IMSOGLO

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2028

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1. About IMSOGLO

The International Master of Science in Soils and Global Change (IMSOGLO) is offered by a consortium of four partner universities:

- Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium (UGent)
- Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark (AU)
- BOKU University, Vienna, Austria (BOKU)
- University of Göttingen, Göttingen, Germany (UGOE)

Additionally, there are eleven associated partners:

- Can Tho University - Vietnam
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Kumasi - Ghana
- Maseno University - Kenya
- Universidade Federal de Pelotas - Brasil
- Universitas Pajajaran - Indonesia
- Washington State University - USA
- Universidade de Sao Paulo - Brasil
- International Livestock Research Institute ILRI - Kenya
- Österreichische Bundesforste AG - Austria
- Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food ILVO - Belgium
- Joint Research Centre European Commission JRC – Italy

The associated partners and their representatives contribute to the implementation of the IMSOGLO programme and its project activities by developing one or more of the following actions:

- actively promoting the IMSOGLO programme in its institution and network;
- identifying and providing internship positions at its institution for IMSOGLO students;
- identifying and providing master dissertation research opportunities at its institution for IMSOGLO students;
- identifying guest lecturers from its institution to visit the IMSOGLO partners and give guest lectures;
- developing joint research with IMSOGLO partners;
- contribute to the organization of the Living Lab Summer Schools.

The programme contains 120 ECTS credits and covers two years. The full programme can be found on

- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-ecosystem-services-and-global-change-en
- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-plant-system-processes-and-global-change-en

From 4-10 September 2026, the preparatory TakeOff programme will be offered to all new international students at the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering of Ghent University. More info will is available on the Ufora info site TakeOff2026.

IMSOGLO has two specializations. All students will jointly follow the Soil Fundamentals courses during the 1st semester at UGent and will jointly participate to the Living Lab Summer Course during the summer between the 1st and 2nd year.

The 1st semester is organized at UGent and starts with a **Primer Event** in which soils, soil threats and climate-smart sustainable soil management are introduced to identify the main topics of study in soils with reference to global change. Furthermore, students are introduced to the research work done at the four partner universities which might help them to define their optional courses for the specialization in the 2nd and 3rd semester, and to interest them for a topic for the master dissertation which is typically conducted in the 4th semester. The Primer Event takes place from 15-17 September 2026. Thereafter, during the 1st semester, 30 ECTS of **Soil Fundamentals** courses are taught at UGent: Soil Biology, Soil Chemistry, Soil Physics, Soil Evolution under Global Change, Land Information Systems, and Applied Statistics.

The specialization "**Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change**" leaves the students at UGent in the 2nd semester and brings them to AU in the 3rd semester:

- The courses at UGent in the 2nd semester focus on natural resources management for resilience to global change. The four mandatory courses (17 credits) focus on the impact of climate change on soil performance and explore how soil management and land use planning can prevent, remediate, or adapt to soil degradation. Three ECTS are reserved for a Living Lab Summer School, each year at a different location. Students choose 13 credits courses from a list of optional courses, including internship, soft skills courses and open choice.
- The courses at AU in the 3rd semester focus on the soil physical and soil-C consequences of global change. The three mandatory courses (20 ECTS credits) concentrate on global soil degradation and ecosystem services, and digital soil mapping. Students choose 10 credits courses from a list of optional courses, including soft skills courses and open choice.

The specialization "**Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change**" brings the students to BOKU in the 2nd semester and to UGOE in the 3rd semester:

- The courses at BOKU in the 2nd semester focus on sustainable land management. The six mandatory courses (18 credits) concentrate on the relation between globalisation, rural development and associated soil problems. Moreover, the students learn how sustainable land use can protect the soils and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Three credits ECTS are reserved for a Living Lab Summer School, each year at a different location. Students choose 12 credits courses from a list of optional courses, including internship, soft skills courses and open choice.
- The courses at UGOE in the 3rd semester focus on the biogeochemical consequences of global change from an (agro-)ecological perspective. The three mandatory courses (18 credits) cover different scale levels: landscape dynamics, agricultural biochemistry and soil microbiology. Students choose 12 credits courses from a list of optional courses, including soft skills courses and open choice.

During the summer after the 2nd semester, all students come together again for the **Living Lab Summer School**, a one week off-campus course.

During the 4th semester, the students perform their **Master dissertation** research (30 credits) at one of the partner universities, associated partners, or at an external university/organisation/company. The main academic supervisor of the dissertation must be affiliated with one of the two universities involved in your chosen specialization. Students that are affiliated to research institutes can propose to conduct their research there and have a (co-)supervisors from two of the partner universities. All students have a supervisor from one partner university and a co-supervisor from another partner university (see also section 3.8).

2. Organizational structure

The IMSOGLO programme is managed by several actors, described below.

2.1. Management Board (MB)

The MB is in charge of the overall management of IMSOGLO, including the evaluation of the application files of candidate students, selection of scholarship holders, financial management, course programme content, student support and quality assurance. The MB is chaired by the Coordinator, currently prof. dr. engineer Wim Cornelis. The MB meets at least three times per year. The composition of the MB reflects its main roles:

2.2. Programme Steering Group (PSG)

The PSG convenes at least three times per year and its roles are

- to advise, in annual cycles, on modifications of the programme contents and to monitor the courses in terms of success of delivery and marks achieved by students. The PSG is thus important in the Quality Assurance (QA) of IMSOGLO. The PSG checks, by means of a competency matrix, whether all the IMSOGLO programme learning outcomes are covered by the end competences of the individual IMSOGLO courses;
- to take, react to and implement independent advice from the Education Quality Assurance Committee (EQAC, see below). The PSG is the main actor in the Plan-Do-Check-Act components of the cycle for Quality Assurance, but independent checks are under responsibility of the EQAC;
- to advise on individual study programmes, selection of elective courses, master dissertation topics, and nomination of lecturers;
- to deal with individual lectures (e.g., content, relevance, quality of course material, effectiveness in training targeted skills, interaction with the professional sector, etc.), lecturers, difficulties arising from mobility, e.g. problems with examination and teaching schemes, and facilities provided by the consortium to host students;
- to convert student results to a common grading system according to advice from the Examination Committee (EC);
- to contribute to reports to EACEA at request of the Coordinator.

As student participation is important for IMSOGLO, student and alumni representatives are member of the PSG.

