

Summary of EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM ECTS

A condensed version of
ECTS Users' Guide
with main points highlighted

to be used in conjunction with

EADMT Training Standards Criteria

and

The **checklist** for European universities and institutions that provide accredited and/or recognised DMT professional training programmes

Formulated by the
EADMT Training Standards Working Group

September 2020

INTRODUCTION *

*(Page 7 of ECTS Users' Guide)

This ECTS User's Guide provides guidelines for Implementation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The Guide is offered to assist learners, academic and administrative staff in higher education institutions as well as other interested parties. It has been updated in 2009 to take account of developments in the Bologna process, the growing importance of lifelong learning, the formulation of qualifications and the increasing use of learning outcomes. It has been written with the help of experts from stakeholders' associations and ECTS counsellors, and submitted for consultation to stakeholders' associations, Member States' experts and the Bologna Follow-up Group. The European Commission has coordinated the drafting and consultation process and is responsible for the final wording of the Guide.

ECTS was set up in 1989 as a pilot scheme within the framework of the Erasmus programme in order to facilitate the recognition of study periods undertaken abroad by mobile students.

ECTS is a tool that helps to design, describe, and deliver programmes and award higher education qualifications.

The use of ECTS, in conjunction with outcomes-based qualifications frameworks, makes programmes and qualifications more transparent and facilitates the recognition of qualifications.

ECTS Users' Guide Sections

- Section 1** *ECTS is placed in the context of the European Higher Education Area, created through the Bologna Process. This section also refers to the role of ECTS in the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area² (referred to as the Bologna Qualifications Framework in this Guide).*
- Section 2** *The Guide contains the ECTS key features. These constitute a concise overview of ECTS and its main functions, on which there is a broad consensus.*
- Section 3** *Provides a detailed explanation of the key features.*
- Section 4** *Gives guidance on how ECTS can be implemented in higher education institutions.*
- Section 5** *Discusses how ECTS complements institutions' quality assurance tools.*

The final sections present:

The ECTS key documents, suggestions for further reading on topics related to ECTS, and a glossary of the terms used in this Users' Guide.

1. ECTS and European Higher Education (Bologna Process) *

*(Page 9 of ECTS Users' Guide)

ECTS is the credit system for higher education used in the European Higher Education Area involving 46 countries engaged in the Bologna Process. ECTS is one of the cornerstones of the Bologna Process.

<http://www.bologna2009benelux.org>

Among other objectives, the Bologna Process aims at the establishment of a system of credits as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility.

ECTS contributes to several other Bologna objectives:

- *ECTS credits are a key element of the Bologna Framework for Qualifications compatible with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF).*
According to the Bologna Qualifications Framework, the first and second cycles have their own credit ranges. Consequently, ECTS credits are used in formulating national qualifications frameworks for higher education, which may contain more detailed national credit arrangements.
- *ECTS helps institutions to implement the objective of quality assurance.* In some countries ECTS is a requirement for accreditation of higher education programmes or qualifications.
- *ECTS is also increasingly used by institutions in other continents* and thus plays a role in the growing global dimension of the Bologna Process.

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/QF-EHEAMay2005.pdf>

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/rec08_en.pdf

Also look at Annex 1 (page 37), "Learners' perspective in using ECTS"



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Masters level or equivalent = EQF 7

2. ECTS Key Features *

*(Page 11 of ECTS Users' Guide)

ECTS

ECTS is a learner-centered system for credit accumulation and transfer based on the transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes. It aims to facilitate planning, delivery, evaluation, recognition and validation of qualifications and units of learning as well as student mobility.

ECTS KEY FEATURES

- 1) **ECTS Credits** are based on the workload students need in order to achieve expected learning outcomes.
- 2) **Learning outcomes** describe what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do after successful completion of a process of learning. They relate to level descriptors in national and European qualifications frameworks
- 3) **Workload** indicates the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

ECTS Credits

- 60 ECTS credits are attached to the workload of a full-time academic year and the associated learning outcomes.
- Student workload ranges from 1,500 to 1,800 hours for an academic year.
- One credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of work.

