Guidelines for the ERASMUS+ program
Aris Anagnostopoulos

In this document you can find some guidelines that will help you when you need to interact with Aris regarding the Erasmus+. The goal is you to provide the necessary information so that we are both sure that your program selection is correct. Unfortunately the online system does not provide sufficient information, so you are asked to follow the following process in the various phases of your Erasmus+ visit.

Of course, in addition to these guidelines you must follow the official Erasmus+ procedures found in the call or given to you by the administration. In case that the information given here, or the information given to you by Aris (in person or via email) are in conflict with what is written in the call (the details in the call change every year and I can make mistakes), please contact Aris and mention it to him to make sure that you don't make your application invalid.

There are four entities with whom you will interact at Sapienza when you participate at the Erasmus+ program:
- **Aris Anagnostopoulos** (RAM – Responsabile Accademico per la Mobilità), who is in charge of evaluating the compatibility of your Erasmus application with respect to the academic content, and for assigning grades when you return. These guidelines regard the interaction with Aris.
- The Erasmus office of the Faculty of Information Engineering, Informatics, and Statistics, headed by **Daniela De Angelis** (RAEF – Referente Amministrativo Erasmus di Facoltà), who is responsible for the administrative procedure for the Data Science master. They are those that can answer you questions about administrative issues.
  Email: erasmus-i3s@uniroma1.it
- The university Erasmus office (smout).
- You will also need to talk with **Pierpaolo Brutti**, in (the very probable) case that you need to change your study plan.

I have made these guidelines after having seen what problems can occur in the past, to avoid them in your case, and to provide you with some information about the process.

There are various times that we may need to interact: (1) when you apply for a position, (2) before you leave, (3) when you are abroad, and (4) after you return.

When applying for a position:
- In the call you can find the locations to which universities you can apply.
- You need to find a set of courses with corresponding courses here.
- It is required that the total ECTS credits abroad are equal or higher than the total ECTS credits in Sapienza. This means, for example, that you may need to map 5 or 6 courses abroad to 4 courses in Sapienza.
- You need to find 24 Sapienza ECTS credits per semester that you plan to spend abroad. Typically in the call there is written a smaller number of credits, but in the Data Science program we require more to make a valid student plan.
- Note that the correspondence of courses abroad and Sapienza is not 1-to-1 but all-to-all, so there is some flexibility.
- It is probable that to find a good set of courses abroad, you need to change your study plan. If you are not sure that the new study plan is acceptable, talk with Pierpaolo Brutti. You can put different study plans for each destination that you consider.
- The free-choice courses in Sapienza can be of great help to find courses abroad.
- To make sure that the program(s) that you choose are acceptable, you should contact Aris. Send an email with the *mapping* (see below).
- Note that we cannot recommend you what courses to take. For example, do not send a request of the type: "I want to go to University of blah, here is the list of courses that they offer, can you recommend some to

put in my program?" If however, you have some specific suggestions, then you can contact Aris to confirm they are valid.

- If we cannot decide through email we can also meet. When we meet have ready all the information of potential study plans described in the *mapping* (below); for example, the web page with the description of the potential courses abroad. After we meet, send an email with the *mapping* that we have decided.
- For the call with deadline on 02/2025, the system asks you to insert your study programs. You should do this in addition to the process described here.
- I have created this page with exams that students have passed in previous years and the corresponding exams at Sapienza. It may be of help, but note that the agreements and the courses change over the years: https://www.diag.uniroma1.it/erasmus/INGEGNERIA%20DELL%27INFORMAZIONE%2C%20INFORMATICA%20E%20STATISTICA/DATA%20SCIENCE.html

Before you leave, after you are accepted:
Before you leave you will need to fill into the system the learning agreement.

- If the courses that you have chosen are the ones that we have agreed when you applied, then go ahead and fill in the official online learning agreement.
- If you have problems inserting the courses that we have agreed, then **before** you fill in the learning agreement you need to agree with Aris about the new agreement.
  - So, send an email to Aris with:
    - The last *mapping* (see below) that has been approved.
    - The changes in courses that you want to do, and the reason for the changes.
    - The final *mapping* after you change the courses.
  - After you agree with Aris about the final mapping, go ahead and fill in the official online learning agreement.

When you are abroad (change form):
When you go abroad, you may have to ask for changing your courses by completing a change form.

- You must make the request and get the approval of the change form **before** you start the courses.
- Before you complete the change form you should get approval for the new mapping from Aris. So send an email to Aris with:
  - The last *mapping* (see below) that has been approved.
  - The changes in courses that you want to do, and the reason for the changes.
  - The final *mapping* after you change the courses.
- After you agree with Aris about the final mapping, go ahead to fill in the official online change form.

