

**CoMundus**  
**European Master of Arts in Media,  
Communication and Cultural Studies**

**enqa**  
TEEP II

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**CoMundus**  
**European Master of Arts for Media, Communication and Cultural Studies**  
**Self-evaluation report**

*Brief history of the programme*

The European Master is a result of the European Union's Socrates programme, which started with an emphasis on media studies in 1988/89. Founding members were the University of Kassel, the University of Manchester and the Institute of Education, University of London. The University of Burgundy, Dijon, and the University of Florence as well the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the University of Bradford joined the network. As a consortium the network has awarded the European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies since 1992/93. In October of 1999 the representatives of the Universities of Burgundy, Bradford, Florence and Kassel signed a contract in Dijon to institutionalise and formalise the success of the European Master's course by providing a common European study programme and a joint degree. In 2004 under the label CoMundus the European Master was recognised by the EU within its Erasmus Mundus programme, which delivers annually up to 26 student grants for non-EU students.

The Institute of Education, University of London collaborated with the study programme, but established the European Master as a local degree in 2004. Since 2000 new university members have been added to the Consortium: the Arizona State University, USA, (2000), the University of Texas at Austin, USA, (2001), the University of Roskilde, Denmark, (2002), the Université Stendhal Grenoble 3, France (2002) and the University of Aarhus, Denmark (2004). In broadening its membership, the Consortium recognized the benefits of widening the range of universities beyond Europe, by including North American universities who support the mission and programmes. In spring 2005 the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, and the State University of St. Petersburg, Russia became members. This is also a tribute to the results of globalisation during the 1990s.

The University of Manchester, the New University of Barcelona and the University of Bradford have left the Consortium.

## 1. Facts and figures

The master course aims to provide a qualification for entry into the professions in the area of media, culture and communication. For the duration of three semesters (90 ECTS credits) students attend two universities, usually enabling them to study in two languages. Each university will host usually 5-15 students. It is the purpose of the programme to qualify students in the fields of media, communication and cultural studies at two universities within the Consortium.

### 1.1 Baseline information

Name of the programme	CoMundus – European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies
Name of the co-ordinating institution	University of Kassel
Names of other participating institutions	Denmark: Roskilde University; University of Aarhus France: University of Burgundy, Dijon; Stendhal University, Grenoble 3 Germany: University of Kassel Italy: University of Florence United Kingdom: Institute of Education, University of London Members in Erasmus Mundus Action 3 (Non-EU Partner Universities) from 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2005 on: Brazil: University of São Paulo Russia: St. Petersburg State University USA: Arizona State University
Length of programme (academic years + ECTS)	1.5 years; 90 ECTS Prerequisite: (180 ECTS = BA) plus 30 ECTS obtained in courses with relevance to media, communication and cultural studies, which have to be recognised
Website addresses	<a href="http://www.mediaudieseurope.net">www.mediaudieseurope.net</a> <a href="http://www.comundus.net">www.comundus.net</a> <a href="http://www.comundus.org">www.comundus.org</a>

### 1.2 Students

These tables represent the spread of students who have been selected across the CoMundus Programme. There are two types of CoMundus students: the non-European students who receive the Erasmus Mundus grant under Action 2 and the European students following the CoMundus Course (Action 1). The following tables represent the numbers of the non-European students in Erasmus Mundus Action 2.

### Application Figures

See annex section 4. Statistics for application figures for the academic year 2005/2006.

### Mobility Arrangements

State and place of the CoMundus students in the academic year 2004/2005.

No	Address	Sex	Nationality	Home university	Host university
1	Yonny Artigas	Male	Venezuelan	Dijon	Florence
2	Irakly Gachechiladze	Male	Russian	Dijon	London
3	Guy-Aimé Liépo	Male	Ivorian	Grenoble	Roskilde
4	Ihsan Miran	Male	Pakistani	Roskilde	Florence
5	Anna Rechnova	female	Russian	Dijon	Florence
6	Flor Eugenia Roa Guzman	female	Mexican	Kassel	Florence
7	Euclides Santos Mendes	Male	Brazilian	Florence	Roskilde
8	Xing Xia	female	Chinese	Roskilde	London
9	Ming Yang	Male	Chinese	Kassel	London
10	Roseline Tatiana Zédia	female	Ivorian	Roskilde	Grenoble

**Denmark: Aarhus**

	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)
	F	M	F	M	Dijon
2004/05					
2005/06	2				1

**Denmark: Roskilde**

	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)				
	F	M	F	M	Grenoble	Florence	Kassel	Dijon	London
2004/05	2	1			1	1			
2005/06	4	1			1		1	1	1

**France: Dijon**

	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)
	F	M	F	M	London
2004/05	1	2			
2005/06	3	4			1

**France: Grenoble**

	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)
	F	M	F	M	Roskilde
2004/05		1			1
2005/06	2	2			

**Germany: Kassel**

Academic year	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)
	F	M	F	M	Roskilde
2004/05	1	1			
2005/06	1	2			1

**Italy: Florence**

	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)				
	F	M	F	M	Aarhus	Dijon	Roskilde	Kassel	London
2004/05		1				2	1	1	
2005/06	2				1	1			1

**United Kingdom: London**

	No. of admissions		No. of degrees awarded		No. of students admitted from each institution (incoming "host" students)					
	F	M	F	M	Aarhus	Dijon	Roskilde	Kassel	Florence	Grenoble
2004/05						1	1	1		
2005/06	3				1	3	4	2	2	3

The chairperson's office in Kassel had about 50 inquiries for the academic year 2004/05, about 450 inquiries for the academic year 2005/06 (Oct 2004 till Jan 2005) and about 80 for 2006/07 (Feb 2005 till Apr 2005).

### 1.3 Teaching resources 2004/2005

#### Term dates:

	August	Sept.	October	Nov.	Dec.	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Brazil: Sao Paulo	winter							summer				
Denmark: Aarhus		winter					summer					
Denmark: Roskilde	winter					summer						
France: Dijon			winter			summer						
France: Grenoble		winter				summer						
Germany: Kassel							compact stage		summer			
Italy: Florence												
Russia: St. Petersburg		winter					summer					
UK: London			fall	10 weeks		spring	10 weeks		summer	10 weeks		
USA: Arizona	winter					summer						
USA: Texas	winter					summer						

### Teaching resources 2004/2005

#### Denmark: Aarhus

Teacher	Title	Contribution to programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
Per	Assoc	0,5	M	Cand.phil.	Media sociology		MODINET
Richard	Assoc	1,0	M	Dr. phil.	Visual Media Production		Visual Media
Chr.	Ass.	0,5	M	Ph.d.	Computer Games		Computer Games
Wolfgang	Prof.	0,5	M	Dr.	Global Information Society		Media Policy

#### Denmark: Roskilde

Teacher	Title	Contribution to the programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
Kim	Prof	0,5	M	cand.mag.	Communi	?	'Dream'
Bente	Assoc.	0,2	F	ph.d.	Pol.Sc.	?	EU 6th
Roy	Prof	0,2	M	ph.d.	Communi	?	Press
Louise	Assoc	0,4	F	ph.d.	Communi	?	Democra
Sisse	Assoc	0,2	F	ph.d.	Communi	?	CACL
Thom	Prof	0,2	M	ph.d.	Cult.Soc.	?	Health

