

To the kind attention of Roy Emmerich

EUREC Master student

AY 2008/2009

Brussels, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009

**Re: Reply to Roy Emmerich's open letter of complaint**

Dear Roy,

The EUREC Master Steering Committee has carefully read and analysed your open letter, and would like to clarify some points for the benefit of the EUREC Master and its students.

The ***European Master in Renewable Energy*** was launched in 2002 with the support of seven European universities, willing to jointly provide a Master course to form highly qualified engineers and scientists in the renewable energy sector. The European Master has grown since, and 54 students are currently registered for the Academic Year 2009/2010.

The peculiarity of such a Master course is not only the fact that it enables the students to specialise in one renewable energy technology, but it has been designed in such a way to provide the students with a truly European experience, since they are requested to follow the Master course in at least two different European countries. In exceptional circumstances, and upon request from the core provider, students can be granted the approval to spend the three semesters in the same country. However, this is not in line with the spirit of the European Master in Renewable Energy whose objective is not only to provide a solid background in the field of renewable energy technologies, but also to expose students to different studying, working and cultural environments in order to make them ready to face the challenges of a growing sector, which is quickly developing around the world, and where Europe is a leader.

Previous EUREC students have successfully gone on to PhD studies both within and outside Europe, and have got positions in renewable energy companies.

In addition to the national diploma delivered by the core university, those students, who successfully pass the EUREC Master course, receive a EUREC Master equivalence certificate, which confirms the equivalence in value and contents of the European postgraduate diplomas listed below, which are fully recognised in their own country:

- Mastère spécialisé en Energies Renouvelables de l'Ecole des Mines de Paris
- European MSc in Renewable Energy from Loughborough University
- European MSc in Renewable Energy from Universität Oldenburg
- Master Europeo de Energias Renovables de la Universidad de Zaragoza

This is the reason why the administrative coordinator of the European Master in Renewable Energy is EUREC Agency<sup>1</sup>, the European not-for-profit association, whose membership is composed of forty four European universities and research organisations, which are leaders in research, demonstration and development activities in the field of renewable energy technologies.

The fee levels of the EUREC Master course are decided taking into account the different financial approaches to further education in the countries represented by the University partners. They are also based on the premise that all students should pay the same fee regardless of their choice of core and specialisation university. Nevertheless, the fact that the education of European students is more heavily subsidised across the participating countries is reflected in the need to charge a differential fee between EU and non-EU students. All students are fully aware of the fees when signing up to the course.

EUREC Agency covers different activities to support the Master course:

- Exclusive administration and management of the online registration and recruitment process, which takes place from January to August, until students are notified of the results of the selection process. Around three hundred registrations are successfully processed annually to make sure that the most suited students are finally selected
- Support letters to students requesting VISA, and other type of ad-hoc support, as requested by the students (e.g. support letters for scholarships. EUREC Agency is not responsible for supporting the students in finding a suitable scholarship. Some information on this item is available on the EUREC Master website. Preparation of a

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<sup>1</sup> [www.eurec.be](http://www.eurec.be)

“European Diploma Supplement” for students to apply for a PhD). EUREC Agency is not in charge of supporting with finding accommodation and other type of information related to the student’s staying at one specific university. This information is directly provided by the chosen universities. Contact details are available on the Master website (e.g. <http://master.eurec.be/EdM-core>). However, EUREC Agency is always at the students’ disposal to orientate them and provide advice on where to find additional information

- EUREC Agency organises periodical conference calls (around four per year) of the Master Steering Committee that takes decisions on the Master strategic aspects
- EUREC Agency widely promotes the European Master by taking contacts with renewable energy industrial associations, as well as its own members:
  - In November 2008, EUREC Agency organised a meeting in Oldenburg dedicated to “Initiatives from industry, research and academia to respond to the challenges of human resources in the Renewable Energy sector” (<http://www.eurec.be/content/view/240/30/>)
  - In February 2009, EUREC Agency participated to a high level conference organised by the European Economic and Social Committee on “Education and Training needs for the carbon-free energy society”
  - In February 2009, EUREC Agency organised a seminar to explore possibilities to enlarge the number of universities and specialisations currently offered within the EUREC Master (<http://www.eurec.be/content/view/263/29/>)
- Organisation of the Presentation days in Brussels

Your letter is also raising some important points that will be treated in the coming months with priority:

- We acknowledge that the EUREC Master website has been so far used more to facilitating the students’ registration process than as a communication tool. We acknowledge the need for an up-to-date EUREC Master website, which clearly spells out the EUREC Master objectives, content, and organisation, in order to increase its transparency. However, we would like to point out that the Forum has been created for the students and it is up to them to organise topics and discuss amongst them
- We acknowledge the need of the students to be kept more informed about EUREC Agency’s activities. To this point, synergies between the EUREC Agency and the EUREC Master website should be promoted

- We acknowledge the need to provide more detailed information on the courses' structure and content so that students can make an informed choice when applying to the EUREC Master course
- We acknowledge the need to provide the students with additional support in order for them to find an appropriate project. EUREC Agency already contacts its members, renewable energy industry associations and other relevant partners in February by sending the project proposal form and requesting whether they are interested in offering project placements to the EUREC Master students. A list of organisations, which have hosted EUREC Master students, is available at: <http://www.master.eurec.be/node/911>. A list of past projects' title will be provided to the students. However, no direct contacts can be provided for privacy issues

We hope that with this letter we have better clarified what the objectives of the European Master in Renewable Energy are, as well as the role that EUREC Agency plays in making this possible.

However, we understand that it is far from being exhaustive and touching upon all the points that you have raised. This is the reason why we would like to invite you, as well as your colleagues, to a discussion with the Master Steering Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009 at 19.30 at the Renewable Energy House in Brussels.

We are very much open to some of your suggestions, and will proactively work on them, in order to continuously provide a higher education standard to our students, as well as form them as engineers and scientists able to work in a multinational and challenging environment.

The EUREC Master Steering Committee