

A Joint European Masters Degree in Citizenship Education: a model of implementing a Joint European Masters within the Bologna process

Alistair Ross

CiCe
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Design of
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Courses

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Contents

Introduction	1
The structure of the booklet	2
The European Higher Education Area and the Bologna process	3
The CiCe MA	4
The European Qualifications Framework at Second-Cycle (Masters) level	5
Joint Degrees	8
Competences and outcomes	11
Specific Competences	11
Generic Competences	12
Grid matching Outcomes to Competences	13
The European Credit Transfer System	14
Course Design and Assessment	15
Grid matching Modules to Competences	16
Conclusions	19
References	20

Introduction

This case study of the development of a Joint Degree programme has been written to support staff in universities and other higher education institutions who are either

- including material in Masters courses (Bologna second cycle) that relates to children's and young people's development of identity and citizenship education within Europe, or
- developing second cycle Joint Degree programmes that address the Bologna process.

The first audience may find our discussion of the specific competences, objectives and processes concerning citizenship education of direct interest; the second may wish to follow our description of the process of creating a degree within the various elements of the Bologna process - competences and the Tuning process, the use of ECTS, and issues of quality control - more useful.

The report has been prepared by the author on behalf of a small working group established by CiCe in 2001 to develop a Joint Masters degree. At that time, our Erasmus Thematic Network decided that it wished to develop a Joint Degree in Citizenship Education for a European audience of professionals who were working in some way with children or young people in the area of citizenship. We established a group of six European universities, each potentially interested in delivering the programme. We applied to the Erasmus programme for a three-year Curriculum Development programme (2003-2006) to support developing the curriculum and its content, in association with a wider group of partners in different institutions, who would help prepare materials, but not necessarily be involved in the teaching of the course. The programme is well-developed: at the time this booklet was prepared much material was ready, and the consortium of universities were in the process of approving the course so that it might begin in the autumn of 2005.

There are certain specific aspects of our Masters programme that are very important to us, but which are not discussed here at any length. For example, our course is largely delivered through distance learning, with a substantial web-based set of teaching materials. We are proposing to apply to become an *Erasmus Mundus* programme. There were significant technical and financial issues around the development of an inter-university agreement. Important though these are for us, none of them affect the core issues about how to develop a degree in the context of the Bologna process, or concern issues of postgraduate degrees in the area of citizenship education and identity in Europe, and are therefore not discussed here.

The structure of the booklet

This case study matches the development of our planning of this degree, from its first stages in 2000 to its current position, against the development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the Bologna process. The purposes and processes of our proposal are supported by the developing European agenda in Higher Education: our proposal for a post-graduate programme that would support professionals in understanding and delivering citizenship education within the context of Europe was well served by the notion of a joint degree, that would be 'owned', taught, delivered and awarded by a consortium of equal partners.

After introducing the development of the EHEA, this booklet describes the development of the European Qualifications Framework, and how our discussions to create a Masters programme developed an agreed understanding of what the award would mean in terms of its length of study, level of work, and the outcomes that it would have for successful students.

There was also considerable development of understanding of what joint degrees would entail, and a recognition that there was very little in existence that was truly 'joint'.

In parallel to this, the Tuning process was suggesting ways to harmonise the nature of degree programmes through the development of competences that would be demonstrated by successful graduates. We developed specific and generic competences, and used these as a basis for designing the structure and nature of the course, ensuring that our design would deliver all the competences we intended, and that our assessment would ensure that they had all been achieved.

The European Higher Education Area and the Bologna process

The concept of a European Higher Education Area was first defined in the Sorbonne Joint Declaration (1998) as 'an open European area for higher learning'. Barriers to exchange and to recognition of different countries' systems would be removed, and it was proposed that a framework for teaching and learning be developed with an international system of two main cycles of taught courses, undergraduate and graduate.

