field trip will be part of a course within their programme of studies. Like this

example, other collaborations have been established in EPiCUR that have led to integrated EPiCUR courses.

9.2.4. Integrated EPiCUR courses

Integrating EPiCUR courses into students' curricula offers a unique opportunity for academic enrichment, particularly in cases where courses are co-developed and exclusively available to students from specific study programmes.

An example of an integrated EPiCUR course that took place in EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT is a virtual exchange between educators from the University of Haute-Alsace, Mulhouse (UHA), and the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań (AMU). It involved students from the Licence Pro e-Commerce et Marketing numérique programme at the University Institute of Technology (IUT) from UHA and the Tourism programme at AMU.

The project aimed to enhance students' English language skills, both written and spoken, whilst also developing their proficiency in digital collaboration tools and intercultural communication. A total of 21 students from IUT Mulhouse participated, along with 14 students from AMU. Students applied their English skills in online communication strategies, contributing to social media posts that highlighted the sustainable development efforts of Mulhouse and Poznań. Once the project was completed the students met in Warsaw for an award ceremony. They successfully developed intercultural skills and gained confidence in using English for authentic communication. The project motivated students to engage in remote international cooperation and improved their skills in intercultural understanding and digital collaboration.

Beyond such integrated learning experiences, integrating EPiCUR courses may appeal when study programmes identify synergies with courses offered by other institutions, enabling them to enhance their own curriculum by incorporating relevant external courses. For example, the Geography Master's

programme at UFR has identified and promoted two EPICUR courses to its students: "Good Work: Social Sustainability and Organisations" offered by SDU, and "Human Impact on Rivers in Europe" offered by AMU. These courses align with the programme's curriculum and offer valuable interdisciplinary perspectives, enriching the learning experience of the Geography master's students.

Such mutual interests — where courses welcome international students to diversify and enhance the student body — can pave the way for more permanent curricular collaborations. Over time, these connections may evolve into established components of the study programme, fostering a more comprehensive and interconnected academic environment across the EPICUR Alliance.

9.2.5. EPICUR Pathways - integrated into study programmes

In addition to integrated courses, EPICUR envisions integrated pathways embedded within study programmes. This approach is particularly appealing for programmes that identify several courses to share and develop an EPICUR track for their students. This track allows students to participate in EPICUR courses, broadening their perspectives and gaining intercultural experiences. Host programmes have the flexibility to determine whether these pathways are mandatory elements or electives. Consequently, students enrolled in study programmes with integrated pathways might have the opportunity to complete the pathway as part of their degree. Table 5 in Annex 6 (section 9.6.2) provides a detailed list of the advantages of EPICUR integrated pathways, based on discussions with relevant stakeholders.

Such integrated pathways are anticipated in the near future of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT. Several study programmes have already identified EPICUR courses they will recognise within specific modules whilst simultaneously offering their own courses. Furthermore, EPICUR is open to alternative conceptions of pathways. For example, educators from collaborating universities could initially prioritise co-developing a cluster of interdisciplinary, complementary

courses available to students as extra-curricular pathways. This would give time for piloting and evaluating the pathway before embedding it into a study programme and thereby making it an automatic entitlement to all students enrolled in the relevant study programmes.

9.2.6. EPiCUR Joint Degrees

EPiCUR contributed to the scoping projects for the European degree label through its membership of the EU project Future-proof Criteria for Innovative European Education ([FOCI](#)). FOCI produced policy recommendations on how European degree labels can work for innovative models of education including joint degrees and smaller units of learning that are presented on the [FOCI website](#). Informed by the [EU Blueprint for Joint Degrees](#) and the emerging conception of the European Degree, EPiCUR is tasked with defining components and attributes of future EPiCUR joint degrees. There is interest amongst the Alliance partners in pursuing joint degrees step by step. EPiCUR joint Master's degree initiatives, with a focus on European Values are underway.

9.2.7. Next steps towards supporting the implementation of EPiCUR learning experiences across the Alliance

Next steps include:

- **Organising networking meetings:** The EPiCUR Education Team plans to set up networking meetings between the study programmes that have already (pre-)recognised open EPiCUR courses and the programmes and educators offering these courses. Through these networking meetings, the EPiCUR Education Team aim to build more sustainable and lasting relationships.
- **Supporting collaborative efforts:** The EPiCUR Education Team will work with educators who have independently collaborated on

integrated learning experiences, with only initial support from the EPICUR Alliance. These collaborations have occurred outside EPICUR's existing technical and administrative support structures. EPICUR will conduct a needs analysis to establish procedures that better support such collaborations.

- **Sub-theme specialisation meetings:** The EPICUR Education Team plans to organise meetings centred on the already recognised sub-themes. In these meetings, the EPICUR Education Team in collaboration with the Alliance Coordination Group will identify courses that can be regularly offered within these sub-themes. Additionally, EPICUR will explore ways to offer these specialisation options more consistently to students, possibly with input and support from external stakeholders who can provide input on and help highlight the importance of the learning outcomes. In addition, the EPICUR certification options for specialisation will be further discussed in EPICUR.
- **Further development of pedagogical design support:** Together with educators and teaching support staff, the EPICUR Education Team will continue to expand the Best Practice Guide on the EPiC TLC. EPICUR aims to provide relevant support to educators interested in EPICUR's approach to teaching and learning, and who wish to adapt it to their courses.

9.3. Annex 3: Glossary

Term	Definition
Accessibility	The quality of being able to be reached, entered, used, easy to understand by everyone, especially those with a disability (Cambridge Dictionary).
Alliance Coordination Group (ACG)	Mainly comprising EPiCUR's Coordination Office, the nine Institutional Coordinators, EPiCUR's Service – & Unit –coordinators, EPiCUR's EU Liaison Officer, one Student Board and one Early Career Research Board representative.
Blended Course	<p>Blended Learning is an integrated learning concept, which makes optimal use of the currently available possibilities of online learning and collaboration in combination with classical learning methods and media in a purposeful learning arrangement (cf. Sauter et al, 2004¹).</p> <p>The objective is to combine and exploit the strengths and potentials of different learning settings (classic presence learning vs. live online-learning vs. self-guided online-learning) in a didactically meaningful and suitable way, i.e., flexibilisation through online self-study and didactic values of on-site events (e.g., intercultural experience, social benefits, action-orientation, haptic aspects).</p> <p>Blended courses can be designed in various degrees of virtualisation, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Augmented Physical: Mostly in-person with minimal online component. - Integrated Physical/Virtual Equal balance of in-person and online components. - Virtualised: Primarily online with a small portion of instruction delivered in-person.
Collaborative learning and teaching activities	<p>Opportunities for students to engage in tasks and share learning experiences with other students. It is a smaller component within a course or can span across multiple courses. Unlike a course, which is a comprehensive and structured sequence of lessons or topics, a learning and teaching activity represents a singular instance or event within that broader structure.</p> <p>Within EPiCUR, these collaborative learning and teaching activities are designed to bring students from different partner institutions together. They are not standalone courses but are integrated as part of a course or sometimes involve multiple courses. For example, an activity could be a group project, a workshop, or a discussion session where students from various universities work together.</p>
Competence	<p>The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) defines competence as the ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the EQF competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy². ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations)³ is the European multilingual classification of Skills, Competences and Occupations.</p> <p>Fostering competences is the objective of all educational programmes. Competences are developed in all courses and assessed at different stages of a programme. Some competences are subject area related (specific to a field of study), whilst others are generic (common to any degree course). It is normally the case that competence development proceeds in an integrated and cyclical manner throughout a programme. EPiCUR International Learning Competences shown in this policy paper are fundamental to the future EPiCUR learning experiences.</p>
Content Framework	<p>A content framework in education refers to the structured outline and guiding principles that shape the design, development, and delivery of learning experiences. It serves as the foundation for curriculum planning, ensuring that all instructional materials, activities, and assessments are aligned with the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>In the context of EPiCUR, the Content Framework includes EPiCUR Priority Areas and the EPiCUR International Learning Competences.</p>

¹ Sauter, A. M., Sauter, W., & Bender, H. (2004). *Blended Learning: Effiziente integration von e-learning und präsenttraining*. Luchterhand.

