

# Consolidation Process



EUROPEAN UNION

**Erasmus+**  
Enriching lives, opening minds.

GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Section Title Page: it can be useful to have a space to breathe between the different sections of the training.

## Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance

### Five Cs

#### COHERENT

comments should be **easy to understand** - even for someone that has not read the proposal - and should provide feedback that the **applicant will understand** and can learn from

#### COMPREHENSIVE

comments should be provided for **each of the award criteria** (written text, not bullet points) and should incorporate most or all of the composite elements

#### CONSISTENT

comments should be **consistent with scores** that have been awarded for each criterion and should be aligned with the predefined scoring bands for each action

#### COURTEOUS

comments should always be **polite and respectful**, and should **avoid first person** references (e.g. I think that, I suggest that...)

#### CONCISE

comments must be within the maxima accepted by the online evaluation tool (usually 3000 characters); experts should also **avoid repeating** that which is written in the application

### Six Cs (one additional element)



#### CONSOLIDATED

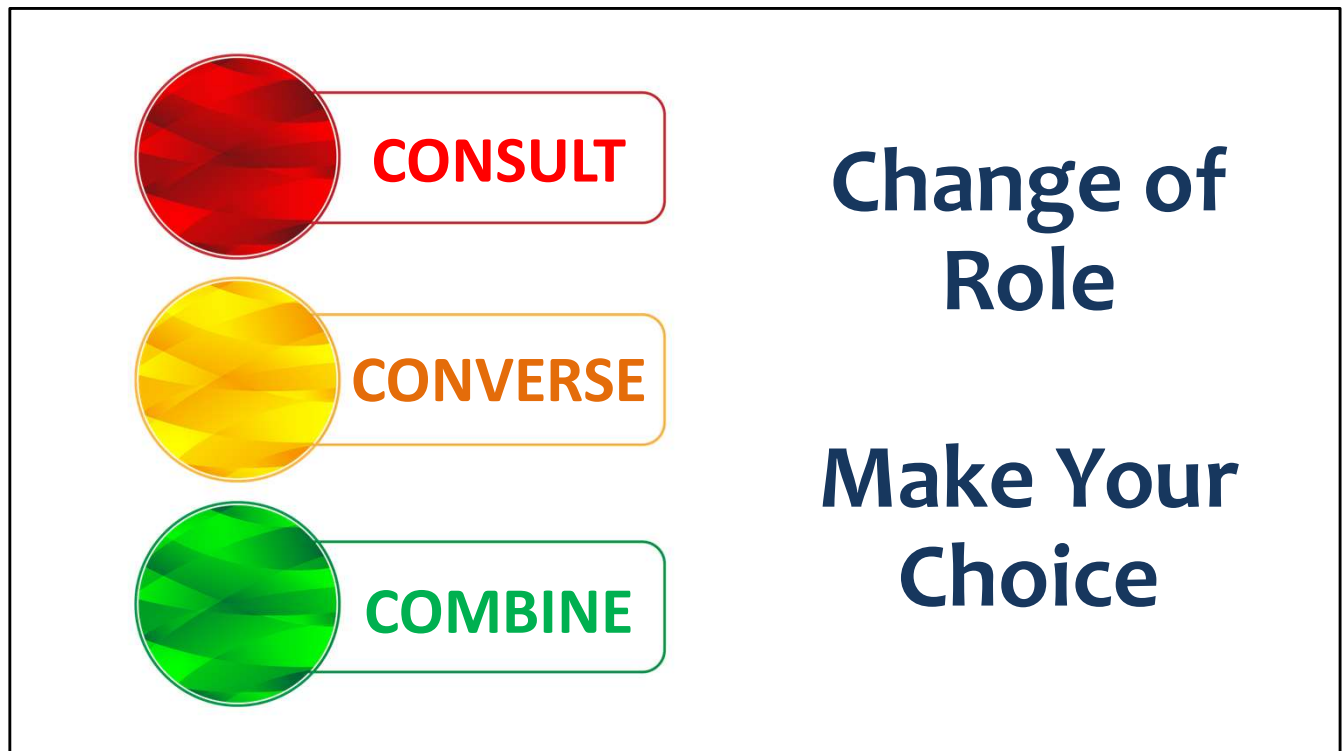
written texts should be presented as a **single set of harmonised comments** in which there are no areas of contradiction; consolidated scores should be consistent with final written comments and not (in all cases) a simple mathematical average.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

This slide presents the model of 5\*Cs, each of which should be briefly introduced. It is especially important to underline that it is the responsibility of all Erasmus+ National Agencies to quality assure the work of their assessors. This initial input forms an important baseline for this activity on comments.