Use of ECTS Credits

- **Credits are allocated to entire qualifications or study programmes as well as to their educational components_such as modules, course units, dissertation work, work placements and laboratory work.** The number of credits ascribed to each component is based on its weight in terms of the workload students need in order to achieve the learning outcomes in a formal context.
- **Credits are awarded to individual students** (full-time or part-time) after completion of the learning activities required by a formal programme of study or by a single

educational component and the successful assessment of the achieved learning outcomes. Credits may be accumulated with a view to obtaining qualifications, as decided by the degree-awarding institution. If students have achieved learning outcomes in other learning contexts or timeframes (formal, non-formal or informal), the associated credits may be awarded after successful assessment, validation or recognition of these learning outcomes.

- **Credits awarded in one programme may be transferred into another programme**, offered by the same or another institution. This transfer can only take place if the degree-awarding institution recognises the credits and the associated learning outcomes. Partner institutions should agree in advance on the recognition of periods of study abroad.
- **Credit transfer and accumulation are facilitated by the use of the ECTS key documents** (Course Catalogue, Student Application Form, Learning Agreement and Transcript of Records) as well as the Diploma Supplement.



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ECTS

European Credit Transfer System

LENGTH of TRAINING PROGRAMME

Minimum:

2 years f/t (full time)

3-4 years p/t (part time)

3. ECTS Key Features explained *

*(Page 13-16 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The ECTS key features give a brief outline of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

This section provides more detailed explanation of concepts and functions related to ECTS. It also shows how these concepts and functions interact with and complement each other and thus enable the core functions of ECTS: accumulation and transfer (dealt with in section 4).

3.1 ECTS as a learner-centred credit system *

*(Page 13 of original document)

ECTS is a learner-centred system because it helps institutions to shift the emphasis in programme design and delivery from traditional teacher-centered approaches to approaches that accommodate for learners' needs and expectations.

Learner-centred learning puts learning at the heart of curriculum design and delivery, and gives learners more choice in content, mode, pace and place of learning.

In such a learner-centred approach, institutions have the role of facilitating and supporting learners in shaping their own learning pathways and helping them to build on their individual learning styles and experiences.

By using learning outcomes and learners' workload in curriculum design and delivery, ECTS helps to place the learner at the centre of the educational process. By allocating credits to educational components it facilitates the creation of flexible learning pathways.

Moreover, ECTS, in conjunction with outcome-based qualifications frameworks:

- *establishes a closer link between educational programmes and labour-market requirements* through the use of learning outcomes, thus enhancing informed learners' choices
- *encourages wider access to and participation in lifelong learning*, by making programmes more flexible and facilitating the recognition of prior achievement
- *facilitates mobility within a given institution or country, from institution to institution, from country to country, and between different educational sectors and contexts of learning* (i.e. formal, non-formal and informal learning = see Glossary)



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ECTS
European Credit Transfer System
120 ETCS = 3000 study hours

If full time = 60 ECTS per year =
1.500 study hours =
480-600 hours FF + 900-1.020 hours PW

Note / Description
1 ETCS = 25 study hours
8-10 FF (Face to Face hours) + 15-17 PW (Personal Work hours)

3.2 ECTS and learning outcomes *

*(Pages 13-14 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Learning outcomes are verifiable statements of what learners who have obtained a particular qualification, or completed a programme or its components, are expected to know, understand and be able to do. As such they emphasise the link between teaching, learning and assessment.

The use of learning outcomes makes the objectives of learning programmes clearer and more easily understood for students, employers and other stakeholders. They also make it easier to compare qualifications and facilitate the recognition of achievements.

In ECTS, the formulation of learning outcomes is the basis for the estimation of workload and hence for credit allocation.

The successful assessment of learning outcomes is the pre-condition for the award of credits to a learner.

