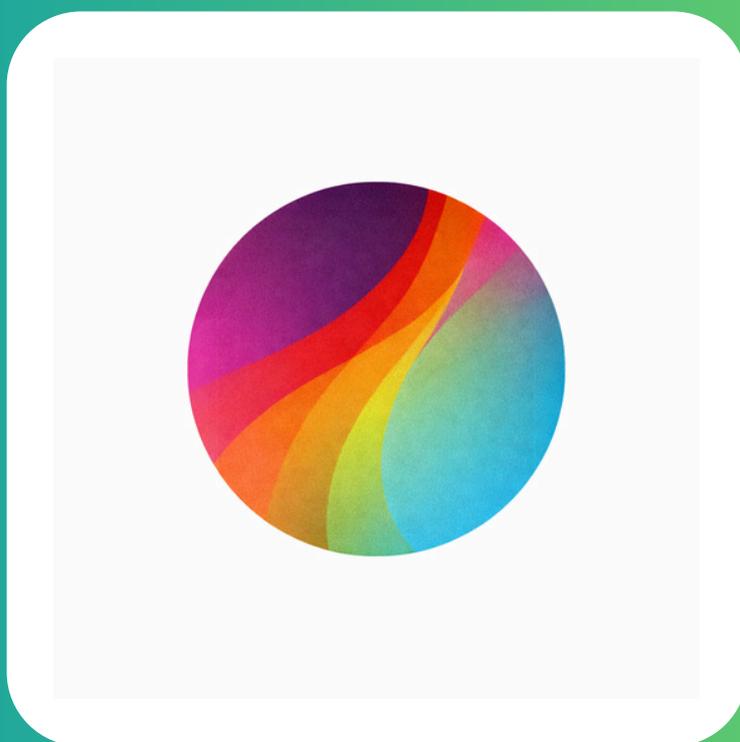


# Student Handbook

Your Guide to the Erasmus  
Mundus Master in Health Equity



# Welcome to MAHEQ



## Purpose of the Handbook

This Student Handbook provides an overview of the programme's structure, learning approach, academic expectations, mobility pathway, and practical arrangements across the partner institutions.

It helps you understand what it means to be a MAHEQ student and to navigate the academic, administrative, and professional aspects of the programme with confidence. It also outlines your rights and responsibilities, as well as the values and principles that guide learning, collaboration, and conduct within the MAHEQ community.

The handbook is a living document and may be updated to reflect changes in regulations or programme arrangements. Students will be informed of any significant updates during the programme.

## What You'll Find in This Handbook

- ◊ **Programme's structure** The overall structure of the MAHEQ programme, including the progression of semesters, courses, and assessments.
- ◊ **Learning approach** How learning takes place through reflection, collaboration, and engagement with real-world health equity challenges.
- ◊ **Academic mobility pathway** Guidance on the mandatory mobility pathway, including study periods in different countries and the internship.
- ◊ **Practical arrangements** Practical information on administrative and logistical matters, such as visas, housing, insurance, and student support at each partner institution.

## Why This Handbook Matters

- **Clarity** It provides clarity about how the programme and what students can expect academically and practically
- **Consistency** It ensures consistency by outlining shared principles, procedures, and expectations.
- **Support** it helps students navigate the programme with confidence by making key information accessible in one place

The handbook is a living document and may be updated to reflect changes in regulations or programme arrangements. Students will be informed of any significant updates during the programme.

## Important Note



While the handbook offers practical guidance and key information, it does not replace formal regulations of the partner institutions or the Erasmus Mundus Programme.

Students are expected to familiarise themselves with relevant institutional rules and national requirements, and to stay informed of official communications from the consortium.

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# 01

# Welcome

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## 1.1 Welcome to MAHEQ

Welcome to the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Health Equity (MAHEQ).