This was followed by the Bologna Declaration (1999) which stated:

... in order to establish the European Area of Higher Education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide:

- a system of easily readable and comparable degrees ... to promote European citizens' employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system
- a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate ... The degree awarded after the first cycle shall ... be relevant to the European labour market. ...the second cycle should lead to the masters' degree
- ... a system of credits ... to promote the most widespread student mobility ... (which) could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts
- ... promotion of mobility ... - for students, for teachers, researchers and administrative staff ...
- ... promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance
- ... promotion of the European dimensions in higher education, particularly ... curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

The Bologna Declaration has been followed by further inter-governmental meetings – in Prague (2002), Berlin (2003) and Bergen (2005) – and many other meetings between to advance particular facets of the process.

The CiCe MA

The 'CiCe MA' that is described here was designed to fit within the Bologna process. It is a degree that we have built that is

- in the second cycle, and following the completion of an (undergraduate) first cycle course
- a joint degree, designed, taught and awarded by a group of universities in different countries
- based on the European Credit Transfer system
- designed with the labour market in mind, enhancing professional understanding and expertise in citizenship education in Europe
- built to match the development of a European Qualifications Framework, built on competences from the Tuning process and descriptors of outcomes
- promoting student and staff mobility
- quality assured through cooperation between states
- based on joint curriculum development and inter-institutional cooperation

The European Qualifications Framework at Second-Cycle (Masters) level

At the Berlin Conference (part of the Bologna process) in 2003 it was agreed that each country involved should elaborate national qualifications frameworks for its higher education systems, which would relate to an overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area - 'against which individual national frameworks could articulate with due regard to the institutional, historical and national context' (Bologna Group, 2003). At each level, the framework would describe the workload, level, quality, learning outcomes and profile, and describe qualifications in generic terms (e.g. as first or second cycle degrees). The framework would also describe qualifications with reference to the four major purposes of higher education (preparation for the labour market; preparation for life as active citizens in democratic society; personal development; and development and maintenance of an advanced knowledge base).

The Joint Quality Initiative Group established to advance this met in Dublin in October 2004, and produced what are known as 'The Dublin Descriptors'. (Joint Quality Group, 2004).

These suggest that for the award of a Masters (second cycle) degree, students must show they:

- have **demonstrated knowledge and understanding** that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;
- can **apply their knowledge and understanding** and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;
- have the **ability** to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;
- can **communicate** their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;
- have the **learning skills** to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

The Bologna Working Group on Qualification Frameworks (2004) reported in December. This suggested that all higher education qualifications should be described in terms of

- *Learning Outcomes* (what a learner will know, understand, and be able to do when they complete the programme)
- *Qualification Descriptors* (statements on the outcome of study).

They also reported that only four countries had developed qualifications frameworks to date: Ireland, Scotland, EWNI (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and Denmark. Hungary is in the process of preparing a framework, and Sweden has conducted a review of qualifications. The UK developments began internally in 1997, and in Ireland the framework is established in law. The Hungarian and Danish developments have been inspired by the Bologna process, and in Hungary these will be incorporated into law. Each framework gives learning outcomes and descriptors at different levels: each also prescribes a single second-cycle level. The Hungarian descriptors are based on the Dublin Descriptors.

The EWNI descriptors are also broadly comparable to the Dublin Descriptors: second cycle courses 'recognise highly developed and complex levels of knowledge which enable the development of in-depth and original responses to complicated and unpredictable problems and situations. Learning at this level involves the demonstration of high level specialist professional knowledge and is appropriate for senior professionals and managers.' (QCA, 2001)

The learning outcomes expect successful students to

- deal with complex issues, make informed judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate these clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- act autonomously in planning, implementing and analysing work regarded as being of a professional or equivalent level;
- demonstrate self direction in tackling and solving problems;
- with further professional training, to remain at the forefront of their subject area(s) or be able to develop new skills to a high level; and
- have the knowledge and technical capacity and qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable contexts of a professional or equivalent context.