² <https://europass.europa.eu/en/europass-digital-tools/european-qualifications-framework>

³ <https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/about-esco>

Course Management Office (CMO)	New, decentralised office, often located in the universities' central offices, that helps manage EPICUR learning experiences and students and provides guidance on further development needs. The CMO members currently are an important intersection between the EPICUR Inter-University Campus and educators and students that engage in EPICUR.
Curriculum	The body of knowledge, skills and competences which define a degree programme.
Degree Programme	The set of educational components leading to the award of a degree to a student after successful completion of all the requirements.
Delivery mode	If a course is taught in person, online, in a blended format (in person and online in some combination) or hybrid (online and offline participants join the course at the same time). Other terms possible = face-to-face (F2F), physical, virtual.
Deployment Framework	A deployment framework is a structured guide designed to facilitate the implementation, management, and evaluation of a specific project or initiative. It ensures that all elements align with the established goals and standards, providing a clear roadmap from conception to execution. The EPICUR Course Deployment Framework specifically outlines the requirements for courses to align with EPICUR's principles, offering a structured and transparent process for course creation and deployment.
Description of Action	A description of how a project is done including steps, instructions, and tasks of individuals and groups.
Educational Developer	Staff with pedagogic and/or andragogic knowledge and expertise, who support educators with for example: course design, course planning, teaching, assessment and understanding student learning. Other titles for this role include academic developers, pedagogic consultants and e-learning consultants.
Educational Principles	Comprise EPICUR Educational Values; EPICUR International Learning Competences and Course Deployment Framework.
EPICUR's Best Practice Guide	Online resource providing support for the design and delivery of EPICUR learning experiences, available through the EPiC TLC.
EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC)	The EPiC TLC serves as a hub for academic staff from all nine EPICUR partner universities – they can find support, connect to collaborate and further develop competences needed in international teaching and learning environments.
EPICUR's Description of Action	The detailed work plan for the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT phase, which was submitted together with the EPICUR-SHAPE- IT project proposal.
EPICUR EDI Fundamentals	EDI experts from several EPICUR universities collaborated to develop an EDI fundamentals document and a toolkit for an action plan. With the creation of the EPICUR EDI fundamentals, the Alliance has taken an initial step toward building a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive European University
EPICUR Education Team	Colleagues representing the partner institutions tasked with contributing to the EPICUR Education work- package.
EPICUR Educational Values	These comprise international, intercultural, innovative, interdisciplinary, inclusive, interactive and are also known as the '6 Is'.

EPICUR Early Career Researcher (ECR) Board	Staff who are in pre-tenure stages of their academic career, from all partner universities. This group includes PhD students, Post-Doctoral Students and some universities include Assistant Professors. These representatives contribute ECR perspectives, recommendations and concerns through the EPICUR work-packages and the governance structure.
EPICURUS	A supporting platform that helps partner universities with administration, enhances communication and ensures access to EPICUR resources for students and educators. EPICURUS is an extended ecosystem on top of VURS (Virtual University Registrar System) and VCLP (Virtual Campus Learning Platform) by offering interfaces for the interconnection with other CMS (Campus Management System), LMS (Learning Management System) and external services.
EPICUR International Learning Competences	EPICUR International Learning Competences are conceptualised in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework ⁴ and ESCO. EPICUR International Learning Competences map to EPICUR Values and are both transversal and multi-functional.
EPICUR learning experience	EPICUR learning experience is used in this policy paper as a collective name for all learning opportunities provided by EPICUR for students at the EPICUR universities, as a holistic and forward-thinking endeavour.
EPICUR Priority Areas	There are five EPICUR priority areas: Sustainable Transformation, European Values, Global Health, Future Intelligence, and Transversal Skills. The Priority Areas signal interdisciplinary strategic and pedagogical interest shared by and promoted by the Alliance partners.
EPICUR-SHAPE-IT	Stands for EPICUR Shaping Higher Education In Transition. This is the title of the intermediate phase of the EPICUR Alliance, which follows the pilot phase and runs from 2022-2026.
EPICUR students	All students enrolled at an EPICUR partner university.
EPICUR Student Board	Student representatives from all partner institutions who contribute student perspectives, recommendations and concerns through the EPICUR work-packages and the governance structure.
European Degree	An emerging conception of ways to enable the validation of joint degrees between European universities. The initial conception of the European Degree is articulated in the EU Blueprint for Joint Degrees ⁵
European Education Area	The European Education Area is an initiative by the European Union aimed at fostering collaboration and integration in education across Europe. Its goal is to create a seamless educational space where learning, studying, and conducting research are unrestricted by borders, allowing students, educators, and researchers to move freely and benefit from the rich diversity of educational opportunities across EU member states. The EEA promotes quality education, inclusion, and lifelong learning.
European Learning Model	The European Learning Model (ELM) is a framework designed to harmonise educational practices across Europe, ensuring high-quality, inclusive, and accessible education. It standardises the way learning concepts are defined and understood across countries and organisations, facilitating seamless data exchange and interpretation, even across different languages. For example, when describing a learning opportunity, such as a university degree or online course, the ELM ensures that this information is universally understood across EU Member States, enabling employers in different countries to accurately assess an individual's qualifications.

⁴ [European Qualifications Framework](#)

⁵ [EU Blueprint for Joint Degrees](#)

European Qualification Framework (EQF)	A translation tool developed by the EU that makes international qualifications more understandable and comparable. This framework supports the mobility of students and workers across borders, whilst also encouraging lifelong learning and career development throughout Europe.
European Universities Alliances	'The European Universities alliances are a flagship initiative of the European strategy for universities ⁶ . They encompass 64 European Universities alliances with more than 560 Higher Education Institutions of all types, from all across Europe.'
European Values	Represent the fundamental ideas, beliefs and norms for European societies and their cultural and political development. These mainly include Democracy, Human rights, Solidarity, Diversity and Tolerance.
Future-proof Criteria for Innovative European Education (FOCI) ⁷	A 12-month project, to which EPiCUR contributed, tasked with producing policy recommendations on how European degree labels can work for innovative models of education including joint degrees and smaller units of learning.
Future Intelligence	Future Intelligence explores how to create intelligent systems and technologies with abilities that include and go beyond today's AI systems. A main focus is the creation and evolution of intelligent systems and technologies that remain human-centred and serve the needs of society.
Global Health	Global Health refers to the science and practice of addressing health challenges, protecting and improving well-being, and achieving equity in health outcomes on a global scale through the promotion of healthy behaviours, the prevention and control of diseases and injuries, and the assurance of access to high-quality healthcare products and services.
Governance Structure	Refers to a framework of management consisting of processes and rules, which defines the responsibilities and decision-making roles.
Hybrid Course	Course setting where educator(s) and part of the class are on campus and the other class members simultaneously participate online. This setting needs to be very carefully planned, both didactically and technically, to ensure active participation and interactivity of, between and among both student groups.
Integrated Collaborations	In the context of EPiCUR, integrated collaboration involves multilateral efforts across universities to create and offer shared courses, pathways, electives, minors, or even joint degrees that are part of students' formal study programmes.
Integrated learning experiences	In contrast to the open learning experiences, these learning experiences are not offered through the EPiCUR course catalogue and only available to specific students – very often the students that are part of the study programme of the collaborating educators/faculties that are co-developing or sharing the specific learning experience.
Joint Degree	A study programme which is co-developed and offered by two or more different institutions or departments from the same or different universities. When students graduate, they earn a joint degree certificate. The programme usually includes coursework from both disciplines/institutions. Not to be confused with dual or double degree programmes or degrees in which students are awarded with two separate degrees from both institutions.