Mapping **of courses Sapienza and abroad:**
As *mapping* of courses we mean a table that contains, information such as:

- The name of the university and the department abroad
- What semester the mapping refers to (semester 1, semester 2, semesters 1&2), and which months you will be (or plan to be) abroad.
- A list of the courses that you plan to do abroad. For each course: (1) the title, (2) the semester, (3) the number of credits in ECTS, and (4) a link to the course web page where we can see the topics covered both abroad and here.
- A list of the corresponding courses here. For each course: (1) the title, (2) the semester
- You can find an example of a mapping at http://aris.me/contents/mapping.xlsx. Please use this template.

To have your grades accepted at Sapienza:
After you finish, the university that you have attended must send to Sapienza in an official way the courses that you have passed and the grade that you have obtained.

Note that the number of ECTS course credits that can be recognized in Sapienza cannot be higher than the ECTS course credits that you have passed abroad. So, if you have passed 20 **course credits** abroad, we can recognize up to 20 **course credits** here (typically 18, as Data Science courses are 6 credits).

This conversion process is not always obvious as different countries use different scaling systems and the mapping is not 1-to-1, but as a general guideline we use the following table:

ECTS Grade	Grade (on a 30 scale)
A	30 cum laude
B	29
C	27
D	24
E	20

The process for the conversion, depending on the load, typically requires 2-3 weeks, sorry but there are a lot of you with a variety of requests. If **and only if** there is an urgent reason to validate your grades earlier (e.g., because you need to apply for a fellowship), please let Aris know by providing details and the deadline. Note that such a request delays the Erasmus procedures of your fellow colleagues who are also have been waiting, so don't abuse it unless it is absolutely necessary. Otherwise please be patient :-)

Regarding doing thesis abroad:
Generally, you can do the final thesis abroad as part of your Erasmus+ stay:
- To do the thesis abroad, you need an advisor at Sapienza and an advisor at the host university, who will coordinate with each other for the supervision. The official advisor remains the Sapienza advisor. After you agree with them, you need an approval from Aris for the two advisors: Email Aris mentioning the two advisors and putting the local advisor in cc.
- **When to select the advisor:** You are allowed to apply even without having selected the advisor(s). However, it is recommended to find an advisor before you apply: It may happen that you win a spot at a university and then you are not able to find an advisor, so you eventually are not able to leave. (See also below.)
- **Important:** In the various years the official rules for participation to the call have changed. What I wrote in the previous point is what was true for the application with deadline March 2023; in some previous years you were not allowed to apply without having found the advisors. As in future years the rules may change, read carefully the official call and contact the Erasmus office if you are not sure.
- If you leave for only one semester, then you are required to find both thesis advisors before you present your learning agreement and before you leave. If you leave for two semesters and you have the thesis in the second semester, then you can leave even without having found the advisor(s). Then during your stay you will select them. (The idea is that while you are following courses in the first semester you have time to meet the professors at the host university and find an advisor.)
- **Number of credits:** The thesis in the Data Science program is worth 24 ECTS credits. However, there is a maximum number of thesis credits that you can obtain for the thesis abroad. If your stay abroad is x months, then the maximum number of credits that you can obtain abroad (and can insert in the learning agreement) is: $L = \min\{3x, 19\}$. It may happen that in the university abroad the thesis is worth more credits (e.g. 24 or 30). Nevertheless, you have to map it to L credits here.
- For a concrete example, assume that the thesis abroad is worth 30 credits and you leave for $x=10$ months. Then the maximum number of credits that you can obtain here is $L=19$. The other 5 credits you do them here. (In practice this often means that here you just finish some experiments, you finish the writing, you prepare the presentation, and you present the thesis during the final exam. However, it is the local advisor who decides what you need to do.) In your learning agreement you will map the 30 credits abroad with the 19 credits here. The 11 credits left, typically *cannot* be used to be mapped to another course here.
- You are allowed to just do the thesis abroad in 1 semester, even though you obtain 19 (< 24) credits.

- **Thesis evaluation:** Eventually, the thesis has to be presented at Sapienza and the evaluation committee decides on the grade. The local advisor, is responsible for contacting the advisor abroad and obtaining some feedback, which typically will be shared with the rest of the committee. Also, some universities abroad require to also do a presentation there; yet, for Sapienza this has no value and you still need to do the presentation here.