The CiCe MA Group developed their own set of learning outcomes in 2003. These can be organised as a sub-set of the Dublin Descriptors:

Students who successfully complete the Masters programme will be able to:

<i>Generally</i> (<i>'Dublin Descriptors'</i>)	<i>Specifically</i> (<i>CiCe Joint Masters Learning Outcomes</i>)
demonstrate knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and enhances Bachelor's level work, and that provides a basis and opportunity for originality in developing and applying ideas, within a small-scale research context;	demonstrate extended knowledge and understanding, drawn from a number of specific fields and/or themes; explore a range of international perspectives, demonstrating an understanding of various ethnic, linguistic and cultural perspectives, and synthesise and articulate these;
apply their knowledge and understanding and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;	apply their knowledge and understanding in their professional context, developing the citizenship education curriculum in changing contexts, as circumstances change and develop;
be able to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information; reflect on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;	be able to synthesise their knowledge and make judgements about the development of identity and citizenship in complex situations, showing the ability to approach each individual child/young person with respect for their diverse identities, showing understanding and reflection on group dynamics and identity; Promote and transmit the values of citizenship in a European context, being aware of and acknowledging their own values in the process of this.
communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;	communicate their understandings and conclusions to various audiences, for example through undertaking professional leadership roles in the field of citizenship education and establishing a personal network of appropriate professional colleagues across a number of different societies/countries;
show learning skills that allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.	develop and use appropriate research to reflect on and inform their practice; continue to work in an autonomous manner that shows respect, reflection, and the analysis of evidence of changing concepts of identity and citizenship, and to translate this into their professional practice.

Joint Degrees

It was our intention from the outset to create this degree as one that was truly 'joint' – that was awarded as a single degree by all the partner institutions, that was administered, organised and delivered by all the partners working equally and in unison.

This was ambitious. A survey for the European University Association in 2002 (Rauhvargers, 2002) found that 'an agreed definition of a joint degree in Europe is still lacking'. Using the definition of a degree awarded jointly by all the participating institutions, almost all countries 'admitted that their joint degrees "are not real joint degrees" ' (p 29). A subsequent survey of a range of exemplars of good practice of self-described supposed 'joint degrees' concluded 'none of the networks ... are yet able to offer students a joint degree that is legally recognised in all its partner countries' (EUA, 2004, p 13).

The EUA report made a series of recommendations that we have found most useful (pp 23 – 24). These are listed below, with our reaction set next to each point.

<i>EUA (2004) 'Golden Rules' for joint Masters programmes</i>	<i>The CiCe Joint Masters programme</i>
<i>Know why you are setting up the programme</i>	Our Masters is to meet a clear pan-European need for professional educators and others to understand the changing nature of citizenship in Europe, and changing identities in Europe, and to translate these into local practice. The focus, content and need for the programme all require a cross-national response.
<i>Choose your partners carefully</i>	The six core partners had all been involved in three years' prior cooperation in the Erasmus Thematic Network, and thus had some experience of cooperation. The final set of partners changed slightly as we tested our emerging plans against local conditions and possibilities. Our partnership was constructed with the desire to represent a wide range of European traditions, regions, cultures and histories.
<i>Develop well-defined programme goals and student-learning outcomes with your network partners</i>	We used the processes developed in the Tuning process (see below) to move from our agreed learning outcomes to identify specific competences that we thought should be demonstrated by successful students. This was undertaken in the early stages of planning, and involved extensive and illuminating discussions. A variety of academic traditions were brought together in this process.
<i>Make sure all the institutions (and not just academic colleagues) fully support the goals and objectives of the programme</i>	This was a critical process. The partnership began as a cooperation between experienced academic colleagues. While we had all begun with the explicit support and encouragement of our most senior academic managers, we did not attempt to involve non-academic colleagues in our administrative departments until our academic labours were

Ensure that sufficient academic and administrative staff resources are involved in the programme

bearing some fruit. At this point we all encountered some resistance – truly joint degrees (as the EUA observed) were unknown creatures that did not fit existing and known academic administrative structures.

It was necessary to re-involve our senior academic managers in each institution, and to ensure that they communicated their enthusiasm for the project, and their concern that structural issues did not become impediments, to all necessary administrative staff in each institution. This involved several joint lengthy discussions between administrators concerned with course approval, quality control, finance and other matters.

Different administrative requirements in the partner countries were identified and explored in these discussions. The principle we adopted was to determine and isolate the essential local requirements in each case, and to devise a system that meant that each of these 'sticking points' was addressed by all the partners in unison, with generally the partner for whom the point was an issue carrying out the preparatory work, and then discussing and sharing this with the other partners. This process – though time-consuming and bureaucratic – ensured that we concluded the process with a programme scheme that addressed all local requirements and conditions.