Composition: One lecturer nominated by each partner university, one student representative per master year, one alumnus. The group is chaired by the Coordinator and facilitated by Technical Secretariat (TS).

2.3. Technical Secretariat (TS)

The TS, hosted at the Coordinating Institution, will treat all administrative questions and problems and will be in charge of practical issues, such as arrival of students (including visa and residence permit applications), mobility arrangements, administrative tasks concerning study progress, collecting the grades of students, organisation of the selection procedure, organisation of meetings of the managing bodies, communication, financial reporting and report writing.

The Technical Secretariat is further responsible for the maintenance of the IMSOGLO website https://imsoglo.eu/. This Secretariat will work under the guidance of the Coordinator. At every partner university, there will be a Local Secretariat consisting of at least one dedicated contact person who will deal with practical issues there and will collaborate with the Technical Secretariat.

The financial coordination is done by the Technical Secretariat at UGent and in agreement with decisions made by the Management Board and agreed in this Consortium Agreement.

The TS can be reached via imsoglo@ugent.be and served as a single point of contact for all questions concerning the IMSOGLO programme.

2.4. Student Selection Group (SSG)

The SSG convenes at annual frequency and its roles are

- to check the entry level of candidates against the academic and English language admission requirements. The TS prepares a ranking of candidates, checks the entry level of all incoming students, and submits this to the SSG for evaluation.
- to rank all eligible candidates, select Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders and award partial programme participation cost waivers, following the criteria set by EACEA. Scholarship holders are equally distributed over the two specialisations of the IMSOGLO programme. Gender and geographical balance are also taken into consideration. The SSG submits the final proposal to the MB for approval.

Composition: One representative nominated by each partner university, chaired by the Coordinator and facilitated by the Technical Secretariat.

2.5. Education Quality Assurance Committee (EQAC)

The EQAC is established at Consortium level, with one member from each partner university. These members are well aware of the Education Quality Assurance (QA) in place at their university and will check if the QA is in agreement with the local institutional regulations. In particular, the EQAC monitors the quality of the education in the IMSOGLO programme, based on formal evaluations of the education, anonymously filled out by students. The EQAC is independent of the MB and submits its advices either at or without request to the MB.

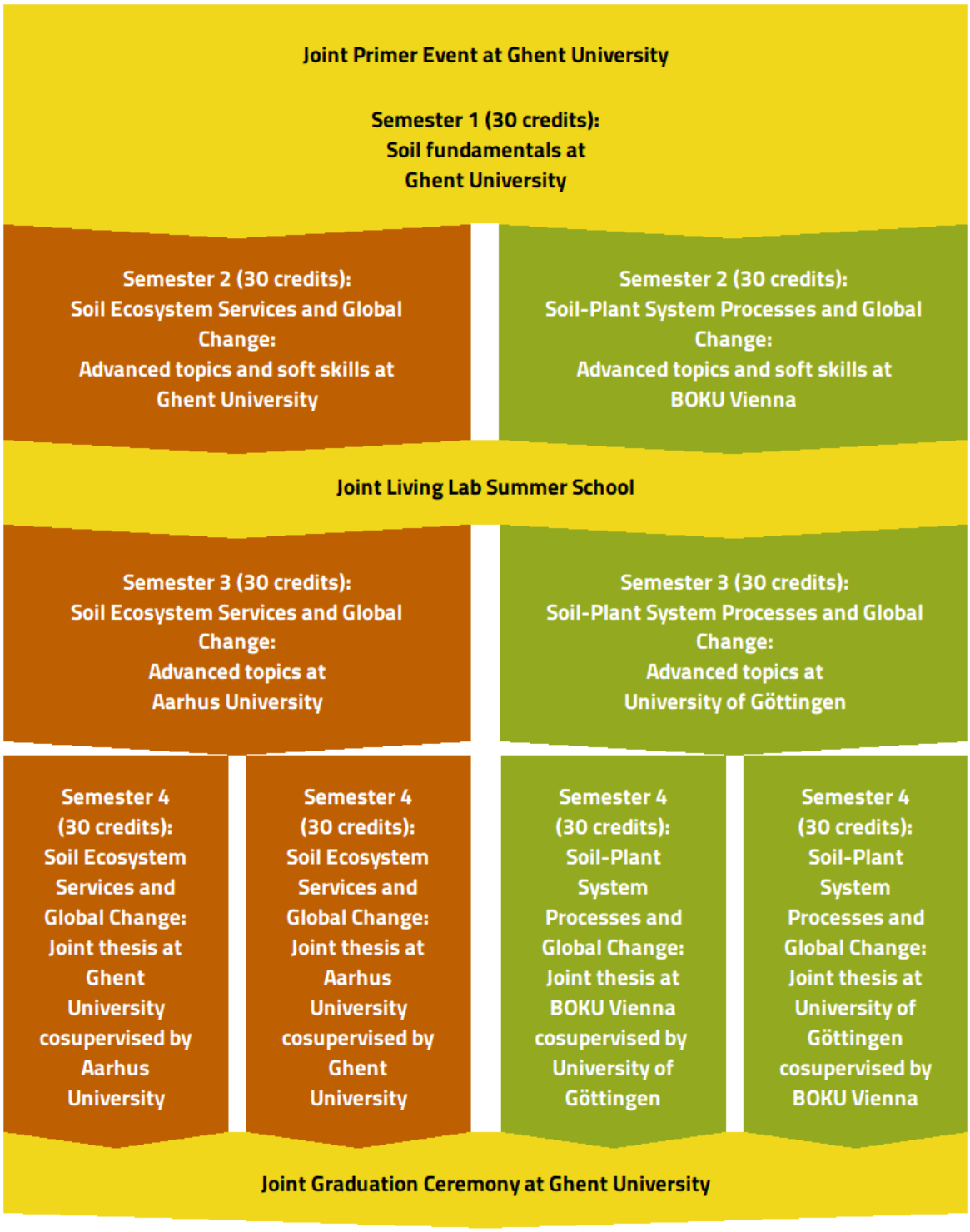
2.6. Coordination University and Coordinator

Ghent University is the Coordinating Institution. It is responsible for the overall management of IMSOGLO and is in charge of coordinating the IMSOGLO programme. It will take all actions necessary for a good functioning of the Consortium and for the fulfilment of the contractual agreement with the EACEA. The Coordinator is the project leader in the Coordinating Institution. The Coordinator is currently prof. dr. engineer Wim Cornelis and acts as Chair of the Management Board. Among other things, the Coordinator is responsible for the good functioning of the Technical Secretariat, the administrative and practical functioning of the IMSOGLO programme, the timely organisation of meetings of the Management Board and all other things necessary for a smooth running and organisation of the IMSOGLO programme.

