

ENHANCE Education Strategy

Core Version

Introduction

This Education Strategy describes the **strategic goals for education of the ENHANCE Alliance** as well as the methods for achieving these goals. The primary focus of the Strategy is the education offered jointly as an alliance.

As reaching the strategic goals is a long-term undertaking, the Strategy does not have a fixed time horizon. The strategy will be evaluated and revised when necessary. A revised version of the strategy is envisioned to be written before each project extension.

Strategic goals

In this section, the strategic goals for education of the ENHANCE alliance are presented.

1. *Providing our students with a rich and diversified joint educational offer and an opportunity to customise their journeys across the ENHANCE network*

ENHANCE will make parts of the educational offers of our universities available to students from all Alliance universities. The traditional degree programmes will be complemented with various jointly developed short-term offerings leading to micro-credentials. This will allow students to select courses across all educational offers of the partner institutions, leading to opportunities for more customised education through the concept of ENHANCE European Education Pathways.

2. *Exposing all our students to physical and virtual mobility*

ENHANCE will gradually, but continuously increase student mobility between the partners to reach our long-term objective of providing all our students an international experience through physical and virtual mobility. Improving transfer of student data and services for mobile students will support this process.

3. *Providing balance between on-campus and off-campus education as well as the opportunity for switching between physical and remote attendance*

To support international classrooms and mobility, especially short-term physical mobility, and taking into account the COVID-19 experience, various forms of hybrid arrangements will be offered. The highly flexible arrangement of the joint educational offer will make it resilient to unpredictable external developments, across Europe and in individual countries.

4. *Strengthening engagement with key stakeholders*

Co-creation is a conceptual basis for the development and implementation of education processes. Our key stakeholders (such as students, doctoral candidates and societal partners) will take part in strategic decision making related to education. The key stakeholders will also support ENHANCE in implementing a challenge-based, transdisciplinary approach to research-based education, where the challenges will be defined by our societal partners.

5. *Implementing a holistic approach to education*

A holistic approach in this context entails both multidisciplinary and awareness of cultural contexts. Creating international student teams with students from different educational and cultural backgrounds broadens their perspectives and prepares them for their professional career. The ENHANCE educational offerings will provide opportunities for students to practice their entrepreneurial mind-set and develop their civic engagement as well as foster active citizenship in Europe and around the world.

6. Focusing on sustainability

ENHANCE will equip students with “sustainable thinking” - the ability to recognise the impact of their actions on sustainability and thus place them in a position to make responsible decisions. The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals are a valuable tool for teaching staff in integrating sustainability as a crosscutting theme in relevant courses.

7. Providing our students with innovative, digitally enhanced learning environments and applying student-centred teaching

ENHANCE will offer our students innovative learning environments, exploiting diverse digitally enhanced learning methods and techniques. The diversification of learning spaces, including physical and digital social spaces, creates opportunities and flexibility. Project-based learning, design thinking, flipped classrooms, gamification, hackathons and other student-centred teaching concepts and techniques will be applied across the board. To support these developments, ENHANCE will foster professional development for academic and support staff by providing them with various opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.

8. Strengthening the links between education, research and innovation

As a means to implement the concept of research-based education, ENHANCE aims at providing our students, from bachelor level onwards, with an opportunity to be involved in real-life research and innovation projects. In particular, our students and researchers, including doctoral candidates, will build knowledge-creating teams with our external stakeholders, including associated partners, to work on challenge-based, transdisciplinary research projects inspired by the needs of our partners.

9. Ensuring the social diversity of the student body, enhancing access, participation and completion for groups with fewer opportunities

ENHANCE aims to provide equal access to our educational offer at each partner institution across the network to students who face obstacles that could prevent them from exploiting opportunities created by the Alliance. ENHANCE will mainstream diversity and gender equality in all educational activities. ENHANCE will encourage, empower and support students and young researchers with fewer opportunities to start and successfully complete a degree in STEM and participate in mobility. ENHANCE will work on networking and capacity building for inclusion and diversity among the partner universities.

10. Widening the spectrum of beneficiaries of the educational offer through an enhanced Life Long Learning provision

ENHANCE intends to widen the spectrum of beneficiaries of our educational offer, reaching out to new target groups of learners of various age groups. To achieve this objective, ENHANCE will develop an offer of dedicated modules (courses, sets of courses, trainings etc.) certified by micro-credentials intended for life-long learners.

11. *Eliminating barriers to effective international cooperation in education through the promotion of necessary regulatory changes*

The Alliance will function as a think tank for change. ENHANCE will join forces with relevant societal stakeholders, from industry to regulatory bodies, NGOs and interest groups, to identify and propose solutions to overcome barriers that make it difficult to reach our strategic goals. ENHANCE will propose necessary regulatory changes at our member institutions as well as at national and international level and will continue to be actively engaged in national and European initiatives that foster the implementation of these changes.