Ensure that a sustainable funding strategy for the programme is in place

The various funding regimes for postgraduate study made this very difficult to achieve. This was compounded by great difficulties in determining the real costs of delivering the programme in each partner institution – there were very different methodologies for calculating the cost of academics' time, for example. Securing local institutional support for our innovations was one thing, but this did not necessarily include national level understanding of the realities of joint degree funding. In the end we were forced to make almost all of the real costs of the programme fall on the students.

Take care that information about the programme is easily accessible to students

Information about the programme has been agreed by the partners, and is available to students on the internet. We found that it has been invaluable to have a single joint planning document, that is maintained in the working language, and regularly updated as the planning developed. Ensuring that we all worked to a common description has prevented the possibility and temptation of parallel (and prospectively divergent) evolution.

Organise and plan meetings sufficiently in advance

We have planned frequent and regular meetings. The financial support of the Commission through the Erasmus Curriculum Development funding has been an invaluable support in this, but the demands of the time that this planning has taken has been at personal cost to the members of the group. Meetings needed to be planned in advance, but planning also needed to be flexible to meet the inevitable contingencies of developing a complex and innovative programme. The location of meetings has been balanced between trying to work in all partner institutions and recognising the geographical imbalance between our locations – easier-to-get-to venues have been used more frequently, to save travelling time.

Develop language policy and encourage local language learning

We agreed at a very early stage that the working language would be English. In planning terms, it was essential to have a lingua franca. For academic delivery, since we were working with prepared materials that would be delivered on-line, it was necessary to write large quantities of teaching material. At an early stage we calculated the costs of translating this into other languages, and concluded that even a second language would be prohibitively expensive. We will thus teach the course on-line in one language. But second-language learning will be encouraged, with the opportunity for learning a second language through on-line materials, and through attending an intensive programme and speaking the local language while living in another country. The course also has the possibility of being delivered in a full-time mode, in which case students will spend six months in each of two countries, and attend the intensive programme in a third country, with the opportunities for second language learning that this will bring.

Decide who is responsible for what

We have reviewed the wide range of teaching and administrative responsibilities and tasks that delivering a joint degree will entail. The division of teaching tasks has been relatively straightforward. We have also agreed a schedule of administrative tasks, and provisionally agreed on their division between institutions. We have agreed the principle that the resources we obtain for the programme (primarily through student fees) will be divided between the partners to reflect this division of tasks, academic and administrative.

Competences and outcomes

The qualification descriptors for the Masters degree are set out above. These are general statements about what we would expect a successful student to be able to do as a result of taking part in the programme. We discussed these at some length, and then used the work on Tuning Educational Structures in Europe, undertaken as part of the Socrates programme of the European Commission's Department of Education and Culture. This initiative, reported on in Gonzalez and Wagenaar (2003), identified generic competences that might be expected to be developed in undergraduate ('first-cycle') courses in European higher education. What might one expect every Masters graduate to be able to do? These generic competences are to be complemented by specific competences: the expectations one might have of a graduate in a particular discipline.

We have taken this idea forward in the CiCe Joint Masters to consider what might be the specific competences in a second-cycle course (Masters programme) in the area of Citizenship Education in Europe. What specific competences one might expect of a successful Masters student, given that they are already working in this area of children's/young people's identity and citizenship? These arise from the qualification descriptors set out earlier, and can be related to them.

The working group discussed possible generic and specific competences at length at its earliest meetings. Lists were generated and tested against the course descriptors, keeping a careful note of parallel pan-European discussions on the development of the Bologna process. We also tested our tentative competences with colleagues, notably in the CiCe Network through plenary conference sessions in 2002 and 2003.

The following two lists present the various competences which we eventually agreed would need to be demonstrated for a student to be awarded our joint degree.