3. Academic matters

3.1. Programme structure

The students are residing each semester at one partner university (or possibly, for the master dissertation at an associated partner institution). Which universities they will visit depends on the chosen specialization. There are four mobility pathways:


Joint Primer Event at Ghent University
Semester 1 (30 credits):
Soil fundamentals at
Ghent University
Semester 2 (30 credits):
Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change:
Advanced topics and soft skills at
Ghent University
Semester 2 (30 credits):
Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change:
Advanced topics and soft skills at
BOKU Vienna
Joint Living Lab Summer School
Semester 3 (30 credits):
Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change:
Advanced topics at
Aarhus University
Semester 3 (30 credits):
Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change:
Advanced topics at
University of Göttingen
Semester 4
(30 credits):
Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change:
Joint thesis at
Ghent University
cosupervised by
Aarhus University
Semester 4
(30 credits):
Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change:
Joint thesis at
Aarhus University
cosupervised by
Ghent University
Semester 4
(30 credits):
Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change:
Joint thesis at
BOKU Vienna
cosupervised by
University of Göttingen
Semester 4
(30 credits):
Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change:
Joint thesis at
University of Göttingen
cosupervised by
BOKU Vienna
Joint Graduation Ceremony at Ghent University

3.2. Academic calendar

Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change 2026 – 2028

Year	Semester	Start date	End date	Mobility
1	1	04/09/2026	10/09/2026	Arrival, TakeOff
		15/09/2026	17/09/2026	**Ghent University** IMSOGLO Primer Event
		21/09/2026	20/12/2026	**Ghent University** Mandatory courses (30 ECTS)
		22/12/2026	03/01/2027	**Christmas holidays**
		04/01/2027	31/01/2027	**Ghent University** Exams
		01/02/2027	06/02/2027	**Inter-semester holidays**
	2	08/02/2027	27/03/2027	**Ghent University** Mandatory courses (17 ECTS) Elective courses (13 ECTS)
		29/03/2027	10/04/2027	**Easter holidays**
		12/04/2027	22/05/2027	**Ghent University** Continuation of: Mandatory courses (17 ECTS) Elective courses (13 ECTS)
		24/05/2027	03/07/2027	**Ghent University** Exams
		Date TBC 5/07/2027	Date TBC 14/08/2027	**Living Lab Summer School in UGOE:** **Summer Holidays**
		16/08/2027	18/09/2027	**Ghent University** Resit exams
2	3	23/08/2027	03/12/2027	**Aarhus University** Mandatory courses (20 ECTS) Elective courses (10 ECTS)
		04/12/2027	12/12/2027	**Preparation for exams**
		13/12/2027	31/01/2028	**Aarhus University** Exams
		22/05/2028	16/06/2028	**Aarhus University** Resit exams
	4	25/01/2028	30/06/2028 *Mind specific master dissertation submission deadlines!* *At Aarhus University, the submission deadline is 2-4 weeks before the assessment deadline on 30/06.*	**Master dissertation** (30 ECTS) Aarhus University or Ghent University

Soil-Plant System Services and Global Change 2026 – 2028

Year	Semester	Start date	End date	Mobility
1	1	04/09/2026	10/09/2026	Arrival, TakeOff
		15/09/2026	17/09/2026	**Ghent University** IMSOGLO Primer Event
		21/09/2026	20/12/2026	**Ghent University** Mandatory courses (30 ECTS)
		22/12/2026	03/01/2027	**Christmas holidays**
		04/01/2027	31/01/2027	**Ghent University** Exams
		01/02/2027	06/02/2027	**Inter-semester holidays**
	2	01/03/2027	21/03/2027	**BOKU** Mandatory courses (18 ECTS) Elective courses (12 ECTS)
		22/03/2027	4/04/2027	**Easter holidays**
		05/04/2027	30/06/2027*	**BOKU** Continuation of: Mandatory courses (18 ECTS) Elective courses (12 ECTS) Exams (period to be confirmed) *officially the summer semester ends by 30 September at BOKU - courses are finished by 30 June usually
		Date TBC 5/07/2027	Date TBC 14/08/2027	**Living Lab Summer School in UGOE:** **Summer Holidays**
		16/08/2027	18/09/2027	**Ghent University** Resit exams
		TBC	TBC	**BOKU** Resit exams - depending on teacher's availability, individual arrangements possible
2	3	1/10/2027	23/12/2027	**University Of Göttingen** Mandatory courses (18 ECTS) Elective courses (12 ECTS)
		24/12/2027	07/01/2028	**Christmas holidays**
		10/01/2028	11/02/2028	**University of Göttingen** Continuation of: Mandatory courses (18 ECTS) Elective courses (12 ECTS)
		14/02/2028	31/03/2028	**University of Göttingen** Exams
	4	31/03/2028	15/09/2028 *Mind specific master dissertation submission deadlines!*	**Master dissertation** (30 ECTS) BOKU or University of Göttingen

3.3. Programme participation cost, insurance and E+ grants for selfpaying students

The IMSOGLO programme participation cost is 4,500 euro per year for students that are national of a European Economic Area* (EEA) country and 9,000 euro per year for students that are not national of a European Economic Area* (EEA) country. Erasmus Mundus Scholarship-holding students do not pay programme participation cost; non-Erasmus Mundus scholarship-holding students will receive an invoice to pay the programme participation cost before enrolment.

*European Economic Area (EEA): Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

The programme participation cost for IMSOGLO includes an all-in insurance policy for foreign students of Ghent University for the full length (24 months) of the master programme, handled by insurance broker Expat & Co, and backed by insurance company Inter Partner Assistance (IPA). The all-in insurance covers medical costs, travel risks, as well as civil liability. EU students should apply for the European Health Insurance Card in their home country prior to traveling to Belgium.