#### France: Dijon

Teacher	Title	Contribution to the programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
S. Exartier	Associate Prof.	1	M	Master in Communication	Communication	Director of Communication (IMAJE, Valence)	
JJ. Boutaud	Prof.	0,3	M	Ph.D.	Communication		LIMSIC (Communication)
A. Williams	Prof.	0,3	F	PhD.	Media		Image, Texte, Langage
A. Janquart-Thibault	Prof.	0,2	F	PhD.	Hispanic studies		XXth c Hispanic Studies

L. Gautier	Lecturer	0,2	M	MA + Agrégation	German linguistics		Image, Texte, Langage
R. Prost	Lecturer	0,2	M	MA + Agrégation	Media studies		Image, Texte, Langage
F. De Chantal	Lecturer	0,1	M	Master	American studies		Image, Texte, Langage

### France: Grenoble

Teacher	Title	Contribution to the programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
C. Carlier	Prof	0,5	F	ph.d	Communication		Media and NTIC
B. Miège	Prof	0,5	M	ph.d.	Communication		Cultural industries
I. Pailliat	Prof	0,5	F	ph.d.	Communication		Public space
J. Caune	Prof	0,4	M	ph.d.	Communication		Culture and theatre
V. Clavier	Lecturer	0,2	F	ph.d.	Communication		Automatic language
B. Lafon	Lecturer	0,3	M	ph.d.	Political science		Media

### Germany: Kassel

Teacher	Title	Contribution to the programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
Heinz Moser	honorary Prof. Dr.	0,25	M	honorary prof.	Media Education/ Research Methods	honorary prof.	
Ben Bachmair	Prof. Dr.	1	M	Prof. Dr.	Education/ Media Education	Prof. Dr.	
Wolfgang Thaenert	honorary prof.	1	M	honorary prof.	Media Law	honorary prof.	
Josef Wallmannsberger	Prof. Dr.	0,3	M	Prof. Dr.	Computer Philology/ Linguistics	Prof. Dr.	
Achim Barsch	Prof. Dr.	0,5	M	Prof. Dr.	German Language and Literature Studies/ Media Education	Prof. Dr.	
Peter Seibert	Prof. Dr.	0,5	M	Prof. Dr.	German Language and Literature Studies	Prof. Dr.	
Gert K. Müntefering	honorary prof.	1	M	honorary prof.	Children's Television/ Media Aesthetics	honorary prof.	

### Italy: Florence

Teacher	Title	Contribution to the programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
Vittore Collina	Professor		M	Political Science	History of Media.		History of Media
Luciano Segreto	Professor		M	Political Science	Economic history		Economic history

Giovanni Bechelloni	Professor Master's Course Coordinator		M	Political Science	Sociology of Communication- Cultural Studies. Italian culture, memory and construction of identities		Italian culture, memory and construction of identities
Gianfranco Pecchinenda	Professor Member of Common Board		M	Sociology	Sociology of Communication Media, memories and identity		Media, memories and identity
Luciano Bozzo	Associate Professor Member of Common Board		M	Political Sciences	International relations		Conflicts, war and international strategies
Laura Solito	Researcher Member of Common Board, Vice coordinator		F	Sociology	Sociology of communication: public communication		public communication
Carlo Sorrentino	Associate Professor		M	Sociology	Sociology of Communication and journalism		Journalism and the public sphere
Milly Buonanno	Professor Member of Common Board		F	Sociology	Sociology of Communication; TV Fiction, journalism, Media and cultural studies		TV Fiction, journalism, Media and cultural studies
Antonio Cavicchia Scalamonti	Professor		M		Cultural studies and Sociology of Cultural processes		
Zeffiro Ciuffoletti	Professor Member of Common Board		M	History	Social history of Communication		Taste communication and social history of communication

### United Kingdom: London

Teacher	Title	Contribution to the programme (full-time equivalent of teaching)	Sex	Academic degree	Academic field/ discipline	Professional qualification (if any)	Research activity (member of research team)
David Buckingham	Prof.		M	PhD	Media Ed	Education/ Media Education	Media Ed. Youth Culture
Andrew Burn	Dr.		M	PhD	Media Ed	Education/ Semiotics	Computer Games, Media Ed
Gunther Kress	Prof.		M	D.Litt	Multimodal Theory	Education/Social semiotics	Social Semiotics, Multimodal theory
Robert Ferguson	Mr.		M	NDD	Ideology and media Ed	Education/Media Studies	Ideology, History, TV, Media Ed

## **2. Organisation and management**

### **2.1 Aims of the programme**

This programme was established to foster and develop a common programme in media, communication and cultural studies, with a particular focus on the European dimension; to promote the development of a European approach to studies in the field of media, communication and culture; to promote and facilitate academic exchanges among member universities; to support inter-university, transitional academic research cooperation among member universities concerning issues in communication.

The aim of the programme is to qualify students to a level of excellence in the fields of media, communication and culture at two universities within the consortium and to provide a qualification relevant for entry to the professions in the field of media.

The programme commenced in 1988 as part of the Socrates initiative of the European Union. During this decade the privatisation and internationalisation of the media e.g. the TV market was obvious, but no critical academic framework for a form of international media studies with special reference to the diversity of European cultures was established. Additionally the academic discourse on media was confined to the traditional academic subjects such as sociology, psychology, pedagogy or to professional approaches to media such as journalism or vocational training in film production. Also there was the anticipated need of the national and international media companies for an internationally trained and experienced generation of employees.

The following aims result from this feature:

- (a) A common core of **four areas of study**: \*Theory, History, Epistemology of Media, Culture and Communication; \*Institutions, Law, Politics, Economy of the Media; \*Media as Text, Media Production and Analysis, Multimedia; \*Audience, Reception and Media Education.
- (b) The student and staff mobility of the Erasmus programme was considered as an opportunity for the partner universities to set up a network of scholars, who are motivated to cooperate on an **interdisciplinary approach to media**. This idea opened up the academic field for “integrative” media studies as part of communication and culture e.g. everyday life. (Meanwhile the definition of the “British Cultural Studies” is used for the critical consideration of media as part of communication and culture).
- (c) Furthermore the common approach aimed to contribute to the development of a **European media culture** by cooperating in English as the common language, but also to enhance the cultural specificity of research and teaching of integrative media studies by working in the regional (national) languages (Italian, French, German etc.). Meanwhile the process of globalisation enforces English as main linguistic tool for research and academic tuition although linguistic diversity is appreciated by the Consortium. Since 2004/05 the Erasmus Mundus strategy of the EU supports this linguistic diversity by delivering student grants for bi- or tri-lingual university programmes.
- (d) Travelling and studying in two different cultural and linguistic European areas were considered desirable for the educative development of students to enable them to cope with the academic and communicative diversity in Europe. As a result of this diversity the curriculum was not established as a progressive sequence of courses but as an additive sequence of the “basic knowledge” of integrative media studies. Therefore students study the same four curriculum areas which represent this basic knowledge from the perspective of two universities together with their cultural, linguistic and academic perspective and

tradition. Also this **generalist curriculum** was seen as an appropriate qualification for the media industry and cultural institutions enabling potential professional placement for the graduated students.