⁶ [The European Universities initiative described on the website of the European Commission](#)

⁷ The [FOCI](#) project as described on the EPiCUR website

Key Supporting Structures	EPiCUR's key supporting structures for educators span the technical, pedagogical and management aspects to get engaged in EPiCUR learning experiences. The key supporting structures for EPiCUR learning experiences currently are: The EPiCUR Inter-University Campus, The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning, and the Course Management Office (CMO).
Learning Outcomes	'...statements of what an individual should know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and responsibility and autonomy' Education Qualifications Framework (2017)
Megatrends	Megatrends are long-term forces that are currently influencing the world and are expected to have a major global impact in the future ⁸ . The European Commission has identified 14 key megatrends, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rapid technological advancements and increased connectivity – Climate change and environmental damage – Shifting health challenges – Greater variety in education and learning and – Growing inequalities
Micro-credential	A micro-credential is a recognised proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience. These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent standards. The proof is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained.
Mobility Service Unit	The Mobility Service Unit will be designed to support the entire mobility process for students, staff, and study programmes within the EPiCUR Alliance. The service aims to gradually transfer institutional mobility support to the Alliance level. It will be a decentralised office comprising local referents.
Open Course	A course which is open for all students enrolled at an EPiCUR university. Open courses are promoted in the EPiCUR Course Catalogue
Open learning formats	In EPiCUR this refers to offers that are open to all EPiCUR students and offered through EPiCUR's course catalogue
Pathway	Where courses are thematically grouped, offering a deeper specialisation in the respective topic. Pathways can be semi-structured which means they include pre-requisites and/or a specific selection of courses or pathways or they will be self-designed flexible pathways where students tailor their academic experiences.
Pedagogical Design Formats	Variety of teaching and learning approaches and modes of course delivery.
Quality Assurance Unit	The Quality Assurance Unit will be set up to develop an EPiCUR QA policy for education.
Recognition	In the context of this policy paper, recognition refers to the formal acknowledgment of a student's academic achievements and learning outcomes. This can involve the acceptance and validation of credits earned through the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) within a study programme, ensuring that credits obtained at one institution are recognised by another. Additionally, recognition encompasses the certification of an individual's learning outcomes, validating the skills and knowledge they have acquired, which may be reflected in diplomas, certificates, or other official documents.

⁸ The [European Commission, 2024](#) and the [United Nations Environment Programme, 2020](#) have identified megatrends

Specialisation	Specialisation refers to the process by which students focus on specific areas of study, allowing them to gain deeper, more specialised knowledge and competences in a particular field. By engaging in several targeted learning experiences, students develop expertise in their chosen area. This concentrated approach not only enhances their understanding of the subject but also prepares them for specialised roles in their future careers.
Small Private Online Course (SPOC)	A Small Private Online Course (SPOC) refers to a version of a MOOC (MassiveOpenOnlineCourse) used locally with on-campus students. ⁹
Strategic imperatives	Main priorities and goals of a business or project that lead to long term success.
Sub-Theme Specialisations	Refer to the specialisation in a sub-theme of a Priority Area by taking more than one course associated with the sub-theme.
Sustainable Transformation	Sustainable Transformation denotes the endeavour of creating and ensuring a viable future by anticipating the need for and realising profound shifts in economic, social and environmental systems. This involves transitioning to more sustainable living and business practices that account for the planet's finite resources and seek to minimise environmental impact whilst ensuring social equity, economic development and stability.
Transformative Academic Teaching	Transformative Academic Teaching goes beyond traditional lecturing—it's the art of inspiring students to think critically, question the status quo, and apply knowledge in innovative ways. This approach turns the classroom into a dynamic space where learning is not just about absorbing facts, but about sparking "aha!" moments. It's the difference between teaching a subject and teaching students to reshape the world with what they've learned.
Transversal Skills	Transversal skills, also known as transferable skills or soft skills, are competencies that are valuable across different professions, industries, and contexts, and can be applied and transferred to various situations and environments. This includes digital competencies, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, leadership, cultural competence, and entrepreneurship, among others.
Virtual Campus Learning Platform (VCLP):	VCLP is the Learning Management System (LMS) of EPiCUR along with a Decentralised LMS server acting as gateway to local LMSs of the partners.
Virtual University Registrar System (VURS)	EPiCURUS is an extended ecosystem on top of VURS (Virtual University Registrar System) and VCLP (Virtual Campus Learning Platform) by offering interfaces for the interconnection with other CMS (Campus Management System), LMS (Learning Management System) and external services.
Work-Package	The name for specific areas within an EU project. Work-Package teams have specific responsibilities for EU project outputs including Tasks, Milestones and Deliverables. The EPiCUR Alliance includes seven Work-Packages during the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT phase.

⁹ Gielen, G. (2016). Advantages and Disadvantages of SPOCs (Small Private Online Courses): Experiences with Online Learning. In *European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN) Conference Proceedings* (No. 1, pp. 105-111). European Distance and E-Learning Network

9.4. Annex 4: Screenshots of the EPICUR Course Catalogue

9.4.1. Cropped screenshot of the EPICUR Course Catalogue

Available at: <https://register.epicur.auth.gr/assets/courses/catalogue/#/index>

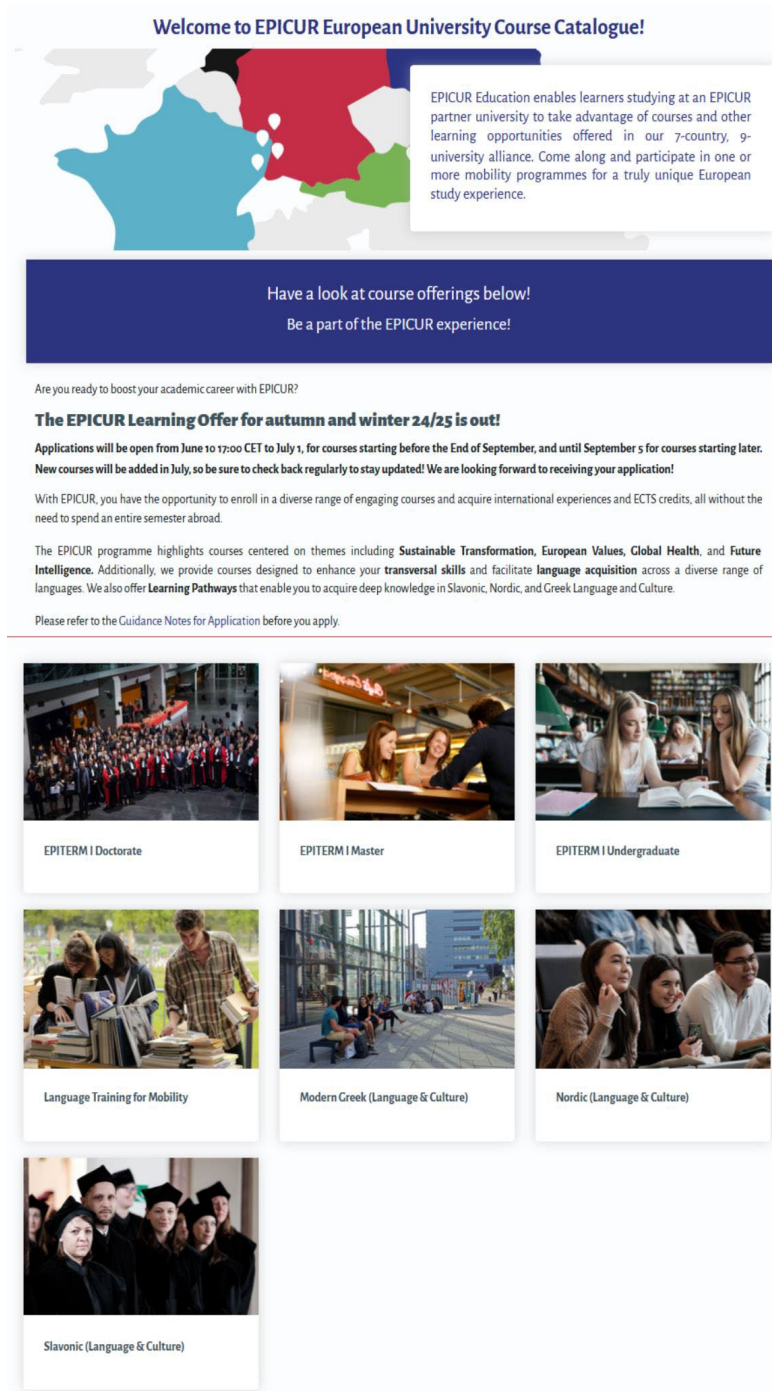


Figure 8: Screenshot of the EPICUR Course Catalogue

9.4.2. Screenshot of the EPICUR course site for undergraduate students

Available [here](#).

