AURORA

Aurora Education Vision: Practical Guidance for Academic Teachers

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Purpose of this Document

This document aims to support academic teachers in [Aurora Universities](#) who want to engage in the Aurora cooperation by providing them with practical information about Aurora education development, referred to as "Aurorisation", and information on the main benefits of participating.

This document also demonstrates the core concepts that will underpin the joint Aurora Education Principles under development with the aim to include as many academics and experts as possible in shaping the principles.

The Aurora Education Vision

The main goal of Aurora is to support our academics in equipping their students with the skills and mindsets necessary for them to thrive in a rapidly changing society and labour market. Aurora aims to graduate students who are social entrepreneurs and innovators, willing and able to contribute to solving the major challenges of our societies.

To achieve this, Aurora will develop shared education principles and frameworks that enable deeper cooperation between Aurora universities. This includes, but is not limited to, an Aurora "inter-university campus" where students and staff can move between the universities, physically or virtually, to learn, teach, train, research, cooperate and facilitate the delivery of joint courses and degrees that support the Aurora vision.

This is crucial to maximise the positive societal impact of Aurora Universities and is fully aligned with emerging international higher education policies, as demonstrated for example by the [2020 joint declaration](#) of the 49 Ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area. This vision is also strongly supported by the Aurora Student Council and a core value of Aurora is to [listen to our students](#) and involve them in our work.

Why should I participate in the Aurora cooperation?

In addition to becoming a pioneer and contributing to the [concrete development of the future of higher education in Europe](#), participation in Aurora offers an academic teacher numerous personal and professional benefits including:

- **Connecting** with like-minded teachers in universities all over Europe to learn from each other and undertake joint teaching, e.g. through Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), or the development of joint courses and programmes.

- **Accessing grants** to cover your travel costs related to cooperation within Aurora or participation in events and trainings and for the development and implementation of joint courses or other joint academic projects.

- **Attracting students** from other Aurora Universities to your course(s) and expanding course offer for your students, building on the strengths, expertise and characteristics of the different universities.

- **Getting further visibility and recognition** for implementing innovative teaching methods and approaches, within your university as well as abroad.

- **Being a member of a diverse community** of university leaders, academics and administrative staff and students from across Europe working collectively on increasing the societal impact of their universities.

The main concepts of the Aurora Education Principles

In order to foster deeper cooperation in higher education and boost student and staff mobility between our campuses, it is essential to establish shared Aurora Education Principles. This helps to build trust between institutions and improve quality of our education programmes. In this sense, the shared principles can help facilitate easier recognition of ECTS credits between our universities. This also helps to pave the way for more joint and ambitious educational endeavours such as joint Aurora degrees.

Aurora teaching and learning aims to:

- Address societal needs and challenges and explore topics across traditional academic boundaries

- Develop students´ general academic and personal competences in addition to subject specific learning

- Embed student-centred and inclusive teaching and learning approaches

- Use internationalisation to enhance the quality of the curriculum and learning outcomes

Who is further developing the Aurora Principles?

Aurora has a dedicated task team *Teaching for Societal Impact* which is working on transforming these characteristics into fully fledged Aurora Education Principles. The task team works closely with experts from all Aurora Universities as well as other task teams to complete comprehensive and practical guidance on course and curriculum design for teachers. If you are interested in contributing to this work - let us know!

What is "Aurorisation"?

'Aurorisation' describes the transformation process of higher education in the context of Aurora and the pedagogical methods and approaches that are encouraged in teaching and learning. The aim is to foster students´ general academic and personal competences to support them to become innovative and sustainable "change makers". Each academic teacher interested in participating should start by reflecting on the overarching goals and determine which approach, or approaches, listed in the table below would bring the most added value to their teaching and their students.

The development and cooperation are focused on four "Pilot Domains" which form the thematic brackets for Aurora courses and joint teaching. These domains relate to the UN´s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with Social Entrepreneurship & Innovation as a cross-cutting theme. These four thematic domains are:

- **Sustainability and Climate Change**
- **Digital Society and Global Citizenship**
- **Health and Well-being**
- **Cultures: Diversities and Identities**

Course Content	Description of the Approach
Thematic linking to Pilot Domains and SDGs	The course covers topics and promotes learning outcomes to achieve one or more of the United Nation´s Sustainable Development Goals and has a thematic connection to one of the Aurora Pilot Domains.
Interdisciplinary approaches	An approach to curriculum integration that generates an understanding of themes and ideas that cut across disciplines and of the connections between different disciplines and their relationship to the real world.

Student Competencies	Description of the Approach
Learning outcomes in universities for Impact in Society (LOUIS)	A tool to convert broad 'horizontal' competences (e.g., Critical thinking, Ethical reasoning, Lifelong Learning, Teamwork etc) into tangible and measurable learning outcomes that make sense to teachers and students.
Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Scales for Measuring Impact Competencies (SEISMIC)	Identifies the competences and skills needed to address societal challenges through social entrepreneurship and innovation. It also measures whether study programmes equip students with the skills and mindset to address key societal challenges.
The Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI)	An accessible, adaptable, and powerful analytic tool that can be used to measure the impact of teaching, learning and training activities on the mindsets of students and staff.

Course Delivery	Description of the Approach
Student centred and inclusive teaching	An educational approach that builds upon differences to enrich the learning experience for all students present using interactive methods.
Service Learning	An approach which connects meaningful community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility.
Co-creation	A form of service-learning which entails collaborative development of new value and knowledge by academics, students, experts and stakeholders together.
Field work or excursion	Allowing students to advance their skills and competencies in interaction with their lecturers in a natural and interpersonal context outside the classroom.

Internationalisation	Description of the approach
Collaborative International Online Learning (COIL)	Two or more academics bringing their students together online to work collectively and simultaneously on specific assignments with supervision. This can either be done by linking together existing courses or by developing new ones.
Collective Course	A course which is jointly developed and delivered by two or more universities. This can be the ideal setting to bring several Aurora approaches together to maximise the development of transferable skills within a new course.
Short-term and blended mobility	A short period of learning or training abroad, less than 30 days, leading to recognised learning outcomes for students. If combined with an online component that facilitates further learning and teamwork, this becomes a blended mobility.

How do I get involved?

Once you have reflected on the Aurora education vision and decided you are interested in getting involved in "Aurorisation" the next step for you is to determine the following:

- Do you want to update an existing course or create a new course?
- Do you want to open your course to students from other Aurora universities?
- Where does your course best fit within the Pilot Domains and SDGs?
- What competencies do you aim to develop in the course?
- What approaches are you interested in using in the delivery of the course?
- Will you embed internationalisation in the delivery of the course?

What next?

Get in touch with your institutional coordinator to learn about the support mechanisms at your disposal to achieve the objectives that you have chosen for your course.

Once the course is ready – you can upload it to the **Aurora Course Catalogue** where prospective students can find it. It is a simple and straightforward process since you only need to fill in this **short webform**.

All courses published in the Aurora Course Catalogue must be open to students from other Aurora universities and "Aurorised" to some extent. The following criteria can help academic teachers assess the level of development in each course and for universities to recognize academic teachers for their efforts.

- **Level 1:** The course is linked to a Pilot Domain and at least one SDG.
- **Level 2:** The course is linked to a Pilot Domain, at least one SDG and develops at least one key competence from the Aurora Competence Framework
- **Level 3:** The course is linked to a Pilot Domain, at least one SDG, develops at least two key competences from the Aurora Competence Framework and uses at least one Aurora approach in the delivery of the course.

For further information and support to "Aurorise" courses – please visit our Academic Teacher support centre on the Aurora Institute.

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