The aims were determined through long-established relationships created over more than 15 years within the Erasmus and Socrates programmes of the European Union.

Since 1988 the partners have worked closely to discuss the curriculum, organise student mobility and exchange ideas, theories, practices, researches at least twice a year. In addition, the common research events e.g. at the partner universities especially fostered by the Florentine annual summer schools and the "Giornate Fiorentine della Comunicazione" (since 1992) helped to define common standards and find curricular coherence e.g. *discourse analysis, media and everyday life, media semiotics, the formation of subjectivity*. Bilateral and shared publications also contributed to the explication of a common academic and curricular frame of reference.

The aims were agreed through careful negotiation and the identification of common fields of academic and cultural approaches. The relationship between theory and practice in media and cultural studies also had an influence upon the four foundation areas of study and the aims which accompany them. (see below section 3)

## 2.2 Choosing partners for the programme

Partner institutions had initially begun working together because of their shared profile in the field of media, communication and cultural studies, their interest in academic interdisciplinarity and diversity, and their interest in international cooperation. At this stage the partnerships operated largely as a **network** to facilitate cultural diversity within the programme by providing individual choice of bilateral mobility ('home university' and 'host university'). To ensure institutional stability, in 1999 the network developed into a **consortium** through a contract between the partner universities. This was further formalised when the Common Board agreed the following requirements for membership at their regular meeting in Roskilde (DK) in September 2004 that:

- there should be an academic director plus an administrator;
- each member must offer a minimum of 10 ECTS as teaching offer;
- each member will contribute a specific amount of money to the administration of the consortium. The amount of 2500 € was considered;
- each member will be able to communicate in English;
- partner institutions bring cultural diversity to the programme.

In addition to this formal contract bilateral treaties continue to exist, which correspond to the Socrates model of bilateral agreements.

When a university applies for full membership, a decision is taken centrally, based on the recognition of the programme offered by the university and its ability to fulfil the consortium's contract. In this respect the four common areas of study are of critical importance. The basis for the agreement is a document which describes the institutional framework of the teaching unit (department, school, faculty) which intends to deliver the European Master's course.

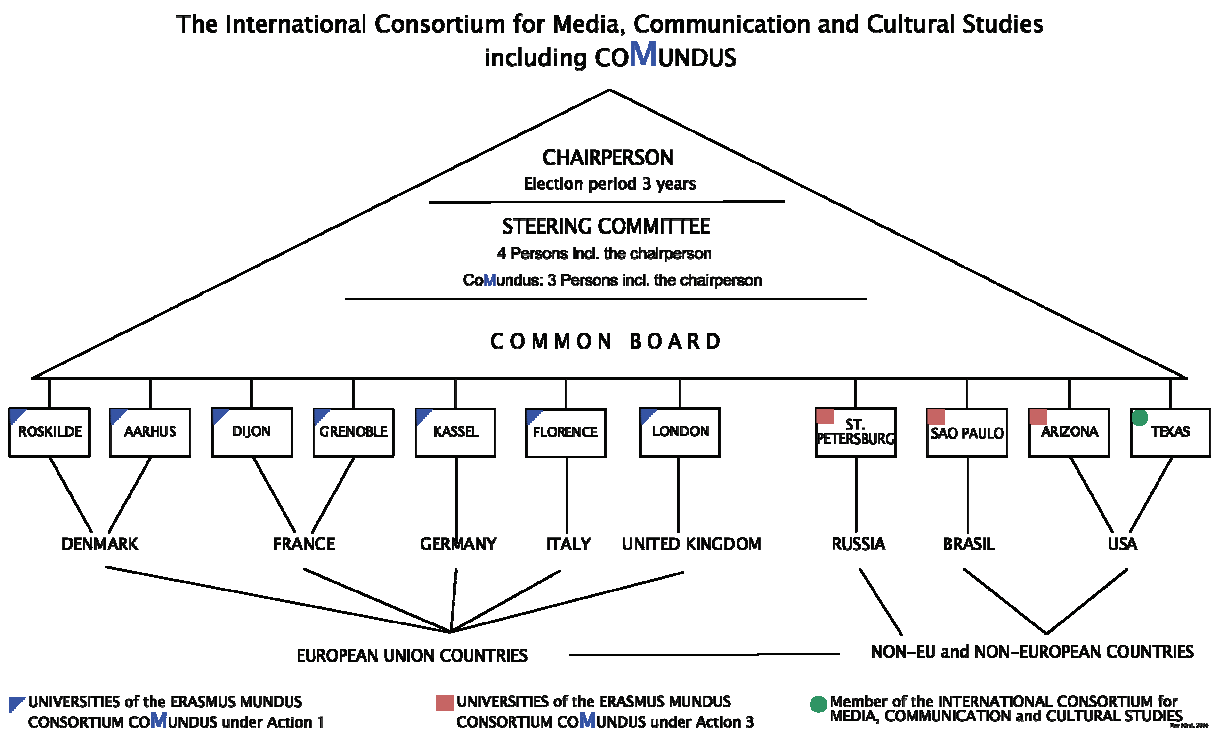
The partner institutions have always sought complementary new partners in order to extend the academic profile of the consortium. Academic cooperation has always been based on a critical cultural approach to media studies and a strong interest in and commitment to international collaboration. Our motivation has always been to engender a linguistically diverse generation of students, capable of working in the scientific and scholastic and professional world of media, communication and culture.

Becoming a member of the consortium evolves first from the relationship between members of individual universities, who invite colleagues to join. The Chairman of the consortium then negotiates with possible new members, usually over a period of one or two years. The Common Board finally has the decisive vote on proposed membership. New members have to exchange bilateral agreements with all partners in the consortium on the basis of Socrates requirements or the specific regulations for non-EU partners. The consortium has retained a collegial and constructive approach to ensuring that any issues over resources and institutional structures are resolved through negotiation. It may be that in the future the administration of the consortium will undergo modifications, but we would wish to do everything possible to avoid the development of a managerial ethos.

### 2.3 Mechanisms for co-operation

The basic elements and functions of the consortium and the European Master's course have developed through the International Consortium's contract in 1999 and been updated in the *Governing Document*, and the *Operational Procedures* from 2004 (see annex section 1. Administrative documents of the Consortium).

Prof. Ben Bachmair, Kassel, acts as chairperson. Members of the CoMundus Steering Committee are Prof. Giovanni Bechelloni, Florence, Prof. Kim Schrøder, Roskilde and Prof. Ben Bachmair.



