



AGENTUR FÜR  
QUALITÄTSSICHERUNG DURCH  
AKKREDITIERUNG VON  
STUDIENGÄNGEN E.V.

## EXPERTS' REPORT

# EUROPEAN MASTER ON WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES (GEMMA) (MASTER OF ARTS)

## *PROCEDURE UNDER THE EUROPEAN APPROACH*

University of Granada (Spain)

University of Bologna (Italy)

Central European University (Austria)

University of Lodz (Poland)

University of Oviedo (Spain)

Utrecht University (The Netherlands)

University of York (United Kingdom)



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## DECISION ON THE ACCREDITATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- **EUROPEAN MASTER ON WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES (GEMMA) (M.A.)  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GRANADA (SPAIN), UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA (ITALY),  
CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY (AUSTRIA), UNIVERSITY OF LODZ (POLAND),  
UNIVERSITY OF OVIEDO (SPAIN), UTRECHT UNIVERSITY (THE NETHERLANDS),  
UNIVERSITY OF YORK (UNITED KINGDOM)**

Based on the report of the expert panel, the discussions of the AQAS Standing Commission in its 19th meeting on 4 December 2023, and the circulation procedure of 15 January 2024 the AQAS Standing Commission decides:

1. The study programme “**European Master on Women’s and Gender Studies**” (Master of Arts) offered by the **University of Granada, Spain, University of Bologna, (Italy), Central European University (Austria), University of Lodz (Poland), University of Oviedo (Spain), Utrecht University (The Netherlands) and University of York (United Kingdom)** is accredited according to the criteria and procedures defined in the European Approach for Quality assurance of Joint Programmes.

The study programme complies with the requirements defined by the European Approach for Quality assurance of Joint Programmes and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version.

2. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **31 January 2030**.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programme:

1. To further deepen the cooperation between institutions, some generically phrased areas of the cooperation agreement should be specified also contributing to increased transparency.
2. To further develop the programme and increase the prominence of the key competencies acquired in the programme, the number of learning outcomes should be reduced to the essential outcomes.
3. The programme should integrate credited internships in its curriculum.
4. The programme management should develop ways to increase transparency for students on the diverse workload regulations.
5. The programme should enable synergies through staff mobility & exchange also facilitating exchange on methodological-didactical aspects like teaching and assessment practice.
6. The programme management should extent information on visa requirements impacting the choice of the mobility partners as well as assure a regular update of student support handbooks.
7. The programme management should proactively increase transparency about combinations of universities that lead to overlapping semester timings, enabling students to consider it when choosing their paths.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Standing Commission refers to the attached experts' report.

## EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE ACCREDITATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- **EUROPEAN MASTER ON WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES (GEMMA) (M.A.)  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GRANADA (SPAIN), UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA (ITALY),  
CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY (AUSTRIA), UNIVERSITY OF LODZ (POLAND),  
UNIVERSITY OF OVIEDO (SPAIN), UTRECHT UNIVERSITY (THE NETHERLANDS),  
UNIVERSITY OF YORK (UNITED KINGDOM)**

Date of site visit: 19-21 September 2023

### Panel of experts:

<b>Professor Dr. Katja Sabisch</b>	Ruhr Universität Bochum, Chair for Gender Studies (Germany)
<b>Professor Dr. Corinna Onnen</b>	University of Vechta, Vice President, Chair for General Sociology (Germany)
<b>Professor Dr. Ainhoa Novo</b>	University of the Basque Country, Chair for Political Sciences (Spain)
<b>Eva Fernandez de Labastida</b>	Unibasq, Expert for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (quality assurance professional)
<b>Cecilia Akibaya</b>	European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) (student representative)
<b>Coordinator:</b> Ronny Heintze	AQAS e.V., Germany

## I. Preamble

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The University of Granada (Spain), together with the University of Bologna (Italy), Central European University (Austria), University of Lodz (Poland), University of Oviedo (Spain), Utrecht University (The Netherlands), University of York (United Kingdom), is applying for the accreditation of the study programme “European Master on women’s and gender studies” (GEMMA) leading to the degree of “Master of Arts”. This final report by the panel of experts is based on the university’s written application documents and the results of the site visit. In particular, the descriptive parts of the experts’ report refer to the submitted Self Evaluation Report.

## II. Assessment procedure

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This report is the result of the external review of the Master’s programme in “European Master on Women’s and Gender Studies” (M.A.) offered by the University of Granada (Spain), together with the University of Bologna (Italy), Central European University (Austria), University of Lodz (Poland), University of Oviedo (Spain), Utrecht University (The Netherlands), University of York (United Kingdom).

### Criteria

The study programme is reviewed in accordance with the criteria of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, which was agreed with the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area in May 2015.

### Approach and methodology

#### *Initialization of the procedure*

In April 2023, the University of Granada mandated AQAS to implement the accreditation procedure using the European Approach. For this purpose, the consortium coordinated by University of Granada produced a self-evaluation report (SER) describing the programme in its entirety; this report was submitted in April 2023, together with the necessary documents, the relevant appendices, and statistical data on the study programme.

AQAS analysed the self-evaluation report for completeness, comprehensibility, and transparency. The accreditation procedure was formally initialized at the meeting of the AQAS Standing Commission in May 2023.

The final version of the self-evaluation report was submitted in August 2023.

#### *Nomination of the panel of experts*

The composition of the panel of experts follows the stakeholder principle and the requirements described in the European Approach. As a result, representatives from the relevant discipline(s), the labour market/quality assurance, and the student body are involved. In addition, AQAS follows the Principles for the Selection of Experts of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

The AQAS Standing Commission nominated the panel of experts in August 2023. AQAS informed the consortium about the members of the panel of experts, and the consortium did not express any concerns about the composition of the panel.

#### *Preparation of the site visit*

Prior to the site visit, the experts reviewed the self-evaluation report and submitted a short preliminary statement containing outstanding issues and any potential need for additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the consortium and the members of the panel in order to increase transparency of the process and the upcoming discussions during the site visit. The experts also had access to a representative sample of 15 final thesis of graduates including the assessment.

*Site visit*

Following a review of the self-evaluation report, the site visit was conducted from 19-21 September 2023 to the campus of CEU in Vienna. During the site visit, the experts held separate discussions to interview various stakeholders, e.g., the university management, programme directors, teaching staff, and non-academic staff from the seven universities, as well as students, graduates and labour market representatives. During the site visit, final theses covering the entire range of grades were also assessed. The site visit ended with a presentation of the preliminary results obtained by the expert group to the representatives of the universities.

*Preparation of the experts' report*

After the site visit, the panel of experts prepared the following report assessing the fulfilment of the criteria set out in the European Approach for Quality Assurance for Joint Programmes. The report included a recommendation to the AQAS Standing Commission. The report was sent to the universities for comment.

*Decision*

The experts' report, together with the university's comments, is the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission's decision on the accreditation of the programme. Based on these two documents, the Standing Commission made its decision on accreditation in January 2024. AQAS forwarded the decision to the universities and published the report on its website as well as at the DEQAR database.

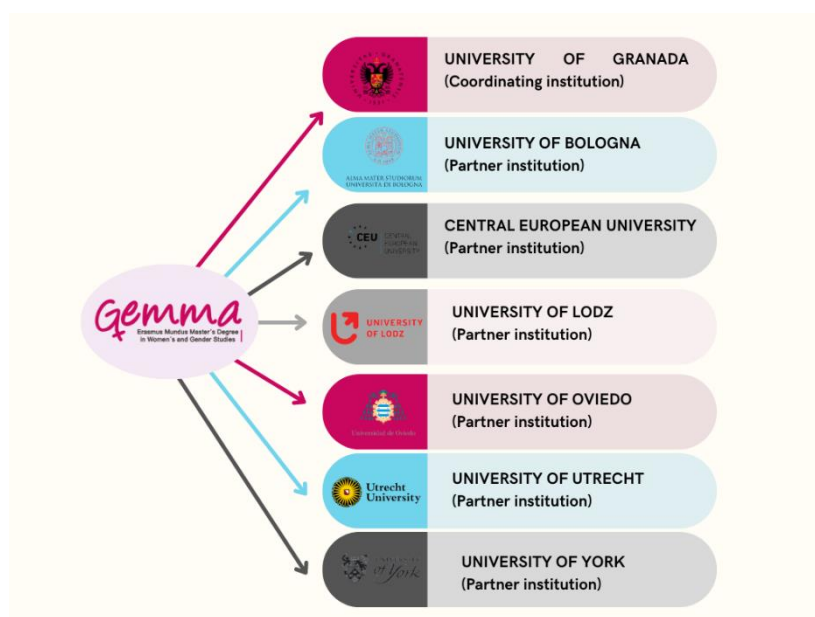
**III. General information**

According to the self-evaluation report (SER), the European Master on Women's and Gender Studies is reported to be the first and only European Erasmus Mundus Master's programme in this multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary area of study. It was conceived in 2006 based on a long-standing collaboration and collective expertise accumulated by the participating institutions and staff for over two decades. The GEMMA Consortium aims to represent the harmonisation of HE institutions from several programme countries and their capacity to adapt to changing economic, political, and social challenges to continue delivering training in Women's and Gender Studies and equal opportunities. The field of Women's and Gender studies itself is reported to have been instrumental in promoting and mainstreaming European values of human rights, freedom, and equality. The material and symbolic support from the EU is said to have been vital for its ongoing development in the current political climate of multidirectional attack on "gender ideology" that affects Gender Studies programmes in Europe and beyond. GEMMA, in synergy with ATGENDER, The European Association for Gender Research, Education and Documentation (the associate industrial partner), is reported to define the area of Women's and Gender Studies as an interdisciplinary field of knowledge and practice that also encompasses Transgender, Sexuality, and Queer studies, feminist research, women's, sexual, and LGBTQI rights, equality, and diversity. In this context, it is reported that gender, the central concept in the field, is understood as a historical and cultural product that affects personal identity and is also a principle of the organisation of social structures and institutions. Gender is reportedly political because Women's and Gender studies cannot be separated from the policies that affect or threaten the life experiences of these groups. At the same time, it is reported that gender forms the basis for normative values and socially enacted meanings and representations. Gender studies address theoretical and practical aspects of scientific research to contribute to a better understanding of the factors that delay the democratisation of equality.

The quality of all GEMMA partner universities and the GEMMA programme itself is reported to have been internationally recognised. All partners are said to be among the best HEI in their national and regional contexts and have pioneered the development of the discipline of Women's and Gender Studies on the national, Euro-

pean, and international levels. The GEMMA programme is reported to have been instrumental in the development and promotion of the discipline of Women's and Gender Studies over the past decades. It has received positive evaluations from the European Commission on numerous occasions and achieved top positions in national rankings. Additionally, it has been reported to have been awarded multiple prizes and recognitions. During its 16 years of existence, the programme is said to have attracted over 7000 applicants from all over the world, of which more than 800 have enrolled and completed the programme. Most (over 60%) of these students are reported to have been self-funded, with a significant increase of third-country students participating on a self-financed basis in the last years (over 20% in the last two intakes).

While the SER points out that the consortium had some changes in the past (e.g., CEU transitioning from Hungary to Austria or the University of Hull dropping out of the consortium), the current consortium consists of the following partner universities:



Furthermore, the SER mentions various institutions and organizations involved in the GEMMA programme as **academic associated partners**, including universities like the Universidad Nacional Autónoma (Mexico), Universidad de Buenos Aires (Argentina), Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Colombia), Universidad Estadual de Campinas (Brazil), Universidad de Chile (Chile), Cátedra UNESCO de Cultura y Educación para la Paz, Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (Ecuador), Cátedra de la Mujer, Universidad de La Habana (Cuba), Florida International University, Rutgers University, University of Columbia, University of Redlands, Centre for Women's Studies Zagreb (Croatia), and two new academic associated partners: Goldsmiths College, University of London, and the United Nations Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme of the University of Iceland.