Welcome to EPICUR European University Course Catalogue!

EPITERM I Undergraduate

EPICUR Education enables learners studying at an EPICUR partner university to take advantage of courses and other learning opportunities offered in our 7-country, 9-university alliance. Come along and participate in one or more mobility programmes for a truly unique European study experience.

[Apply now](#)

Here, you will find courses accessible to undergraduate students who want to enrich their curriculum with diverse and engaging topics. Explore opportunities to expand your academic horizons and gain valuable international experiences through EPICUR.

Don't forget to check our Q&A section. If you have any further questions, please contact the EPICUR course coordination team at epicur@ucf.uni-freiburg.de or consult the contact person at your university (email addresses are on the Q&A page).

Please refer to the Guidance Notes for Application before you apply. Go back to the main page of the course catalogue.

Priority area

European Values | Sustainable Transformation | Global Health | Future Intelligence | Transversal Skills

Delivery mode | Language | Start Date | End Date

[Reset](#) [Apply filter](#)

Quality Assured Programmes

The Quality Assured Programmes module provides technical skills for designing, implementing, evaluating and promoting the quality of health systems in urban contexts as well as assuring, monitoring and evaluating quality using concrete examples and case studies. Current challenges such as the unequal distribution of health care

Academic Writing

English for Academic Writing (EAW) is designed to introduce students to the essentials of English academic writing culture. The objective of this course is to support students in a regular practice of critically reading and writing academic texts across genres. Students will also learn how writing is not a passive medium of communication, but a social activity that

Argument-Checking and Critical Thinking

The current overload of information on media poses problems of mis- and disinformation, challenging the capacity of people to critically determine what to believe and what to do. We are increasingly aware that we experience European discourse as a set of informational packages, arguments designed to be convincing and uncritically assimilated, not to be

Bilingualism in education

The course will be based on materials developed as part of the Erasmus+ TEAM project. The aim of the project was to educate teachers and other education professionals, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including persons working with migrants, refugees and minority students, about bilingualism and multilingualism. The course materials combine

Children's Classics Across Time and Cultures

Juvenile literature is a compelling domain underpinning every reader's imagination. Children's classics—books from different cultures and languages that combine fantasy with reality, humour and nonsense with lyricism, and linguistic invention with philosophy—constitute an important part of the world's literary heritage. This course proposes

Civil society and non-profit organizations in democratic societies

The course is focused on the understanding of civil society and non-profit organizations' roles and functions in contemporary society. Students will take part in the regular online session and they will work individually or in groups on several assignments; they will discuss topics connected with civil society and non-profit organizations in the European context

Figure 9: Screenshot of the EPICUR course site for undergraduate students

9.4.3. Screenshot of one open EPiCUR course as displayed during registration period



The aim of the course is to give the student an introduction to the current state of the climate and possible solutions to battle climate change, through the high profile symposia series Climate Thursdays, which focuses on the state of our climate and on the technical, behavioural, economical and political solutions and actions taken to meet the current climate challenges.

Climate Thursdays that are held in collaboration with leading researchers from the University of Southern Denmark and several other Danish universities, experts from the Danish Council on Climate Change, and companies, think tanks, institutions and organisations.

The knowledge gained throughout the course will enable the student to reflect upon and discuss current climate knowledge and relate this to their academic field.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this learning offer, students will be able to... - Explain a selection of aspects relating to the current state of the climate

- Describe a selection of technical solutions to respond to climate changes
- Describe a selection of behavioural actions to respond to climate changes
- Describe a selection of economical and political approaches to climate changes
- Reflect upon and discuss the current knowledge in climate research

Additional information

Prerequisites

This is a graduate course, and students must have completed a bachelors degree to follow this course. (180 ECTS)

Register two places (Application to EPiCUR and Registration at SDU)

If selected by EPiCUR you will also need to register at SDU to access the course:

To be registered we need to enroll you at SDU - this is done by submitting an application as an exchange student. (Link will be sent to you immediately after being selected by EPiCUR)

The deadline for registering at SDU is **August 1st**.

As this leaves a short time to complete or compile needed documents, we suggest you start collecting the documents now:

1. **Language requirement form** (signed by an employee at your home university e.g. EPiCUR staff, Erasmus staff or teacher)
2. **Transcript of records in English** - either signed/stamped by your home university OR with other validation option (e.g. QR code)
3. **Copy of Passport/ID**

Feel free to reach out to epicur@sdu.dk with any questions this might give you.

Registration Period. The registration period for this course closes July 1st 2024.

All details

Academic period: 2024-2025 Fall	ECTS: 5 ECTS
Dates: Sep 5, 2024 - Nov 30, 2024	Priority area: Sustainable Transformation
Schedule: Students will follow online "Climate Thursday" lectures either live or as recorded videos. Within a week after the live lecture is held, students must complete an E-test on the subject. The course will end with students writing an assignment covering one of the subjects covered. The course will run from September 5th till the end of November	Subthemes: Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability
Format: Online	Language: English
Status: Closed	Workload:
Maximum number of students: 10	Location: University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

Figure 10: Screenshot of one open EPiCUR course as displayed during registration period

9.5 Annex 5: EPICUR course proposal documents

9.5.1 EPICUR's Course Deployment Framework Beta Version

EPICUR Learning Experience

Deployment Framework

To be filled out by Institutional Coordinators

Checklist for learning experience

(Please add the name of the learning experience here)

Proposed from following institution:

- Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań (AMU)
- Aristotle University Thessaloniki (AUTH)
- University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (BOKU)
- Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)
- University of Haute-Alsace (UHA)
- University of Freiburg (UFR)
- University of Amsterdam (UvA)
- University of Southern Denmark (SDU)

Which type of EPICUR learning experience is it? (Multiple choices possible)

- Open to all EPICUR students offered through the EPICUR Course Catalogue*:
- Course
 - Specialisation option, namely:

- Integrated learning experience**
- Collaborative learning and teaching activity
 - Integrated course
 - Embedded Learning Pathway, namely:

 - EPICUR Joint Degree

*In EPICUR this refers to offers that are open to all EPICUR students and offered through EPICUR's course catalogue

**Integrated learning experiences involve multilateral efforts across universities to offer shared courses, pathways, electives, minors, or even joint degrees that are part of students' formal study programmes.

Is there still a need to find collaboration partners?

- Yes No

1. Requirements for EPICUR Learning Experiences

Themes: Does the learning experience fit into one of EPICUR’s priority areas?

- European Values (also tick this box for courses in the Language and Culture learning pathways)
- Sustainable Transformation
- Global Health
- Future Intelligence
- Transversal Skills (also tick this box Language Training courses)

Other:

- Namely _____

Timing: Does the learning experience require a full semester abroad?

- No, it aligns with accessibility standards (see table below).

Delivery mode	In-person	Hybrid	Blended	Online
Duration	Intense – consecutive days up to one or three weeks		The in-person component is recommended to last at least three days to make the trip through Europe worthwhile.	
	Total duration is flexible – could be a few classes or the duration of a semester.			

For open EPICUR course submission: Is the proposal form complete and ready to submit?