The roles of the programme co-ordinating team are clearly identified and implemented through a series of meetings and administrative procedures which are shown below. In general the CoMundus Consortium uses the following operational procedures:

- up to three annual meetings of the whole consortium including new partners (Common Board);
- an International Consortium chairperson as chief executive;
- a Steering Committee, which identifies issues for decision making within the consortium;
- a common website: [www.mediastudieseurope.net](http://www.mediastudieseurope.net) or [www.comundus.net](http://www.comundus.net);
- provision of regular reports;
- provision of an administrative handbook.

The institutional framework for the programme and the programme components were established through the International Consortium's contract which is signed by the partner universities from October 1999. This contract specifies that:

- all partners must deliver the four areas of study;
- these areas of study must address the specific local cultural and academic context and traditions of the individual institutions;
- advice will be obtained from a representative of the relevant media industries;
- the Common Board of the Consortium is the main decision making and recognition body of the consortium, to which all programme directors of the partner universities belong;
- the Steering Committee consists of 3 members of the Common Board including the chairperson;
- the Chairperson and Steering Committee act as the executive body of the Common Board.

The administration of the consortium is carried out at the Chairperson's office in Kassel. Additionally one half post and three staff members work for the administration of the consortium.

The tasks of the CoMundus administration in Kassel include the following:

- the general administration of students and scholars and the offering of advice to potential applicants including the selection of applicants, students' seminar, insurance, student database, diploma and diploma supplement;
- budget planning;
- public relations (website, entries on other websites);
- preparation of meetings;
- regular reports to the Consortium;
- administrative handbook;
- future co-operations, summer schools;
- evaluation, including ENQA TEEP II self evaluation;
- maintenance of the addresses database;
- annual applications for Action 2 (scholarships for Non EU students) and Action 3 (scholarships for EU students);
- reports to the EU (progress and final).

Cooperation mechanisms are formalised and have been agreed on and ratified by the partner universities in the consortium's contract from Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1999 and its actualisation by the "Governing Document" and "Operational procedures" from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2004. The role of the chairperson, the Steering Committee and the Common Board are defined in two papers ("Governing Document" and "Operational Procedures") which are part of the consortium's contract and are signed by the legal representative of each of the participating institutions.

The finance department of the University of Kassel is responsible for the central administration of finance related to the programme. Each CoMundus member supports the consortium's administration with an annual contribution of ca. 2500€, which comes from the *lump sum* of the EU Erasmus Mundus programme.

A variety of methods are used for communicating within the consortium.

- a) Up to three regular meetings of the Common Board and of the Steering Committee are held each year. In addition the chairperson corresponds with the partners.
- b) Regular reports are made by the Chairperson which reflects the recent work that has been done, the current status of the programme and future issues that have to be addressed by the chair and / or by each of the partners. These reports form an essential part of the programme's management. The following standardised index is used: General issues Consortium/ General issues CoMundus/ Finances Consortium/ Finances CoMundus/ New Partners/ Meetings/ Student mobility: traditional non-CoMundus student/ Student mobility: CoMundus students/ Scholars CoMundus/ Website/ List of Appendices/ Addresses.
- c) There is a password protected members section on the common website [www.mediastudieseurope.net](http://www.mediastudieseurope.net) or [www.comundus.net](http://www.comundus.net) which hosts a common calendar with dates concerning the consortium, current files such as applications and reports to the EU, agendas and minutes of meetings as well as student application and ECTS forms. The members section also provides lists which show the current status of student applications and the related database as well as all the contact data of the partner universities and relevant mailing lists.

Since 1992 the Common Board has met on a regular basis to discuss the business and developments of the course. Sometimes the Common Board may set up additional meetings if there are key issues to be discussed, such as the development of this document. The Steering Committee has also been developing video conferencing as a means of communication.

In addition to members of the Common Board, members of the administrative staff have also participated in meetings of the Common Board since 2004. This is enabling the consortium to build administrative structures to support the programme, though limited funds mean that very few members of administrative staff are able to attend on a regular basis.

## **2.4 Support and recognition**

The programme is fully recognised by the European Commission under the terms of the Erasmus Mundus project (Action 1 and 2) as a European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies. In addition, the programme is recognised under the national systems of the partner institutions.

For a couple of the partner institutions the recognition at national level contradicts the Bologna Declaration in relation to the minimum number of credits required for the award. The French and the Danish Ministries will only recognise an MA on the basis of 120 ECTS, whereas the EU programme Erasmus Mundus recognises an MA, which delivers 60 ECTS or 90 ECTS or 120 ECTS. The issue of how to resolve this is currently being discussed by the partners. Two proposals are set out below.

***Proposed procedures for combining the 90 ECTS of the European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies with the MA regulation of 300 ECTS***

- (a) Prerequisite for being enrolled in the European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies is a BA degree with 180 ECTS.*
- (b) An additional prerequisite for being enrolled in the European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies are 30 ECTS obtained in recognised courses with relevance to media, communication and cultural studies.*
- (c) The European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural which delivers 90 ECTS is awarded*

*Altogether a student successfully completing the European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies (c) and the two prerequisites (a plus b) obtains 300 ECTS.*

***Alternative procedure***

*Instead of a prerequisite under (b) 30 ECTS can be obtained additionally to the European Master course and its 90 ECTS by taking a supplementary course, specifically an academically supervised vocational training module.*

However, before either of these proposals can be implemented, a number of issues (such as meeting the costs of the additional element, possible changes to the course and/or the entry requirements as a result of the additional element, approval from the partner institutions and the EU) would need to be resolved by the consortium as a whole.

**National recognition**

*Denmark: Roskilde and Aarhus*

In Denmark the CoMundus Programme is a recognized Erasmus Mundus master programme of 90 ECTS, to which Roskilde/Aarhus Universities' Communication Programme contributes 60 ECTS. The Master Certificate is issued by the Consortium's chairperson until Roskilde/Aarhus University becomes a degree-awarding partner. A request for this status has just been sent to the Danish Ministry of Science and Technology.

*France: Dijon and Grenoble*

The CoMundus programme is integrated into the existing French Masters degree, recognised by the French ministry. Within the framework of the French Master CoMundus is identified as a special option and as such has full official status as a French degree.

*Germany: Kassel*

The Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies has been recognised by the Hessian State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts in 1993, in 1995 and in 1998. The Master Programme is in the process of accreditation by the "Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur Hannover" (ZEvA). The formal approval to the accreditation procedure was given on February 14<sup>th</sup> 2005.

### *Italy: Florence*

The CoMundus programme is integrated into the existing Italian Master degree, recognised by the Italian ministry (MIUR). Within the framework of the Italian Master, CoMundus is identified as a special option. There are two possibilities of being enrolled in the CoMundus Master: 1. Getting the CoMundus Scholarship for non European Students, 2. Paying the fees in order to follow the CoMundus Programme without any CoMundus Scholarship. The existing Italian Master degree offers 74 ECTS and contributes to the CoMundus Program with 60 ECTS for students who choose Florence as home University and with 30 ECTS for the one who choose Florence as host University.