You are joining a unique, transnational learning community committed to understanding and addressing health inequities as **complex societal, political, and planetary challenges**. MAHEQ brings together students, academics, practitioners, and organisations from different countries, disciplines, and professional backgrounds to learn with and from one another.

Health equity, as approached in MAHEQ, is not limited to questions of healthcare access or health outcomes. It is fundamentally connected to **justice, participation, power relations, environmental sustainability, digital transformation, and human rights**. Addressing inequities therefore requires collaboration across sectors, systems, and professional cultures.

This Student Handbook is intended to support you throughout the programme. It provides guidance on academic structure, learning approaches, assessments, mobility, support services, and your rights and responsibilities as an Erasmus Mundus student over the next two years.

## 1.2 History of the MAHEQ Consortium

MAHEQ is the result of a **long-standing and evolving collaboration among the partner institutions**, grounded in shared academic interests, complementary expertise, and a common commitment to advancing health equity through higher education.

The foundations of this collaboration were laid through prior joint work in education, research, and capacity building related to health equity, social justice, and sustainability.

Building on these shared experiences, MAHEQ represents the natural continuation and consolidation of an established partnership. The transition from project-based collaboration to a fully integrated Erasmus Mundus Joint Master allows the consortium to formalise joint governance structures, deepen academic integration, and offer students a coherent transnational learning pathway. **MAHEQ thus embodies both continuity and innovation:** continuity in the relationships, trust, and shared vision developed over several years, and innovation in the form of a joint degree dedicated exclusively to health equity, justice, and planetary wellbeing.

## 1.3 What is MAHEQ?

MAHEQ is a 120 ECTS, two-year, full-time Erasmus Mundus Joint Master, jointly delivered by:

- **Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL)**, Norway
- **University of Zaragoza (UNIZAR)**, Spain
- **Arcada University of Applied Sciences**, Finland
- 

In collaboration with the NGO **Humanity & Inclusion**.

The programme is taught in English and includes **mandatory physical mobility**, ensuring that all students study in multiple European higher education systems. A central feature of MAHEQ is a **practice-based semester**, carried out in collaboration with external organisations, allowing students to engage with real-world health equity challenges.

# 02

# Educational philosophy





## 2.1 Educational Philosophy and Learning Approach

MAHEQ is grounded in a shared educational philosophy that understands learning as a process of **professional becoming**, rather than the passive acquisition of predefined knowledge.

The programme recognises that addressing health inequities requires not only analytical skills, but also **ethical judgement, reflexivity, relational competence, and the ability to act responsibly in complex and uncertain contexts**. Learning therefore unfolds through sustained engagement with theory, practice, and dialogue across difference.



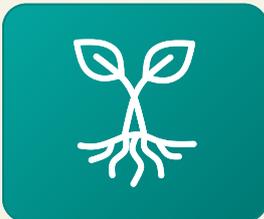
## 2.2 Learning as Professional Becoming

Learning in MAHEQ is explicitly designed to be:

- **Reflective** – students critically examine their own values, assumptions, positionality, and professional roles.
- **Relational** – learning takes place through dialogue, collaboration, disagreement, and mutual learning across disciplines and cultures.
- **Action-oriented** – theory is continuously connected to real-world challenges through cases, projects, and practice-based learning.
- **Ethically grounded** – justice, responsibility, participation, and respect for human dignity guide learning activities and assessment.

Students are expected to take active responsibility for their own learning, supported by peers, mentors, and teaching staff throughout the programme.

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## 2.3 Peer Learning Ecosystem

cross all four semesters, students participate in a Peer Learning Ecosystem that forms the social and pedagogical backbone of MAHEQ. This ecosystem provides:

- A stable learning community that continues across countries and mobility periods.
- Structured spaces for dialogue, feedback, and collective sense-making.
- Opportunities to engage with diverse perspectives and professional experiences.
- A foundation for intercultural and interprofessional learning.

The Peer Learning Ecosystem supports continuity, belonging, and shared responsibility for learning, even as students move between institutions and countries.