- Yes, all information necessary at course proposal stage has been provided, including:
 - Title
 - Description
 - Delivery mode
 - (Preliminary) start and end date
 - ECTS value (if applicable)
 - Learning outcomes (minimum 3)

The following information has not yet been provided (but will be provided before publishing the course in the catalogue):

- Assessment method
- Schedule
- Target group
- Other, namely _____

No Participation Fees:

- Yes, there are no fees required to participate in the learning

experience. Any incidental costs (e.g., travel, accommodation, materials) are addressed under the inclusiveness criteria below.

How is the learning experience financed?

Institutional validation for ECTS-bearing courses: Is the learning experience officially recognised by the hosting institution?

Yes

No, please elaborate _____

Will the learning experience be evaluated through the usual internal evaluation procedure?

Yes

No, please elaborate _____

2. EPiCUR Principles and Values Alignment

EPiCUR is dedicated to six core values in teaching and learning: **International, Intercultural, Inclusive, Interdisciplinary, Innovative, and Interactive**. Whilst an EPiCUR learning experience does not need to address all six values, Institutional Coordinators should ensure alignment with at least some of the six values. The questions in the list below are provided to help the review process. If you are unsure about alignment, please meet with the teacher to discuss how this can be improved.

International

- Does the course involve collaboration with students or institutions from different countries?
- Are international guest speakers, experts, or resources integrated into the learning experience?

Interculturality

- Does it include content that provides a global or multicultural perspective?
- Are diverse case studies or examples included?
 - Is there support for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds? Inclusiveness
- Is the learning experience accessible to students with disabilities?
- Are diverse groups (gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status) represented in the materials?
- Is inclusive language used in materials and interactions?
- Are costs minimal and flagged if significant?
 - Are assessment methods varied and inclusive of different learning styles? Interdisciplinarity
- Does the learning experience integrate perspectives, theories, or methodologies from multiple disciplines?
- Are there collaborative projects that require knowledge from different fields?
 - Are interdisciplinary learning outcomes clearly defined? Innovativeness
- Does the learning experience cover emerging topics or cutting-edge research?
- Are innovative teaching methods employed (e.g., flipped classroom, gamification)?
 - Does it encourage critical thinking and problem-solving? Interactiveness
- Are there multiple opportunities for student participation (e.g., discussions, group work)?
- Are interactive tools and platforms (e.g., online forums, simulations) used effectively?
- Are there mechanisms for providing and receiving feedback?
- Are active learning strategies used to engage students?

I confirm the alignment with EPiCUR values.

3. Alignment with EPiCUR International Learning Competences

The teacher has highlighted the applicable EPiCUR International Learning Competences in the proposal sheet. This is not a requirement; however, it is highly appreciated.

Methods & Approaches	Communication & Collaboration	Knowledge & Expertise	Transfer & Application
M.1 Interactivity Engage with interactive approaches to learn about complex and evolving issues.	C.1 Interculturality Work and collaborate effectively in intercultural teams.	K.1 Scientific Knowledge Pursue knowledge and/or expertise in one or more EPiCUR Priority Areas.	T.1 Interdisciplinarity Integrate perspectives, knowledge, and skills from different disciplines to identify and engage with real-world issues.
M.2 Innovativeness Engage with innovative pedagogies and methodologies.	C.2 Cultural Sensitivity Engage sensitively with others, drawing on an understanding of cultural influences on yourself and others.	K.2 Geopolitical Expertise Recognise how geopolitical relations, diversity, and power dynamics impact the negotiation and resolution of real-life issues.	T.2 Social Agency Demonstrate agency for social justice in local to global contexts.
M.3 Criticality Analyse and evaluate the credibility of information, taking into consideration biases in norms, practices and opinions.	C.3 Communication Present ideas and information clearly and effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes, using appropriate modes of communication (written, oral, visual, kinesthetic).	K.3 Implementation Demonstrate the capacity to implement theoretical approaches and/or innovative methodologies across one or more EPiCUR Priority Areas.	T.3 Environmental Agency Demonstrate agency for environmental justice in local to global contexts.
M.4 Self Reflection Reflect critically on your values, perceptions, biases and actions.	C.4 Multilingualism Demonstrate communicative competence in more than one language.	K.4 Ethical Research Engage in ethical research practices.	T.4 Futures Recognise the need to understand, evaluate, and/or navigate multiple futures including the possible, probable, and desirable.
M.5 Inclusivity Practise inclusive approaches in diverse situations.	C.5 Digital Literacy Demonstrate informed and ethical digital literacy when researching and disseminating ideas and information.	K.5 Impact Critically reflect on research outcomes and their impact on stakeholders and environments.	T.5 Lifelong Learning Engage with opportunities for your own lifelong learning.

- I confirm alignment of this EPiCUR learning experience with EPiCUR principles.
- I am unsure if this learning experience aligns with EPiCUR principles and I would like to discuss this in a meeting.
- I do not see alignment and do not recommend to offer the proposed learning experience in EPiCUR.

9.5.2. Screenshots of the EPICUR course proposal document

EPICUR Course/Offer Proposals To be included in the EPICUR Autumn/Winter Term (EPITermI) Programme please submit to your Institutional Coordinator by May 27

<p>What is EPICUR? EPICUR (European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions) belongs to the first generation of European university alliances launched by the European Commission under the Erasmus programme. The objective of the EPICUR alliance is to create a unique environment of interdisciplinary education and research and to prepare tomorrow's European citizens to face societal challenges and become drivers of European innovation. The alliance is composed of the 9 higher education institutions across Europe (see picture on the right-hand side) and is led by the University of Strasbourg.</p>	<p>Important Info for navigating the Proposals Sheet!!! Save the file immediately upon downloading!</p> <p>You have to enable Macros for this file in order to allow multi-select in the various dropdown menus. To do so, right click on the file in explorer and go to properties. There, select "unblock".</p> <p>If you want to change information inserted into a predefined cell, please select the cell and hit "Delete" ("Backspace" does not work).</p> <p>Please fill in all the required information. If any fields cannot be answered yet, please send an updated list as soon as possible.</p> <p>To get more information on what is expected in a given cell, click on the according cell, hover over it, and more details will be displayed.</p> <p>If something is not captured in the form or if you have additional requests for any proposal, please add those at the bottom of the appropriate column.</p> <p>Main course info goes in the "course proposal mandatory" sheet (next tab 3 offer/course per column!) - other info on the "secondaryinfo" tab can be entered by the individual proposing the course or by the EPICUR Institutional Coordinator!</p>
<p>What are we looking for? We invite instructors at the EPICUR partner institutions to propose courses (and non-credit offers) that fit one of the EPICUR priority areas: Sustainable Transformation, European Values, Global Health, Future Intelligence, Entrepreneurship and Engagement, or Transversal Skills (e.g., academic skills, interculturality, critical thinking, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion).</p> <p>We are interested in offers that are accessible to students from across the alliance without the requirement to go abroad for a whole semester. For more specific guidelines, please see below.</p>	<p>In case of any questions please contact us by email at epicur@uctf.uni-freiburg.de Check out the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning.</p> <p>And with this link you will be directed to our list with FAQs and the contact information of all institutional Coordinators.</p>
<p>What is in it for you? By offering your learning activity in the framework of EPICUR, you will get the chance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote distinctive aspects in your course offer, - offer elective courses in your specialist area and engage with motivated students on the topic, - engage with internationalisation at your university, - gain teaching experience (especially if you are an early career university teacher), - increase the diversity in your classroom, - create an intercultural learning space, - become part of an international community of academics, - get access to EPICUR's teacher support. 	
<p>Students register for courses and offers designed like these:</p> <p>Virtual deliveries – fully online deliveries, especially offer proposals that transcend traditional synchronous delivery and incorporate asynchronous work (e.g., self-study and virtual teamwork).</p> <p>Hybrid deliveries – synchronous teaching of online and on-site groups.</p> <p>Blended deliveries – combining virtual and physical class learning.</p> <p>Block courses & summer/winter schools – taught on a compressed schedule that differs from a traditional semester schedule.</p> <p>Excursions – experiential offers where students are assessed based on on-site, collaborative work.</p> <p>Flexible offers – that accommodate various semester schedules by, for example, combining asynchronous learning activities with intensive synchronous sessions.</p> <p>Short, intensive courses – courses that can be delivered within a short time window (to facilitate wide participation) and which may award fewer ECTS credits (e.g., under 5).</p>	