It also mentions various **associate industrial partners**, including Associazione Orlando (Bologna), Atria, Institute on Gender Equality and Women's History (Amsterdam), Equality Unit of the University of Granada as women's studies research and promotion institutions, and public administration actors like Instituto Asturiano de la Mujer (Oviedo), Diputación de Granada, Gender Equality and Human Rights Commission of the Legislative Assembly of Emilia Romagna Region, Bologna, and Ayuntamiento de Granada.

Additionally, the SER includes **companies and enterprise associations** such as AIDDA (Italian Women Entrepreneurs Association), HERA, CNA Impresa Donne di Bologna, Espora – Consultoría de Género, and Ágora

– Espacio de Formación Feminista. It also mentions feminist activist organizations and NGOs like Acción en Red, Hombres por la Igualdad, Equal Opportunities' Office of ASC InSieme, Casco – Office for Art, Design and Theory, Lodzki Szlak Kobiet (LSK), and Kyra Women's Project in York.

The SER further highlights **academic and professional networks** like ATGENDER: European Association for Gender Research, Education and Documentation, Fundación IES, EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network), and Inter-America Organization for Higher Education (IAO). It also mentions academic publishers such as Peter Lang, KRK, FEMINAE, Nomadías journal, Cuadernos PAGU journal, and Mora journal.

It is stated that the GEMMA project strengthens its consortium through various instruments, including mobility of scholars and students, virtual GEMMA Employability reunions, and optional internships. The programme aims to provide high-quality education and professional competencies in Women's Studies, Gender Studies, and Equal Opportunities. Its objectives include:

- Offering excellent training and career prospects.
- Promoting women's action and networking.
- Transferring knowledge and skills to society.
- Fostering further research within the GEMMA community.

#### IV. Assessment of the study programme

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##### 1. Eligibility

###### 1.1 Status

*The institutions that offer a joint programme should be recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries. Their respective national legal frameworks should enable them to participate in the joint programme and, if applicable, to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree(s) should ensure that the degree(s) belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.*

##### Description

The information given in the SER outlines that all consortium institutions are recognised as higher education institutions with degree-awarding power. It is said that the universities participating in the joint programme have distinct roles and responsibilities.

According to the text, the Coordinating Institution at **the University of Granada** is responsible for centrally administering and managing the Consortium, while the partners handle the programme locally. The distribution of responsibilities is as follows:

The GEMMA General Scientific Coordinator, assisted by the GEMMA Consortium Technical Coordinator, oversees communication and management tasks for the Consortium. This includes preparing reports, communicating with partners and the Agency, and assisting candidate students and scholars. They also handle centralised selection and registration procedures, Consortium meetings, graduation ceremonies, and quality control reports. They are also responsible for applications for extra funding, marketing, and other matters affecting the Consortium. The GEMMA Coordination Office and the Women's Studies Institute of University of Granada (UGR) provide support, including part-time officers, student interns, and administrative staff.



The Erasmus Mundus Unit at the International Relations Office of UGR manages student and scholars' grant procedures, such as official communication of selection results, signing grant contracts, and monthly grant payments. They also assist with visa procedures for Partner country students and Erasmus grants.

The Postgraduate Office of UGR handles the enrolment of all Consortium students, coordination of transcripts, custody of student records, and coordination of degree issuance in collaboration with the University of Granada Degree Office. Additionally, UGR organises local Career Days.

Each partner institution's GEMMA Scientific Coordinator is supported by university units within their institution and at least one officer dedicated to managing the local programme in their respective departments/centres. Each partner institution also has a second scientific coordinator for academic support.

The full partners' scientific coordinators form the Steering Committee and have various responsibilities for managing the Consortium and delivering the programme. Additionally, each partner has specific responsibilities:

- **University of Oviedo** coordinates thesis submission instructions, the GEMMA Applicant's Guide, and the preparation of the new GEMMA website.
- **University of Lodz** and **University of Utrecht** organize European Feminist Research conferences that offer internship opportunities for GEMMA students and serve as a forum for presenting their research.
- **University of Bologna, University of Granada, and University of Utrecht** organize the NOISE Summer Schools.
- **University of Bologna** coordinated the EDGES LLP project for the creation of the Joint European PhD.
- **Central European University (CEU)** coordinates the EUTERPE project.
- The GRACE project was initially coordinated by the former GEMMA partner, the university of Hull, who has now been replaced by the **University of York** in the GEMMA consortium. The individual who coordinated the project is currently serving as the President of the GEMMA Experts' Advisory Board and is affiliated with the GEMMA AAP at Goldsmiths, University of London.

The SER points out that the GEMMA programme has received recognition and approval from all legal representatives of the seven Consortium partner institutions. National degree accrediting agencies have also accredited it. Specifically, the UGR and UNIOVI partners in Spain have fully integrated GEMMA into their postgraduate and international offerings, awarding the degree of "Máster Erasmus Mundus en Estudios de las Mujeres y de Género/Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Gender and Women's Studies". These programmes have been accredited and registered nationally. At UNIBO, GEMMA is integrated as a Women's and Gender Studies specialization within the Master's programme in Modern, Comparative, and Postcolonial Literatures. The programme has received recognition and accreditation at the national level. At CEU GmbH, GEMMA is integrated within the Master's degree in Critical Gender Studies, and after being accredited as an Austrian higher education institution, the GEMMA programme received accreditation in Austria. In Lodz, GEMMA is integrated within the Master's programme "International Gender Studies", and the degree awarded is a "Master in International Relations (International Gender Studies)". In Utrecht, the GEMMA programme is integrated into the Research Master in Gender Studies, officially recognized. At York, the degree awarded is a Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies, approved by the university under its entitlement as a degree-awarding body in the UK.

The consortium outlines the current status of awarding the degree jointly (Double Degree). According to the SER, GEMMA graduates receive double degrees from their home and mobility partners upon completing their jointly supervised Master's thesis. They also receive a Diploma Supplement that provides comprehensive information on grading systems, educational systems, module credits, and other relevant details. Additionally, graduates receive a joint document signed by the consortium coordinator, which includes information on their additional training activities. The Consortium has been working towards adopting a Joint Degree, considering multiple national legislations. The University of Granada, as the coordinating institution, has the authority to grant a Joint Degree on behalf of willing Consortium institutions. This Joint Degree is accompanied by a Diploma Supplement that includes accreditation validity, subject areas, qualification level, mode of study, and other relevant information.

### **Experts' evaluation**

Undoubtedly the institutions part of the GEMMA consortium are recognised as HEIs by the relevant authorities of their corresponding countries as stated in the SER and evidenced by the legal documents presented in Annex 1 of the provided material. As confirmed by the annexes and also discussed during the interviews particularly with the leadership of the institutions their national legal frameworks enable all the partners to participate in the joint programme, while awarding a joint degree is still a challenge for some partners and partners are working on it. Nevertheless, through a complex arrangement the institutions awarding the degrees ensure that the awarded degrees belong to the HE system where they are based and depending on the country the programme is accredited at programme or institutional level. Currently, and according to the SER and the interviews with the coordinators, GEMMA graduates receive double degrees from their home and mobility institutions upon completing their jointly supervised Master's thesis. They also receive a Diploma Supplement that provides comprehensive information (grading systems, educational systems, module credits...) and other relevant details. Additionally, graduates receive a joint diploma signed by the consortium coordinator including information on their additional training activities. Consequently, GEMMA implements a concise way to address the various regulations in the different countries enabling to provide a degree that meets the respective requirements and also the provided qualification.

### **Conclusion**

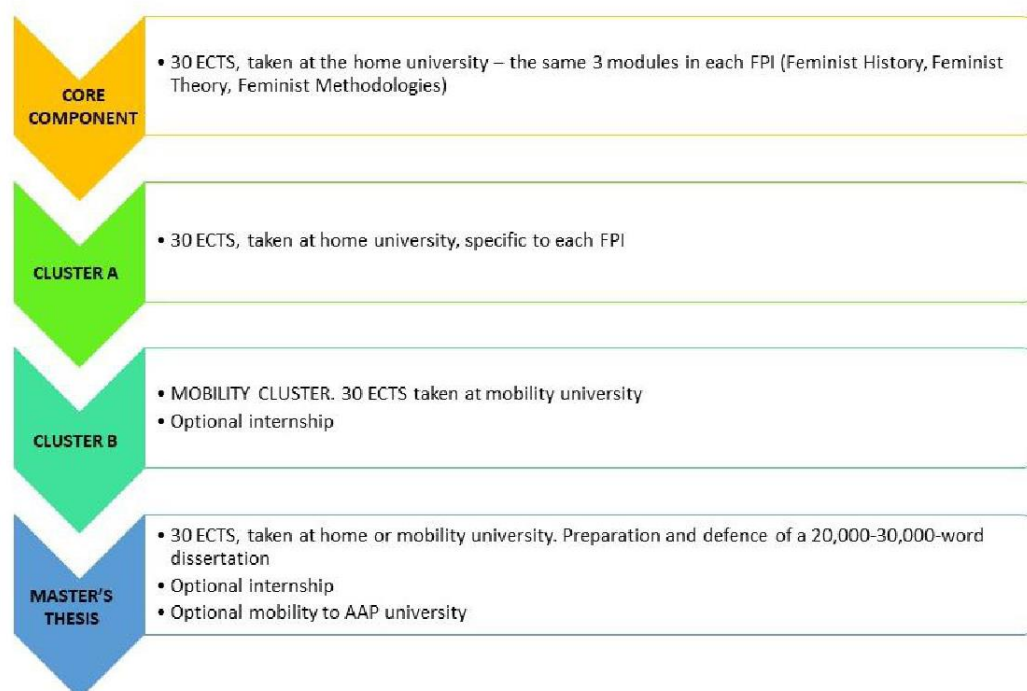
The criterion is fulfilled.

## 1.2 Joint design and delivery

*The joint programme should be offered jointly, involving all cooperating institutions in the design and delivery of the programme.*

### Description

According to the SER, the GEMMA curriculum, implemented successfully for over fifteen years, includes essential components identified by the GEMMA Consortium for a joint European master's course in the ATHENA project (A Thematic Network Project for Women and Gender Studies programmes at universities, research institutes and documentation centres in Europe). These components consist of core and elective clusters at the home university, elective cluster B at the mobility university (with mandatory mobility), and research for the final Master's thesis conducted at either the home or mobility university. The SER states that the curriculum structure has proven effective in delivering the GEMMA programme. An overview of the mobility paths is seen as follows:



During the second year of the GEMMA programme, students can participate in a self-funded research stay at one of the associate academic partners. This aims to provide an opportunity for additional academic exposure beyond the two programme countries already visited in the GEMMA mobility paths. The design and structure of the programme aim to contribute to achieving the programme's objectives. Joint teaching and training activities are implemented to ensure a standard knowledge foundation and maximise student mobility benefits. The Consortium universities have tried aligning their postgraduate programmes and identifying core elements for the first semester modules. Furthermore, collaborative initiatives with industrial partners have been established to offer internship opportunities to students across all partner institutions.

The SER outlines the key features of the GEMMA curriculum focusing on the consortium's design. According to the SER, one of the key features of the GEMMA curriculum is the opportunity for students to engage in optional research stays at associate academic partners during the second year of study. This aims to allow

them to gain additional exposure to different educational environments and broaden their perspectives beyond the two programme countries they have already visited.