# 03

## Programme Structure and Mobility Pathway





## 3.1 Programme Structure

MAHEQ is structured over **four semesters of 30 ECTS each**, with a clear academic and pedagogical progression from foundational concepts to advanced application and independent research.

SEMESTER	LOCATION	COURSE	ECTS
<b>Semester 1</b>	Bergen	Fundamental Principles of Health Equity	30
<b>Semester 2</b>	Zaragoza	Bridging Theory and Practice in Health Equity	30
<b>Semester 3</b>	Helsinki + internship	Praxis for Health Equity	30
<b>Semester 4</b>	Variable	Master's Thesis	30

**Mobility is mandatory** and constitutes a core learning condition of the programme. Studying in different national, institutional, and cultural contexts is central to developing the competences required to work on health equity across systems and sectors.



## 3.2 Semester 1 at HVL

### Fundamental Principles of Health Equity (30 ECTS)

During this semester you will:

- Explore core concepts of health equity, health justice, and planetary health.
- Engage with critical pedagogy and complexity thinking.
- Develop shared language and conceptual grounding within the cohort.
- Begin building your individual learning portfolio.



## 3.3 Semester 2 at Unizar

### Bridging Theory and Practice in Health Equity (30 ECTS)

During this semester you will:

- Work with case-based and problem-based learning approaches.
- Apply the capability approach and justice-oriented frameworks.
- Develop skills in systems thinking, collaboration, and professional judgement.
- Engage in teamwork across disciplinary and cultural backgrounds.

Teaching and learning include fieldwork in the Pyrenees.

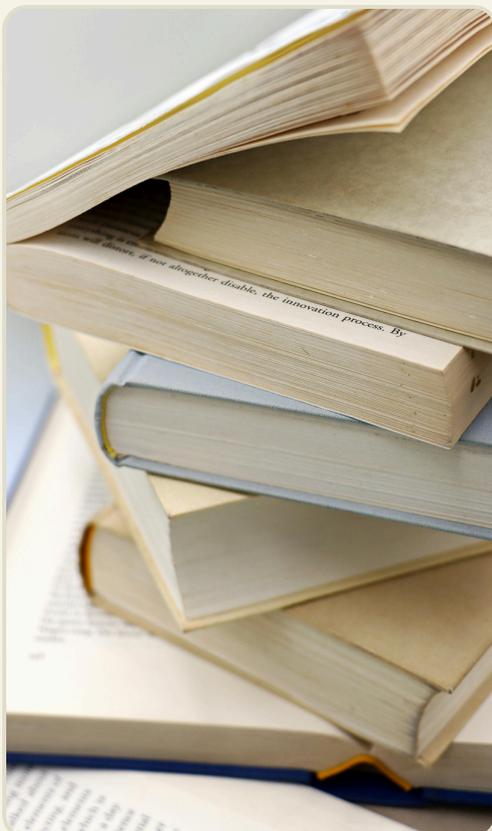


## 3.4 Semester 3 at Arcada

### Praxis for Health Equity - Internship (30 ECTS)

During this semester you will:

- Participate in mandatory introduction period at Arcada, followed by an internship or applied project with an organisation addressing health equity.
- Apply MAHEQ values and knowledge in professional environments.
- Work individually or in teams on implementation-oriented challenges.
- Reflect critically on ethical, organisational, and political dimensions of practice.



## 3.5 Semester 4

### Master's Thesis (30 ECTS)

The Master's thesis constitutes the culmination of the MAHEQ programme, allowing students to integrate theoretical insight, practical experience, and methodological competence. Students may choose their location to write their thesis.

During this semester you will:

- Design and carry out a research or innovation-oriented project.
- Work individually or in groups of two to three students.
- Engage with ethical approval processes where required.
- Communicate findings to both academic and non-academic audiences.