Figure 11: Screenshot of front page of the EPICUR course proposal sheet

ID	Course /Learning Activity Proposal Info	Sample Course/Offer
1	Course/Activity Title	Business 101
2	(optional) Course code	BUS-101
3	This form completed by	Jane Administrator
4	Main host institution	Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg (UFR), Germany
5	Description	Unlock the secrets of business success with our comprehensive course. Dive into fundamental principles, from strategic planning to financial management, honing your skills for real-world application. Explore case studies and industry insights to understand diverse business landscapes. Gain expertise in leadership, communication, and decision-making to navigate complexities confidently. Interactive sessions foster collaboration and critical thinking, empowering you to tackle challenges head-on. Whether you're an aspiring entrepreneur or seasoned professional, this course equips you with the tools and knowledge to thrive in any business environment. Join us and embark on a transformative journey toward achieving your professional goals.
6	Previously run in EPiCUR?	no
7	EPiCUR Term for course start date	Sept-Dec[EPITerm1]
Contact information (enter all info necessary)		
8	Instructor	John Instructor
9	Instructor e-mail	john@kit.edu
10	Additional Instructors	Maggie Smith, Mike Jones
11	(optional) Main contact person (if different from instructor)	
12	(optional) Main contact e-mail (if different from instructor)	
13	Involved Institutions	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Austria, Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg (UFR), Germany, University of Upper Alsace (UHA), France
14	Study Programme, Faculty, or Department	University College Freiburg
Course/Offer Information needed for catalogue (enter all that apply)		
15	EPiCUR priority areas	European Values, Transversal Skills
16	(optional) Subtheme/Area	TransSkill: Entre & Engage
17	Delivery mode	virtual [online only]
18	(A)synchronous Delivery	Fully asynchronous
19	Location (if in-person part exists)	
20	Learning outcomes (After this learning offer, students will be able to...)	Understand core business principles such as strategic planning and financial management; Demonstrate effective leadership, communication, and decision-making skills; Apply theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios, enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
21	Language(s) of delivery	English, German
22	ECTS	5
23	(optional) Option for less ECTS?	
24	Grading Scale	German/Austrian grading scale (best: 1)
25	(optional) Grading Scale additional explanation (if applicable):	
26	(optional) #ECTS required at start	
27	Course/Offer Information required/ desired for course promotion (enter all that apply)	
28	Schedule (please indicate the meeting pattern and times)	Mondays 14:00-16:00
29	Start date (based on current info at time of proposal)	2024-10-25
30	End date (based on current info at time of proposal)	2024-11-25
31	(if credit course) Type(s) of assessment	Final paper/report, Cumulative assignments, Attendance (yes or no)
32	(if credit course) Estimated Final assessment date	2024-11-25
33	(if credit course) Date when course grade can be submitted	2024-12-20
34	Suitable Level for applicants	Bachelor Level
35	Max number of EPiCUR students	10
36	(optional) Min. number of students	
37	(optional) Prerequisites to study in course	
38	Student selection	EPiCUR Team
39	(optional) Different student selection procedure requested (please describe)	
40	(optional) Certifications or Recognitions	
41	Additional request to EPiCUR personnel	Will need resources for equipment to run course.

Figure 12: Main page of EPiCUR's course proposal sheet with one example proposal.

ID	Course /Learning Activity Proposal Info	Sample Course/Offer
	Course/Activity Title	Business 101
	Didactic Features - (Optional) If any special didactic/design features shown below apply to an offer, please elaborate as needed	
	Co-Teaching	Yes (please elaborate below)
	Specify co-teaching (if yes to previous item):	Working with two colleagues from partner universities indicated. Also there are guest speakers from other EPiCUR universities.
	Student Input & Co-Creation	Students will design and lead mini-workshops or discussion sessions on sustainability topics they are passionate about related to the covered course content.
	Problem-based learning	Main assessment is a problem-based task based on a simulated case study.
	Interdisciplinarity	Topics from sustainability
	Collaboration and Active Student Engagement	The course is very project oriented and requires the students to work in groups.
	Additional info and requests	
	Please elaborate if/ how for physical or blended mobility the host or cooperating partners will provide funding or logistical support for potential participants.	N/A
	Additional comments (incorporate/edit as appropriate)	N/A
	(Pilot) EPiCUR Values & Targeted Competences.	To indicate how offers align/correspond with EPiCUR's Values as well as (pilot) EPiCUR International Learning Competences, please select all that apply for each offer.
	Alignment with EPiCUR values	
	Targeted EPiCUR Competences (please highlight [change cell color] which of the 20 EPiCUR International learning competencies apply to this course - please choose at least 2).	M.1 Interactivity engage with interactive approaches to learn about complex and evolving issues.
		M.2 Innovativeness engage with innovative pedagogies and methodologies.
		M.3 Criticality analyse and evaluate the credibility of information, taking into consideration biases in norms, practices and opinions.
		M.4 Self Reflection reflect critically on your values, perceptions, biases and actions.
		M.5 Inclusivity practice inclusive approaches in diverse situations.
		C.1 Interculturality work and collaborate effectively in intercultural teams.
		C.2 Cultural Sensitivity engage sensitively with others, drawing on an understanding of cultural influences on yourself and others.
		C.3 Communication present ideas and information clearly and effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes, using appropriate modes of communication (written, oral, visual, kinesthetic).
		C.4 Multilingualism demonstrate communicative competence in more than one language.
		C.5 Digital Literacy demonstrate informed and ethical digital literacy when researching and disseminating ideas and information.
		K.1 Scientific Knowledge pursue knowledge and/or expertise in one or more EPiCUR Priority Areas.
		K.2 Geopolitical Expertise recognize how geopolitical relations, diversity, and power dynamics impact the negotiation and resolution of real-life issues.
		K.3 Implementation demonstrate the capacity to implement theoretical approaches and/or innovative methodologies across one or more *EPiCUR Priority Areas.
		K.4 Ethical Research practice ethical research practices.
		K.5 Impact critically reflect on research outcomes and their impact on stakeholders and environments.
		T.1 Interdisciplinarity integrate perspectives, knowledge and skills from different disciplines to identify and engage with real-world issues.
		T.2 Social Agency demonstrate agency for social justice in local to global contexts.
		T.3 Environmental Agency demonstrate agency for environmental justice in local to global contexts.
		T.4 Futures recognize the need to understand, evaluate, and/or navigate multiple futures including the possible, probable and desirable.
		T.5 Lifelong Learning engage with opportunities for your own lifelong learning.

Figure 13: Secondary info in EPiCUR's course proposal sheet with one example proposal. Entering this information is currently voluntary. It supports to assess the alignment with EPiCUR principles and pedagogical design formats.

9.6. Annex 6: Stakeholder considerations

9.6.1. Stakeholder perspective on sub-themes

Table 4: What do sub-themes offer different stakeholders? provides insights into how sub-themes can benefit different stakeholders.