Following the documentation provided, GEMMA emphasises joint thesis supervision, providing students with extended expert feedback and the opportunity to expand their networks. The fourth semester is dedicated to the development of a research Master's thesis, which is supervised by both the institution where it will be defended and another involved institution. The thesis can be written and defended in English, Italian, or Spanish, and its defence is recognised by the partner university issuing the degree. Additionally, students conducting research stay at GEMMA-associated partners during the thesis elaboration period and receive additional supervision.

The SER outlines that the programme strives to employ horizontal, democratic teaching methods that are supposed to foster a proactive attitude and critical thinking skills. GEMMA aims to train individuals equipped with interdisciplinary preparation in theories and methods of Women's and Gender Studies, as well as excellent communication skills. The seminar format, self-reflexivity, team teaching/evaluation, and inclusion of case studies and practical assignments contribute to this process.

It is explained that the expertise of the GEMMA faculty enhances the quality of training, with renowned academic teachers from the field of Women's and Gender Studies. The programme also benefits from partnerships with prestigious universities globally as associate academic partners.

Furthermore, the partnership network of GEMMA is designed to enhance the employability of graduates and fosters connections between Europe and the world in the field of women's studies and equal opportunities. The programme provides internship possibilities in various sectors, including public administration, women's studies organisations, companies, academic networks, and NGOs. The involvement of these organisations in the design of the GEMMA curriculum strengthens the ties between academic and non-academic communities.

GEMMA emphasises student networking, facilitating multidimensional exchanges between students, alumni, staff, and guest scholars. Social media profiles, virtual Employability reunions, Graduation Ceremonies, an Alumni Association, inter-cohort courses, mobility opportunities, internships, and participation in the Erasmus Mundus Association for Students and Alumni (EMA) contribute to this networking and promote solidarity, equality, and gender mainstreaming.

Knowledge transfer is a key aspect of the GEMMA programme. It occurs through various channels, including horizontal teaching through inter-cohort courses, exchanges of students and scholars with associate partners, participation in courses and summer schools, academic publishing, open access to students' Master's Theses, and the active involvement of students and alumni with their communities and social environment.

Furthermore, GEMMA acts as a bridge to further research, with joint projects and initiatives aimed at creating a joint PhD programme. The programme has participated in projects such as LLL EDGES and H2020 GRACE, supporting PhD candidates through fellowships and promoting the circulation of knowledge beyond Europe.

### **Experts' evaluation**

The joint programme is a clear outcome of the cooperation of the partners for more than fifteen years. As described in the SER and evidenced during the interviews, there is a long story of collaboration including the active participation of the partners in the ATHENA project strand on "working towards a joint European curriculum in Gender Studies" which supported the design of the programme's curriculum and additional projects (LLL EDGES and H2020 GRACE) related to the subject of the programme and which promote further research on the topic. The panel considers that in addition to the joint design all institutions are involved in the delivery of the programme. There is a double supervision system of the Master's thesis involving a main supervisor at the institution where the thesis will be defended and a support supervisor at the second institution involved.

Based on the discussions on site the panel believes that there is a spirit of shared ownership and mutual contribution to a truly joint programme.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

### 1.3 Cooperation agreement

*The terms and conditions of the joint programme should be laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement should in particular cover the following issues:*

- *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
- *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income etc.)*
- *Admission and selection procedures for students*
- *Mobility of students and teachers*
- *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.*

### Description

According to the GEMMA Consortium cooperation agreement (Annex 2 of the documentation), the Consortium has established an integrated programme of 120 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credit points in the area of Women's and Gender Studies including a compulsory period of mobility for students from the partner institution chosen as home university to the mobility university for a period of at least one semester and no longer than two semesters. The coordinating institution is the University of Granada, and at each partner university there will be a scientific coordinator responsible for the programme. The agreement consists of different points of joint programme regulations including:

- Degrees awarded
- Organization of the Consortium
- Students related issues, among others:
  - Admission and selection of students
  - Registration and enrolment and language policy (Languages of instruction: Italian, Spanish or English)
  - Examinations regulations including the boards of examiners
  - Double degree delivery
  - University facilities
  - Appeals and complaints.
- Study programme (Annex 1 and 2 of the cooperation agreement)
- Mobility of students and staff
- Quality assurance and evaluation of the programme
- Financial arrangements (Annex 3 of the cooperation agreement).

**Experts' evaluation**

The panel considers that in general the Consortium agreement covers adequately the terms and conditions to provide a joint programme. It is comprehensive and well structured. Nevertheless, some aspects are described in a schematic way or refer to the local regulations, like the student's assessment methods and the recognition of credits. Clearly, the agreement balances the need for regulations that are specific enough to regulate required aspects while at the same time respecting diversity of the partners. On the long run and to further deepen the cooperation, these aspects could be further described, included as links or annexes **(Finding 1)**.

**Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.

**2. Learning outcomes****2.1 Level**

*The intended learning outcomes should align with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications framework(s).*

**Description**

Given the fact that the consortium consists of multiple partners and the curriculum's structure of the GEMMA programme draws on nationally accredited curricula (see section 4.1 of the report), the consortium's documentation includes annexes that outline the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of these curricula based on the respective national qualifications' framework of the partner university. These describe the intended learning outcomes on the programme level for each curriculum at the partner university. In addition, the annexes include an overview of the ILOs on the programme level for the GEMMA master's programme. A detailed description of the learning outcomes is provided under 2.2 disciplinary field.

According to the SER, the master's programme aims at level 7 following the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

**Experts' evaluation**

The study programme's concept is supported by all participating universities in terms of content, both theoretically and methodologically. In the opinion of the panel of experts, the theory-guided and empirical examination of the phenomena of gender studies is coherently designed and considers the need for increased methodological training, especially at the University of York.

The described learning outcomes meet the requirements for a master's level and the defined qualification goals. The integration of the study contents is ensured in the students' required transfer from one university to another within the framework of the study programme because of the prudent organization of the curriculum. The curricula cover meaningful areas of gender studies and especially in literary studies. There is cooperation between the various academic focal points at the individual university locations. The compulsory elective areas create room for individual focal points which is clearly supported by the panel of experts.

**Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 2.2 Disciplinary field

*The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills, and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).*

### Description

The documentation submitted includes an annex which focuses on the intended learning outcomes at the programme level of the GEMMA programme. The document differentiates between knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills, and transferable skills. The list provided includes a total number of 35 intended learning outcomes at the programme level.

Regarding **knowledge and understanding (ILO 1-7)**, the GEMMA programme aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of gender studies. This includes advanced knowledge of contemporary gender theories, the application of gender in research, interdisciplinary aspects of Gender Studies, and the historical and current status of women in society. Students are encouraged to explore various branches of feminist theorising and the intersection of gender with other forms of inequality. They also gain an understanding of the role of gender in power and politics and the critical examination of traditional knowledge production in gender scholarship.

Regarding **intellectual skills (ILO 8-15)**, the GEMMA programme equips students with skills to engage in key debates in gender studies. They learn to analyse and evaluate gender issues by considering intersectionality with other axes of difference. Students develop the ability to apply different theoretical perspectives, engage in coherent arguments, and think critically and independently about gender in professional and political contexts. They are prepared to conduct interdisciplinary research and evaluate diverse interpretations of events. Students also analyse the social, ethical, and political implications of feminist research and critically analyse cultural texts to uncover forms of inequality and oppression.

In terms of **practical skills (ILO 16-24)**, the GEMMA programme provides students with the skills to access, extract, and critically engage with relevant materials related to gender-based issues. They learn to evaluate research styles and strategies and present their work in different formats. The programme emphasises the value of feminist work and gendered analyses in various contexts. Students are prepared to pursue a PhD or engage in research, navigate different university environments, and contribute to gender equality activism and policy-making.

Regarding **transferable skills (ILO 25-35)**, the GEMMA programme enables students to investigate complex issues using a gendered perspective and a wide range of evidence. Effective communication in written and oral forms is emphasised, along with proficiency in communication and information technology. Students gain a critical understanding of research processes and methodologies and develop the ability to undertake independent research. The programme also promotes disciplined work under time pressure, giving and receiving constructive criticism, and self-reflective practices for personal and professional development. For students in equal opportunity institutions, the programme facilitates the transfer of knowledge to the external working environment.

### Experts' evaluation

Overall, the qualification objectives and their implementation in the curriculum are purposeful and appropriate. The examination system is fit for purpose and ensures an appropriate competence orientation. The personality development as well as the social commitment are to be promoted among other things by the qualification goals mentioned in the courses and on programme level.

The qualification goals and learning outcomes of the GEMMA Master's programme have been sensibly developed and constantly updated over the past years. The goal of a theory-guided and methodologically sound examination of the various socio-political aspects of feminist-oriented social analyses leads to a broadening of knowledge and enables the understanding of scientific statements and a reflective application of experiential values and knowledge. The scientific-theoretical fundamentals serve as a scientific foundation for the courses of study. The promotion and development of the students' personalities and their social commitment is promoted in an exemplary manner.

The explicit structure of the learning outcomes differentiating knowledge, transferable, intellectual, and practical skills provide a clear impression of the broadness of the approach of the programme without neglecting the required deepening of the application.

The expert group recognizes a particular high number of intended learning outcomes. While they are clearly appropriate regarding the level of a Master's programme and well fitting for the field of study, of course, this creates a challenge for the achievement of so many outcomes by all graduates. The panel recognizes the challenge resulting from the (required) broadness of the consortium to cover the field in its many facets, and thus understands the tendency to jointly agree on many learning outcomes. The structured approach towards different types of outcomes is helpful and provides structure, and at the same time allows a differentiated view. Consequently, at the level of definitions, all these learning outcomes fit the programme and are well defined while in the future development of the programme a simpler structure for the general learning outcomes might help the programme to further improve (**Finding 2**). Encouraging evidence for this was presented during the interviews with students and graduates as the panel learned that they can clearly identify a core of outcomes of the programme based on transferable skills, methods and intellectual approaches of their fellow students.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 2.3 Achievement

*The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.*

## Description

The SER outlines how the programme affects the further development of students and visiting scholars, how students' performance will increase during the programme, and how language and interculturality of graduates will be fostered within the GEMMA programme.

According to this description, GEMMA graduates acquire a range of intellectual, practical, and transferable skills through their training in gender studies and various specialisation opportunities. These skills include improved critical thinking, effective communication of complex arguments both orally and in written form, and the ability to give and receive constructive criticism, as indicated in 5.2 of this report. These abilities align with the priorities set by the European Union for implementing the Paris Declaration. Moreover, the programme equips graduates with the capability to critically apply a gender perspective to diverse issues and tasks, fostering a heightened sensitivity to gender and other forms of inequality. As a result, GEMMA graduates become advocates for gender equality and gender mainstreaming in their respective environments, making them genuine agents of democratic processes, especially in these crucial times. The mobility component of GEMMA, which exposes students to different European and extra-European university settings, also enhances their



self-esteem and language skills. Additionally, regular Employability reunions facilitate networking opportunities with industry partners and experts, further cultivating students' entrepreneurial spirit. These events are also designed to introduce new cultures of "employability" that prioritise equality and respect within the private sector, NGOs, and public administrations, where GEMMA students have already secured employment and will continue to do so. The presence of GEMMA alumni at these events fosters mentorship ties between students and graduates, with the support of each partner institution.

According to the SER, the GEMMA classroom consists of an international, multicultural, and interdisciplinary group of students, often comprising individuals from up to seven different nationalities, who are chosen through a competitive selection process. Following the description, the GEMMA classroom's intercultural composition has significant benefits for both students and scholars.