### *United Kingdom: London*

In the UK University Statutes, independent of government approval, confers on a university the power to recognise, approve and confer a degree. The Institute of Education has the power as a constituent college of the University of London to recognise, approve and confer a degree. The modules which developed or which already existed were validated by the Institute of Education, University of London. All other modules were discussed in committee at the Institute and were recognised as validated by the participating universities. There was general consensus that all universities had to be allowed parity of esteem and their own quality assurance mechanisms respected.

The senior management of each of the partner institutions have shown their commitment to the programme in differing ways. Some partner institutions have a commitment through their policies, whilst others have provided support through the integration of this programme into the mainstream activities. Support is thereby gained through the existing structures and mechanisms in relation to, for example, student recruitment, admissions, assessment and quality assurance procedures within the individual institutions. Thus it is recognised that the programme is not simply focused on individuals.

All partners are therefore satisfied with the level of support they are receiving from senior management at their universities although there are some challenges in relation to succession planning and adequate financial resources which will be required to ensure that the programme's development continues effectively.

## **2.5 Staffing and funding**

Since the establishment of the CoMundus programme staffing and finances have moved from a self financing system, whereby each partner fully funded its own contribution, to a system which requires devolution of finances between the partners.

### **Administrative Costs**

The workload of the Chairperson's office at Kassel University has grown considerably since the Erasmus Mundus programme started in 2003/04. The full list of administrative tasks is set out under section 2.3 above. The increased costs have required the setting up of a new financial arrangement whereby partner universities channel funds to Kassel, using part of the lump sum provided by the EU to support the programme. However, even this does not provide sufficient funds to support the administration which Kassel has estimated to be around 77,500 Euros per year. The deficit, around 62,500 Euros, has hitherto been met by the Chair of Media Education at Kassel University but it is unlikely that this will continue. A major challenge for the Consortium in the future will therefore be to find ways jointly to cover the actual administrative costs of running the programme.

There are also additional local costs in administering the CoMundus programme which fee income only partly meets. Individual partner universities have not only to cover the normal costs incurred in administering any course, but also to fund the additional costs of an international course currently based in four different countries, requiring communication with a range of institutions and regular travel across Europe. The Chairperson's office has estimated that the additional cost per year for each partner is around 40,000 Euros.

### **Student fees**

Owing to national and institutional differences in the level of acceptable fees, the CoMundus programme calculates the fee according to an agreed formula in order to ensure that all students pay the same fee irrespective of their selection of home and host universities. The Consortium currently collects a common tuition fee of 8250 Euros from each student. As has been indicated above, this does not create sufficient surplus to cover all the administrative costs of the programme.

### **Teaching resources**

As the CoMundus students are taught in courses, seminars and project groups together with other international and home students in each partner university, the specific contribution to the CoMundus programme of the staff listed in section 1.3 page 4 can only be estimated based on the relative number of CoMundus students in the classes.

### **3. Level and content**

#### **3.1 Programme structure**

##### **The Common Core**

The CoMundus curriculum covers four areas of study, which are taught at the home university as well as at the host university, to cover the total of 90 ECTS. Over the 3 semesters it is ensured that each student becomes familiar with the theories, methods and analytical tools that characterize the four areas, which thus serve as a common core:

- I. Theory, History, Epistemology of Media, Culture and Communication
- II. Institutions, Law, Politics, Economy of the Media
- III. Media as Text, Media Production and Analysis, Multimedia
- IV. Audience, Reception and Media Education.

Each university articulates its offer of courses in accordance with these four areas, but integrates the areas within its own national and scholarly traditions, so that students encounter different perspectives on the areas at the two universities that provide the curriculum for any student's learning achievement. Each student thus benefits from two different cultural and scholarly flavours within the academic field of media, communication and cultural studies, and is invited to bring these flavours into a fruitful dialogue leading to a higher level of understanding.

The structure of this curriculum is based both on a systematic scientific typology (a consensual way of conceptualizing the field across academic paradigms) and on the Consortium's consideration of the professional competences of the graduates. The CoMundus Programme is not designed to compete with other media and communication programmes that may, for instance, focus on a particular medium, on media production rather than on media content or media reception, or on media education rather than on mediated politics. In a world increasingly characterized by processes of 'convergence', it is rather our aim to provide a comprehensive level of competence that bridges different media types and different functions in the communication circuit, which enables the Consortium's graduates to flexibly step into a variety of job functions in the media and communications sector (doing analytical, strategic or design-oriented work) The success rate of our graduates from the pre-CoMundus 'European Master's' programme in receiving internships and jobs in media related institutions over the past 11 years supports this curricular orientation. The Consortium's members also believe that the comprehensive approach is better suited to point students in the direction of continued scholarly careers, e.g. in a doctoral programme.

##### **The scientific rationale of the four areas**

The academic vision builds on an integrated model of media with respect to communication, mass communication, and culture. According to this model the media are embedded in institutional structures (law, economy, broadcasting, politics), which produce, market, review, etc. media contents (Study Area II). These contents are made available to users and thus embedded in contexts of utilization, where an audience becomes an active recipient within the framework of different contexts and valuation approaches - as citizens, consumers, learners, etc. (Study Area IV). The media themselves and their analysis as texts are the topic of Study Area III, which focuses on a broad definition of the medium as a text, including all kinds of multimodal (including visual) manifestations. The media perspective also considers the processes in which media production takes place. These three areas of study all require a command of specific scientific or practical methods. Study Area I, finally, focuses on the contemporary theoretical landscape and its historical development of concepts and methods as well as on practical procedures and institutions. This systematic academic pattern is implemented by the partner universities through their respective approach to research and instruction. The Consortium deliberately supports the interdisciplinary approach of its partner universities.

### **Optional curriculum elements**

While the four Study Areas constitute an obligatory common core, the particular ways in which they are studied at the different partner institutions can be said to constitute one of the curriculum's optional elements, as they vary according to the different students' different choice of the configuration of home and host university. To take an example from Study Area Three, a student will cover the 'Media as Text' area in 'optionally' different ways if, with Roskilde University as his home university, he studies media texts under its discourse-analytical perspective coupled with the semiotic perspective of Florence or the multimodal perspective of London.

Another source of optionality comes from the range of choices between the different teaching offers that students have in each of the partner universities, as long as the aggregate curriculum of the three semesters covers all the four areas. Such freedom of choice is more prevalent in some partners than in others.

### **Academic Progression**

The CoMundus programme aims to share the master programme goals developed within the framework of the Dublin Descriptors, according to which our graduates will gradually develop, over the three semesters, the various competences associated with the master level (such as originally applying their knowledge to the development of new ideas; solving problems and handling complexity in the area of communications; communicating to expert and non-expert audiences; and having acquired the reflective skills necessary for continued self-directed study). With their long experience of educating master students the CoMundus partners have designed their existing programmes, and by implication also their joint programme CoMundus, so as to ensure that their graduates will live up to these expectations.

This means that during the first two semesters students will be studying media, communication and culture and aiming to establish a common theoretical, methodological and analytical platform that draws upon and brings together the varied academic backgrounds that they bring into CoMundus from their first degree studies. They will also face scholarly challenges that encourage them to approach their field at a higher level of complexity. The third semester (MA thesis) aims to enable them to work independently and originally, but with competent supervision, on a topic they themselves define.