Therefore, statements of learning outcomes for programme components should always be accompanied by clear and appropriate assessment criteria for the award of credits, which make it possible to ascertain whether the learner has acquired the desired knowledge, understanding and competences.

Two approaches exist: learning outcomes may be either threshold statements (showing the minimum requirements to obtain a pass) or written as reference points describing the typical (showing the expected level of achievement of successful learners). In any case, statements on learning outcomes must make clear which definition is being used.

Learning outcome-based approaches also enable knowledge, skills and competences gained in contexts other than formal higher education (non-formal or informal learning) to be assessed, to have credits awarded and hence to be recognised for the purpose of awarding a qualification (see section 4.5).

Figure 1 – “Learning outcomes” and “Competences” as defined in European Higher Education contexts:

In Europe a variety of terms relating to “learning outcomes” and “competences” is used with different shades of meaning and in somewhat different frames of reference. In all cases however they are related to what the learner will know, understand and be able to do at the end of a learning experience. Their widespread use is part of the shift in paradigm that places the learner at the centre of the higher education experience. This shift is the foundation of the European Higher Education Area, the Bologna Process and ECTS.

1. In the Qualifications Framework for the EHEA (Bologna Framework) learning outcomes (including competences) are seen as the overall results of learning. The Framework is based on the “Dublin Descriptors”, developed by the Joint Quality Initiative. These descriptors consist of generic statements of typical expectations or competence levels of achievement and abilities associated with the Bologna cycles. The word competence is used in this case in a broad sense, allowing for gradation of abilities or skills.

(http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf)

2. The European Qualification Framework for LLL instead distinguishes knowledge, skills and competence. It uses the following definition: “competence means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy”. In this case the term competence is understood in a more limited way, as the capacity to transfer knowledge into practice.

(http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/rec08_en.pdf)



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**Learning outcomes according to the
CONTENT OF PROGRAMME
ECTS 60**

- Cluster 1 (35 ECTS = 280–350 hours)**
- Cluster 2 (8 ECTS = 64-80 hours)**
- Cluster 3 (10 ECTS = 80-100 hours)**
- Cluster 4 (4 ECTS = 20-40 hours)**
- Electives (3 ECTS = 24-30 hours)**

Learning outcomes relate to level descriptors in national and European qualifications frameworks based on agreed level descriptors, with learning outcomes and credits related to such levels (i.e. the Bologna cycle descriptors known as the 'Dublin Descriptors' 10:10 Ibidem, p. 65).

(Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks (2005) A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, p. 38
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

The Dublin Descriptors offer generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with qualifications that represent the end of each of a Bologna cycle.

They are not meant to be prescriptive; they do not represent threshold or minimum requirements and they are not exhaustive; similar or equivalent characteristics may be added or substituted. The descriptors seek to identify the nature of the whole qualification.

The first two Bologna cycles are associated with the following ECTS credit ranges:

First cycle qualifications typically include 180-240 ECTS credits.

The Second cycle qualifications typically include 90-120 ECTS credits (with a minimum of 60 ECTS credits at the level of the 2nd cycle).

This rule applies to all higher education qualifications independent of their level.

National qualifications frameworks may contain levels (or intermediate qualifications) within the three Bologna cycles (e.g. a short cycle within the first cycle). These levels allow institutions to structure a particular qualification and regulate progression through the qualification. *Credits are always described by the level at which they are awarded, based on the level of learning outcomes of the programme or component. Only credits awarded at the appropriate level can be accumulated towards a qualification.*



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ECTS
European Credit Transfer System
Level Descriptor: 2nd Bologna cycle
(120 ETCS = 3000 study hours)

3.3 ECTS credits and workload *

**(Page 16 of ECTS Users' Guide)*

Prior to estimating the workload associated with a programme or an educational component, the learning outcomes should be defined.

Learning outcomes are the basis for choosing suitable learning activities and for a consistent estimation of the workload necessary to complete them.

The estimation of workload must not be based on contact hours only (i.e. hours spent by students on activities guided by teaching staff).