As stated, students are presented with a challenging opportunity to learn from one another in various ways, encompassing cultural, educational, and disciplinary differences that each student brings to the class. They enhance their language skills and learn to navigate different academic environments and collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds. Moreover, students' creative abilities are nurtured as they are encouraged to write blogs, personal narratives, and gender-sensitive texts, such as advertisements, social awareness campaigns, and screenplays.

On the other hand, faculty members face the task of addressing and reconciling the needs of exceptional students with different cultural and academic backgrounds. They must propose ways to transcend these differences in research and intellectual debates. Consequently, students and teachers collaboratively explore new areas of interest, tap into the interdisciplinary potential of the working environment, and develop innovative pedagogical practices specific to an intercultural classroom.

It is stated that visiting scholars, including renowned experts in women's and gender studies, have an ongoing impact on the quality of teaching and supervision the GEMMA staff provides. This exchange with visiting scholars contributes to GEMMA knowledge's continuous production and evolution, making the programme truly unique. The programme emphasises constant feedback from associate industrial partners, ensuring that students and faculty understand the demands of the labour market and non-academic environments.

To further strengthen this synergy, optional internships are offered to GEMMA students during the second year of their training. Additionally, regular networking opportunities are provided through Employability reunions at all partners.

According to the information provided, GEMMA strongly emphasises raising intercultural awareness among its students. The programme is specifically designed to heighten awareness of intersecting inequalities such as gender, race, class, religion, and disability. This intercultural awareness is fostered through daily interactions in GEMMA's multicultural classrooms and through close collaboration with European and extra-European partners. Additionally, non-mandatory mobility opportunities for students and scholars further expand exposure to diverse teaching and learning cultures, enabling students to engage with various feminist and gender analysis frameworks beyond Western perspectives. According to the SER, an online programme developed by GEMMA's transatlantic partners, and the extensive range of internships offered also contribute to this objective.

It is stated that GEMMA also plays a crucial role in enhancing students' language skills. The programme is delivered in three official languages: English, Spanish, and Italian. Students can choose from three main language combinations (English + Spanish, English + Italian, Spanish + Italian). Optional courses in English are also available at UNIBO and UGR, allowing students to master three of the programme's languages. In addition to the official languages, students are encouraged to learn local languages in partner countries where the programme is taught in English, such as Dutch in Utrecht and Polish in Lodz. Furthermore, students who opt

for mobility to GEMMA's Brazilian partner institution have the opportunity to immerse themselves in Portuguese. The option to write their master's thesis in any of the three official languages (English, Spanish, Italian) further contributes to developing students' language skills.

### Experts' evaluation

The programme succeeds in different ways to demonstrate achievement. The panel carefully reviewed a variety of final thesis and student work all confirming the achievement of the master's level. At the same time numerous learning outcomes cover practical skills as well as transferable skills. Consequently, this topic was carefully reflected in the interviews on site and with regards how the assessment takes place. Most of all discussions with students and graduates provided clear confirmation that also these learning outcomes are well achieved. On the long run, the programme might benefit from a reduced amount of learning outcomes allowing a clearer definition of what makes a GEMMA graduate unique (**see Finding 2**).

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 2.4 Regulated professions

*If relevant for the specific joint programme, the minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC, or relevant common trainings frameworks established under the Directive, should be taken into account.*

*The joint degree is exempt from the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC. For this reason, the criterion is not applicable.*

## 3. Study programme

### 3.1 Curriculum

*The structure and content of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

### Description

The GEMMA programme is a 24-month programme and consists of 120 ECTS. It is structured into four semesters. The first semester (30 ECTS) includes core component modules common to all Consortium universities. During the specialisation phase in semesters 2 and 3, students will choose from various elective modules at home and partner universities, deepening their specialisation. The last semester (30 ECTS) is dedicated to preparing and defending the master's thesis, which can be written in any of the three official languages of instruction (Spanish, English, Italian).

According to the SER, the GEMMA programme consists of academic core components and elective modules, providing students with a comprehensive education in Women's and Gender Studies. The core component modules focus on essential knowledge in theory, history, and methodology, while the elective modules cover a wide range of research areas in the field.

The **first semester** is dedicated to the core component, which includes three modules: Feminist Theory (10 ECTS), Feminist Methodology (10 ECTS), and Feminist History (10 ECTS). Feminist History is divided into two sections: Women's Movements Worldwide and Feminist Historiography, which explore the history of women's movements and feminisms from a global perspective and delve into the theoretical and methodological aspects of feminist historiography.

It is said that feminist theory familiarises students with modern feminist thought and its relevance to culture, politics, and knowledge production in Women's and Gender Studies. Feminist methodology introduces students to key methodological debates within the field, including quantitative and qualitative methods, discourse analysis, comparative research, intersectionality, ethics, and self-reflexivity.

During the **second and third semesters**, students have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of elective modules offered by partner universities. These modules allow students to specialise in specific areas of Women's and Gender Studies or pursue a more interdisciplinary path. The elective modules cover various topics such as gender and health practices, women's popular culture, gender and nationalism, feminist cultural activism, men and masculinities, violence against women, and postcoloniality.

Following the SER and the annexes, students have the following options in the **second semester** :

The **University of Granada** in Spain offers courses such as "Enfoques feministas en el análisis del discurso: lengua y literatura," "Género y paz," and "Recursos bibliográficos documentales para los estudios de las mujeres".

The **University of Bologna** in Italy has compulsory courses like "Letteratura Italiana delle donne" and elective courses such as "English Women's Literature" and "Spanish Women's Literature".

**Central European University** in Austria offers courses such as "Affect Theory," "Gender and Nationalism", and "Communism and Gender."

The **University of Lodz** in Poland offers courses like "Gender and Welfare State: International Perspective" and "Introduction to Gender in Postmodern Visual Culture".

The **University of Oviedo** in Spain provides courses on topics like "Género y educación" and "Violencia contra las mujeres: Análisis psicológico y social".

The **University of Utrecht** in the Netherlands offers courses such as "Advanced Introduction to Gender Research" and "Feminist Approaches to Art and Affect".

Lastly, the **University of York** in the United Kingdom has courses on "Approaching Women's Studies", "Gender and Violence", and "Feminism and Sexuality".

In the **third semester**, students can take elective courses according to their mobility path. Following the annexes, these courses allow students to delve deep into various aspects of gender studies, feminist theory, and women's studies. Whether exploring the representation of women in literature, analysing the intersections of gender with other social categories, or examining the impact of gender on different aspects of society, these courses equip students with the knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to understand and navigate complex gender issues in today's world.

The **University of Granada** offers courses such as "Gender, Art and Literature: The Representation of Women in Literary and Visual Discourse" which explores the portrayal of women in various artistic mediums. "Gender, Culture and Development: Africa" examines the intersection of gender, culture, and development in an African context. The course "Women in Classical Antiquity" delves into the representation and role of women in ancient societies. "Feminist Research: Case Studies (II)" focuses on in-depth case studies of femi-

nist research. "Medicalisation and suffering. Women who use legal and illegal drugs" examines the medicalisation of women's experiences with legal and illegal drugs. "Women's Education in Contemporary World" explores the state of women's education in the present-day global context. "Género y Arqueología" investigates the relationship between gender and archaeology, while "Género, cuerpo y mujeres en la historia de Occidente: prácticas de salud y discursos científicos" explores the history of women's bodies, health practices, and scientific discourses.

At the **University of Bologna**, the GEMMA programme includes elective courses divided into two parts. The first part offers courses such as "The Revision of the Body in Women's Literature", which examines how the female body is portrayed in literature. Students can choose one course from two options: "Women's Popular Culture: Women's Travel Literature" or "Women's Popular Culture: Critical Utopias" which explore different aspects of women's popular culture. The second part of the elective courses covers topics like "Women and Law", "Women Painters in Western Art History", "Violence and Gender in Ancient Germanic Literature," "Women and Science", "Methods, Sources, Research, and Documentation for Women's Studies", "Women and Social Sciences", and "Japanese Literature and Culture within a Gender Perspective".

The **Central European University** offers a variety of courses within its Gender Studies programme. These include "Affect Theory," which explores the role of emotions and affect in understanding gender dynamics. "Commodification of the Human Body" focuses on the ways in which human bodies are commodified and the gender implications. "Communism and Gender" examines the intersection of communism and gender politics. "Feminist Biopolitics" explores how feminist theory engages with biopolitical issues. "Gender and Nationalism" delves into the complex relationship between gender and nationalism. "Gender, Labor Markets, Neoliberalism" explores the impact of neoliberalism on gender and labour markets. "Gender, Race, Class: Global Inequalities" analyses global inequalities through the lens of gender, race, and class. "Gendered Memories of the Holocaust" focuses on the gendered aspects of Holocaust memories. "Narrating Worlds" explores the intersections of narrative, gender, and identity. "Performing Arts, Research, and the Public" examines the role of performing arts in public discourse. "Popular Culture" analyses the influence of popular culture on gender dynamics. "Reimagining Social Movements" explores how social movements can be reimagined through a gender lens. "Sexological Subjects" examines the historical and contemporary discourses around sex and sexuality. Finally, "The Nature of Performativity" delves into the concept of performativity in gender studies.

The **University of Lodz** offers courses that cover various aspects of gender studies. "Gender Representations in Advertising" explores how gender is represented in advertising. "The Body in Feminist Theory and Practice" focuses on the body as a site of feminist theory and activism. "War and Imperialism: Feminist and Postcolonial Perspectives on Nationalism" examines the intersections of war, imperialism, feminism, and postcolonialism. "Gender & Academic and Creative Writing" explores the relationship between gender and academic and creative writing. "Intersectionality and Audience Analysis in Feminist Classroom, Part II" delves into the concept of intersectionality and its application in feminist classrooms. "La Frontera and the New Mestiza Consciousness: Race, Ethnicity and Gender at the US-Mexican Border" explores issues of race, ethnicity, and gender at the US-Mexican border.

The **University of Oviedo** offers a variety of courses within its Gender Studies programme. These courses include "Nation and Gender", which examines the intersection of gender and nationhood. "Work Placement" provides students with practical experience in a gender-related work setting. "Space, Body, Gender" explores the relationship between space, the body, and gender. "Specialised Research Seminar" focuses on conducting specialised research in gender studies. "Women in European Texts: Comparative Perspectives" examines the representation of women in European literature from a comparative standpoint. "Women, Films, and the Visual Arts" explores the role of women in films and visual arts. "Postcolonialism, Diasporas, and Representation" delves into postcolonial theory and its implications for gender and representation.

The GEMMA programme at the **University of Utrecht** offers a diverse range of courses. These include "NOISE Summer School/Research School I", which provides an introduction to gender research. "Advanced Introduction to Gender Research" delves deeper into advanced topics in gender research. "Contemporary Feminist Debates" explores current debates within feminist theory. "Research Design I RMA Gender" focuses on research design in gender studies. "Contemporary Cultural Theory" covers various theories and approaches within cultural studies. "Feminist Research Practice" provides practical training in feminist research methods. "Feminist Approaches to Art and Affect" examines the intersections of feminism, art, and affect theory. "Somatechnics: Bodies and Power in a Digital Age" explores the relationship between bodies, power, and technology. "Issues in Postcoloniality" analyses key issues in postcolonial theory. "Theory and Critical Research I" provides an introduction to theory and critical research methods. "Religion and Secularism: Postsecular Perspectives" explores the intersections of religion, secularism, and gender. "Feminist and Queer Studies: Special Topics" covers specialised topics within feminist and queer studies.