For selfpaying students (not receiving an Erasmus Mundus Scholarship), there is the possibility to apply for an Erasmus+ grant for a total of 12 months (two semesters) consisting of two different destinations. It is not possible to receive a 12 month scholarship if you are staying at the same destination.
You need to send in an grant application per semester. Applications for a second semester in BOKU need to be submitted before the end of November, applications for a 3th or 4th semester in UGOE or AU need to be submitted before 31 January. Applying for the E+ grant will not automatically mean students will receive the scholarship. IMSOGLO selfpayers will be invited for an info session on Erasmus+ grants at the beginning of the academic year.
For more information please see Info session on exchange opportunities for IMSOGLO or contact out.fbw@ugent.be

3.4. Teaching, learning & examination

Teaching methods, learning methods and examination methods are different from university to university and from course to course. If you want to know about the teaching and learning methods or an examination method for a specific course, you can consult the course files. They can be found in the study guide on the UGent website, but also on the websites of the other Partner universities.

- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-ecosystem-services-and-global-change-en
- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-plant-system-processes-and-global-change-en

The student needs to follow the educational and examination code of the university the student is residing at.

The Ghent University regulations concerning study progress monitoring and binding conditions apply to all IMSOGLO students during the complete IMSOGLO programme.

IMSOGLO students as well as the programme management have mutual rights and obligations formalized in the IMSOGLO Student Agreement to be signed before the start of the programme.

3.5. Class schedules

The 1st semester is preceded by a Primer Event, from 15-17 September 2026. On Wednesday 17 September, a reception and vegetarian BBQ is organised in the evening to get to know each other and the some of the IMSOGLO staff.

Class schedules of the Ghent University courses will be available via the following pages

- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-ecosystem-services-and-global-change-en/programma
- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-plant-system-processes-and-global-change-en

Class schedules and courses of BOKU can be checked in the BOKUonline education management system. Registration for courses and exams can be done after your arrival at BOKU since you need an active BOKUonline account for this purpose. Please note that course details will be published approximately one month before the semester start.
The class schedules for courses at Aarhus University and the University of Göttingen will be shared with you later.

3.6. Curriculum and elective courses

Your curriculum for the 1st IMSOGLO year needs to be registered and submitted in oasis.ugent.be by October 1, 2026. Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change students also need to select their elective courses for the 2nd semester at UGent by October 1, while Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change students need to select their elective courses for the 2nd semester at BOKU by 1 March. You will receive further instructions on how to select your elective courses by email from the Study Track Counsellor. **Please do not submit your curriculum before you have received these instructions.**

Soil Ecosystem Services students: your curriculum for the 2nd IMSOGLO year containing your elective courses needs to be registered and submitted in oasis.ugent.be by October 1, 2027.

Soil-Plant System Processes students: your curriculum for the 2nd IMSOGLO year containing your elective courses needs to be registered and submitted in oasis.ugent.be by November 14, 2027.

Elective courses at partner universities have to be chosen at the beginning of each semester and cannot be changed during the semester. Deadlines for your final choice of elective courses will be communicated by the respective partner university in advance.

Remember that during your 2-year IMSOGLO studies your curriculum submitted in oasis.ugent.be is the one and only valid curriculum. Never register for different courses at other partner universities than the courses in your Oasis curriculum. Ensure that the curriculum in OASIS aligns with the curriculum at the partner university. In case you have questions on your curriculum, contact imsoglo@ugent.be.

Remember that you have to re-enroll at Ghent University via oasis.ugent.be for your second year even if you do not take courses at Ghent University during your second year. Also **remember to keep your data** (telephone number, address, etc.) **up to date** in Oasis.

3.7. Internship

IMSOGLO students of both specializations can include an internship as an elective course in their first year curriculum.

In case you follow the specialization Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change, you can do a 5 credits internship as an elective course during the 2nd semester at UGent.

In case you follow the specialization Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change, you can do a 3 credits internship as an elective course during the 2nd semester at BOKU.

The purpose of an internship is to allow students to get a practical training under real conditions, apply theoretical knowledge and expand their competences. It will also provide an opportunity to learn about career positions and different working environments, and carry out specialized work which might not be offered within the programme. An internship is therefore not aimed at academic research and should not be seen as a precursor to a master dissertation. It is preferably carried out in a company or organization with a strong link to business or socio-economic practice.

Internship for Soil Ecosystem Services students

The contact person of the internship for Soil Ecosystem Services students is **prof. Steven Sleutel** (steven.sleutel@ugent.be).

A list of potential internship places (non-exhaustive list) will be provided during the first semester but an internship place can also be proposed on the student's own initiative. In any case, the concrete subject must be submitted for approval to the **internship manager** (i.e. prof. Steven Sleutel) via an **internship application form**. The internship manager is the first point of contact but is not involved in the practical implementation of the internship. The follow-up is in the hands of an **academic supervisor**, in addition to the **supervisor at the internship workplace**. The academic supervisor is a staff member involved in IMSOGLO and can give advice on the scientific-technical content but will mainly supervise the reporting. The student is responsible for finding an academic supervisor, but can be assisted by the internship manager.

An **UGent internship contract** needs to be established, necessary to be insured during the internship. During an **info session** in November, the International Training Centre (ITC) will provide further instructions. All steps are explained on the Faculty website for internships. Please, respect the mentioned **deadlines**.

Timing:

Please contact steven.sleutel@ugent.be as soon as possible during the first IMSOGLO semester in case you are interested in doing an internship. You will receive further instructions to prepare your internship.

For Soil Ecosystem Services students, the **5 ECTS credits** internship is included in the curriculum of the 2nd semester of the 1st master year and so the internship must be completed and defended before September of the 1st IMSOGLO year. The internship workplace should be selected during the first semester.

An internship is usually carried out during the summer vacation but may also be carried out at other times. In any case, an internship must take **at least 20 working days** and needs to be completed before the student travels to Aarhus in August.

Reporting and evaluation:

No later than 6 weeks after the end of the internship, a **report** is submitted according to the template provided. It presents the company/organization and the work plan, discusses the scientific and socio-economic context. An

oral presentation is then given upon appointment at the end of August, beginning of September. The workplace supervisor and the academic supervisor are part of the jury, which is chaired by the internship manager. All jury members will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Internship for Soil-Plant System Processes students

The contact person of the internship for Soil-Plant System Processes students is **prof. Eugenio Diaz-Pines** (eugenio.diaz-pines@boku.ac.at).

A list of potential internships and topics will be provided during the first semester. The student may suggest additional institutions. The workplace where the internship will take place will be discussed with the **course coordinator**, who will authorize the internship. A **mentor** from the host institution will be assigned, who will be both contact person for the student and responsible for him/her during the whole duration of the stay.

