



ROADMAP ON THE ASEAN HIGHER EDUCATION SPACE 2025 AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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Introduction

The **Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Higher Education** was adopted by the 27th ASEAN Summit in 2015. The Declaration initiated the work of SOM-ED towards the development of an ASEAN Higher Education Space, by acknowledging *'higher education as one of the catalysts in accelerating ASEAN's economic, political and sociocultural development agenda'* and the need to *"embrace [the] diversity and solidarity of the ASEAN Community through enhanced intra-ASEAN mobility of students and scholars."* The **Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025**, which focuses on physical, institutional and people-to-people linkages, also contains an explicit strategic objective to increase the number of intra-ASEAN international students by 2025.

Coupled with the second **ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016 - 2020**, this was envisaged as being achieved through augmenting the quality of ASEAN higher education provision, enabling greater comparability and recognition of qualifications through harmonisation, facilitating the transfer of credits for student mobility periods, and catalysing internationalisation through a critical mass of mobility under an ASEAN Branded Scholarship.

There have been significant developments and outcomes achieved in this body of work since the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration. The third **ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021 – 2025**, adopted by the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASEM) on May 31st 2021, will see the work in this sphere of the ASEAN Socio-cultural Community Blueprint consolidated, contributing to the attainment of the ASEAN Vision 2025 thus enhancing the quality, competitiveness, and internationalisation of its higher education institutions.

The higher education components of the new ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021 – 2025 carry forward the undertakings of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration and are delineated under Outcome 3 of *'Enhanced regional capacity in higher education as part of lifelong learning provision, including the harmonisation of ASEAN higher education and the following outputs.'* The scope of work to deliver greater harmonisation and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education is found under Output 3.2. *'Sustained and strengthened ASEAN capacity in higher education harmonisation through strategies, mechanisms and scholarship provision.'*

The key activities operationalising the outputs of the Work Plan have been allocated to key regional higher education stakeholders which include the membership of the newly formed **ASEAN Working Group on Higher Education Mobility 2025** (hereinafter referred to as 'Working Group'), chaired by the Education Youth and Sports Division (EYSD) of the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Foundation, with the technical and operational advisory of the EU Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (SHARE) Programme for the duration of the SHARE Programme. Within the remit of the Working Group is the formulation and proposal of this Roadmap to realise and implement the **ASEAN Higher Education Space**¹ for greater people-to-people connectivity and knowledge transfer across ASEAN, in the framework of the ASEAN Education Work Plan 2021 - 2025. This Roadmap will deliver the mandates and commitments of ASEAN related to boosting intra-ASEAN student mobility by 2025, including the design, ownership, and operationalisation of an **ASEAN Branded Scholarship**.

¹ This space will need to be operationally defined and continuously discussed among AWGHEM members. The 2nd AWGHEM Meeting in Nov 2021 suggested to include in the definition: (a) ASEAN identify; (b) employability; (c) youth participation; (d) SDG4; and (e) ethics.

This is in line with the **Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4)** which aims to *"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."* In addition, it seeks to address SDG Target 4.b *"By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, (...), for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries."* The initiative of the Working Group to realise an ASEAN Branded Scholarship in the framework of an ASEAN Higher Education Space by 2025, demonstrates the commitment of the ASEAN Member States (AMS) to Sustainable Development Goal Target 4.b.

The initiatives and components that lead towards the development of an ASEAN Higher Education Space, including quality assurance, higher education mobility², and recognition of higher education qualifications, are aligned with the **ASEAN Declaration on Human Resource Development in the Changing World of Work**, the **ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework**, the **ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025**, and the ongoing initiative for a **Declaration on Digital Transformation of Education Systems in ASEAN**. The roadmap and its implementation plan take a whole of ASEAN Community approach in the development of an ASEAN Higher Education Space and contributes to improved inclusiveness in higher education, augmented employability and competitiveness, and the acquisition of demand driven competencies and qualifications. Furthermore, it contributes to the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and strengthening of future resilience through enhanced people to people connectivity, enhanced access and recognition of higher education in the ASEAN region.

This Roadmap is developed against the backdrop of the changing context of higher education globally and the disruption to student mobility wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cognisant of this new reality, the Roadmap proposes adaptive and sustainable approaches to ASEAN higher education harmonisation strategies and internationalisation methodologies. This includes augmenting access and inclusion to internationalised higher education provision through digital transformation.