The sixth C is especially important to mention in this case as it relates to the overall topic of this activity, namely CONSOLIDATION.

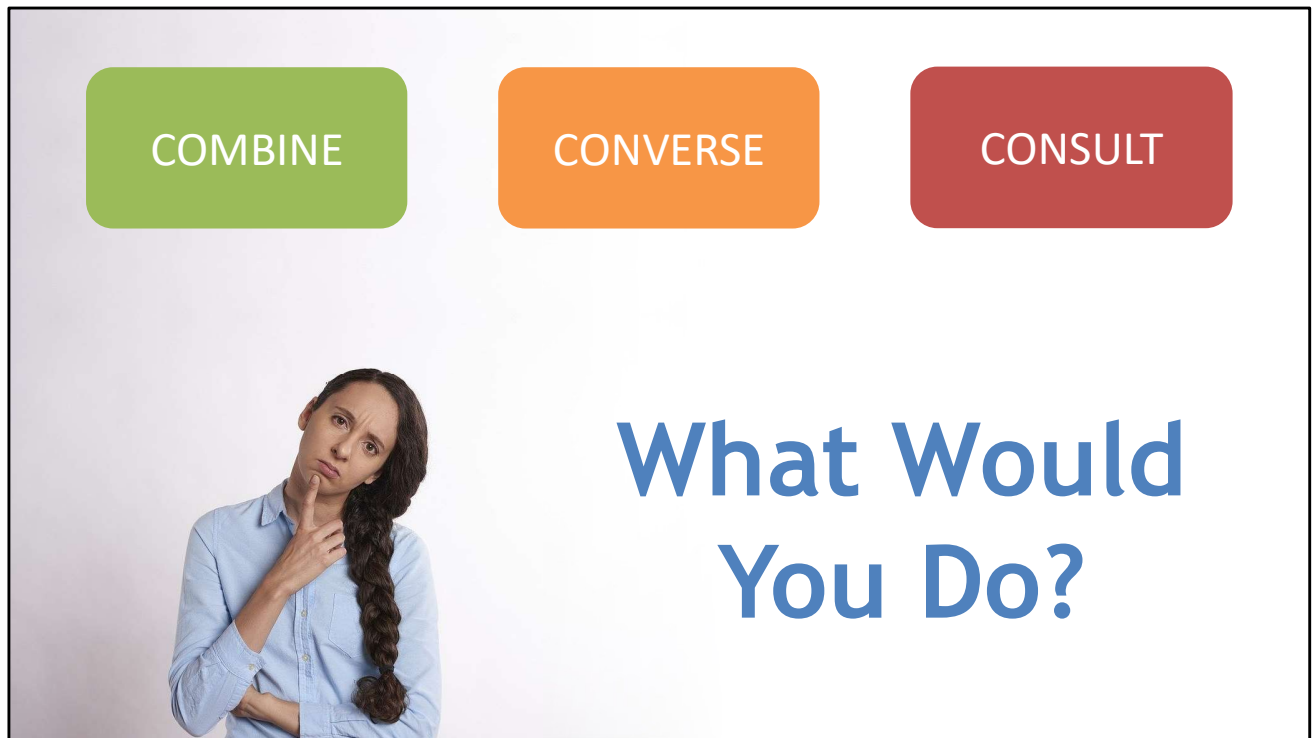
It is important to remind assessors of the need to bring opinions together in a single set of harmonised comments rather than simply trying to get a equal balance of words and input from the two assessors.



#### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Participants are asked to visualise themselves as lead assessor with responsibility for drafting the CONSOLIDATION and already having access to both sets of comments and scores. The following concepts should also be introduced:

- **COMBINE:** preferred option for consolidation where comments from the two assessors are very similar and with no significant differences of opinion; normally a desk-based exercise in which draft comments are created prior to agreeing with the second assessor via a short meeting or exchange of emails.
- **CONVERSE:** preferred option where comments from the two assessors differ in one or more areas; normally involves a short meeting or call for each assessor to present their opinion and for agreement to be sought; meeting or conversation should take place prior to drafting consolidated comments.
- **CONSULT:** preferred option where comments from the two assessors differ on fact-based issues (e.g. number of partners; involved countries); in all such cases, it is important to consult the proposal to ensure that comments are correct; suggested to avoid quantitative references in written texts unless absolutely necessary, limiting the potential for misinterpretation.



#### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

In the exercise, participants will be asked whether they would COMBINE, CONVERSE or CONSULT either by standing or raising hands when a specific category is called out (e.g. all those who would COMBINE please raise their hand) or, more effectively, by raising a red, orange or green card.