Timing:

Please contact eugenio.diaz-pines@boku.ac.at as soon as possible during the first IMSOGLO semester in case you are interested in doing an internship. You will receive further instructions to prepare your internship.

For Soil-Plant System Processes students, the **3 ECTS credits** internship is included in the curriculum of the 2nd semester of the 1st master year and so the internship must be completed and defended before September of the 1st IMSOGLO year. The internship workplace should be selected during the first semester.

An internship is usually carried out during the summer vacation but may also be carried out at other times. In any case, an internship must take **at least 75 working hours or 2 weeks**.

Reporting and evaluation:

Continuous/permanent assessment of the student by the host mentor during the internship duration is done. The hosting mentor will fill in an evaluation questionnaire after the internship has finalized. A short **report** is delivered by the student, including a description of activities conducted, main results and lessons learned. The report will be evaluated by the course coordinator and the host mentor.

3.8. Master dissertation

The Master dissertation is scheduled in the final year of the standard learning track within the Master programme. It is closely aligned with the student's study programme and Intended Learning Outcomes, with a broad focus on Soils and Global Change.

Information moments on the possible topics and location of the master dissertation research are organised:

- during the Primer Event before the start of the 1st semester. The involved universities will present the research themes and methods of potential supervisors, to interest students for their research;
- during the 2nd semester, via online or in person interactions with possible master dissertation supervisors, students can receive more info on topics they are particularly interested in.

Each Master dissertation is supervised by at least one supervisor from a Partner university organizing the student's chosen specialisation, and co-supervised by a co-supervisor from the other Partner university within the same specialisation. This means that students in the 'Soil Ecosystem Services and Global Change' specialization have at least one supervisor and co-supervisor from UGent and AU, and in the 'Soil-Plant System Processes and Global Change' specialization from BOKU and UGOE. An extra co-supervisor may be appointed from an Associated Partner, if the master dissertation work is conducted at or in collaboration with an Associated Partner. For example, a student working on their dissertation at UGOE, has at least one UGOE

supervisor and one BOKU co-supervisor. Exceptionally, students may conduct their dissertation at a Partner university different from the one organizing their specialization.

A list of dissertation topics provided by IMSOGLO lecturers will be made available to the students. They must select a first and second priority topic, one from each Partner university organizing their specialization. Exceptionally, they may choose a topic from a Partner university different to the one organizing their specialization. However, such requests require approval from the Programme Steering Committee. Every topic on the list must remain accessible to IMSOGLO students and feasible to implement. If a topic is also selected by another student, supervisors are encouraged to find creative solutions. For example, the topic could be divided in two (or more) with different focuses, or students (from different programs) could collaborate on the same topic. In the latter case, each student must submit an individual manuscript with the collaboration acknowledged in the introduction, specifying the similarities and distinct aspects of their work.

Students are required to submit their master dissertation to the Partner university of their main supervisor, where it is written and defended according to the local regulations.

While at AU and UGent the general evaluation for all students fall at the end of June and August, respectively, deadlines at UGOE and BOKU are typically later. However, for IMSOGLO students submitting and defending their dissertation at UGOE or BOKU, the entire process must be completed by the first week of September, as all grades must be submitted to UGent ahead of the deliberation in the second week of September.

Joint IMSOGLO assessment forms should be used at all IMSOGLO partner institutions. Both manuscript and defense are initially scored on a scale from 0 to 10, after which the score is converted to the UGent scoring system (the score that will appear on the transcript of records) and then to the local scoring system using the IMSOGLO conversion table as per the Consortium Agreement. The scores are based on the (qualitative) assessment of several criteria grouped in rubrics that evaluate the learning outcomes.

For each master dissertation of 30 ECTS credits, 20 ECTS credits are obtained at the partner delivering the supervisor, and 10 ECTS credits are obtained at the partner delivering the co-supervisor. Students follow the local procedures and regulations for the master dissertation work, writing, submission, defence and evaluation.

General IMSOGLO Timeline and procedure

January	IMSOGLO lecturers and the designated contact at the Associate Partners will receive an invitation from the Technical Secretariat (imsoglo@ugent.be) to submit one or more master dissertation topics. They are required to complete a specific form (docx file) with the following details: - thesis topic (preliminary title), - keywords, - name of supervisor (and potential co-supervisor(s)), - name of university (and university/institute of potential co-supervisor(s)), - email address(es), - topic description (max. 150 words), - check-items: field work, lab work, coding.
February, 28	Deadline for master dissertation supervisors to send the completed form to the Technical Secretariat at imsoglo@ugent.be (= implicit commitment).
March	Screening of topics by IMSOGLO coordinator.
March, 9	The completed forms with available topics will be compiled in a pdf file and send to the students by the Technical Secretariat (imsoglo@ugent.be). Students can contact the potential supervisor(s) for further details and arrange meetings either in person or online. Students are

	required to select two topics, indicating their first and second priorities, ensuring that each choice comes from a different Partner university organizing their specialization or from an Associate Partner. Students also have the option to propose their own topic. They indicate their choices in a shared xlxs file on SharePoint. To prevent multiple students from selecting the same topic as their first or second choice, they are encouraged to communicate with each other. The shared xlxs file allows students to track the selection of topics in real time. They may revise their selections until the final deadline. Even students proposing their own topics must still select a first and second priority.
April, 30	Deadline for students to submit a first and second priority topic on SharePoint.
May	A committee which will meet online is responsible for assigning the topics, and there is no first-come first-served regulation in place. If multiple students select the same topic, they will be asked to provide a short written motivation or discuss their interest orally in a meeting with the supervisor. The supervisor will then decide which student will be assigned the topic. The committee aims to ensure an equal distribution of topics among the Partner universities. Once the final topic assignments are determined, the UGent coordinator will update the shared document on SharePoint to reflect the decisions made by the committee.
May	The national IMSOGLO coordinators from the Partner universities co-organizing the chosen specialization and providing co-supervisors are invited to assign a co-supervisor to each topic by the Technical Secretariat (imsoglo@ugent.be). This process ensures that every topic receives appropriate co-supervision from the Partner universities, maintaining consistency and alignment with the programme's joint structure.
May, 31	Deadline for national IMSOGLO coordinator to add the assigned co-supervisors in the shared xlxs file.
June	Students and (co-)supervisors receive an email from the Technical Secretariat (imsoglo@ugent.be) about the final assignment of the topic and the co-supervisors.