Objectives of the Roadmap

In developing a roadmap aimed at fully implementing initiatives towards an ASEAN Higher Education Space and the management of an ASEAN Branded Scholarship by 2025, the Roadmap will have the following objectives:

1. Consolidate the vision and commitments set out in the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Higher Education;
2. Formulate and propose an ASEAN Declaration and Vision on the ASEAN Higher Education Space as a high-level commitment to the objectives of the Working Group;
3. Determine key milestones in the design, development and implementation of the Working Group's activities;
4. Contribute to the underlying visions of ASEAN 2025 and a post-2025 agenda as well as the sustainability and resilience of an ASEAN Higher Education Space;
5. Provide strategic guidance to the Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED) on the implementation of the relevant activities ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021 – 2025 in accordance with their respective mandates;
6. Identify, agree, and implement the procedure, timeline, and capacity building required to transfer of ownership of assets and action lines from the SHARE Programme to the ASEAN nominated entity/entities, prior to the SHARE Programme's conclusion at the end of 2022, to sustainably lead the initiative to 2025 and beyond;

² Refers to students and faculty

7. Identify, develop and implement continued Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Activities required for the Working Group and ASEAN Member States
8. Establish programme areas for the following components, within the implementation plan:
 - a. The Digital Transformation of ASEAN Higher Education
 - Virtual Exchange / Collaborative Online International Education (COIL)
 - Digital Credentials / Digitalised Credit Transfer System
 - b. Communities of Practice of ASEAN Higher Education Practitioners / Alumni
 - c. Support for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam on student mobility
 - d. Graduate Employability in ASEAN

Key Principles of the Roadmap

In implementing the Roadmap aimed at realising an initiative towards an ASEAN Higher Education Space and the management of an ASEAN Branded Scholarship by 2025, the Working Group will observe the following key principles.

Measurable: Agreed targets to be achieved with clear timelines and key performance indicators to track progress;

Impactful: Programmes are mutually reinforcing and will be delivered in a coherent manner, focus on strategies and activities with most impact for the ASEAN higher education systems and students, supported by strong sustainability mechanisms at regional and national levels;

Participatory: Fostering voluntary collaboration amongst all stakeholders to support holistic approaches and outcomes; and acknowledging students/ learners, higher education practitioners, and stakeholders as partners and agents of their own learning and capacity development; and take due consideration the national regulations and different contexts of ASEAN Member States.

Complementary and Pragmatic: Ensuring the alignment of the eventual intra-ASEAN initiative with ASEAN mandates, commitments, and other initiatives including those of the SHARE Programme; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 4, as well as stakeholders' interests;

Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive: Ensuring all target groups, genders are facilitated and supported to have equal access to development opportunities so as to promote equal opportunities for all in ASEAN higher education;

Sustainable: Ensuring that strong sustainability mechanisms (financial and human resources) are in place to implement programmes and inform developments in the region.

Framework of the Roadmap

The following table sets out the vision and outcomes to be achieved by the Working Group, in the framework of the ASEAN Education Work Plan 2021 – 2025

Roadmap on the ASEAN Higher Education Space 2025					
Vision: A resilient and sustainable ASEAN Higher Education Space that enables greater harmonisation and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education, especially in enhancing people to people connectivity and supporting ASEAN community building.					
Outcome: To contribute to enhancing regional capacity in higher education as part of the lifelong learning provision, including harmonisation of higher education					
Key Area 1:	Key Area 2:	Key Area 3:	Key Area 4:	Key Area 5	Key Area 6
Promote awareness and support for the development of an ASEAN Higher Education Space	Strengthen the awareness and implementation of regional Quality Assurance	Support and enhance implementation of the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework	Promote and strengthen regional cooperation for Higher Education Mobility, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students - Faculty - Researchers, and - Internships 	Promote and implement mutual recognition on ASEAN Higher Education Qualifications, and professions, if possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diploma supplement - Digital Credit Transfer System - Ratification of Tokyo convention and eventually Global recognition convention 	Design and set the foundation that ensures sustainability (technical/human and financial resources) of the ASEAN Higher Education Space
Strategies: Each key area will focus on three strategies, as needed:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity Building for the working group, AMS and relevant organizations, and higher education institutions in relation to each key area 2. Technical Assistance in cases there is a need for external inputs on relevant matters within the key area 3. Policy Dialogues to promote, discuss and reach consensus among AMS on key directions, policies, guidelines, mechanisms and tools 					

Review and Reporting of the Roadmap Implementation

- Multi-stakeholder meetings involving the permanent and non-permanent members of the Working Group will be conducted to exchange information on progress of the implementation of this Roadmap.

- Permanent and non-permanent members will also monitor progress of their respective complementary initiatives and report these to the meetings of the Working Group
- Result-based key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed for this Roadmap.
- This Roadmap shall be regularly reviewed to ensure relevance and coherence with regional developments of ASEAN.
- Outcomes and results of this Roadmap's implementation plan will be evaluated in 2025 with a view of continuing efforts on the development and enhancement of an ASEAN Higher Education Space and ASEAN Branded Scholarship beyond 2025

ANNEX 1.

Biennial Implementation Plan of the Roadmap on Higher Education Space 2025³.

³ Annex 1 is meant to be a living document that could be updated periodically by AWGHEM Members and stakeholders involve in the implementation of this Roadmap. This will be used to track progress of implementation of actions and subject to further consultation with SOM-ED.