The **University of York** offers a range of courses in both the Autumn and Spring terms. Some of the courses offered in the Autumn term include "Approaching Women's Studies" which provides an introduction to the field of women's studies. "Feminist Cultural Activism" explores the role of cultural activism in promoting feminist causes. "Gender and Violence" examines the complex relationship between gender and violence. "Qualitative Methods" focuses on qualitative research methods used in gender studies. "Quantitative Methods and Data Analysis" covers quantitative research methods and data analysis techniques. "Gender and Migration" explores the intersections of gender and migration. "Feminist Histories - Feminist Historiographies" delves into the history of feminism and feminist historiography. "Debating Global Literary Culture 1800-Present" examines global literary culture from a gender perspective. "Understanding Social Media" explores the role of social media in shaping gender dynamics. In the Spring term, courses such as "Gender and Development" and "Gender, Power, and Global Politics" are offered.

The **fourth semester** is dedicated to the preparation and defence of the master's thesis. Students receive joint supervision and have the option to conduct fieldwork under the guidance of a third tutor if they choose to do a third mobility to an Associate Academic Partner. The programme also offers internship opportunities during the second year of study, allowing students to gain practical experience in different programme countries.

GEMMA aims to provide additional training on gender issues through seminars, workshops, conferences, and online courses. Guest lecturers from associate partner institutions contribute to the curriculum by introducing non-Eurocentric perspectives and methodologies. The programme also collaborates with online platforms and institutions to offer virtual gender training and expand access to knowledge.

GEMMA strives to foster international collaboration and exchange by comparing perspectives from different European and non-European countries, as well as national and local contexts. The programme's involvement with online lectures and virtual exchanges further promotes the dissemination and democratisation of knowledge in the field of Women's and Gender Studies.

### **Experts' evaluation**

The structure of the programme with its division into core components and elective modules is convincing in its entirety. From an expert's point of view, the diversity of content in the elective modules is particularly noteworthy. Different universities focus on distinct topics which are reflected in teaching and research. This ensures that students gain a valuable educational experience, and it clearly can be seen as a strength of GEMMA.

Within this complex diversity, aiming to give students orientation, the programme coordinators regularly exchange information about the teaching content. The students' perspective and experience also plays a major role in the continuous development of the curriculum. In addition, during the site visit it became clear that the

decolonisation of the curriculum is a currently major concern for the participating universities. The panel of experts clearly supports these discussions and respective future developments of the curriculum.

As GEMMA acts as a beacon for the realisation of European values, public engagement is of great importance. For universities such as CEU or Lodz, the commitment to GEMMA is per se also a political statement; in other locations, GEMMA is central to the development of equality plans structurally embedded in the strategy of the universities.

So far, organising conferences and workshops is only sporadically credited. To be able to give students - in addition to the (yet limited) internships offered - a deeper insight into practice-oriented work, the panel of experts considers an even stronger integration of academic events into the curriculum to be of additional value.

In view of the diverse learning outcomes presented by the programme, the panel of experts suggests that this list be made more precise. At present, the Learning Outcomes could appear as a collection of potential outcomes corresponding to the highly commendable “à la carte”-structure of GEMMA. Through exchanges with students, it became clear that they achieve their goals through tailored monitoring and close guidance. An adjustment of the Learning Outcomes could underline this very good result (**see Finding 2**).

Particularly noteworthy is the multicultural approach of the study programme, which supports cosmopolitan and critical thinking. The curriculum is characterized by an acquisition perspective in practically oriented professional fields as well as by a scientific foundation that can be further pursued in the context of a university career, as mentioned before. The study programme provides adequate forms of teaching. Internships are provided and open up various career options. However, they are offered on a voluntary basis and are not part of the credited curriculum (with one exception). They must be organized by the students themselves and – which is particularly difficult abroad – financed. Clearly, this point offers room for future development as it does not seem to be a joint approach to internships within GEMMA yet. Recognizing the challenge of diverse regulations at different partners, it is particularly the strength of the network that should allow GEMMA to find a solution how to integrate credited internships in a coordinated way (**Finding 3**).

The active involvement of students in teaching has been successful. There is room for self-designed studies within the framework of the possibilities. The curriculum is well thought-out, balanced and sensible. The emphasized research orientation is well founded, especially through the teaching of research methods in several modules. The curriculum also enables students to develop a profile by choosing a research field. There is a good balance between lectures, seminars and research workshops. Altogether the panel of experts believes that the curriculum of the programme is well designed across the different partners and tailored towards the outcomes.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

### 3.2 Credits

*The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.*

## Description

According to the annexes provided, the GEMMA programme offers modules with credit values in subsequent semesters that differ across partner institutions, ranging from 4 to 10 ECTS, with some institutions consistently offering 5 ECTS. Students have to take 30 ECTS every semester.

In the programme's first semester, all modules have a standard credit value of 10 ECTS. However, the credit values of modules in the following semesters vary depending on the partner institution where the courses are taken. All modules at the University of Granada are worth 5 ECTS, indicating a lower credit load than the first semester. Moving to the University of Bologna, modules have a credit value of 6 ECTS.. At the Central European University in Austria, the credit values of modules vary, with some courses carrying 4 ECTS while others are worth 8 ECTS. The University of Lodz follows a similar pattern to the University of Granada, with modules having a credit value of 5 ECTS.

Similarly, modules at the University of Oviedo have a credit value of 5 ECTS. The University of Utrecht aligns with the credit value of 5 ECTS, maintaining consistency with the University of Lodz and the University of Oviedo. Lastly, the University of York stands out by offering modules worth 10 ECTS.

### Experts' evaluation

From the expert's point of view, the distribution of credits within the programme is well defined and comprehensible. However, different universities and countries have different credit regulations about the connected workload (and required assignments). During the site visit, the panel of experts learned that this topic is the subject of regular exchange between coordinators and teachers but also students. While there is a common understanding of the work done and the time required, and that the translation and recognition of the different regulations is practicable, there seems to be room to increase transparency. It seems advisable to document the common idea for awarding ECTS and make it accessible to students. The different credits could be translated into different performance requirements (e.g., additional essays/presentations/posters for higher-credit courses) (**Finding 4**).

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 3.3 Workload

*A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the FQ-EHEA); for joint doctorates there is no credit range specified.*

*The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.*

### Description

Students are required to earn 30 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits per semester. These credits are obtained by taking mandatory and elective courses offered by the universities. Each semester, students must complete a specific number of modules. In the first semester, all students are required to take joint courses, leading to mandatory courses at the home university in the second semester and elective courses in the third semester. In the fourth semester, 30 ECTS credits will be awarded upon completing the master's thesis.

### Experts' evaluation

The workload for the programme is clearly and systematically presented and corresponds to the regulations for a joint master's programme. The degree is awarded after completing 120 ECTS which is well in the typical range for master's degrees. The monitoring of the average time to complete the programme is well done

through intense supervision and assistance enabling the staff to track students individually and the panel found no reason for concern in this regard.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 4. Admission and recognition

### 4.1 Admission

*The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the programme's level and discipline.*

### Description

It was stated in the SER that the GEMMA programme ensures the recruitment of the best candidates through a transparent and objective selection procedure. The selection process occurs twice a year, with a Call for applications for Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders in December and a second call for self-financed students in April.

According to the SER, the number of applications and their quality has consistently increased over the past 16 editions of GEMMA. To accommodate the international nature of the programme and the high number of applications, an entirely online application procedure has been implemented since 2013. The online application tool has been tested and improved to ensure a smooth process. Applicants upload the required documents and receive an automated confirmation when their application is complete. Referees receive a direct link to attach their recommendation letters.

After submission, applications undergo eligibility checks by the GEMMA Coordination Office and are then assessed by the Consortium on a 0-100 scale. Shortlisted candidates participate in Skype interviews, and the final decision on student selection is made during the online Steering Committee meeting.

Applicants are encouraged to indicate their preferences for mobility paths in the application form, considering their specialization and language skills. The GEMMA Coordination administrative personnel screens applications for technical eligibility criteria and then passes them to the Steering Committee, comprising Scientific Coordinators from all participating universities. Each Coordinator evaluates applications, with priority given to applicants who have chosen their university as the first choice for their home university. Candidates are assessed based on various criteria and receive points according to the evaluation form's grading scale.

Due to the large number of applications, local evaluation panels are formed within each university to select the top candidates. The panels recommend applications to other Consortium institutions if they are unsuitable for their institution but could be of interest elsewhere. Since 2013, online interviews have been conducted with shortlisted candidates as the final step in selecting scholarship holders.

To apply, applicants must possess at least a University bachelor's degree (or equivalent), have proficiency in the language of instruction at their chosen GEMMA home and mobility institution and complete all sections of the online application form. Required documents include a CV, diploma and official transcript, first-degree average grade certificate, language proficiency certificates, a cover letter explaining academic and personal reasons for entering the programme, recommendation letters, and a passport copy.

### Experts' evaluation



The students applying to GEMMA have a clear international orientation, with a significant proportion of students coming through the Erasmus Mundus platform. The panel of experts can confirm that GEMMA's admission process is accessible, user-friendly, and efficient. The application gathers enough information about the students to facilitate the selection process and the interviews favour the necessary completion in accordance with the established criteria. The students' assessment of the admission process during the interviews on site was also positive.

In the application, students should include not only the subjects but also the mobility pathway within the programme. Regarding the choice of subjects when applying, GEMMA offers students a variety of tools such as information on the website, a handbook, orientation courses, contact with the organisation, etc.

Firstly, the GEMMA website provides information on the academic orientation and specialisation of each university, making it easier for candidates to design their learning programme. Secondly, GEMMA provides students with a handbook to facilitate the admission process, although this document is sometimes out of date, causing some setbacks.

Thirdly, GEMMA provides candidates with a contact address to answer their questions about the content of the courses, and responses are usually prompt. In addition, the coordinators at each university are available for questions and, if they prefer, they can contact the central coordinator of the programme. This contact is highly appreciated.

Finally, some universities such as Utrecht or Granada offer courses to guide candidates in the choice of subjects and in the design of the itinerary in the admission process; however, this is not extensive to all the universities that make up the consortium.

Regarding the choice of universities in the consortium in the admission process, GEMMA offers information, guidance, and advice to candidates. However, although in principle all combinations of universities are possible, there are extra-academic obstacles that make this process difficult in practice. Thus, the academic calendar of each of the universities is different and sometimes there are imbalances that prevent the timely incorporation into the mobility university. Likewise, the organisational culture of each university affects the time without teaching for the preparation of the Master's thesis. Knowing this information in advance would make it easier for candidates to choose their pathway and would facilitate the admission process. Since there is good knowledge based on experiences finding a way to increase transparency in the beginning might be helpful to students.

Another element that hinders some combinations of universities is the management of student visas, especially for non-European students. Although this management is not in the hands of GEMMA, its international character and previous experiences can be of help to applicants, especially in the choice of the mobility university. Finally, a last added obstacle is accommodation, especially in the cities of some of the universities in the consortium. Perhaps some guidance in this respect would also facilitate the choice of itinerary. Alumni social networks are serving as a way to guide the application of some candidates in these aspects.

It can be concluded that the admission requirements and selection procedures are fully appropriate in light of the level and discipline of the programme. Information about the process is accessible and the selection criteria do not cause any problems, and any doubts that arise during the application process are quickly resolved.

Some aspects for improvement are related to the updating of the information offered through the website, such as the handbook, or the extension of the orientation courses when filling in the application form to all universities.

## **Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 4.2 Recognition

*Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies (including recognition of prior learning) should be applied in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.*

### Description

The partner universities in the GEMMA programme mutually recognize the successfully passed examinations from other partner universities. To acknowledge the mobility period, the mobility university issues a certificate to each student, indicating the courses attended, academic performance, and the number of ECTS credits obtained. The responsibility for providing clear transcripts of grades and final degree certificates lies with the awarding institution.