# 04

# Assessment and Progression



## 4.1 Portfolio-Based Assessment

Portfolio-based assessment is a central feature of MAHEQ. Throughout the programme, students document:

-  **Reflective learning** Document ongoing reflections on your learning, professional development, and engagement with health equity challenges across different contexts.
-  **Project and practice work** Include evidence from individual and group projects, internships, and applied activities that demonstrate how theory has been translated into practice.
-  **Feedback** Received from peers, mentors, and staff; record and reflect on formative and summative feedback to show how it has informed your learning, decisions, and professional growth.
-  **Competence development** Collect concrete examples that demonstrate the development of programme competences over time, linked to learning outcomes and professional practice.

Portfolio-based oral examinations serve both as summative assessment and as structured opportunities for reflective dialogue on learning progression.

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## 4.2 Grading

- Courses are graded using either the A–F scale or Pass/Fail, as specified.
- One re-sit opportunity is available for failed assessments.
- The Master’s thesis may be revised once if initially failed.

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## 4.3 Student Responsibilities

MAHEQ is a full-time programme. Students are expected to participate in all compulsory learning activities, including introductory sessions, seminars, internships, and examinations. Absences must comply with the regulations of the host institution and the Erasmus Mundus Student Agreement. Prolonged absence, interruption of studies, or withdrawal may affect academic progression, scholarship payments, and residence permit status.

# 05

## Mentorship and Academic Support





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## 5.1 Mentorship

Each student is assigned a mentor team of three mentors, one from each partner institution. During each semester, one mentor is physically present at the host institution, while continuity is ensured through digital communication. Mentors support students in:

- Academic progression and learning orientation.
- Professional identity development.
- Navigating complexity, mobility, and intercultural learning.
- Mentorship is conceived as an ongoing pedagogical relationship rather than a purely administrative function.

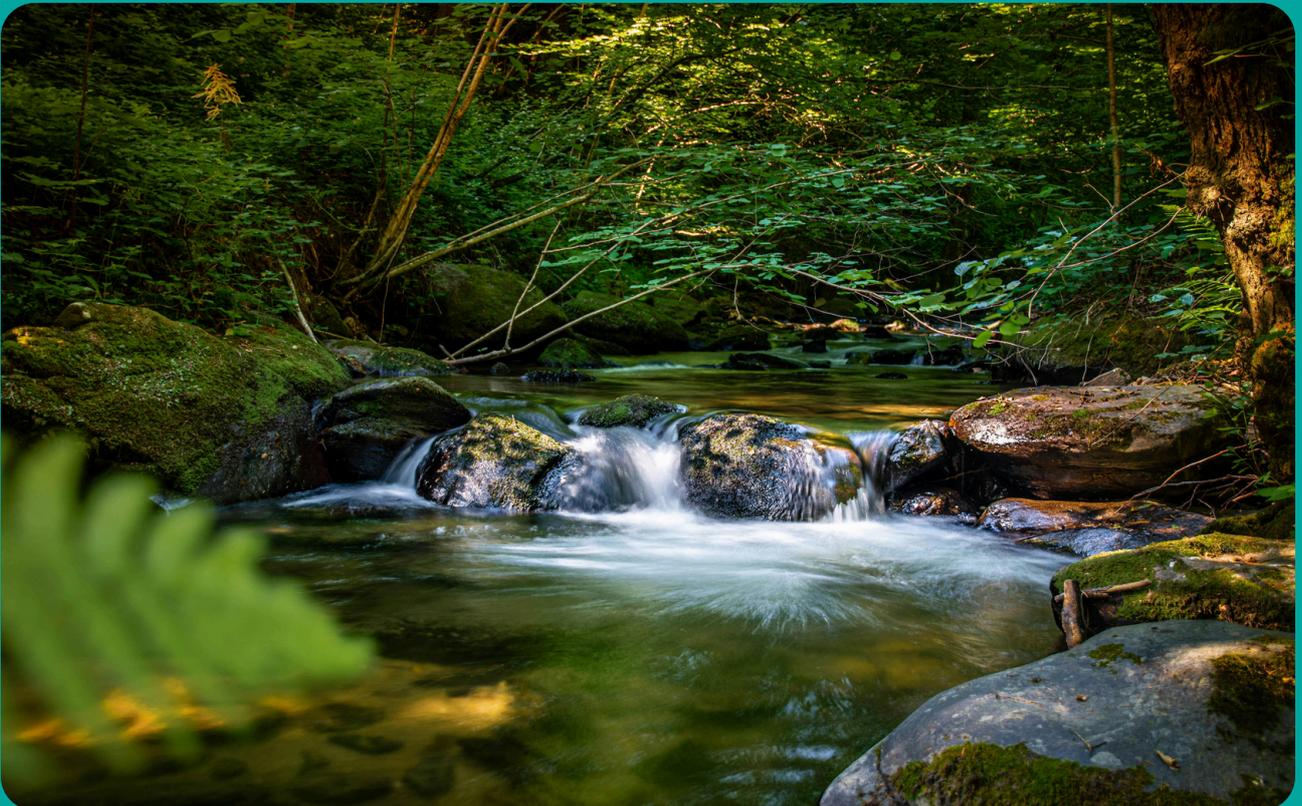
Mentorship is conceived as an ongoing pedagogical relationship rather than a purely administrative function.