## Consolidation Process: What Action is Required?

COMBINE

CONVERSE

CONSULT

**Assessor 1:** Evaluation plans are clearly stated and it is positive to see ambitions for securing feedback from participating learners in school and work-based settings.

**Assessor 2:** Evaluation plans are outlined yet specific performance indicators are lacking.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Ask participants to vote using your chosen method (e.g. raise hands, show cards).  
Invite 1 or 2 participants to justify their decision before sharing your own perspective.

**The preferred approach in this case would be to CONSULT and possibly CONVERSE: firstly, it is important to check whether performance indicators are actually lacking (it could be that assessor 1 missed this point); where so, it is fairly easy to proposed a common text, where not the case, a conversation will be needed to find agreement on this aspect among the two assessors.**

Note: if working with additional actions (e.g. KA1) or delivering this training over multiple years, assessor comments should be updated.

## Consolidation Process: What Action is Required?

COMBINE

CONVERSE

CONSULT

**Assessor 1:** Ambitions for involving non-traditional learner audiences are positive and sufficient insight is given into how this expects to be achieved, specifically.

**Assessor 2:** Whilst having valid plans for engaging non-traditional learner audiences in the targeted training programmes, the level of detail provided is fairly minimal.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Ask participants to vote using your chosen method (e.g. raise hands, show cards).  
Invite 1 or 2 participants to justify their decision before sharing your own perspective.

**The preferred approach in this case would be to CONVERSE: there are different opinions presented on the issue of how non-traditional learner audiences are to be involved and agreement needs to be sought among the two assessors.**

Note: if working with additional actions (e.g. KA1) or delivering this training over multiple years, assessor comments should be updated.

## Consolidation Process: What Action is Required?

COMBINE

CONVERSE

CONSULT

**Assessor 1:** The roles of partners are fairly well explained and task attribution is consistent with existing partner experience and expertise.

**Assessor 2:** Insufficient insight is given into the role that will be played by employers in training delivery.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Ask participants to vote using your chosen method (e.g. raise hands, show cards).  
Invite 1 or 2 participants to justify their decision before sharing your own perspective.

**The preferred approach in this case would be to CONSULT and possibly CONVERSE: firstly, it is important to check whether the reference to employers is the same as the reference to partners or whether these are different entities that expect to be engaged in different ways. Where these are different entities, it is fairly easy to proposed a common text, where these are the same entities then a conversation will be needed to find agreement on this aspect among the two assessors.**

Note: if working with additional actions (e.g. KA1) or delivering this training over multiple years, assessor comments should be updated.

## Consolidation Process: What Action is Required?

COMBINE

CONVERSE

CONSULT

**Assessor 1:** Plans for delivering entrepreneurship training for learners and staff are clear and appropriate, with adequate justification for not including all partners in these activities.

**Assessor 2:** Entrepreneurship training forms an important part of the project yet little indication is given of how this is to be delivered, specifically.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Ask participants to vote using your chosen method (e.g. raise hands, show cards).  
Invite 1 or 2 participants to justify their decision before sharing your own perspective.

**The preferred approach in this case would be to CONVERSE: there are different opinions presented on the perceived level of clarity and insight on plans for delivering entrepreneurship training and agreement needs to be sought among the two assessors.**

Note: if working with additional actions (e.g. KA1) or delivering this training over multiple years, assessor comments should be updated.



## Consolidation Process: What Action is Required?

COMBINE

CONVERSE

CONSULT

**Assessor 1:** Considering the number of planned activities, as well as targets for participation, the proposed lump sum is unjustified and a reduced grant amount should be considered.

**Assessor 2:** Budget forecasts are not excessive taking into account the size of the consortium, the planned activities and the total number of number learners that will participate.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Ask participants to vote using your chosen method (e.g. raise hands, show cards).  
Invite 1 or 2 participants to justify their decision before sharing your own perspective.

**The preferred approach in this case would be to CONVERSE:** as well as having a difference of opinion on budget justification, it is also important to acknowledge that an increase or reduction to the budget is **NOT ALLOWED** for KA210 or KA220 thus agreement will need to be sought among the two assessors on the adequacy (or not) of the proposed budget and lump sum.

Note: if working with additional actions (e.g. KA1) or delivering this training over multiple years, assessor comments should be updated.

## Consolidation Process: What Action is Required?

COMBINE

CONVERSE

CONSULT

**Assessor 1:** A good range of marketing and promotional actions is outlined, with positive ambitions for promoting results and successes within and beyond the applicant institution.

**Assessor 2:** Whilst a sufficient range of dissemination tools and channels is proposed, less is said of how the selected tools might be targeted for use with specific stakeholder audiences.

### GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

Ask participants to vote using your chosen method (e.g. raise hands, show cards).  
Invite 1 or 2 participants to justify their decision before sharing your own perspective.