It is explained that the consortium has developed a common academic calendar, a grade conversion framework, and rules for the elaboration, presentation, and evaluation of master's theses. Continuous assessment is the preferred evaluation method. The defence of the master's thesis follows the rules and regulations of the university where the thesis is submitted, and the outcome of the defence is recognized by the partner university issuing the degree.

The recognition of study performances and the conversion of grades between participating universities are carried out through an integrated study programme based on the principle of equivalence and in accordance with the cooperation agreement. The recognition of qualifications and periods of study outside the consortium's universities, including recognition of prior learning, adheres to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and related documents. The recognition process is coordinated and documented by each partner institution, with the decision made by the study programme board.

### Experts' evaluation

The recognition of credits within the programme is well regulated and practiced through its joint implementation. Recognition of competencies and qualifications outside the consortium builds on the respective structures at the participating institutions in line with the Lisbon recognition convention. Interviews with students found the use of these options of limited relevance but not unheard of.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 5. Learning, teaching and assessment

### 5.1 Learning and teaching

*The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially in view of potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.*

#### Description

The SER highlights two essential components in the teaching and learning process within the GEMMA programme, namely the innovative teaching methods and the internships.

#### Innovative teaching methods

According to the SER, the GEMMA programme includes unique gender training characteristics, as highlighted in the final report of the EU Socrates-sponsored TUNING GENDER project. These include a close connection between content training and students' experiences, innovative teaching methods focused on teamwork and collective group experience, a women and minorities-friendly atmosphere, openness to new modes of thinking, and a non-traditional approach to education. These principles align with GEMMA's joint teaching and research methodologies, making it an exemplary programme in gender studies.

GEMMA's teaching approaches are collaborative, critical, interdisciplinary, comparative, multi-sited, and performative. The Consortium developed and agreed upon these methods through their collaboration in the ATHENA network and subsequent initiatives by AOIFE and ATGENDER. The accumulated experience of the Consortium, along with other institutions offering degrees in Women's and Gender Studies, has been made public through various publications such as the Teaching with Gender book series, which focuses on teaching differently and has been supported by the European Commission's Erasmus Thematic Networks Projects.

In terms of teaching methodologies, GEMMA states to employ innovative approaches in the following ways:

- Courses are conducted in small, multinational groups, promoting collaborative and comparative teaching in a learner-centred environment. Teachers act as facilitators of democratic discussions rather than authoritative figures.
- Students are encouraged to read and provide feedback on their own and fellow students' papers and projects, fostering constructive criticism and self-reflection.
- Many partner universities adopt team-teaching methods, combining senior and junior scholars to enrich the classroom with intergenerational knowledge.
- Case studies are systematically included in course designs to enhance interdisciplinary training. Faculty research or invited scholars' research is shared with students, sparking discussions and reflecting on its relevance to their own research experiences.
- Guest lecturers from associate partner institutions contribute non-Eurocentric perspectives to the curriculum.
- Practical assignments, such as organizing conferences or writing project proposals based on real calls, are incorporated to develop students' transferable skills.
- Skype webinars are utilized to provide opportunities for interactive exchange and collaboration among the GEMMA community, including students and alumni who cannot attend in person.

- Feminist Research & Teaching Laboratories, such as Doing Gender and Designing Gender Research, offer students the chance to explore their fields of interest and engage in empirical research and critical analysis.
- GEMMA strives to provide virtual gender training opportunities through online activities and collaborations with associate partners.

It is stated that these innovative teaching methodologies contribute to GEMMA's commitment to feminist research and teaching, equipping students with the necessary tools to become producers of knowledge in an interdisciplinary and critical manner.

### Internships

It is stated that GEMMA will provide several internship opportunities to its students during the second year of their training and in each Field Placement Institution (FPI). These internships are offered through collaborations with various public and private institutions that collaborate with GEMMA. It is mentioned that these institutions include NGOs and networks such as EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network), Acción en Red, ASC InSieme, Kyra, Lodzki Szlak Kobiet, and others. It is noted that public administrations like the Equality Units of the University, Diputación and Ayuntamiento de Granada, as well as professional associations like AIDDA, and private companies like HERA and Espora, would also be involved in providing internship opportunities. It is explained that these internships would cover different sectors where GEMMA graduates already found employment opportunities in the past. As part of the proposal, it was suggested that virtual employability events be institutionalized at each partner institution to enhance students' networking possibilities with industrial partners.

### **Experts' evaluation**

From the experts' point of view, the universities that make up the consortium have been leaders in the incorporation of new pedagogies in the field of feminist and gender studies, as shown by the publications, acknowledgements and projects mentioned above. The structure of the programme allows an exchange of subject specific content and field specific developments.

Despite the heterogeneity in the teaching methods, the training, competences, and tools that students leave the GEMMA programme with are assimilable regardless of the chosen mobility pathway. The academic programme, the methodology, and the assessments are adapted to the demands and characteristics of the students, and this was consistently confirmed not only by the teaching staff but also by the students.

The coordinators and those responsible for each university have frequent bilateral relations with their colleagues in other universities to adjust the specificities that the students need and to solve any particular issue that may arise also with regards to the respective teaching methods.

However, (despite some team teaching) the consortium does not yet have structured spaces for sharing experiences among teaching staff, for training. The mobility of teaching staff is limited, and this does not favour the sharing of teaching experiences. Good practices come from students who share their experience in other universities in the consortium, or at the time of co-direction of theses, or in informal meetings between those who share research projects. General conferences and workshops also serve as a way to present their teaching experiences, although they are not specifically addressed to the GEMMA faculty. The panel believes that some synergies could be found when further developing ways of mutual exchange on teaching methods and approaches within the consortium. The good practices developed in some universities of the consortium can be applied to other universities as well. Some elements that could favour this joint growth in favour of the programme are the debate on teaching methodologies, general teacher training based on the online format, or the promotion of teacher mobility.

Students consider the programme to be theory-based and research-oriented. Except in some universities, such as Granada, for example, where there is greater interaction with public administrations, in the rest, the research profile prevails. The optional internship programme offered to students in public and private organisations is still limited, sometimes not compatible with the schedule of the semester and (except for one partner university) not credited. As mentioned above, further developing the currently optional internships in a fully credited element of the programme will also contribute to practice oriented learning and applicable skill development.

It can be concluded that the programme is designed to correspond to the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied are appropriate to achieve them. The catering to the diversity of students and their needs are a clear strength of the programme due to its tailor-made nature.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

### 5.2 Assessment

*The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.*

### Description

It is stated in the SER that the assessment of students in the GEMMA programme varies depending on the country's and university's regulations. The documentation submitted includes the regulations of each partner institution. It is mentioned that all students have access to the list of courses offered at their assigned university (home/mobility) through the GEMMA website. Additionally, at the beginning of the academic year, students receive the course syllabi, which provide detailed information about each course's content and assessment process. This can be found by students in the course syllabi of each partner university.

In terms of the grading system, the consortium has created its own ECTS grade conversion table based on the official conversion tables provided by the international/postgraduate offices of all partner institutions. This conversion table calculates grades relative to students' performance within their peer group. All partners use this conversion table to facilitate the transcription of records and the calculation of the average grade. The coordinating institution oversees this process through one of its senior officers in the postgraduate office at UGR.

The consortium has established common rules and regulations for thesis submissions and defences. The Master's thesis is a crucial component of GEMMA and is required to complete the programme and acquire the Master's degree. It is an individual research dissertation that applies a feminist/gender perspective to a relevant subject chosen by the student and approved by two supervisors, one from the home university and one from the mobility university. The thesis should have a length of 20,000 to 30,000 words and can be written in any of the three consortium languages, depending on the mobility route and the institution where it is submitted.

Before the submission of the student's thesis, both supervisors write a final report, which is then submitted to the board of examiners appointed by the awarding institution. A set of regulations for the preparation and defence of theses is provided to students at the beginning of the third semester to prepare them for the joint submission of the first draft in the fourth semester. The performance and results of students are discussed between the coordinators of the two institutions involved in each case. The consortium coordinator communicates cases of underperformance or unjustified absence to the entire consortium, and all consortium partners approve decisions regarding actions to be taken in such cases. Reports on students' performance at each

partner institution are exchanged and openly discussed during the two annual consortium meetings. Further monitoring of performance is conducted through the GEMMA coordinator's Erasmus mobility visits to each other's centres, as well as coordination visits by the consortium coordinator.

### Experts' evaluation

The particular regulations for student assessment depend on the respective partner university and the requirements are defined in the course descriptions. The panel positively recognizes that there is a common regulation regarding the assessment of the Master's thesis which also leads to cooperation and coordination between different teachers as part of the supervision.

The interviews on site confirmed that both the content and the assessment method of each of the courses are known to the students and the panel of experts can confirm that these are in line with the respective learning objectives. The panel also learned that assessment methods sometimes have been adapted to the demands of the group and the diversity of the student body. While the assessment of individual courses lies with the respective teaching staff the coordination of the achievement of the common learning objectives is in the hands of the GEMMA coordinators.

The panel believes that in line with the above-mentioned encouragement of increased exchange on teaching this could also be continued in an exchange on assessment standards. While diversity clearly is a strength within the consortium and part of its concept, this could strengthen the consistency of assessment as already implemented for the master thesis (**see Finding 5**). This experience can constitute a reference point for the elaboration of a common minimum assessment guide, respecting the culture and regulations of each university and the capacity of the teaching staff to find the best way to assess the learning objectives of their subjects.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 6. Student support

*The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.*

### Description

Following the documentation in the SER, it is stated that the GEMMA programme differentiates student support in information instruments, support at partner institutions concerning accommodation, language and administration, student insurance, and equity regulations.

#### Information instruments

It was reported that GEMMA has established effective mechanisms for providing students with information to prepare for their participation in the programme. These mechanisms include the GEMMA website, the GEMMA Coordination Office based in Granada, and the International Relations and Postgraduate Offices at each partner university.

The GEMMA website serves as the primary source of information for prospective students and guest lecturers. The central coordinating team regularly updates it, and it has recently been redesigned to enhance its appeal and accessibility. The website contains comprehensive information about GEMMA, including programme objectives, consortium composition, and contact details of Academic Coordinators. It also provides links to the websites

of participating gender and women's studies centres and universities, detailed descriptions of the course structure and programme, rules and regulations for thesis submission, information on scholarships and internship opportunities, application procedures and forms, activities within GEMMA, frequently asked questions, handbooks for prospective students, and access to GEMMA theses through FPI's Open Access repositories.

Additionally, each partner institution includes GEMMA-related information on its Women's Studies Centre website. GEMMA offices are at the partner institutions, with employees to assist and inform students. Guest lecturers visiting partner institutions are provided office space at the Women's Studies Centres. The International Relations and Postgraduate offices at each partner institution support students in obtaining university passes and cards, granting access to university facilities, libraries, electronic resources, research facilities, and subsidized catering at some consortium institutions. These offices also provide GEMMA brochures with detailed course information emailed to students upon admission.

GEMMA utilizes social networking profiles such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, managed by the GEMMA Coordination Office and partner universities, to facilitate communication, networking, and dissemination of relevant information, including funding opportunities, job announcements, and PhD programmes. National and international academic networks like ATGENDER, EWA, and IES, along with their mailing lists, are utilized for announcements. GEMMA continues to leverage established international and local networks for email messages and announcements, and the associate partnerships with HEIs from North and South America, as well as the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education and EMULIES, offer additional communication channels for promoting GEMMA.