## 5.2 Academic Support

In addition to the MAHEQ mentor team, students receive academic support at each host institution during their mobility periods, including access to local teaching staff, libraries, learning resources, and student support services, in line with the support offered to local master's students.

# 06

# Student Responsibilities



## 6.1 Student Responsibility and Support

While host institutions provide guidance and support, students are responsible for:

- Meeting visa and residence deadlines.
- Securing accommodation.
- Maintaining valid insurance.
- Keeping copies of official documents.

Each institution provides access to international offices, student services, and wellbeing support.

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## 6.2 Compliance with Erasmus Mundus Rules

Students must respect Erasmus Mundus mobility, attendance, and progression requirements and inform the consortium of any changes affecting legal or academic status.

Non-compliance may result in delayed progression, suspension of scholarship payments, or deregistration.

## 6.3 Research Ethics and Responsible practice

MAHEQ places strong emphasis on ethical responsibility in research and practice. Students whose work involves:

- Human participants
- Sensitive personal or institutional data
- Community-based or participatory approaches may be required to obtain ethical approval in accordance with national and institutional regulations.

Ethical reflexivity, informed consent, data protection, and respect for participants are core learning outcomes embedded across the programme.

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## 6.4 Inclusivity, Accesibility and Fairness

MAHEQ is committed to **equity and inclusion** across all aspects of the programme. This includes:

- Equal access to learning opportunities
- Inclusion of students with disabilities
- Respect for diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences

Reasonable accommodations can be requested, and students are encouraged to communicate access needs early and openly.

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## 6.5 Digital learning environment

MAHEQ uses **Canvas** as the primary shared digital learning platform, ensuring continuity across institutions and mobility periods. Additional local systems may be used during specific semesters.

Digital literacy, including ethical engagement with AI and health technologies, is integrated throughout the curriculum and treated as a core professional competence.

## 6.6 Community, Conduct and Responsibility

Students are expected to:

- Engage respectfully across cultures and disciplines.
- Contribute actively to the Peer Learning Ecosystem.
- Uphold academic integrity.
- Act in line with MAHEQ values of justice, solidarity, and responsibility.

Harassment, discrimination, and academic misconduct are not tolerated and are addressed according to institutional and consortium regulations.



# 07

# Scholarships



## 7.1 Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Scholarships

MAHEQ is funded under the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master (EMJM) scheme of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. A limited number of Erasmus Mundus scholarships are awarded to highly qualified applicants from around the world through a competitive selection process.