Specific Competences

In order to reach such a situation, students will work towards and achieve the following specific competences:

1. communicate effectively and with sensitivity (with children, young people and professionals) in multicultural (educational or learning) contexts
2. acquire skills to develop children's and young people's understanding of their identity in the changing context of citizenship in Europe, recognising the contemporary diversity of cultures, languages, ethnicities, religious beliefs, political opinions and nationalities

3. develop and use appropriate strategies to help resolve social and interpersonal conflicts
4. initiate cooperative activities with people from different backgrounds and cultures
5. promote and develop strategies of professional self-reflection, and strategies to lead professional development with colleagues and other teams
6. identify specific appropriate professional colleagues in other countries and cultures, and communicate effectively with them to share and further professional practice
7. recognise tolerance and preconceptions in their own and others' behaviour and attitudes, and be able to develop strategies to promote greater acceptance and understanding
8. demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding in selected multidisciplinary aspects of citizenship education
9. analyse a specific issue through a piece of sustained writing that links professional circumstances to a broadly European perspective.

Generic Competences

In order to reach such a situation, students will work towards and achieve the following generic competences:

1. understand and appreciate diverse customs and cultures
2. apply knowledge to organise and design projects, working in a team and providing leadership
3. apply knowledge to practice in an ethical manner
4. handle complexity and work in an interdisciplinary team, communicating effectively with other professions, other fields and other countries
5. continue to use critical and self-critical skills autonomously in new and changing situations

This list of competences then needed to be tested against our qualification descriptors. Firstly, was each qualification descriptor addressed through one or more competence? Secondly, was every competence that had been identified necessary in order to meet the need of the qualification descriptors? The following grid was devised to ensure that each item on our list of competences was necessary, and the list as a whole was sufficient to ensure the qualification we propose to offer.

	demonstrate knowledge and understanding as a basis for originality in developing ideas	apply knowledge, understanding, problem solving abilities in new environments	integrate knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate judgements, reflect on social responsibilities	communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences	learning skills that allow autonomous study	
	demonstrate extended knowledge and understanding, from fields and/or themes; explore perspectives, understand various perspectives, synthesise and articulate	apply their knowledge and understanding in professional contexts, developing citizenship education curriculum in changing contexts;	synthesise knowledge and make judgements in complex situations, showing respect for diverse identities; understanding and reflection	promote values of citizenship in a European context	communicate conclusions to various audiences; take professional leadership roles and establish networks across different societies/countries	Develop/use appropriate research to reflect on practice; work in an autonomous manner, reflect and analyse evidence of change
Specific Competences						
communicate effectively and with sensitivity			✓		✓	
develop children's understanding of identity			✓			
use strategies to resolve conflicts	✓				✓	
initiate cooperative activities					✓	
professional self-reflection and leadership					✓	
network with professional colleagues					✓	
recognise tolerance and promote understanding	✓		✓			
demonstrate knowledge of multidisciplinary aspects	✓					
analyse issues through a piece of sustained writing	✓	✓				
Generic Competences						
understand/appreciate diverse customs & cultures	✓			✓		
organise projects in a team and lead					✓	
apply knowledge in an ethical manner.		✓		✓	✓	
handle complexity, teamwork, communicating effectively with others				✓	✓	
critical and self-critical skills autonomously		✓				

The European Credit Transfer System

We decided from the outset that the programme must be designed within the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). This provided a ready-made and easily understandable structure and weighting system that could be used to create a mutually-understandable structure, and one which we could be sure was sufficient to constitute a recognised second-cycle (Masters) qualification that would be accepted across Europe.

ECTS, as endorsed by the Bologna process, specifies the amount of study involved in a particular programme or part of a programme, and the recording of the degree towards which this study was successful, on a common scale. Broadly speaking, full-time study over an academic year of about 30 weeks equates to 60 ECTS points. The original Bologna agreement envisaged a broad structure whereby

First cycle	(undergraduate)	180 ECTS	3 years full-time
Second cycle	(taught postgraduate)	120 ECTS	2 years full-time
Third cycle	(postgrad research)	180 ECTS	3 years full-time

in each case, a year means an academic year. However, some countries deliver a calendar year programme, which can be judged to be 90 ECTS points, and second cycle Masters courses are now set at between 90 and 120 ECTS points. The principle is that an award following study credited at 180 ECTS points at first cycle level is the normal entry requirement for a second cycle course.