Following upon the more global intake of students with more heterogeneous backgrounds under CoMundus, it will be a challenge for the partners to closely monitor whether we continue to achieve the desired progression for all entrants. One way to do this may be to set up more direct linkages between the four areas of study and the specific course offers at the partner institutions.

### **3.2 Academic standard**

The consortium was founded by academics from partner universities who were intimately familiar with each other's scholarly profiles, as well as those of their respective departments, and who therefore saw an opportunity to build a collaborative programme with a high measure of compatibility of content and of standards. Whenever new partners have been admitted - also based on personal and institutional affinity - they have had to demonstrate that their curricula would fit into the already compatible ensemble, and they would not have been admitted if this had not been the case.

At the same time, we have always valued the scholarly differences between the partner programmes highly, and this diversity has been an important ingredient in the added value of the joint delivery of the programme. This diversity, however, has been bridged by the common allegiance to the four areas of study (above).

The starting point for the programme's development as an international cooperation between different universities has been the internationalisation of mass communication and the media. A purely national programme in the field of media would have been insufficient to adequately capture

the cross-national tendencies within the field of mass communication, especially since the underlying disciplines of science are limited by the respective national traditions of science. The media are at the same time embedded within unique national and regional cultural contexts. The field itself and the programme objectives thus suggest that students should study the supra-national phenomena of media and mass communication from two different national perspectives and their respective scientific framesets.

The trend of “globalisation” currently makes students, as well as scholars, focus on a global contextual frame with English as the language, which adds a new dimension to the cultural complexity of Europe. Through the Consortium’s application for Erasmus Mundus Action 3, by extending the educational network and opening it up for universities from overseas, the students will have the chance to explore both a European and a more global perspective.

Moreover, high-profile jobs within the field of media and mass communications are increasingly in need of people for whom transnational mobility is an enticing challenge, who have therefore experienced different national perspectives and phenomena in their acquisition of professional skills, and who have demonstrated a personal ability to become integrated within a cross-cultural media environment in bilingual situations.

The Consortium’s common admission criteria for CoMundus students are:

- excellent results in the first degree (BA);
- theoretical and practical experience in at least one of the 4 areas of study;
- language ability, documented through the passing of a recognized language test;
- motivation and professional orientation.

At present in France and Denmark, the ministries responsible for higher education require that a master’s degree consists of 120 ECTS. For this reason French and Danish partners can only enrol students who have acquired 30 ECTS in a relevant field of study in addition to their bachelor’s degree; when added to the 90 ECTS of CoMundus, these pre-requisite points will be integrated into the CoMundus degree as a free-module. (For details see pages 11 and 12.)

The profile of the academic staff is intimately linked to the overall theoretical and conceptual development of the modules and the structuring of the courses. The staff and the programme have grown and evolved together, rather than designing a course and then looking for someone to teach it. Diversity is also a key feature of the staff profile whereby individual strengths, in relation to their research activities in the relevant fields, are utilized in developing the programme alongside the integration of major developments in the field.

Prospective new partners must have academic profiles that match the aims of the programme and which can enhance the programme further.

Being employed in excellent media and communication departments the teaching staff will adopt the usual ways in which academics develop their potential as teachers and researchers. Under CoMundus the main opportunities for staff development lie in the following areas:

1. The stimulating effects of receiving 3rd country scholars as visiting scholars at CoMundus departments: Being able to listen to their lectures and research presentations, entering into dialogue with them in seminars, etc.
2. The opportunity to use the organizational meetings of the Common Board also as mini-conferences, in which one day is devoted to research presentations, sharing of curricular and pedagogical experiences, etc.
3. The opportunities for staff interchange between partner institutions for teaching purposes.

Under Erasmus Mundus Action 3 it will become possible for EU scholars to spend extended periods of time at non-European partner institutions.

Although it is difficult to integrate Comundus students into active research projects, due to the nature of the programme, the course is research led so students are given an opportunity to consider current and past research. Research is intimately linked to the course through the research activities of the academic members. The teaching is all research led. The programme enables students to access a number of academics at their home and host institutions thereby gaining knowledge of differing practices.

For the Consortium's development research, conferences and publication were important.<sup>1</sup> Great importance is also attached to drawing media, communication and educational professionals into classrooms where CoMundus students will become familiarized with the professional challenges and solutions of the host country. Some partners arrange visits to media businesses or educational establishments, and the Consortium is currently exploring the opportunity for organizing part-time work placements for interested CoMundus students.

### 3.3 Teaching and learning methods

Across and between partnership members, a wide range of learning and teaching approaches are utilised. These include lectures, small group teaching, seminars, course work, thesis preparation/supervision, and workshops. The most commonly used are lectures, workshops and working in small groups to create a communication project. The mixed mode approach to learning and teaching is unique to the Institute of Education, London, on this CoMundus MA. The mixed mode approach provides the main bulk of the work online, with short periods of face-to-face intensive study (residential) which take place for each module and last two or three days. Different universities in the consortium do, of course, provide their own individual perspectives and contributions, and there is a move towards the provision of regular seminars and close tutorial supervision of students is provided. Seminars may address issues which are significant specifically for students of media, culture and communication, or they may be oriented towards developing appropriate research skills and knowledge. Some of the partners also arrange placements for students with broadcasters or other communication professionals as part of their courses. The Consortium is also beginning to incorporate the considerable talents and experience of the CoMundus scholars into the programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Selected list of research meetings:

Manchester, January 22nd 1991: "Approaches to Mass Communication Research in Everyday Life: Symbolism of Power in Modern and Traditional Media; Nov 10 - 12.1994 European Media Conference: "The Media between Policy, Production Analysis"; Dijon, Nov. 27. - 28. 1992, "Medias: Entre Fiction Et Réalité"; May 19. - 20. 1995, "Media Perspectives in Europe"; London, Institute of Education: April 9. 1993, Colloquium, Media in Everyday Life and in the Process of Civilisation, May 2nd 1996, Colloquium "Subjectivity and the Media", January 17. - 18. 1997: Colloquium „Subjectivity in the Context of the European Media Industries“; Austin January 2003 Giornate Fiorentine della Comunicazione: Florence 9.4.1992; June 21. 1996 "Il marketing delle imprese radiotelevisive"; Febr. 7th 1997 „Identities in the Context of the European Media Culture“ ; June 12th – 15th 1997 „Children and Television, Violence, Path to Literacy, Media Education“; March 7th ; „Media and Collective Identities“.