Final-year students and GEMMA graduates form an independent Student and Alumnae Association, which maintains blogs and social networking sites and offers assessments to first-year and prospective GEMMA students. The GEMMA Technical Coordination in Granada supports the exchange of information by facilitating contact data in compliance with data protection laws.

#### Accommodation, Language support and administration at partner institutions

It was reported that each partner institution in the GEMMA consortium has an International Office responsible for welcoming and hosting foreign students and scholars. These offices are staffed by qualified personnel with experience in international projects and cultural differences. They provide support to students and scholars, offer accommodation options, and provide comprehensive welcome guides describing the facilities and services offered by the partner institutions.

Additionally, each partner institution's Women's Studies Centre has international staff or a professor in charge of international affairs. The consortium hires a junior coordinator at each partner institution and a full-time Technical Coordinator at the coordinating institution to assist newcomers. The GEMMA handbooks cover various topics such as immigration, travel, registration, academic matters, climate, welfare, medical care services, leisure activities, communication, transportation, and coming as a family. They also provide information on finding accommodation, language proficiency improvement, associations, social activities, and safety.

The GEMMA Central Coordination International Relations Office handles the production of necessary documents such as visas, acceptance letters, certificates, and other required paperwork. They assist students with visa and residence permit processes, accommodation searches, medical visits, and other needs. They also oversee scholarship payments. The University of Granada's Postgraduate Office assists students with enrolment and maintains their academic records. Language learning support is provided at each partner institution, including courses in the national language, second language learning for mobility purposes, and language exchanges.

The University of Granada's Centro de Lenguas Modernas offers Spanish language courses and cultural activities for international students. UNIBO offers free Italian language courses, and Lodz offers a free intensive Polish

language course. UNIOVI provides Spanish immersion courses, integration programmes, and linguistic programmes, and Utrecht offers language courses at student rates. York provides English language programmes, including pre-sessional courses and additional in-sessional courses in various languages.

In addition to these mechanisms, GEMMA has implemented various student induction procedures. The GEMMA Welcome Week provides new incoming students with specific information and social events. Academic tutors are assigned to offer support, and second-year students serve as mentors for first-year students. Inter-cohort courses and online course support platforms facilitate academic integration and communication. Online courses from associate partners are also available to diversify learning opportunities.

Overall, these mechanisms and procedures aim to support students throughout their GEMMA programme experience and facilitate their integration into the host institutions.

### Equity regulations

The consortium places great importance on monitoring and promoting equality within the programme following the information in the SER. This includes closely monitoring gender equality and considerations for disability, sexuality, race/ethnicity, family needs, and age. Specific regulations and support are implemented at each partner institution to cater to students with special needs, such as specialized teaching using IT tools for visually impaired individuals and sign language for those with hearing disabilities. The consortium is also working on a protocol, with the assistance of the Equality Unit of the UGR, to support transsexual students.

Efforts are made to encourage and facilitate the participation of candidates from less developed countries and challenging situations. The Consortium universities have dedicated centres for cooperation with developing countries and engaging in missions and projects that assist universities in need. These partnerships often involve specific plans of distribution and address challenges related to limited access to ICT.

To ensure equal opportunities, the consortium actively encourages male candidates to apply and be accepted into the programme. Despite gender dominance in the field of Gender Studies, the consortium has seen a significant number of male students participate in GEMMA, with some of them being represented in the alumni and student advisory board. Additionally, the consortium receives support in this area from the associate industrial partner "Hombres por la Igualdad" (Spanish Association of men for gender equality).

### **Experts' evaluation**

The study programme GEMMA can be considered as a leading example for inner-European mobility and at the same time offering worldwide cooperation and transfer as well global knowledge (what aims to be decolonized). The student support services contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and take into account specific challenges of mobile students to a great extent. The students know before starting their GEMMA journey to what university they will go to, and many students get a scholarship for studying the programme.

To make the study programme work, indeed many different coordinators are involved at different levels at the respective institutions. From the expert's point of view, the work of coordinators is indispensable and the experts' heart during the site visit that students highly appreciate their work University of Granada with its main coordination service comes along with a long experience with incoming students and is well prepared for its duties. Having in mind the complexity of the programme, it is clear for the students how to deal with challenges and who to ask when they face problems. The students are provided with detailed and well written handbooks so that they can easily find their way through the programme and the different cities where they are going to live temporarily. At the same time, the experts learned that sometimes those handbooks are a little bit outdated and thus should be kept updated on a more regular basis. Maybe more detailed information for the students coming from outside of Europe would be helpful here, as some students got problems with their visas. Some



don't know, e.g., the exact duration of the procedure and due to that do not have all the documents at the right time ready and/or suddenly have to pay high fees and didn't know about that beforehand. Having that information easily accessible even before the application for the study programme would be good for the students so they could base their decision what university to choose on that. With the complexity of the programme, it can clearly be stated that academic achievement and quality depends on solving organizational issues first, and then move on to successful learning (**Finding 6**).

Apart from visa issues. Some students suffer from complicated housing situations. The offer of accommodation options differs widely depending on the partner university. In Granada. e.g., it is less of a problem getting an apartment but in Utrecht a lot of students find themselves without a good option where to stay as the housing market situation is very tight. The panel clearly agrees that this problem needs to be faced on a larger scale. But at the same time the conceptual success of the programme depends on the mobility of students assuming they are on site, consequently in need of accommodation. The panel of experts therefore encourages the programme management to support and try alternative pathways like connecting landlords to the GEMMA programme and/or implement alumni connections. Social networks are being used as an instrument for that matter and used by students as well as teachers for other issues as well. Consequently, the panel positively recognizes the initiatives undertaken by the programme to address this issue and only encourages to further intensify its efforts as the nature of the programme requires a quick settling of students so they can focus on their academic growth.

The study programme “produces” future researchers, and the students are being well prepared for their thesis and a future research career. Regarding evaluation and development of the curriculum, students always have the opportunity to discuss the content and priorities with the teaching staff. The compulsory courses at the beginning of the degree programme give a solid foundation as required for mobile students with diverse backgrounds. The co-supervision of the thesis at the end of the study programme supports the quality of the thesis highly.

The panel learned that in some combinations it is not unusual that different semester timings tend to overlap, and students are indeed challenged to arrange a quick settling in a new place and find academic orientation. The overlaps are not always addressed properly, depending on the individual mobility track and the panel learned that some students are a little bit left on their own regarding this topic. While there is an excellent support mechanism available that helps once demanded, the programme management should also consider proactively increasing transparency about these issues enabling students to consider it when choosing their paths.

From the expert's point of view, students are especially well supported for a research career at a university, and PhD options are also promoted. At the same time students gain a lot of knowledge for other working areas. It was already mentioned above that the internship approach of the programme should be further developed and transparently communicated. With numerous labour market cooperation partners of the programme and a growing pool of alumni, this experience would greatly contribute to student growths. Hence students should be actively supported to include internships in their programme. Opening up in this area would also enable to combine their thesis with an internship (**see Finding 3**).

To conclude, the panel considers that the implemented student support is a key factor for the success of the programme as its complexity and flexibility requires wise navigation and guidance which the programme delivers very well to its students.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 7. Resources

### 7.1 Staff

*The staff should be sufficient and adequate (qualifications, professional and international experience) to implement the study programme.*

#### Description

The SER outlines two-level of staff for the GEMMA programme: key staff and guest lecturers.

##### Key staff

Following the documentation, GEMMA core teachers consist of senior lecturers and senior researchers who have a solid academic background and extensive experience in international cooperation. It is said that they are internationally recognized figures in European Women's and Gender Studies, known for their contributions to feminist theories and contemporary feminism. Many hold leadership positions in European research associations, networks, local Women's Studies Centres, and Institutes. They have also served as experts on gender equality and higher education for national and regional governments. The programme benefits from over 100 permanent staff members across partner universities, resulting in a favourable teacher-to-student ratio of 1:2. The staff members offer a wide range of specializations, providing exceptional choices for student supervision. Each partner institution covers a broad range of gender disciplines, with unique domains in specific gender fields, such as Gender and Health Studies, Gender and Film Studies, Women in Antiquity, Education, Masculinities, Anthropology, Archaeology, Literature and Feminist Theory, Women's Utopias, Visual Culture, Men and Masculinities, Postcolonial Studies, Cultural Studies, Ethnicity, Queer Studies, Violence and Gender, and Feminism and Sexuality. This diverse academic offering enhances the employability of GEMMA students and fosters their integration and interaction within their socio-economic environment.

##### Guest lecturers

According to the information provided, it was reported that GEMMA had made significant efforts to incorporate international scholars into the programme. It was mentioned that additional subsidies were sought to support their participation. It was noted that financial support from Spanish national and regional authorities had been available for the UGR and Oviedo until 2011, but since then, university funds covered only one-third of the costs. The importance of the Erasmus Mundus programme in maintaining standards is highlighted, as it supported international scholars. The SER explains that scholars contributed through seminars, lectures, tutorials, and interactions, assisting students in advancing their research projects. The new bid aimed to further enhance their involvement through Skype webinars with renowned scholars in Women's and Gender Studies. Visiting scholars' involvement was instrumental in attracting famous feminists and experts to join GEMMA's Experts board. The strategy to continue this successful involvement included:

- Promoting the visiting scholar scheme.
- Joint organization of specialized conferences.
- Cooperation with related programmes.
- Increasing the participation of industry experts through employability reunions.

#### **Experts' evaluation**

From the expert's perspective, the quantity and academic credentials of the core educators involved are highly impressive and unmatched in Europe. It is noteworthy that all participating academics have varying areas of expertise in terms of content and academic background, enabling students to gain a fantastic insight into the diversity of Gender Studies. It is particularly noteworthy that the programme is also managing a generational

change in the contributing academics as it is already a long-standing programme which manages also to involve new academic staff from the different participating institutions. The provided documentation clearly supported good evidence for quality and also quantity of the involved staff, but even more the experts were impressed by the cooperative and supportive atmosphere experienced during the interviews which highlights that also the combination of diverse contributors to a joint team succeeds very well. The panel concludes that this impression results from a solid team spirit that grew over time and marks a clear strength and academic backbone of GEMMA.

A noteworthy positive addition to this comprehensive offering are additional lectures delivered by guest speakers, ensuring a close link between research and teaching. Their contribution was highlighted also by students, and from the experts' point of view this creates great additional value.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.

## **7.2 Facilities**

*The facilities provided should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes.*

### **Description**

The SER relates to the programme's handbook providing details of the facilities used for students. This was available as an annex to the documents. The programme benefits from the physical facilities of all partner institutions, their libraries and at some locations specialized research centres. Also, the panel could see the Campus and facilities of CEU during the site visit. The panel also addressed the facilities in the interviews with the students aiming to cover the sites that were not part of the visit but well known to the students and graduates that studied there.

### **Experts' evaluation**

The central Programme Handbook key information on student facilities for each study location, including academic calendar, accommodation, banks, cost of living, dining out, health services, international services, IT facilities, languages, libraries, location, shopping, social and cultural life, sports, tourism, transport, visas and weather. The panel also discussed the facilities, rooms, and library access with students, and all contributions support the conclusion that facilities are appropriate to achieve the programmes' outcomes. The programme benefits from the participation of well-established academic institutions with excellent facilities. The visit to CEU also provided the impression of a modern and very student-centred room architecture with adequate space for self- and group learning.

In addition, each participating university has its own handbook or information pack which provides students with centralised information about the facilities available at that location. The experts found these adequate to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.

