

Education in the EIT

Europe's need for highly skilled and entrepreneurial graduates, in particular Masters and PhDs, will continue to grow in the years ahead. Europe not only needs employees but also future employers and entrepreneurs. The EIT will encourage higher education institutions within the KICs to focus on developing innovative curricula that give students the knowledge and necessary skills, especially in the fields of entrepreneurship, creativity and leadership.

Through the KICs, the EIT has the opportunity to act as a test-bed for future developments in this area. To achieve 'world-class' levels, it is also important to tap into developments outside Europe. The EIT will not interfere with the design and implementation of curricula but will support and challenge the KICs in this area.

KICs and the development of new curricula

Higher education institutions within the KICs will take a lead role in introducing innovative approaches to graduate education by developing new European masters, doctoral and post-doctoral curricula, integrating scientific progression with entrepreneurial and creativity skills. Such an approach is not only relevant to technical universities; entrepreneurial educational programmes in medicine, social sciences, humanities and arts are also needed to foster new learning outcomes and multi-disciplinary skills. These new approaches will reflect the diversity of actors in the innovation web.

The EIT will monitor and reward the impact of KICs' new curricula. Examples of measurement could include world-class best practices, transversal skills, multidisciplinary curriculum design, assessment based on learning outcomes and new models of entrepreneurship education, encompassing the rich spectrum of innovation models and approaches.

EIT labelled degrees and diplomas

Degrees and diplomas awarded by higher education institutions within the KICs will be based on clearly identified excellence and the key EIT educational activity will be to work with these institutions to implement coherent quality criteria for the EIT labelled degrees. EIT labelled degrees will form a major element of the EIT's intent to deliver a unique brand of excellent and relevant education, responsive to both business and societal demands, including entrepreneurship education with highly integrated and innovative curricula and approaches to learning combined with mobility and outreach. The criteria, and simple and effective processes for their application, are currently being developed together with the KICs.

Existing high-profile Community programs, such as Erasmus Mundus and Marie Curie, will be used as benchmark for joint curriculum development and international mobility to enhance the EIT's reputation for excellence in innovation and entrepreneurship.

Quality criteria for EIT labelled degrees and diplomas

The EIT labelled degrees build on the experience gained in the context of other EU actions and be in line with the main achievements of the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process), in particular in the field of Quality Assurance (European Standards and Guidelines) and recognition tools like the European Qualifications Framework, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the Diploma Supplement.

The following quality criteria for EIT labelled degrees shall be applied to degree programmes in order to foster excellence in innovation and entrepreneurship. In order to apply the EIT labelled degrees and diplomas, the higher education institutions participating in a KIC will fulfil the following quality criteria:

1. Robust entrepreneurship education, through:

- An open concept to innovation and entrepreneurship, encompassing but not confined to setting up a business or running an SME.
- In view of enhancing employability of graduates across sectors, coherent Master programmes and structured Ph.D. trajectories, in order to facilitate the acquisition of transferable skills, in particular entrepreneurial skills. These skills could include personal skills (e.g. team working, communication, self-confidence, taking initiative, problem-solving, taking calculated risk, leadership) and business skills (e.g. basic economics, financial literacy, developing market research, drafting a business plan, raising finance, sales techniques, running a business meeting).
- Entrepreneurship embedded in the curricula and learning offer in order to provide relevant training for future entrepreneurs.
- A climate in which entrepreneurship is nurtured and where students are offered a comprehensive array of technical, financial and human services and means (e.g. incubators, mentoring and coaching, "business angels", seed money) to test out the commercial potential and viability of their ideas/research outcomes.
- Structured opportunities for on-the-job learning, exposing students to the reality of professional life in industry and business.

2. Highly integrated, innovative "learning-by-doing" curricula, through:

- A strong trans-disciplinary approach (e.g. via joint courses across sectors) going beyond the borders of science and technology but also reaching out to social sciences to address broad societal challenges and to link up with new business and innovation processes.
- Responsible partnerships between universities and enterprises in the development of curricula, in teaching activities and by joint supervision of Master and Ph.D. projects.
- Use of the latest developments in innovative teaching by e.g. favouring interactive learning methods.
- A coherent support structure for knowledge transfer (e.g. knowledge transfer units, incentives schemes for researchers, co-location centres).
- The promotion of joint or multiple degrees and qualifications awarded by the different partner universities of the KIC on the basis on jointly agreed curricula involving different strands of the KIC partnership (education-research-business and industry).

3. Mobility, European dimension and openness to the world, through:

- An approach oriented on "learning outcomes" in the development of the EIT labelled curricula in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework and the common transparency instruments (learning outcomes, ECTS, DS), thus facilitating recognition, at least in the countries of the awarding universities.
- Integration of "mobility windows" or structured opportunities for international mobility integrated in each study programme, both for intra-KIC and international mobility (within and outside KICs), with built-in mechanisms for the recognition of periods of study undertaken in partner institutions, based on the European credit transfer and accumulation system.
- Smooth transitions between academia and industry via e.g. student internships, recruitment of teaching staff from the industry and business sector, etc.
- A culture of quality in alignment with recent developments in the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process) in European cooperation in quality assurance by defining procedures for internal and external evaluation of quality of the study programmes. On top of this new European and international approaches to quality of entrepreneurship education could be developed.
- A strategy for global cooperation.

4. Outreach strategy and access policy, through:

- A joint strategy involving the different strands of the KIC partnership (universities, research bodies, business and industry) for knowledge sharing with society at large. In this context provision of open educational resources could be encouraged.
- An equitable access merit-based access policy with defined entry requirements in view of attracting entrepreneurial talent.
- Structured links with future "EIT" alumni.