Selected list of publications:

Baridon, Michel, Durix, J.-P., Rabaté, J.-M. (ed.): Médias: entre Fiction Et Réalité. Centre de Recherche Image Texte Language (Université de Bourgogne) 1994  
Bachmair, Ben, Kress, Gunther (Hrsg.): Höllen-Inszenierung Wrestling. Beiträge zur pädagogischen Genre-Forschung. Opladen (Leske + Budrich) 1996; Bachmair, Ben: Cosa fa la TV ai Bambini?. Editrice Elle Di Ci, 10096 Leumann (Torino) 1997  
Meinhoff, Ulrike, Smith Jonathan (eds): Intertextuality and the media. From Genre to Everyday life. Manchester, New York (Manchester University Press) 2000  
Ben Bachmair, Antonio Cavicchia Scalamenti, Gunther Kress (eds.): Media, Culture and the Social Worlds. Napoli (Liguori) 2002  
Bechelloni, Giovanni, Sassoli, Elisa (a cura di): Inquietante Presenza. Media education e dintorni. Firenze Mediascape Edizioni, 2004

The main strengths of the approaches to learning and teaching lie in their variety and the ways in which they have been developed as appropriate for a wide range of learning tasks in the field of media and communication studies. The inter-cultural dimension of classes and the interchange which they facilitate also ensure a richness of the educational experience which is a clear strength of the programme.

The main strength of the mixed mode approach is proving to be the flexibility for movement and communication between students and their tutors which it facilitates. It is also providing for a more open and investigative pedagogy than the more conventional (though equally valid) approaches which are adopted in the regular lectures and seminars.

Where there are some issues for development, they are often concerned with adequacy in the language of learning and teaching. This is usually related to the finesse in language use and specialist vocabulary which academic writing requires. Courses are provided for students which develop their skills and capacities in these matters.

### ***Assessment methods***

All academic achievements are assessed using the European Credit-Transfer-Systems (ECTS): 30 ECTS credits are to be earned at the home university, 30 ECTS credits at the host university, and 30 ECTS credits through the completion of a master's thesis. The Consortium's universities make available relevant information such as learning-agreements covering the study-programmes, information on rules for the allocation of credits, and transcripts of records, etc. For this purpose the ECTS forms ("Student Application Form", "Learning Agreement", "Transcript of Records", see annex section 2. ECTS package) are used.

The coursework is usually assessed through the provision of coursework essays of a stipulated length. In some of the partner universities, modules are assessed through oral examinations, including vivas, or research papers. There is also the possibility of handing in a portfolio for the assessment of certain course elements. The grading of work is undertaken according to the criteria and quality assurance mechanisms of the individual universities. All participating universities have their own quality assurance procedures, and all recognise the levels of the work of partners on a basis of parity of academic worth and level. Individual partners will provide the TEEP II visitors with full documentation of their own examination systems within the broad remit of the European Masters programme.

What is common across all the universities and schools involved in the CoMundus programme is a wish to provide a wide range of learning and teaching experiences and contexts. It is the latter which provides one of the main strengths of the programmes. The Consortium's partners have worked to ensure that students are welcomed and involved in the workings of the various universities and schools of universities as they move through the degree. The different universities have their different specialisms and these are on offer for the students along with personal tuition and academic counselling and advice.

It must be noted that the main advantages of this approach to a Masters course may become issues of concern if they are not well administered and delivered. It is for this reason that we attach considerable importance to retaining our productive diversities and at the same time ensuring that the partner universities provide careful monitoring and pastoral care for all students.

The assessment increasingly involves consideration of practical and production skills as well as the more traditional academic papers and dissertations. This is something which the Consortium is watching closely and it has required a careful re-appraisal of assessment and grade criteria with practical work in mind.

The overall, shared learning environment is one which is conducive to intellectual stimulation and development, as well as the acquisition of relevant production and research skills. The Consortium intends, as the courses develop, to make explicit those elements in the Dublin Descriptors which emphasise the importance of applying knowledge, understanding and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments. There is a strong sense of community amongst many of the Consortium's students. There is healthy competition, tempered by a spirit of cooperation and genuine intellectual enquiry.

Many of the universities involved are at the present updating their learning environments and providing high quality digital production facilities and/or library collections.

The Consortium's partners are guided in their work by a pedagogy which is based upon questioning and investigation. The approach to the media, culture and communication is one which encourages independent and critical thinking, whether in relation to theoretical developments and issues, or in relation to assessing the relevance, place and worth of a variety of media and communication modes. The work is concerned with the formal educational settings as well as the wider (global) communities.

Until 2003 the master thesis was assessed by the home and the host university. Because of the basic assumption of the ECTS-regulation and the idea of the transfer of exam results the marking of the home university was accepted by the host university without counter checking the Master thesis.

### **3.4 Competences/ learning outcomes**

One of the key developments has been to ensure that the modules offer a range of skills and opportunities which link theory and practice across a breadth of cultural, media and communication studies approaches. Learning outcomes are increasingly being recognised at the practical/production levels alongside the more traditional university criteria for academic success.

#### **4. Quality assurance**

Although the Consortium that is responsible for the CoMundus Master's programme has been in existence for a number of years and has collaborated on the European Master of Arts in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies, the development and approval of the CoMundus programme has given a more formal status to the Consortium as the basis for the management of this new degree.

The first CoMundus students were recruited in 2004. The Consortium has put in place the programme management arrangements described earlier in this document and has agreed entry requirements to the programme and admissions procedures. These form the initial strands of a quality assurance strategy for the whole programme. The Consortium recognizes the importance of developing an overall strategy and in fact volunteered to take part in the TEEP II project as part of the process of identifying those areas requiring further work.

However, the separate strands of the programme in each partner institution are subject to that university's national quality assurance requirements. This includes formal accreditation of the programme in Germany, France, Italy and Denmark, and the implementation of the national quality assurance framework established by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the UK. As has already been stated, the differing requirements of national agencies can cause difficulties for collaborative programmes such as CoMundus.

The Consortium also has agreed criteria and procedures for considering and approving new partners which have already been described in section 2.2 above. The detailed negotiations with potential new partners are undertaken by the Chairperson (currently Prof. Ben Bachmair at Kassel University) and reported to the Common Board.

Responsibility for quality assurance across the programme lies with the Common Board with the Director of the CoMundus programme in the lead university taking day to day decisions and liaising as appropriate with institutional co-ordinators. Responsibility for quality assurance in the partner institutions lies with the institutional co-ordinator. In the majority of partner institutions, the Erasmus Mundus course is a separate entity but also a strand of an already approved course, so each institution's own quality assurance arrangements apply. Individual staff in each partner University are therefore responsible to the local co-ordinator for ensuring that the students receive high quality teaching and supervision.

Student feedback on their experience is important to the Consortium. The EU Commission recently undertook a survey of Erasmus Mundus students attending a seminar in Brussels and the written report has been circulated to Consortium partners for information. Individual partner institutions seek student feedback on their experiences, for example at Kassel, Florence and the Institute of Education, in London, students are asked to complete questionnaires. At the programme level there is an evaluation tool on the CoMundus website for the students to use and further work is planned in relation to obtaining information on the level of student satisfaction with the CoMundus Master's programme.