In the CiCe Joint Masters programme we settled at an early stage on a 120 ECT model. The course was then designed on a modular basis, with the basic module being 15 ECTS points.

2	core taught modules (15 ECTS each)	30 ECTS
2	option taught modules (15 ECTS) (selected from a choice of 6 modules)	30 ECTS
1	Intensive Programme course (15 ECTS)	15 ECTS
1	Dissertation (45 ECTS) (proposal 15, thesis 30)	45 ECTS

The sequence in which various modules were to be taken was determined: students should start with Core 1; the dissertation must be the final piece of work offered for assessment; the Intensive Programme had to be taken after at least two taught modules, and before work was commenced on the dissertation, for example.

As the programme was largely to be delivered through web-based learning, the Intensive Programme – which was a module

that centred on a two-week residential period of study – was the only face-to-face element of the whole course.

Course Design and Assessment

Having determined what competences we expected to be demonstrated by our successful graduates, and the structure of the course, our next task was to design a course programme that ensured that

- all the various competences would be acquired through following the programme, and that
- our assessment of the various parts of the course would enable us to be confident that we could say the competences had been appropriately demonstrated at Master's level.

Given the optional nature of parts of the programme, it was important to ensure that whatever options were taken, all the competences were developed and assessed.

We decided that the two core modules should provide a broad conceptual foundation for the course: the first module would be entitled ***Society and Citizenship: Ideas, Values and Policies***, and deliver a philosophical, historical and sociological approach that brought together conceptual, institutional and procedural knowledge. Students should recognise the highly contested nature of all these issues and concepts. The second core module, ***Citizen and Identity: Socialisation, Representation and Learning*** would start from the individual perspective, looking at ideas of identity - as members of groups, as learners - drawing from various branches of psychology, pedagogy and sociology.

The optional modules were to focus on four contexts (political, historical, economic and environmental) and on two processes (an emphasis on democracy and human rights, and the exploration of conflict and co-operation).

1. ***Economic Awareness and Consumer Education***
2. ***Conflict, Co-operation and Citizenship***
3. ***Environmental Education and Citizenship***
4. ***Political Education and Citizenship Education***
5. ***Human Rights & Democracy in Citizenship Education***
6. ***History and Culture in Citizenship Education***

The ***Intensive programme*** was to have three objectives:

- preparation for the dissertation (including research methods, scope etc.)
- activity-based learning for children and young people, developing the skills of active citizenship education
- consolidation of elements of the core modules.

Grid matching Modules to Competences

	Modules								Intensive programme and related activity	Dissertation
	C1	C2	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	O6		
	Society and Citizenship: ideas, values, policies	Citizen and Identity: socialisation, representation	Economic awareness and consumer education	Conflict, cooperation and citizenship	Environmental education and citizenship education	Political education and citizenship education	Human Rights & democracy and citizenship education	History and Culture in citizenship education		
Specific Competences										
communicate effectively and with sensitivity	X	X							X	X
develop children's understanding of identity										
use strategies to resolve conflicts				X		X	X	X	X	
initiate cooperative activities			X		X	X	X		X	
professional self-reflection and leadership									X	X
network with professional colleagues	X	X							X	
recognise tolerance and promote understanding				X	X	X		X	X	
demonstrate knowledge of multidisciplinary aspects			X	X	X	X	X	X		X
analyse issue through a piece of sustained writing			X							X
Generic Competences										
understand/appreciate diverse customs & cultures	X	X							X	X
organise projects in a team and lead									X	
apply knowledge in an ethical manner.									X	X
handle complexity, teamwork, communicating effectively with others	X	X							X	X
critical and self-critical skills autonomously	X	X							X	X

(note: other competences *may* be developed within modules: this chart gives those that it was *planned* to develop within each module)

The **Dissertation** was to be a research project carried out by the student. It would have to include a comparative, pan-European dimension and offer some possible applications to children's and/or teenagers' education, if possible, based on the student's own specific professional circumstances.