What do sub-themes offer different stakeholders?	
Stakeholder	EPiCUR Sub-theme
Student	<p>Arranging courses in sub-themes raises my awareness of the opportunities EPiCUR offers to specialise in thematic areas. I could choose a selection of thematically linked courses and deepen my knowledge and skills on a specific theme.</p> <p>Sub-themes help me manage my personalised learning experience. I can easily find and choose related courses, which I may otherwise have missed.</p> <p>I am looking forward to getting EPiCUR recognition for specialising on a sub-theme.</p>
Educator	<p>Arranging courses in sub-themes raises my awareness of other institutions' thematically related course offers.</p> <p>Interdisciplinary sub-themes inspire me to see how my course contributes to an existing sub-theme as well as inspiring me to propose a new sub-theme.</p>
Study Programme	<p>Sub-themes provide a useful starting point for multilateral collaboration on EPiCUR pathways, such as minors or joint degrees.</p> <p>Data on how well sub-themes recruit and retain provide a useful indicator for student and educator interest in a collaboration for a pathway.</p>
CMO	<p>Sub-themes enable EPiCUR to support student choices more effectively. For example, courses can be promoted when a student registers for a course within a sub-theme or if they cannot get a place on a course, they can be encouraged to try another one for the same-sub-theme.</p> <p>Seeing how well sub-themes recruit provides useful indicators for student and educator interest in a collaboration for a pathway. This information can be shared with the institutions offering courses in sub themes and generally across EPiCUR.</p>

9.6.2. Stakeholder perspective on integrated pathways

Table 5: What do integrated pathways offer different stakeholders? provides insights into how integrated pathways can benefit different stakeholders.

What do integrated pathways offer different stakeholders?	
Student	<p>Knowing there is a special pathway integrated in my study programme would be an incentive for choosing a study programme. I like the fact that my study programme would include courses by other universities, this would enhance my international profile and develop my intercultural competences.</p> <p>If my study programme allowed me to choose an EPICUR pathway as an elective, that would give me an opportunity to widen my portfolio and show future employers I'm committed to this area of study and internationalising my profile.</p>
Educator	<p>Designing and teaching courses in an EPICUR pathway, offers me a way to develop my specialist subject and to collaborate with other researching educators with related areas of interest. Such collaborations would be made possible through EPICUR connections.</p> <p>It's professionally rewarding to teach courses along with other educators with similar interests and to have the opportunity to teach a diverse group of students enhances my teaching portfolio.</p>
Study Programme	<p>Programmes may welcome the opportunity to collaborate with another two institutions on an integrated pathway. This way all involved can all benefit from offering enhanced study programmes and increased student recruitment.</p> <p>Pathways offer ways to bring researchers together with niche interests. Together they can craft new minors and even joint degrees that are current and focused on megatrend issues.</p> <p>If three collaborating universities cannot integrate the pathway in their study programmes, then it remains useful to know that it can be made available as an elective through the Course Catalogue. In this way, more students can be reached to promote the intercultural aspect.</p>
CMO	<p>Student recruitment and retention can be monitored with integrated pathways with this information then shared widely across EPICUR.</p>

9.7. Annex 7: Operational Infrastructure

Progress in technical infrastructure, administrative capacity, and teacher training and development are driving EPiCUR's progress and the deployment of its educational offer. These operational resources are detailed here.

9.7.1. Technical infrastructure

During the pilot phase EPiCUR implemented the “EPiCUR Inter-University Campus - **EIUC**”, a working ecosystem with a centralised CMS¹⁰ (called VURS-Virtual University Registrar System) and a decentralised LMS¹¹ system network (called VCLP-Virtual Campus Learning Platform).

This platform has been extended (see Deliverable EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT Deliverable D3.1) to create an interconnected university ecosystem (**EPiCURUS**¹² 1.0.) for supporting data exchange with local CMS and LMS with the central VURS, in order to support the creation of a shared registry (using common necessary data) of students, courses and professors.

Therefore, EPiCURUS is an **extended ecosystem** on top of VURS and VCLP by offering interfaces for the **interconnection** with other CMS, LMS and external services.

The main components of EPiCURUS are the following:

1. Virtual Campus Learning Platform (VCLP)¹³: It is the Learning Management System (LMS) of EPiCUR along with a Decentralised LMS server acting as gateway to local LMSs of the partners.
2. The Internship Portal (front end): The Internship Portal front-end serves as the primary interface for student interaction at <https://internships.epicur.auth.gr/>.

¹⁰ CMS: **C**ampus **M**anagement **S**ystem

¹¹ LMS: **L**earning **M**anagement **S**ystem

¹² EPiCURUS: **EPiCUR U**niversity **S**ystem

¹³ This component is described in detail in the Deliverable of Task 4.2.1 with title: Initial design and creation of the Virtual Campus Learning Platform (VCLP)”

3. Virtual University Registrar System (VURS): Centralised Campus Management System/Student Information System (CMS/SIS) keeping the necessary information for the students' mobilities and services.

The main VURS Components are the following:

- Course Catalogue (<https://courses.epicur.auth.gr>): Public course catalogue of all learning pathways offered to the EPICUR students.
- Candidates App (<https://register.epicur.auth.gr/>): The application for the prospective students to apply for participation in the EPICUR learning pathways.
- Students App (<https://students.epicur.auth.gr/>): The application for the selected students attending the EPICUR learning pathways.
- Registrar App (<https://registrar.epicur.auth.gr/>): The application for the administrative staff to monitor EPICUR learning pathways and students mobilities. In addition, the Registrar App is supporting the “Internships Administration module”.
- Faculty App (<https://faculty.epicur.auth.gr/>): The application for the teaching staff delivering a course that is part of an EPICUR learning opportunity. This app is integrating the “Course proposal module” by teaching staff.
- Admin Panel (<https://registrar.epicur.auth.gr/>): A specific part of the application for the Registrar App to admin the rights and roles of the rest of the users.
- VURS API Server (<https://api.epicur.auth.gr/>): The core service interacting with all the apps above, external services/systems and the VCLP component.

The VURS has recently undergone substantive changes to more closely mirror the structure of EPICUR's educational offer. Prospective students can a) filter courses based on Priority Areas, b) quickly compare courses based on key aspects relevant to their studies, and c) sign-up for courses through the Course Catalogue that is linked with the central EPICUR registration system. Afterwards students trace and complete their whole learning experience with EPICUR on the platform. Educators' information provided about their courses

is kept up to date and accessible, whilst also allowing them to enter grades and to communicate with students through the VURS.

The comprehensive management of the course lifecycle through the VURS allows EPiCUR to function akin to a digital university, ensuring that administrative and supportive processes associated with the student and educator experience are (where applicable) automated and linked with existing structures (e.g., the partner universities' learning management systems).

Furthermore, the connection of the partner universities' campus management systems is currently in the first tests. This will further support the alignment with the European Learning Model (ELM), ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) and the interoperability of learning opportunities, qualifications, accreditation and credentials.

9.7.2. EPiCUR informal Course Management Office

The EPiCUR informal Course Management Office (CMO) was built through a bottom-up initiative within EPiCUR that fulfilled the identified need of a decentralised course management. It formed as a team with one or two representatives from each EPiCUR university and started with recursive training sessions that transferred established processes from the more centralised task group previously managing the course offers and mainly involving two institutions throughout the Alliance. Today, the CMO ensures course lifecycle support, reaching from the call for course proposals and course proposal curation to student selection and transcript provisioning. Additionally, CMO staff function as a link between Work Packages and EPiCUR's educational offer, acting as one of the main connections in integrating courses and educators within each partner university. The CMO members work closely together with their Institutional Coordinators in overseeing courses hosted at their university as well as incoming and outgoing students.

This administrative role includes the iterative co-design of a course lifecycle that meets the needs of a flexible course administration that accommodates the schedules of nine universities whilst providing clarity and transparency for educators and other relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, such decentralised course management also bears the potential for upscaling the learning offers. Since the conception of the CMO, processes associated with the course lifecycle have been streamlined and integrated into existing university structures. The course proposal sheet, which aims for alignment with the [European Learning Model](#), is centrally placed on the EPICUR website. The CMO members, in coordination with the Institutional Coordinators, are responsible for sending out the call for course proposals to teachers at their universities and collecting the course proposals. After submission, a list of all course proposals is compiled and shared with the Alliance Coordination Office and the Management Board. The latter approves the course offer, making sure it aligns with EPICUR's global strategy.