Students conducting their master thesis at Ghent University must take the following general guidelines into account.

Students conducting their master thesis at **Aarhus University**, must be aware of the following deadlines and regulations. **Deadlines:**

- The master's thesis contract must be completed and signed **before 1 February 2027.**
- Deadline for starting the master thesis is **1 February 2027.**

You are automatically registered for your master's thesis starting on 1 **February 2027**.

- Submission deadline is 2-4 weeks before the oral exam.
- Oral exam/assessment must take place by **30 June** the latest.

Please be aware that these are strict deadlines. Only illness or exceptional circumstances constitute valid grounds for an exemption to extend your thesis period.

You must prepare a master's thesis contract **The thesis contract** is made by you, your supervisor, and your head of degree programme via the Contract Generator

- When your thesis contract has been approved, the Study Administration will **register the contract**. If there are any questions or you need to update your contract, you will be contacted.
- The Study Administration will administratively register you for your thesis exam. Both the ordinary exam and any re-exams, without possibility of withdrawal.

Your **thesis exam** will take place at Aarhus University as an individual, oral exam. The exam follows the guidelines stated in the thesis' course description in the Course Catalogue. More information about master thesis requirements at Aarhus is provided online here.

When a student has his/her main supervisor at the **University of Göttingen**, they have to register the thesis at the University of Göttingen. The staff at the examination office will register the master thesis at the university portal- **FlexNow.**
The following information should be sent to the examination office of the Faculty of Agriculture (paagrar@uni-goettingen.de) in order to register for the thesis.

1. Matriculation number
2. Last name, first name Student
3. Title of the thesis
4. Start date (exact date)
5. Name and email address of the first supervisor (from UGOE)
6. Name and email address of second supervisor (from BOKU)

When the details are provided, the examination officer will register the Master's thesis in FlexNow, and then the student has six months to work on and submit the final version of their thesis. When the final version of the document is uploaded, the supervisors will automatically get a link to the student's thesis document. Then, they can grade them, making sure that the score is sent around the first week of September to UGent for the final transcript.
Note that once the final version of the document is uploaded, it cannot be resubmitted; hence, it is advised to upload the **final version** of the thesis after all changes have been made.
For more details, this page can be consulted. There is also a useful video guide demonstrating how to upload the final thesis in the FlexNow system.

Students receive detailed information on exact procedures, deadlines and documents from the IMSOGLO coordinators at **BOKU** at the beginning of semester 4 as well as throughout the semester.
At the beginning of the semester (~March), the master thesis has to be registered at BOKU and the ICP (Individual Course Plan) has to be prepared and submitted to BOKU Study Services for a mandatory pre-check. The master thesis should be finished and submitted to supervisors in June. A master thesis defense has to be held between mid/end of August and early September (exact dates TBD). The documents for the defense registration have to be submitted at least 3 weeks before the planned defense date.
Further information can be found on the BOKU Website: https://short.boku.ac.at/int-master-imsoglo

3.9. Grading systems and grade conversion

All partner universities use a different grading system. Your official Ghent University transcript of records will show your grades in the Ghent University grading system (0-20 scale). Grades for every semester can be consulted on oasis.ugent.be at the end of every semester. Below you can see how the grades will be converted to the UGent system.

The lecturers of courses followed at the partners are responsible to convert the grades to the UGent grading system. For cases where the grade conversion from Aarhus University, BOKU University, or the University of Göttingen to the Ghent University grading system (0-20 scale) results in multiple possible outcomes based on the conversion table, the responsible lecturer will determine the final grade on the UGent scale. If the lecturer does not explicitly assign a specific grade, the lowest value on the 0-20 scale, as indicated by the conversion table, will be applied.

Verbal	Final Score	UGent	AU	BOKU	UGOE
Fail	**<10**	<10	00/-3	5	≥ 4.3
Sufficient	**10**	10	02	4	4.0
Satisfactory	**11**	11	02	4	3.7
Satisfactory	**12**	12	4	3	3.3
Satisfactory	**13**	13	4	3	3.0
Good	**14**	14	7	3	2.7
Good	**15**	15	7	2	2.3
Very good	**16**	16	10	2	2.0
Very good	**17**	17	10	2	1.7
Excellent	**18**	18	12	1	1.3
Excellent	**19**	19	12	1	1.0
Excellent	**20**	20	12	1	1.0

4. Dealing with the educational culture shock

During previous student intakes of the IMSOGLO program, we observed that the diverse backgrounds of students made it challenging for some to adjust during the first semester. Your experiences and expectations regarding teaching and learning styles, interaction with lecturers, and workload may vary depending on your background—familiar to some, but a culture shock for others. Therefore, it is important to understand the expected initial competencies at the start of the courses and to be aware of your responsibilities. Below we briefly address these issues.

4.1. Teaching and learning styles and interaction with lecturers

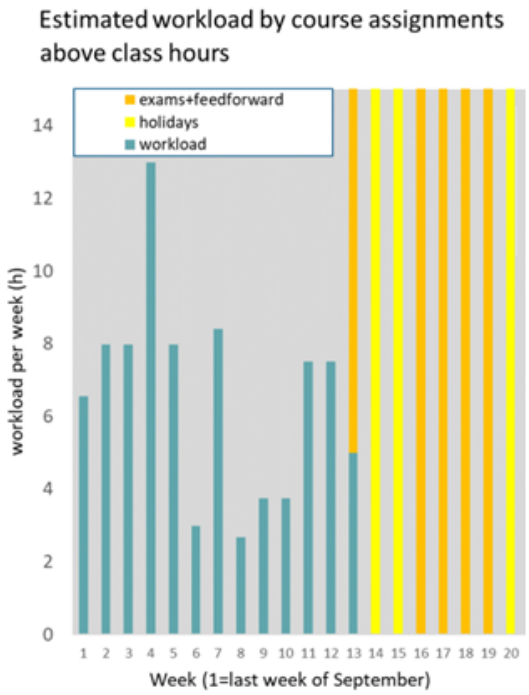
In Europe, teaching styles vary by lecturer and also by teaching form. Some teaching forms are much more interactive than others. Generally, lecturers and their assistants are open to questions during class hours and are willing to help afterwards as well, within the limits of their availability. The distance between lecturers and students may be surprisingly modest for some of you. The motto is: **Dare to ask!**

A lot of communication flows via the e-learning platforms, which is Ufora at UGent. **Stay tuned** to the IMSOGLO infosite on Ufora and the individual course sites. Read your Ghent University e-mails daily in order to not miss any important info.