The grid on the facing page shows how each competence is related to one or more modules. Each module is necessary to develop the full complement of competences, taking the optionality of particular modules (O1 to O6) into account. The Dissertation – the most heavily weighted and final work to be assessed – carries a particularly heavy burden in terms of competences, because this is the largest and the last piece of work to be presented.

This process helped the planning group determine the purposes of each module, in addition to the development of a particular set of understandings and knowledge. It also helped clarify and pinpoint the objectives of assessing each module. The purpose of the assessment is to be able to assert that the student has a particular competence or set of competences: we could now set out for the student what was being looked for in an assessment task.

Firstly, each competence (from Specific 1 (SC1) to Generic 5 (GC5)) was matched against module and assessment task:

SC1 communicate effectively and with sensitivity	C1 C2 Diss Diss IP	Write effectively and with understanding, demonstrating sensitivity towards multicultural contexts and towards those with whom they engage in a professional context (parents, children colleagues) Sustain a written argument in a substantial piece of work Demonstrate good oral communication skills with a range of professional peers
SC2 develop children's understanding of	C1 C2	Demonstrate in their written work their understanding of identity and citizenship as they affect young per European contexts

GC2 critical and self-critical skills in changing situations	C1, C2 (and all options) IP Diss	through coursework, demonstrate skills of critical thinking and evaluation in the context of theories and practice of citizenship and identity demonstrate in a group context the exercise of critical skills show through a sustained piece of writing the ability to handle complex critical ideas
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Following this, the assessment tasks for each module were aggregated, noting which particular competences were being assessed by each aspect of the assessment task. The following two examples relate to the Core Modules and the Dissertation:

	Assessment	Competence
Core Modules	write effectively and with understanding, demonstrating their sensitivity towards multicultural contexts and towards those with whom they engage in a professional context (parents, children colleagues)	SC1
	demonstrate in their written work their understanding of identity and citizenship as they affect young people in their own and other European contexts	SC2
	through their coursework, show that they are working collaboratively with others on the course, working with them in an appropriate way, sharing ideas and communicating issues concerning citizenship education and identity	SC6
	through the coursework, show an ability to consider, reflect on and refer to the differences in practice found across Europe and beyond	GC1
	through their coursework, show that they are working collaboratively with others on the course, sharing ideas and communicating effectively	GC4
	through coursework, demonstrate skills of critical thinking and evaluation in the context of theories and practice of citizenship and identity	GC5
Dissertation	write effectively and with understanding, demonstrating their sensitivity towards multicultural contexts and towards those with whom they engage in a professional context (parents, children colleagues); sustain a written argument in a substantial piece of work	SC1
	show a reflective approach to professional management and leadership and professional development	SC5
	show through a sustained argument the ability to bring together knowledge and understanding from at least two other disciplines or fields to inform their capacity to further citizenship education in professional practice within a European perspective	SC8 and SC9
	throughout the dissertation to draw on, use and reflect on the customs and practices of different cultures	GC1
	through the dissertation to show a concern for ethical issues as they affect professional practice and behaviour	GC3
	show through the dissertation that they have worked effectively with others in a professional context, both in their own practice and with others on the course	GC4
	show through a sustained piece of writing the ability to handle complex critical ideas	GC5

Conclusions

This degree is now in the final stages of its validation. We have found a series of issues that were problematic – not about the nature and content of the degree, on which it was relatively easy to agree, but concerning structures, finances and working practices. These we have found some solutions to, and some ways of by-passing problems.

The ability to award joint degrees has not always been possible in many countries until very recently, and there is much legislation in hand. In other countries, we found very little knowledge of what joint degrees would entail, or whether they were possible or not. There are still issues of liabilities to be considered, in an inter-institutional agreement.

Financial issues seem particularly difficult, with a wide range of practices in different member states. This was compounded by the on-line nature of the course, which meant that residence issues were problematic.

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The Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) Thematic Network links 28 European states and some 80 universities and college departments which are engaged in educating students about how children and young people learn about and understand their society, their identity and citizenship.

A cross-disciplinary group, we include lecturers in social psychology, pedagogy, psychology, sociology and curriculum studies, and those who educate various professions such as teachers, social pedagogues, psychologists, early childhood workers and youth workers.

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