Erasmus Mundus scholarships are awarded for the entire duration of the programme (24 months) and are intended to support students' participation in the joint master. The scholarship typically includes:

- A monthly subsistence contribution to support living costs during the study period.
- A contribution to travel and installation costs, calculated according to the student's country of residence.
- Coverage of participation costs, including tuition fees and mandatory insurance.

The exact financial amounts, eligibility criteria, and conditions are defined annually in accordance with the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and are communicated clearly during the application and selection process.

- ◉ **Scholarship** €1,400/month for 24 months, paid monthly after arrival and confirmation.
- ◉ **Conditional** Not conditional on grades, but conditional on:
  - Full-time enrolment.
  - Attendance.
  - Respect of mobility path.
- ◉ **Suspension** No extra funding if a year/course must be repeated. Scholarships are suspended during long interruptions.
- ◉ **Purpose** Scholarships support living costs but do not cover all personal expenses.

## 7.2 Selection and Conditions

Selection for an Erasmus Mundus scholarship is based on academic excellence, motivation, and overall application quality, in line with transparent and fair procedures agreed by the consortium.

In accordance with Erasmus Mundus regulations, geographical balance is applied, and no more than 10% of scholarships may be awarded to candidates of the same nationality over the duration of the project.

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## 7.3 Self-Funding and Tuition Fees

Students who are not awarded an Erasmus Mundus scholarship may still be admitted to the programme as self-funded students, subject to the same academic standards and requirements.

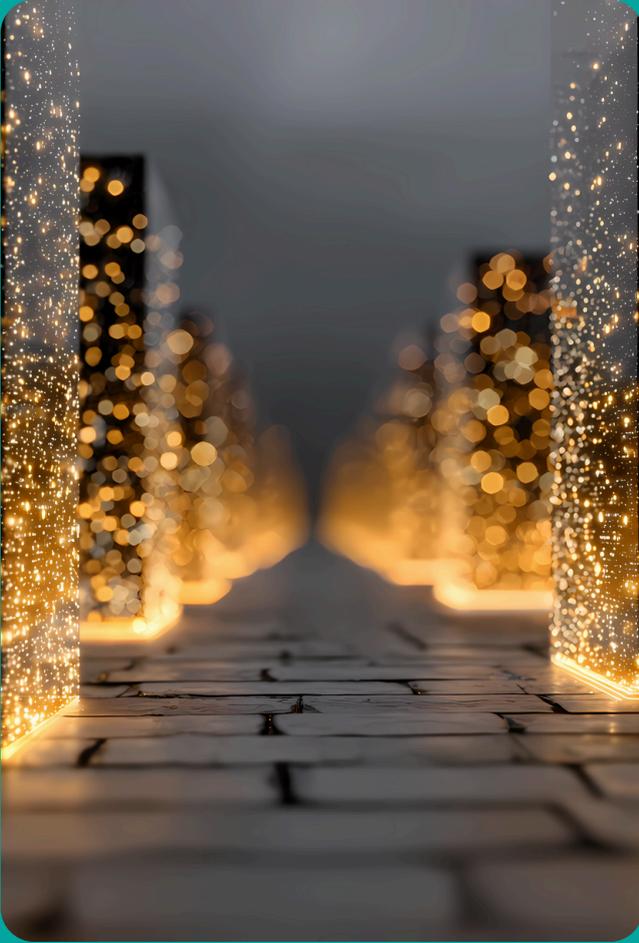
- Self-funded students are required to pay tuition fees as determined by the consortium and in accordance with national regulations of the partner institutions.
  - Detailed information on tuition fees, payment schedules, and conditions is provided in the official offer letter and on the MAHEQ website.
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## 7.4 Additional costs

Students should be aware that, in addition to tuition fees (where applicable), they may incur other costs such as:

- Living expenses (housing, food, local transportation).
- Visa and residence permit fees.
- Costs related to study materials or fieldwork (where relevant).

Living costs vary between host countries and cities. Students are encouraged to carefully consider financial planning for the full duration of the programme..