**The preferred approach in this case would be to COMBINE: there are different aspects highlighted by the two assessors but they are not conflicting and it should be easy enough to present a single constructive comment. If assessor 1 preferred to include a more positive comment, they could also CONSULT the proposal again to see if there is indeed a lack of detail of targeted stakeholder approaches. Where not the case, they might also CONVERSE with assessor 2 to secure their agreement on this point.**

Note: if working with additional actions (e.g. KA1) or delivering this training over multiple years, assessor comments should be updated.

# Expert Briefing Sheet

In this briefing sheet, additional detail is provided on the role and responsibilities of experts involved in assessing applications for funding, confirming tasks, award criteria and scoring mechanisms.

## Introduction

A large part of the Erasmus+ Programme follows the indirect management model, meaning that National Agencies (NAs) in EU Member States and associated third countries take responsibility for the management of decentralised funds including for the promotion of calls for proposals, the selection and monitoring of projects and partnerships and the accreditation of organisations and consortia, facilitating participation in the Erasmus+ programme. For some actions, NAs are required to engage external experts to assist them in assessing projects, ensuring that only the highest quality projects are selected for funding and that only organisations or consortia that meet predefined quality criteria obtain accreditation. For other actions, usually where lower levels of funding are requested, NAs have the option to use either internal (NA staff) or external experts to undertake assessments.

Figure 1 provides an overview of expert involvement in the assessment process, confirming whether more than one expert is required for quality assessment.

## Expert Appointment, Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest

As an expert, you are appointed on the basis of existing knowledge, skills and experience in the field(s) of education, training and youth for which you have been asked to assess applications. To ensure independence, expert names are not made public. As an expert, you are required to perform assessments to the highest professional standards and to operate within deadlines set by the NA. You are bound to a code of conduct that will be detailed in your appointment letter or contract, and to specific rules on the protection and storage of data. All information related to the assessment process is strictly confidential meaning that you should not disclose any information about the applications submitted and/or the results of the assessment process to any external actors or organisations. Experts are also required to follow clear privacy and data protection rules and guidelines.

As an expert, you must not have a conflict of interest in relation to the proposal(s) on which you have been requested to give your opinion. According to Financial Regulation 2018/1046 (article 63) "a conflict of interests exists where the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of a financial actor or other person... is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect personal interest". To ensure this, all experts are required to sign a declaration, provided by the NA, that no such conflict of interest exists at the time of appointment, confirming that they will inform the NA of both the existence and nature of any such conflict should this subsequently become known. The same declaration binds experts to confidentiality. Experts involved in submitting an application for the action that is being assessed are considered to have a conflict of interest and will not be appointed. Beyond this, the NA will decide on the required course of action where a conflict of interest is declared.



## Expert Briefing Sheet

Briefing Sheet  
Page 1

## Consolidation and Final Scores

Where an application is assessed by a single expert, this individual assessment provides a final score and set of comments.

Where an application is assessed by two experts, the two individual assessments must be consolidated in order to arrive at a final score and a single set of comments for each application.

Where there is a difference of less than 30 points between the total scores awarded by the two experts, one expert will be asked to prepare a consolidated assessment, bringing together scores and comments from the two individual assessments in consultation with the other expert. Exceptionally, where the two experts are unable to agree on a consolidated score and set of comments, the NA will decide whether or not a third expert (third assessment) is needed.

Where there is a difference of 30 points or more between the total scores awarded by the two experts, the NA will ask an additional expert to undertake an assessment (third assessment). An exception exists where the two original experts have both scored the application below the threshold in one or more criteria. In cases where a third assessment is undertaken, consolidated scores and comments should be produced by taking into account only the two assessments that are closest in terms of overall score, with the comments and scores of the remaining expert not considered. The consolidation process then follows the same rules as outlined (above) for assessments involving just two experts.

Consolidated assessment scores and comments should reflect the results of a discussion among involved experts providing complementary and harmonious comments - with no elements of contradiction - and scores which are consistent with these consolidated comments rather than being simply the mathematical average of the two individual assessments. Consolidated assessment should take into account both individual assessments but the final version may differ in terms of numerical score and comments. Experts should not use half points or decimals during the consolidation phase.

Consolidated assessments comments and scores are considered as the final assessment of a given application and form the basis for ranking the application on a list of eligible applications that are suggested for funding.



## Expert Briefing Sheet

Briefing Sheet  
Page 7

## GUIDELINES FOR ERASMUS+ NAs

This final slide, it can be useful to remind assessors of the availability of a written “EXPERT BRIEFING SHEET” which provides an overview of individual and consolidated assessment and the roles of expert assessors.