Learning styles vary by student, but as courses are taught in parallel (several courses scheduled in each week), it is advisable to follow up continuously and not wait for the exam period to catch up.

4.2. Work load

The work load of each course, expressed in hours, is more than the sum of the contact (class) hours per week, but also includes assignments, preparing for classes, studying, etc. While class hours are the same for all students, hours spent on assignments and studying vary per student. The figure on the right shows how many hours students spent on average on assignments per week during the first semester at Ghent University, based on a survey amongst lecturers.



This graph can help you to **plan your work**. An update regarding work load of the IMSOGLO programme will be made available in October.

4.3. Initial competences

Course files always indicate what expertise, competences or skills you need to successfully start a course. Normally, all admitted students to IMSOGLO should be able to follow all courses. However, as students have varying academic backgrounds and may have obtained their Bachelor degree some years ago, a check on initial competences is worthwhile before you select elective courses.

The course files containing the initial competences can be found by clicking on individual courses on:

- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-ecosystem-services-and-global-change-en/programma
- https://studiekiezer.ugent.be/2026/international-master-of-science-in-soils-and-global-change-soil-plant-system-processes-and-global-change-en/programma

5. Mobility and partner info

5.1. Passport, visa and residence permit

If you need a visa to live and study in Europe, make sure you have a valid **international passport** (note that it must be valid until at least six months after your return, i.e. at least until March 20xx+3 if you start the IMSOGLO programme in September 20xx).

If you need a visa to live and study in Europe, please start your **visa application** as soon as possible after you have received your Letter of Admission.

Apply for a **long stay student visa type D** at the Belgian embassy or consulate which is competent for your country of residence. More information about your visa application can be found here and at the competent Belgian embassy or consulate.

IMSOGLO includes student mobility to other Schengen countries, and therefore you have to apply for a long stay student visa type D with **code B35**. After your arrival in Belgium, you will be able to apply based on this code B35 for a two year residence permit that will allow you to travel to Austria and Germany without having to apply for a visa in these countries.

When applying for a visa, you will be asked to prove your **solvency** (i.e. sufficient means of subsistence). This solvency can be proved in different ways:

- A Scholarship Award Letter (document certifying that the student has been granted a scholarship);
- An affidavit of support (or a financial guarantee);
- A blocked account and solvency letter: UGent can provide a letter to prove sufficient means of subsistence. In that case the financial means have to be transferred to a bank account of UGent, where they will be blocked on a personal account. The financial means will then be reimbursed to you on a monthly basis. For more information, contact international@ugent.be.

For registration at the City of Ghent (i.e. application for a residence permit), students must register within eight working days after arrival via this link.

To maintain your residence card and to be able to continue in the IMSOGLO programme, you must have obtained at least 60 ECTS by the end of your second year. By the end of a possible third year you must have finished your programme to be able to apply for an orientation year and extend your stay in Belgium for up to 12 months.

5.2. BOKU University

Registration at BOKU

Find **general info** about welcome days, studying at BOKU and living in Vienna for international students here. Online pre-registration at BOKU before 5 February is required. The pre-registration is open by the end of December or the beginning of January. IMSOGLO students will be informed about further details by e-mail by the administrative coordinator prior their study period at BOKU.

Housing

You can rent a room in the student residences or share a flat. It is important to check your IMSOGLO calendar before booking a room. Book 4-5 months beforehand since the rooms are on a first come first serve basis. Housing can be booked via the OEAD housing office or other providers (online), you will receive an offer via e-mail and can confirm this offer. The deposits are usually between 750-950 euro. Make sure that your room is guaranteed for the whole stay in Vienna. Find all info on student accommodation in Vienna here and a list of student residences here. Be aware that IMSOGLO students have to find an accommodation by themselves, BOKU-International Relations cannot provide housing offers.

Registration in Vienna

Immediately after your arrival (by Austrian law within the first three days of your stay) you need to register at a municipal district office in Vienna. Check if online pre-booking for an appointment is needed. You will get further information on locations and links by BOKU before your arrival.

Visa and residence permit

- EU/EEA/Swiss citizens who stay in Austria for longer than three months:

For EU/EEA/Swiss citizens a visa-free entry in Austria is possible. After you have received the admission letter from BOKU and you have done your registration in Vienna you need to apply for the so called "Anmeldebescheinigung" (=confirmation of registration) at MA 35. Check if online pre-booking for an

appointment is needed. Costs: approx. 15 EUR. Further details will be sent by BOKU-International Relations and can also be found here.

- Non EU/EEA citizens:

Send a scan of your valid Belgian residence permit to your administrative coordinator at BOKU before the end of November. Generally, you are allowed to stay with your valid Belgian student residence permit up to 90 days in Austria. According to EU directive 2016/801 BOKU will provide an official confirmation at the beginning of your studies in Vienna which confirms that you are taking part in an EMJM mobility programme. With this confirmation, your valid passport, a proof of your travel health insurance and a valid Belgian student residence permit you can stay up to 360 days in Austria (as long as your Belgium residence permit is valid!). The maximum amount of 360 days can be split in shorter periods (e.g. for two stays at BOKU). You can be asked to prove when you entered in Austria, left Austria and re-entered in Austria since legal authorities are calculating precisely on a daily basis. Therefore, keep all your cross-border flight/bus/train tickets during your whole study period. Further details will be sent by BOKU-International Relations and can be found here.

In case instructions about visa and residence permits change, you will be informed in time.

5.3. University of Göttingen

Registration at the University of Göttingen

Right at the start of your first year of study in Ghent, you will already receive an email from the coordinator of International Master's Programs at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences containing your admission letter and further information regarding enrollment at the University of Göttingen.

In due time before your arrival in Göttingen you receive an eMail with further information on how to register for course and dates for the pre-arrival online week offered by the International Office (taking place around mid-September).Find useful information on travelling to, arriving in and living in Göttingenhere.

Housing

The Accommodation Support offers information and guidance in navigating the local housing market. They work together with the Studierendenwerk which runs the dormitories.. All information can be found here. including a registration form if you require assistance in finding accommodation. mailto:accommodation@uni-goettingen.deCheck with your calendar to make sure your rental period does not exceed your stay in Göttingen.