No	Activities	Category	Indicators	Lead	Potential Partners	2022	2023	Reference
3.1.2								
3.1.3								
3.1.4								
3.1.5								
Output 3.2:								
3.2.1								
3.2.2								
3.2.3								
3.2.4								
3.2.5								
Key Area 4: Promote and strengthen regional cooperation for Higher Education Mobility, including: (i) Students; (ii) Faculty; (iii) Researchers, and (iv) Internships.								
Output 4.1: ASEAN-wide digital Credit Transfer System (CTS) to support ASEAN mobility designed and institutionalised								
4.1.1	Design, piloting and adoption of the ASEAN-wide Digital Credit Transfer System (ASEAN-DCTS) to support student mobility through dialogues with organisation that share with similar experiences, skills and resource management capacity	Capacity Building		SOM-ED Chair	AWGHEM, AUN, EU-SHARE and SEAMES	SHARE Pilot		SHARE Work Plan and ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025
4.1.2	Consultation Workshops with ASEAN entities	Technical Assistance/ Research						SHARE Work Plan
4.1.3	Establishment of ASEAN-DCTS Community of Practice	Technical Assistance/ Research						SHARE Work Plan
4.1.4	Design and Development of Digital ASEAN-EU Credit Transfer System (DAECTS) Platform	Technical Assistance/ Research		EU-SHARE				EU SHARE 8th Annual Workplan Jan-Dec 2022
4.1.5	Design and Development of an Intra-ASEAN Virtual Exchange/COIL Platform	Technical Assistance/ Research		EU-SHARE				EU SHARE 8th Annual Workplan Jan-Dec 2022
4.1.5	Engaging ASEAN Member States (AMS) on CTS National Policies	Capacity Building		EU-SHARE				EU SHARE 8th Annual Workplan Jan-Dec 2022
Output 4.2: ASEAN Branded scholarship scheme for all ASEAN Member States established								
4.2.1	Establish an ASEAN Branded Scholarship scheme for all AMS using management and funding mechanisms to be determined by AMS	Technical Assistance/ Research		SOM-ED Chair AWGHEM	AUN, EU SHARE, SEAMES			ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025
4.2.2	Series of consultations in the development process	Technical Assistance/ Research		AWGHEM				
4.2.3	Establishment of ASEAN Scholarship Management Entity	Technical Assistance/ Research		AWGHEM				
4.2.4	Development of a sustainable mechanism for the scholarship	Technical Assistance/ Research		AWGHEM				
4.2.5	Analyse mobility barriers for CLMV	Technical Assistance/ Research		EU SHARE MPAC Study				SHARE Work Plan
4.2.6	Support CLMV to reduce barriers restricting intra-regional higher education student mobility into the countries	Technical Assistance/ Research		Myanmar	AUN, SEAMEO RIHED, EU SHARE			SHARE Work Plan and ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025
4.2.7	Promote inter and intra-regional student exchange programmes through face to face or virtual/online	Capacity Building		Indonesia	AUN, SEAMEO RIHED, EU SHARE			ASEAN Workplan on Education 2021-2025
4.2.8	Support initiatives that strengthen universities' capacity building in management and leadership, teaching, research and cross-border higher education (including joint supervision and fellowship programme)	Capacity Building		Lao PDR	AUN, SEAMEO RIHED, EU SHARE			ASEAN Workplan on Education 2021-2025

No	Activities	Category	Indicators	Lead	Potential Partners	2022	2023	Reference
4.2.9	SHARE Student Mobility and Alumni Workshops: EU-ASEAN Summit	Capacity Building		EU-SHARE				EU SHARE 8th Annual Workplan Jan-Dec 2022
4.2.10	Intra-ASEAN Mobility Information Session for All SHARE Partner Universities for batch 8	Capacity Building		EU-SHARE				EU SHARE 8th Annual Workplan Jan-Dec 2022
Key Area 5: Promote and implement mutual recognition on ASEAN Higher Education Qualifications, and professions, if possible. (including: Diploma supplement)								
Output 5.1: Awareness and ratification of the 2011 Tokyo Recognition Convention								
5.1.1	Dialogues, seminar on the Tokyo Convention	Policy Dialogue/Consultation			UNESCO			Proposed activity by ASEC
5.1.2								
5.1.3								
5.1.4								
5.1.5								
Output 5.2: Metal recognition agreements revisited and expanded								
5.2.1	Diploma Supplement (UNESCO and APEC) for ASEAN	Policy Dialogue			Australia			
5.2.2								
5.2.3								
5.2.4								
5.2.5								
Key Area 6: Design and set the foundation that ensures Financial sustainability of the ASEAN Higher Education Space								
Output 6.1: Partnerships to ensure financial sustainability forged/strengthened								
6.1.1								
6.1.2								
6.1.3								
6.1.4								
6.1.5								
Output 6.2: Systems to ensure financial sustainability of higher education space established								
6.2.1								
6.2.2								
6.2.3								
6.2.4								
6.2.5								

Category of Activity

Capacity Building

Technical Assistance/ Research

Policy Dialogue

Note: The Implementation Plan is meant to be a living document that could be updated periodically by AWGHEM Members and stakeholders involved in the implementation of this Roadmap. This will be used to track progress of implementation of actions and subject to further consultation with SOM-ED.