Methods for achieving the strategic goals

In this section, key elements of the implementation of our Education Strategy are explained, most of them explicitly mentioned in the ENHANCE Proposal, some other added based on experience gained so far and the recent development related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

a) Creating One Campus

The idea of One Campus is to create a framework for integrating our educational activities and supporting mobility. Its key components are:

- **ENHANCE European Education Pathways**

The concept of a system of European Education Pathways is based on common learning goals and outcomes and a related competence mapping tool. This will allow students to select courses which fit the learning outcomes of their degree across educational offers of all the partner institutions. This process will be supported, ultimately, by an AI-based tool. The ECTS achieved will be transferred to the students' study records and recognised for their final degrees. This will lead to customised degree programmes at bachelor and master level.

- **Diversified joint educational offer**

The offer of traditional degree programmes will be complemented with various jointly developed short-term offerings leading to micro-credentials. With the ENHANCE micro-credentials framework compliant with European standards, it will be possible to embed such short-term forms of educational provision into the degree structures following the concept of the ENHANCE European Education Pathways. Doctoral candidates will be offered jointly developed trainings in generic and transferable skills.

These short-term offerings as well as components of the traditional degree programmes will be increasingly offered online or in hybrid mode to foster virtual mobility and internationalisation.

- **Support for mobility**

The concept of One Campus relies on transfer of student data and improved services for mobile students. ENHANCE will therefore:

- connect our IT systems where reasonable and build new platforms where necessary,
- build on solutions such as Erasmus without Papers, Open U, Emrex or the new Europass,
- adopt the European Student Card,
- develop an action plan with local actors to introduce new accommodation solutions.

The joint framework of learning goals and outcomes together with a recognition database will form the basis to establish mobility windows within degree programmes.

b) Developing innovative pedagogies and joint innovative learning environments for challenge-based society-centred education

This includes, inter alia, the following concepts and activities:

• Service-based learning

Through service-based learning and volunteering, our students will offer their skills to local communities, learning through the practical challenges they meet within these contexts. ENHANCE will develop relevant training and self-learning material in the form of an online toolkit and offer it to our teachers.

• Challenge-based society-centred interdisciplinary projects

ENHANCE plans to establish ENHANCE Teams, where inter-university student teams together with our external stakeholders will work on challenge-based interdisciplinary projects defined by our societal partners.

ENHANCE Transdisciplinary Project Catalyst will be established to expand co-creation, cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral research, and innovation projects into education. This will engage students, from bachelor level onwards, and researchers to build knowledge-creating teams with local city governments, industries and other associated partners.

• Hybrid provision

To support international classrooms and mobility, part of our joint educational offer will be provided in hybrid mode. To support this, ENHANCE will work on a secure framework for digital examinations. With the increasing reliance on digital technologies, the development of the digital competencies of our students is of key importance.

c) Activities intended to widen the spectrum of beneficiaries of the educational offer, including learners with fewer opportunities

This includes, inter alia, the following concepts and activities:

- **Diversification of the educational offer to attract non-traditional learners**

By adapting the idea of short courses certified by micro-credentials, ENHANCE will establish a life-long learning offer, thereby reaching out to new target groups of learners. This offer of continuing education will, in particular, address the needs of those living in regions affected by structural economic change in the context of the Green Deal to allow them to actively engage with new technologies.

- **Fostering equal opportunities for all**

Our diversity and gender equality ombudsperson will monitor and develop frameworks with all partners to provide equal access to our educational offer at each partner institution across the network for learners with fewer opportunities.

Supported by our associated partners, an ENHANCE network of disability officers and diversity and gender equality officers will address the underlying causes of low participation of students with fewer opportunities.

d) Higher Education Innovator (HE Innovator)

ENHANCE will establish the HE Innovator - a virtual unit that will support the changes aimed at introducing innovations and increasing the quality of our educational provision. This will take place through:

- **Applied research**

This research, intended to guide future joint initiatives in line with the Education Strategy, will be conducted, inter alia, by:

- Future Lab on the future shape of higher education, co-created with societal stakeholders, in particular secondary school and university students,
- Lab on sustainable entrepreneurship education, co-created with start-ups, local society and other stakeholders.

- **Organisational change incubators on innovative educational methods and administration of the education processes**

ENHANCE will create incubators for innovative ideas in teaching and administration, enabling teams, composed of academic and administrative staff, doctoral candidates and students from different ENHANCE member institutions, to bid for incubator support (time, space, mentoring, access to technical equipment) to jointly develop and test new methods of teaching and learning which will change the way ENHANCE organises and runs our education process.

- **Continuous professional development programmes available to our staff**

The outcomes of the HE Innovator research labs and change incubators will be made available to all Alliance members via an offer of workshops, training sessions, toolkits and other resources, in particular on innovative teaching methods. These will include the newly developed toolkits on co-creation and transdisciplinary education, diversity and anti-bias education, sustainable entrepreneurship, service-based learning and learning analytics.

- **Language tandems**

The HE Innovator will provide the technological infrastructure and pedagogical guidelines for self-organised virtual language tandems of students, doctoral candidates or staff to foster multilingualism, reduce the barriers to language learning, foster the development of the ENHANCE community and provide groups with fewer opportunities a low-threshold European learning experience.

The outputs of the HE Innovator will be shared with other European and non-European universities, allowing ENHANCE to act as role model and exchange best practices with other networks for the continuous development of the European Higher Education Area.

Indicators

The progress of the strategic goals will be evaluated based on the education related indicators defined in the ENHANCE proposal.