Visa and residence permit

You need to present yourself in the New City Hall (Hiroshimaplatz 1-4) at the Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeangelegenheiten, on the ground floor) within the first two weeks of arrival.

If you plan to take a job while you're studying, you need a supplementary document for your Belgian residence permit. In this case contact the UGOE International Students Office (international.study@uni-goettingen.de). They inform you about the necessary documents and hand in your application to the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). If you plan to stay more than 360 days in Germany and intend to work, you apply for a residence permit at the Foreigners' Registration Office in the City Hall of Göttingen after your arrival and registration.

https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/24845.htmlIn case instructions about residence permits change, you will be informed in time.

5.4. Aarhus University

Registration at Aarhus University and in Denmark

All students regardless of their nationality must apply for CPR number. Nordic citizens, however, only have to apply if staying in Denmark for more than six months. The CPR number is used when dealing with public authorities, health authorities, libraries, banks and the like. The card with your CPR number is also referred to as your health insurance card or 'yellow card'. In due time before your arrival, you will receive an e-mail with information about how to register at Aarhus University and how to apply for Cpr number.

Housing

Aarhus University provides housing for all Erasmus Mundus students. You must apply for housing in Viborg through Aarhus University. In due time before your arrival, you will receive an e-mail with information about how to apply. You can find information about AU Campus Viborg here. Please be aware that the section for International Students is not updated but will be in December 2026.

Visa and residence permit

EU/EEA/Swiss citizens

For EU/EEA/Swiss citizens a visa-free entry in Denmark is possible. Once you arrive in Denmark, you need to apply for an EU residence certificate for the duration of your stay in Aarhus. Nordic citizens do not need to apply for a residence permit/certificate. Find more information here.

Non-EU/EEA citizens

For non-EU/EEA citizens entry in Denmark is possible if you have a valid EU-Schengen (Belgian) residence card. However, you are not allowed to start your studies until your application for a student residence permit to Denmark has been completed.

You have to submit your application for a student residence permit for the duration of your stay in Aarhus before arriving to Denmark through an online platform. Aarhus University will send detailed information about this process to you by email in early May.

It is important that you apply as soon as possible and no later than 30 days after you receive the email with a link to the online application form. It may take up to two months for the authorities to process your application!

Please be aware that the Danish Immigration Authorities will charge fees of about 600 euro in total (indexed annually).

Step by Step Guide

1. Fill in an online ST1 form and pay the first fee.
    a. You will receive an email from AU with a formal letter of enrolment and information about the application process.
    b. AU will then initiate the application on your behalf by filling out part 1 of the ST1 form.

c. Once part 1 of the form has been completed by AU, you will receive an email directly from the Danish Immigration Service (SIRI) with the link you need to create a user and fill out part 2 of the application.
d. You have 30 days to complete the application after you receive the link.
e. Please note that it is very important that you use the same email address throughout the process
f. Important: You are required to give your biometrics within 14 days after paying the first fee! So, get the appointment at the embassy first and THEN pay the fee.

2. Give your biometrics and pay the second fee.
   a. Get an appointment at the Danish embassy in Brussels to give you biometrics Phone number: +32 (0) 2 233 09 00

   b. Important: You are required to give your biometrics within 14 days after paying the first fee! So, get the appointment at the embassy first and THEN pay the fee.

3. You will receive the residence permit/visa
   a. Entry in Denmark is possible before you receive the residence permit if you have a valid EU-Schengen (Belgian) residence card. However, you are not allowed to start your studies until your application for residence permit has been completed.
   Find more information here and here.

6. Education and Examination Codes

The Education and Examination Codes of the Partner universities are accessible to all students via:

- UGent: https://www.ugent.be/student/en/class-exam-exchange-intern/class-exam/education-examination-code
- AU: https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/strategy/au-rules-and-regulations
- BOKU: https://boku.ac.at/en/studienservices/themen/informationen-zu-pruefungen and https://boku.ac.at/universitaetsleitung/senat/dokumente-und-rechtliches
- UGOE: https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/49739.html

Students have the **right of complaint and appeal** to the IMSOGLO Management Board. These rights are described in the Education and Examination codes specific to each partner university for the courses taken at that university. More information about the right of complaint and appeal can be found via:

- UGent: https://www.ugent.be/student/en/class-exam-exchange-intern/class-exam/education-examination-code/internal-appeals-procedure.htm
- UGOE: https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/688706.html
- BOKU:https://boku.ac.at/en/international/themen/international-students-coming-to-boku/a-good-start-plan-your-studies-at-boku/wie-plane-ich-mein-studium-an-der-boku-nach-der-ankunft/responsibilities-and-appeal
- AU:https://studerende.au.dk/en/studies/subject-portals/agroecology-food-and-environment/examination/examination-complaints/
  Please send complaints and appeals to the IMSOGLO Management Board via imsoglo@ugent.be.

6. Bullying

As students of a diverse and international university programme, students are expected to treat one another with respect, fairness, and kindness at all times. Bullying, harassment, or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. Instead, students are encouraged to communicate openly, value different perspectives, and contribute to a safe and inclusive learning environment where everyone can thrive.

To seek support from bullying, students can address the IMSOGLO Management Board or other confidential contacts (e.g. the administrative coordinators) at each partner university. Additional info on bullying and support van be found via the following links:

- UGent: https://www.ugent.be/student/en/study-support/trustpunt/bullying or contact the reporting centre for inappropriate behaviour specifically for students at the faculty report.fbw@ugent.be.
- AU: https://studerende.au.dk/en/zero-tolerance
- BOKU: https://boku.ac.at/en/besondere-organe-und-einrichtungen/coordination-office-for-gender-equality-diversity-and-accessibility/inclusion-disability-accessibility/information-for-students/psychosocial-counseling
- UGOE: https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/580846.html

7. Data protection

Data on the students are collected during the process of application, enrolment and examination. The partners have signed an agreement on the joint control of data processing. One aspect is, that you, as the “data subject”, can contact any of the controllers with regard to protecting their rights, other queries and communication regarding the agreement. The contact points are as follows:

- For UGent: privacy@ugent.be
- For BOKU: datenschutz@boku.ac.at
- For AU: dpo@au.dk
- For UGOE:datenschutz@uni-goettingen.de

8. People and contact

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Don't hesitate to become a member of the Erasmus Mundus Association (EMA), an association for students and alumni of Erasmus Mundus Master and Doctoral programmes.

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