# 08

## Practical Information



## 8.1 Practical Information by Study Location

Students are responsible for completing visa, residence, housing, and insurance procedures, with guidance from host institutions.

All MAHEQ students are covered by **mandatory Erasmus Mundus insurance**, covering:

- Health care.
- Accident and liability.
- Travel-related risks.

Students are responsible for ensuring continuous coverage and compliance with national requirements.

## 8.2 Norway - HVL

- **Residence permits** Non-EU/EEA students apply through the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI). EU/EEA students register after arrival.
  - **Housing** Guidance provided via public student housing (e.g. Sammen) and the private rental market. Early application is essential.
  - **Health insurance** Erasmus Mundus insurance is mandatory. Students staying over 12 months may be eligible for the Norwegian National Health Scheme.
- 

## 8.3 Spain - Unizar

- **Residence permits** Non-EU/EEA students require a long-stay student visa and residence card (TIE). EU/EEA students register locally.
  - **Housing** University residences and private options are available. UNIZAR provides housing guidance.
  - **Health insurance** Erasmus Mundus insurance applies. Access to public healthcare depends on length of stay and nationality.
- 

## 8.4 Finland - Arcada

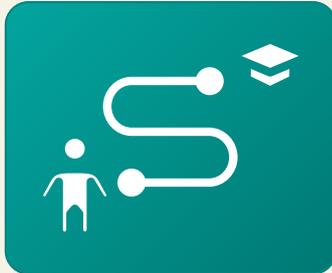
- **Residence permits** Non-EU/EEA students apply via the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri). EU/EEA students register their right of residence.
- **Housing** Arcada supports applications to student housing providers (e.g. HOAS). Supply is limited; early application is recommended.
- **Health insurance** Comprehensive insurance is required; Erasmus Mundus insurance generally meets Finnish requirements.



# 09

## Alumni, Careers and Professional Future

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## 9.1 Career Pathways

MAHEQ graduates pursue careers in a wide range of fields, including:

- Health and social care organisations at local, national, and international levels.
- Non-governmental and humanitarian organisations.
- Public administration, policy development, and governance.
- Research and innovation environments.
- International organisations and networks working on health, social justice, and sustainability.

Some graduates may continue in their existing professional roles with enhanced responsibility, while others move into new positions that require interdisciplinary collaboration, systems thinking, and ethical leadership.



## 9.2 Transferable Skills

Beyond sector-specific knowledge, MAHEQ places strong emphasis on the development of transferable skills that are highly valued in European and global labour markets. These include:

1. Collaboration across disciplines, professions, and cultures.
2. Analytical and systems-based thinking.
3. Ethical judgement and reflexive practice.
4. Communication and facilitation in complex, multi-actor environments.
5. Capacity to work under uncertainty and navigate institutional boundaries.

Through sustained exposure to transdisciplinary learning, mobility, and practice-based work, the programme functions as a structured rehearsal for future professional practice, preparing graduates to work effectively in roles that cut across traditional sectoral and professional divisions.



## 9.3 Alumni Network

As a MAHEQ graduate, you become part of a growing international alumni network linked to the Erasmus Mundus community. Alumni are encouraged to remain engaged with the programme as mentors, guest speakers, practice partners, or contributors to joint projects and initiatives.

The consortium values alumni as key partners in the ongoing development of the programme and as ambassadors for MAHEQ's core values of equity, justice, and planetary wellbeing. Graduates are also encouraged to participate in wider Erasmus Mundus alumni activities and professional networks that support lifelong learning and international collaboration.





**MAHEQ**  
Master in Health Equity

# Thank You

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## Contact Information

Phone

Website

Email



Western Norway  
University of  
Applied Sciences

Phone

Website

Email



**Universidad**  
Zaragoza

Phone

Website

Email



**ARCADA**

Phone

Website

Email



**Hi**  
humanity  
& inclusion