The courses are then integrated by each CMO member into the EPICUR Inter-University Campus, ensuring that the information is completed at the start of the student registration period and the Course Catalogue promotion by the Communication Office. The CMO members are also responsible to answer their students' and educators' questions, welcome their incoming students and making sure they are registered at their universities, as well as providing mobility support to their outgoings where needed.

In the coming months, a Mobility Service Unit will be established to handle student-related tasks currently managed by the informal Course Management Office (CMO). The CMO will then focus on course management, including the preparation of the EPICUR Course Catalogue, connecting virtual course rooms from the local Learning Management Systems, and ensuring that grades are entered into the VURS. The Mobility Service Unit will be responsible for student application management, student selection, and their registration, as well as the issuing of transcripts of records and certificates.

Both units will conduct evaluations of the processes they oversee to ensure continuous improvement. Evaluations are crucial as they provide insights into

the effectiveness and efficiency of the systems in place, identify areas that require enhancement, and ensure that the provided services meet the needs of students and faculty. Regular evaluations also foster accountability and transparency, helping to maintain high standards and align with the overarching goals of EPiCUR. By systematically reviewing and refining processes, the Mobility Service Unit and the CMO can better adapt to evolving challenges and opportunities, ultimately contributing to the overall success of the educational offer.

9.7.3. The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning

The online EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) provides resources and professional development opportunities for educators and educational developers engaged with developing and delivering EPiCUR learning experiences. The EPiC TLC offers bespoke resources for educators facing EPiCUR challenges, such as identifying potential course collaborators and adapting traditional pedagogical designs such as courses with in-person synchronous classes to hybrid or online or blended formats.

The EPiC TLC comprises three areas of differentiated support: *Let's explore!*, *Let's connect!*, *Let's grow!*. *Let's explore!* offers resources for educators designing and teaching EPiCUR courses; *Let's connect!* offers events, Special Interest Groups and access to CoTeachConnector where educators can register their interest in finding a collaborator for an intercultural learning experience, *Let's grow!* offers professional development opportunities for educators at the EPiCUR universities or online. Further information on the development of the EPiC TLC is available in the relevant online policy paper.

Enabling educator collaboration

Individual educators are and will be welcome to offer EPiCUR courses, and during the initial project phase this was the most common teaching mode. However, to achieve EPiCUR's aim to 'foster a dynamic synthesis of education resources from across disciplines' educators need to meet and develop trusting, sustainable collaborations. [The EPiCUR Forum: Transformative](#)

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on June 11-12, 2024, in Mulhouse provided the space and impetus for inter-university educators to meet and share aspirations for course collaborations. Educator collaborations instigated at the Forum are now being developed. In addition, the EPiC TLC offers a variety of online forums, including the CoTeachConnector, where educators can log their interest in finding partners for the co-development of courses, pathways and co-teaching. Institutional Coordinators and educational developers at the partner institutions play a key role helping educators search for and identify relevant connections across the Alliance. To facilitate access to these key players, educators are guided to relevant contact details hosted on the EPiC TLC.

Enabling collaborative course design and teaching

Bringing educators together is the vital first step towards collaboration and in the Let's Explore! section on the EPiC TLC, educators can find inspiration about different forms of collaboration for course design and teaching. EPiCUR recognises all forms of educator collaboration and acknowledges the value of entry level collaborations such as guest lecturing, providing the foundation for trusting professional partnerships.

In addition, the Best Practice Guide provides resources on EPiCUR course design and collaborative approaches. The Guide is an organic resource, which will be updated in response to educator requests and contributions.

9.8. Annex 8: Accessing EPiCUR webpages

Accessing the EPiCUR International Centre for Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) and the Best Practice Guide requires EPiCUR affiliation and login with university credentials.

Follow this link <https://s.kit.edu/epictlc>

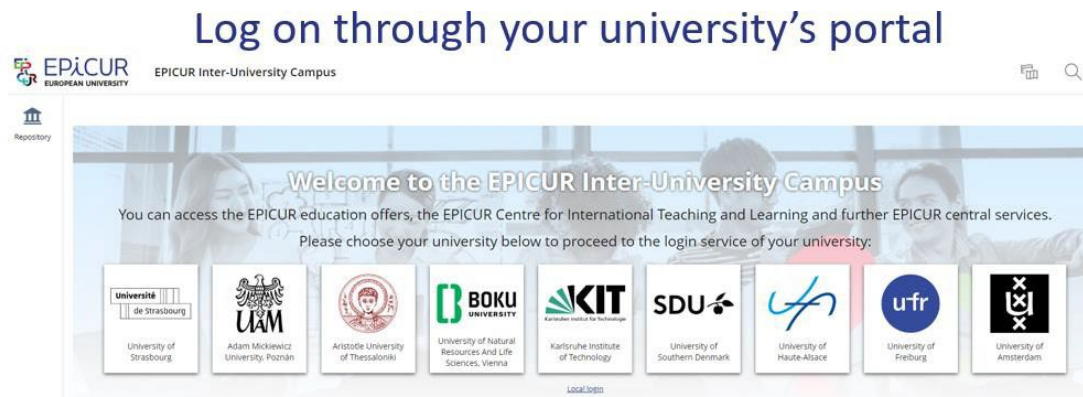


Figure 14: Screenshot of access to the EPiCUR International Centre for Teaching and Learning.

9.9. Annex 9: Overview of the EPiCUR Alliance

9.9.1. EPiCUR Alliance: European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions

EPiCUR, the European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions, is a first-generation European University Alliance, dedicated to shaping European Society in Transition through the development of collaborative inter- and transdisciplinary teaching and learning.

The EPiCUR Alliance's core ambition is to transform education, research and transfer practices and opportunities across its member universities in order to develop original cutting-edge solutions and train new generations of European change makers able to shape a European society in transition and help overcome the daunting challenges.

EPiCUR brings together the distinctive and complementary forces of its 9 member universities as well as the experience and creative potential of their regions. Its knowledge-creating teams are joining forces to work on some of the most demanding global challenges of our days, including EPiCUR's initial priority areas **Sustainable Transformation, European Values, Global Health and Future Intelligence**. Such an endeavour requires interdisciplinary approaches and strong connections with regional academic and socio-

economic ecosystems. EPICUR therefore must create a polycentric network of mutually empowering regional knowledge hubs future-proofed for tackling these global challenges.

9.9.2. EPICUR Alliance Partner Universities

Institution name and acronym	Country
Université de Strasbourg (UNISTRA)	France
Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (AMU)	Poland
Aristotelio Panepistimio Thessalonikis (ATh)	Greece
Universität für Bodenkultur Wien (BOKU)	Austria
Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT)	Germany
Université de Haute-Alsace (UHA)	France
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (UFR)	Germany
Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA)	The Netherlands
Syddansk Universitet (SDU)	Denmark

9.9.3. Overview of the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT project

The EPICUR Alliance has won the second call for application of the European Universities Initiative by the European Commission and has therefore been tasked to roll out its successful pilot phase. The EPICUR- SHAPE-IT project involves all nine EPICUR partner universities and runs from November 2022 to October 2026, with a potential extension for two more years.

Following a stepwise approach to secure deeper and wider cooperation, EPICUR will move from the pilot project-based management approach (Phase 1) to a structural integration of policies and activities (Phase 2), paving the way for sustainable long-term cooperation in a whole-of-institution framework (Phase 3).

The EPICUR-SHAPE-IT work plan has been structured to implement the Phase 2 transformation strategy by combining a limited number of work packages closely articulated with EPICUR's core missions. Drawing on EPICUR's key pilot

phase achievements, the 7 Work Packages (WP) have been designed to achieve:

- **An agile and inclusive governance** integrated with member universities' bodies and ensuring quality assurance and buy-in within Alliance communities (WP1), together with a comprehensive impact assessment policy (WP7).
- **Support infrastructures and services for digital cooperation (WP3) and mobility (WP2).**
- **A vision articulating purpose, formats and procedures** for education (WP4), research- and transfer-oriented training (WP6) and societal engagement (WP5).