## **8. Transparency and documentation**

*Relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures etc. should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.*

## Description

The SER outlines that transparency and documentation for the GEMMA programme has multiple levels: admission procedure and student's rights and obligations, GEMMA promotion and dissemination mechanisms, free availability of GEMMA materials, documents and media.

### Admission procedure and student's rights and obligations

According to the information provided, the student admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination, and assessment procedures of the programme can be found on the GEMMA website and each partner's local websites.

Regarding student rights and obligations, all students receive an acceptance letter before the start of the course. This letter explains all their rights and obligations in detail. It also includes information about the assigned mobility route for each student, the visa process, and the insurance scheme.

Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders have an additional requirement. They must sign the student agreement provided by the UGR's International Relations Office. This agreement states that the Erasmus Mundus scholarship will cover academic fees, full medical insurance, and other participation costs. It also outlines the procedure and timeframe for scholarship payments and the process for submitting bank account details. The agreement mentions that students must attend at least 90% of classes and provides guidance on what to do if studies need to be interrupted due to health or family reasons. Additionally, students are asked to confirm their acceptance of the agreement's conditions, ensure they meet the twelve months rule, declare that they have not previously received an Erasmus Mundus grant, and authorize the UGR to share their email addresses for communication (which is optional).

Furthermore, all students receive practical information about their study places from the local GEMMA coordination before their arrival.

### GEMMA promotion and dissemination mechanisms

To attract excellent students and scholars, GEMMA utilizes various promotional channels. The GEMMA website serves as an informational platform and features a section dedicated to the success stories of recent graduates, showcasing their achievements and satisfaction with the education received. The programme also maintains social media accounts on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, managed by the GEMMA Coordination Team. Additionally, each partner institution and its Women's and Gender Studies Centre have a social media presence. The programme's social media presence has generated increased interest among prospective candidates, evident through the engagement and inquiries received.

A semi-annual newsletter about the programme has been circulated since 2013 among academic and non-academic stakeholders, with its reach expected to expand due to the growing associate partner networks. Graduation ceremonies and career days are organized periodically to facilitate networking and dissemination of the programme. These events include the "Voices of Gemma" conference, providing students and graduate a platform to present their research projects or findings. The SAR explains that the programme benefits from the intense media presence the GEMMA Scientific Coordinator. Additionally, the involvement of highly recognized visiting scholars contributes to the programme's promotion through word-of-mouth within the established transnational solidarity network and beyond.

Partners of the Consortium play an active role in promoting GEMMA. They contribute to local social media profiles, liaise with associate partners, and take turns organizing graduation ceremonies. GEMMA is disseminated through both full Consortium partners and associated partners, with transnational associations and organizations like IES, Inter-American Organization for Higher Education, Cátedra UNESCO de Cultura y Educación para la Paz, Marcela Lagarde's Network of Researchers for Women's Lives and Freedoms, ATGENDER, and EWA playing significant roles in attracting students, particularly from Latin America.

Apart from targeting students, GEMMA also markets itself to the wider academic community and media. The programme has been presented at various feminist and academic forums, seminars, conferences, and international events. Press coverage has been instrumental in raising awareness about GEMMA, with notable appearances in national and regional newspapers, radio interviews, and awards recognizing the programme's achievements. A promotional video was also created for the 10th-anniversary celebration, featuring interviews with partners and students as well as highlights from previous graduations and forums.

To ensure the dissemination, exploitation, and transfer of GEMMA results, several approaches are employed. These include the GEMMA repository and website, expanded social media presence to share information on Women's and Gender Studies and equality in Europe, publications derived from GEMMA, as well as the activities of GEMMA students and alumni, such as the Voices of GEMMA Intercultural Forum and personal academic projects like "Radio Degeneradas".

Overall, GEMMA employs a comprehensive strategy involving online platforms, social media, newsletters, events, media presence, partnerships, and academic forums to attract outstanding students and scholars and disseminate the programme's outcomes.

#### Free availability of GEMMA materials, documents and media

GEMMA recognizes the importance of Open Access in line with the H2020 Responsible Research and Innovation framework and the forthcoming Horizon Europe scheme. In adherence to these principles, the research Master's theses produced by GEMMA students are made available online through open-access institutional repositories at partner institutions such as UGR, UNIBO, CEU, UNIOVI, Utrecht, and York. Lodz also provides access to Master's theses through its Faculty of International and Political Studies Library. Furthermore, the Consortium plans to develop its digital repository on the new GEMMA website, ensuring that all Master's theses and other relevant materials are accessible. The website will continue to provide Open Access to GEMMA institutional documents, including reports, external evaluations, activity reviews, programme outcomes, and qualitative and innovative aspects of the programme. By prioritizing Open Access, GEMMA aims to foster the dissemination and availability of its research and resources.

#### **Experts' evaluation**

From the experts' point of view, all relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures are well documented and published. A central website also presents links to the participating institutions with special sections for arriving/international students. There different sources of the partners vary in structure indicating that the programme builds on and integrates the diversity of its partners.

The study programme consists of a big variety and expertise which is communicated to the students in a transparent way. E.g., students know about the universities research focuses already during the application procedure. The application procedure is quite complex but clear to the applicants and they can get help during this process if they need it. The handbooks are a great measure for support and at the same time do provide transparent information for the students. The panel learned that sometimes information in the handbook is outdated thus requiring students to reach out for personal support (**see Finding 6**).

Interestingly the panel found quite a different level of information on the possibility of internships within the programme. While some students reported that this is well possible, others explained that internships are even discouraged at some institutions due to the dense academic calendar and requirements. This impression was supported by the discussions with teaching staff and coordinators which left the impression that this is an area of current discussion and development in the consortium and the panel believes that once the programme has developed a clearer and joint approach towards the integration of internships there will also be more transparency on this for students **(see Finding 3)**.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 9. Quality assurance

*The cooperating institutions should apply joint internal quality assurance processes in accordance with part one of the ESG.*

### Description

According to the joint agreement on quality standards and procedures, all GEMMA partners acknowledge the significance of quality as an indicator of excellence in higher education and express their strong commitment to ensuring the quality of the master's programme. The consortium initially adopted the GEMMA quality assurance procedures in 2008, and the accumulated experience of over 16 years has led to the development of clear and transparent internal and external evaluation processes. These processes involve various internal and external stakeholders and mechanisms to enhance the evaluation procedures.

#### Internal evaluation

According to the SER, the internal evaluation process takes place at two levels: the Consortium level and the partner level. At the Consortium level, the evaluation focuses on training outcomes through alumni satisfaction and employability surveys. Students must complete an online survey three times: upon programme completion and again three and five years after graduation. The Steering Committee utilizes these surveys to gauge the satisfaction of GEMMA graduates with the programme and creates a database of their professional paths to monitor their employability. Similar surveys have been conducted in the past, and the results have demonstrated graduates' contentment with the international experiences and academic quality of the education provided by GEMMA. Trained interns at the GEMMA Coordination Office at UGR conduct these evaluations as part of the permanent quality control measures.

At the partner level, each GEMMA university evaluates teaching quality and the training process using specific mechanisms such as questionnaires and focus groups, both online and traditional. These evaluations are carried out in writing, following local models, and completed anonymously after the course has ended. They encompass the evaluation of all teachers, including visiting staff, and the teaching content, particularly concerning students' individual research projects. Each partner institution has its own university quality evaluation unit that conducts evaluations on faculty and curriculum. These units collect anonymous opinions from attending students through online questionnaires to ensure the quality of the study courses. Furthermore, students at each partner university select their local student representatives for local academic commissions, which play a role in decision-making regarding the implementation and content of local programmes.

Regular local GEMMA faculty meetings, meetings between students and local coordinators, and face-to-face meetings between tutors and students facilitate better communication between the coordinators and students

and provide opportunities to discuss potential improvements to the programme. The outcomes of these local evaluations are shared during Consortium meetings.

### External evaluation

The external evaluation process also operates at two levels: the national level of partner institutions and the international level. At the national level, local consortium institutions undergo an assessment by National Quality Evaluation Agencies and submit the GEMMA programme for evaluation by regional and university evaluation bodies in their respective countries. Each partner institution's evaluation process is described in detail for Spain, the United Kingdom, Poland, Austria, Italy, and the Netherlands. These evaluations involve external organizations and agencies responsible for assessing the academic quality of higher education institutions and programmes.

### Consortium bodies

To ensure the effectiveness of quality assurance, several Consortium bodies and external players are involved in monitoring and implementing quality procedures. Each partner institution is responsible for monitoring quality at the local level and reporting to the Steering Committee, as well as implementing any necessary corrective measures. The GEMMA Coordination Office at the Women's Studies Center in Granada analyses data collected through student evaluations and surveys and reports the results to the Steering Committee and the entire Consortium on a biannual basis. The Steering Committee, comprised of scientific coordinators from the partner institutions, reviews and discusses evaluation reports, responds to external evaluator comments, and designs corrective measures when needed. The Committee will also produce a biannual report on the quality of teaching, training, and good practices. In addition, there are multiple boards like:

- The Expert Advisory Board, consisting of external members not affiliated with the Consortium institutions, acts as external evaluators of the GEMMA programme. They evaluate the programme's quality and produce a report once during the programme's duration, offering their expertise and recommendations.
- The GEMMA Alumni Advisory Board, created in 2017, gathers GEMMA graduates with different career paths.
- The GEMMA Student Advisory Board is composed of one student representative from each partner institution, who are elected annually.

These three boards' role is to provide advice and input to the consortium on various matters related to the GEMMA programme, including the academic curriculum, employability initiatives, promotion, and programme dissemination. They include the student perspective and contribute to the programme's continuous improvement.

The GEMMA Scientific Coordinator ensures the smooth running of the programme at all partner universities, visiting each partner institution, holding meetings with all GEMMA actors, and providing support and guidance as needed.

### **Experts' evaluation**

As stated in the SER and during the interviews, quality assurance of the programme is monitored at different levels, internally and externally, which is assessed positively by the panel. At the consortium level there are joint alumni satisfaction and employability surveys which graduates are requested to fill in online three times: upon completion of the programmes and three and five years after graduation. This initiative is considered as a good practice as together with the regular searches in publications databases and research portals conducted by trained interns at the GEMMA coordination office at the University of Granada assure a complete graduate monitoring. For the assessment of the quality of teaching and learning, the partners rely on each

partner's local procedures (online and traditional questionnaires and focus groups). Even if the good and close communication of the coordinators seems to work well, there could be an area for further enhancement as a systematic coordination on the content of the surveys (analysing what is asked and how it is asked to see if the outcomes are comparable), and sharing all the outcomes at the coordinators' meetings could help detecting positive or negative trends which could support the improvement/updating of the programme. The biannual report on the quality of teaching, training, and good practices which will be produced by the Expert Advisory Board is considered to be a good opportunity for the programme to reflect on its own strengths and areas for improvement, being in line with the idea of having a SWOT analysis which was commented during the interviews with the coordinators.

**Conclusion**

The criterion is fulfilled.



## 10. Recommendation of the panel of experts

The panel of experts recommends accrediting the study programme “European Master on Women’s and Gender Studies” (M.A.) without conditions.

### **Findings**

1. To further deepen the cooperation between institutions some general areas of the cooperation agreement could be specified also contributing to increased transparency.
2. To further develop the programme and increase the prominence of the key competencies acquired in the programme the number of learning outcomes should be reconsidered within a simpler structure.
3. The programme should integrate credited internships in its curriculum.
4. The programme should develop ways to increase transparency for students on the diverse workload regulations.
5. The programme should extend the exchange also to teaching and assessment practice and enable synergies through staff mobility & exchange.
6. The programme should extent information on Visa requirements impacting the choice of the mobility partners as well as assure a regular update of student support handbooks.