In addition, the University of Kassel has undertaken some empirical research into the ability of its graduates to obtain professional placements. The evident success of the graduates from Kassel in obtaining jobs in the European media industry demonstrates the strength of the programme in providing two European perspectives on media, communication and cultural studies. It is planned to involve all partner universities in this empirical investigation of students' vocational placements (see annex section 4. Statistics)

In terms of follow-up and improvement, responsibility for identifying problems or shortcomings at institutional level lies with the individual partner university. At programme level, problems are raised at a Common Board meeting and a solution agreed and implemented.

As has already been stated, quality assurance practices in relation to the whole Master's programme are under development. Entry requirements, admissions, communication and decision making between partner Universities and criteria and procedures for assessing potential new partners are all in place. An administrative handbook has also been developed. Through the development of this self-evaluation document, other areas have been identified for discussion, including curriculum development and assessment. The Consortium has already identified the need to consider, at a future Common Board meeting, the implications of the Dublin descriptors for the CoMundus programme as a whole. It will be important for the success of any overarching quality assurance strategy and associated procedures for at least one cohort of CoMundus students to have completed the programme so that a complete evaluation of their experiences can feed into discussions of quality assurance arrangements.

The main challenge for the Consortium will be to implement an appropriate quality assurance strategy without cancelling out the key strength of the programme, namely the richness of the experience for CoMundus students in the range of courses available to them at all the partner universities and the consequent curricular diversity.

### **The self-evaluation exercise**

The guidelines were helpful in enabling to write a joint self-evaluation, which was mainly undertaken by a group of authors. In dividing up the writing activities the group utilised the guidelines. However, the guidelines invite more or less general answers, but it is anticipated that the site visits will clarify specificities of the programme in partner universities.

The self-evaluation manual provided the basis for a two day discussion by the whole Consortium at a meeting in London at the end of April 2005. This discussion was considered as really fruitful in the sense of self reflection of the Consortium's structures and procedures, which were as well formally developed as have grown naturally over years. The self reflection in the context of a communicative evaluation procedure is considered as helpful for the self concept of the Consortium and for understanding difficulties, which result from the network structure, the cultural diversity of the partner's academic basis and practices and of the interdisciplinary diversity.

## 5. Summary

### Main strengths

- **The common core curriculum:** The scientific platform constituted by the four 'study areas' ensures a comprehensive approach to the building of an attractive professional identity for the understanding of the contemporary challenges in the media and communications field.
- The flexibility of the implementation of the common core curriculum at the different partner universities, which allows for **different national and scientific inflections** of the way the common core is taught at the different partner institutions: different sociocultural traditions that affect the national mediascapes, and different disciplinarity that merge into a synthesizing **interdisciplinarity** in the qualifications of the individual graduate.
- **The cooperative efficiency** of the Consortium as an organization: This efficiency is a result of 1. the collaboration going back to the early 1990s; 2. the clear administrative procedures as specified in the constitutional documents and governing principles; 3. the professionalism of the operation of the chairperson's office due to managerial and administrative care and flair; 4. the mutual personal trust among the institutional representatives of the partners.
- **The communicative efficiency of the student-related services:** 1. The informative level of the website; 2. the immediate and personal counselling of prospective applicants and enrolled students by the headquarters' and the partners' academic and secretarial staff; 3. the quality of the Administrative Handbook as a tool for the Consortium's staff dealing with applications, selection, enrolment, money transfer, etc.
- **The professional profile** of the graduates: The success of the pre-CoMundus graduates promises a similar prospect of employment success for the CoMundus graduates of the future.

### Main challenges

- **Improved monitoring of the profile of the graduates:** The Consortium needs to ensure more systematically that individual graduates obtain a sufficient coverage and an appropriate distribution of the four study areas. Some partners need to establish more explicit linkages between the four study areas and the specific curriculum elements they offer. The Consortium as a whole should devote more time at Common Board meetings to systematically update other partners about curricular innovations, so as to ensure a constant monitoring of the academic profile acquired by the students.
- **Academic progression:** At the moment the seasonal rhythm of Erasmus Mundus student enrolment does not always match the academic calendar of individual partner universities. Because of this, in some combinations of home/host universities students may be required to take modules out of sequence; they may also be required to attend the host university first. The Consortium will need to look at the sequencing of courses by individual partners to see whether it is possible to improve sequencing for all students.

- **The long history: advantage and burden:** The consortium has not been able to homogenise fully the academic practises between the partner universities. So far, by help of the English MA model homogenisation was obtained just on the surface, the students' qualification as prerequisite for and result of the studies were really different, but represented the typical national level of academic qualification. Therefore Erasmus Mundus and TEEP II are appreciated as practical option to reconsider the Consortium's standards and receive support to overcome tradition-bound and sometimes opaque local and national conditions.
- The consortium with a **network structure:** local flexibility, individualised options for students but a low level of coherency. Additionally the network structure gives space for the local and national cultural identity, which the consortium appreciated as positive input for the tradition of different curricula. The high number of the consortium's members as a result of the network idea implies a high risk of incoherency.
- **Arrival of 3rd country students in Europe:** The EU Commission should conduct its administrative procedures within a time-frame that allows 3rd country students to arrive at the CoMundus university before the beginning of the autumn semester. The delays in the Commission's recognition of entrants in 2004 and 2005 has meant that visa applications have not been getting through the national immigration offices in time; similarly they have not been able to apply for accommodation in time. Students have been delayed for up to one month, with serious consequences for the academic, financial and practical planning of their master studies.

Overall the main challenges for the Consortium relate to its complexity and flexibility, which developed as a result of the network structure and the multidisciplinary approach to teaching the original European Master's degree. The Consortium has already achieved a considerable degree of administrative reliability by beginning to harness the abilities of the administrative staff at several of the partner universities and by developing tools like the Administrative Handbook. However there is no formal budget for the Consortium and its administration, support for professional cooperation between the administrative specialists at the partner universities and the academic directors.

Following the development of this self-evaluation document for the TEEP II project, the Consortium recognises the need for further self-reflection to include reviewing the coherence and delivery of the curriculum across all the partner institutions, including the non-EU partners. Partner universities need to continue developing a shared knowledge of the positive and negative impact of the multidisciplinary nature of the course on the academic success of the students.

## Checklist

- Self-evaluation report ( $\leq 25$  pages)

The following texts will be delivered by post. If these texts are needed by data file please inform [k.rummler@uni-kassel.de](mailto:k.rummler@uni-kassel.de) or [bachmair@uni-kassel.de](mailto:bachmair@uni-kassel.de). (These files contain more than 7 MB.)

- Quality assurance strategy/ies:  
Documents with relevance for quality assurance: Consortium Contract from 1999; Governing Document; Operational Procedures; Reports from the chair to the common board (see annex section 1)
- Programme description (e.g. chart) outlining the different parts of the programme including compulsory and optional elements:  
General description please see CoMundus application from May 28<sup>th</sup> 2004; CoMundus application Action 3 plus "Amendment" from March 31 2005; Progress report from April 15<sup>th</sup> 2005 (see annex section 3)

Description of the programme at the partner universities will be provided individually for the site visits.

- Reading lists for the various parts of the programme

Core reading lists from each institution will be handed in later. Detailed reading lists from each institution will be provided at the site visits.