It embraces all the learning activities required to achieve the expected learning outcomes, including the time spent on independent work, compulsory work placements, preparation for assessment and the time necessary for the assessment.

The estimation of workload should be regularly refined through monitoring and student feedback.



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WORKLOAD OF EACH EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT

Essentials (Clusters 1-4)

57 ECTS: 440/550 hours and Electives 3 ECTS (40-50 hours)

Cluster 1: 35 ECTS (280-350 hours)

1.1. Movement Observation and Assessment – must include LBMS (may include other in-depth tools), Experiential Anatomy that includes Somatic Practice **12 ECTS = 96-120 hrs**

1.2. DMT History and Theory (to include European History) **3 ECTS = 24-30 hrs**

1.3. DMT frameworks, approaches, methods, applications e.g. psychodynamic, person-centered, humanistic, social constructivist, systemic; creative, expressive; specific populations, issues, & considerations **20 ECTS = 160-200 hrs**

Cluster 2: 8 ECTS (64-80 hours)

2.1. Groups: a) Group dynamics b) DMT group skills c) Group Process/Interpersonal Learning Group

Cluster 3: 10 ECTS (80-100 hours)

3.1. History of psychotherapy and therapeutic models: incl. theories of creativity, healing, self–psychology, developmental psychology, neurobiology, social pedagogic applications **5 ECTS = 40-50 hrs**

3.2. Psycho-pathology: physical and mental health, disability **5 ECTS = 40-50 hrs**

Cluster 4: 4 ECTS (20-40 hours)

4.1. Research skills: methods and criteria, theory of research, statistics and application, critical review and analysis, case presentation

Electives : 3 ECTS 24-30 hours)

E.1. Anthropology

E.2. Pedagogy

E.3. Dance

E.4. Other

4. Implementing ECTS in higher education institutions*

*(Pages 17-24 of ECTS Users' Guide)

This section provides higher education institutions with some guidelines and illustrations of how to tackle the main steps in implementing ECTS. The objective is to show how ECTS is best used to generate maximum added value for learners.

4.1 ECTS credit allocation *

*(Page 16 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Credit allocation is the process of assigning a number of credits to qualifications/programmes or to educational components.

Credits are allocated to entire qualifications or study programmes as well as to their educational components (such as modules, course components, dissertation work, work placements and laboratory work).

ECTS credits are allocated on the basis of the typical workload necessary to achieve the required learning outcomes.

The number of credits allocated to the entire qualification or programme depends on the national or institutional regulations and the respective cycle of the Bologna Framework (see section 3.3).

Each academic year (60 credits), semester (30 ECTS credits) or trimester (20 ECTS credits) is split into educational components. An educational component is understood to be a self-contained and formally structured learning experience (such as a course unit, module, seminar or work placement).

Each component should have a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes, appropriate assessment criteria, defined workload and specified number of ECTS credits.

4.1.1 Credit allocation to educational components *

*(Pages 17-18 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The allocation of credits to single educational components is performed as part of curriculum design with reference to national qualifications frameworks, level descriptors and qualifications descriptors.

Generally, it is the responsibility of higher education institutions and academic staff, but in some cases may be decided by external bodies.

Prior to allocating credits to individual components, an agreement should be reached on the 'profile' of the specific study programme and the associated learning outcomes. By profile is meant the description of the programme in terms of its main features and its specific aims.

It is good practice to define this profile after consultation with relevant stakeholders, (i.e. experts in the field, social partners, labour market representatives, student representatives, etc. See the Tuning approach for examples:

<http://unideusto.org/tuning/> or <http://www.rug.nl/let/tuningeu>

On the basis of the qualification profile, the academic staff designs the curriculum by defining the learning outcomes and allocating credits to the programme components. Credit allocation to educational components is based on their weight in terms of the workload needed for students to achieve the learning outcomes in a formal context.

(See in more detail the approaches to credit allocation in last paragraph of page 17 and page 18 of ECTS users' Guide)

By standardising the size of components, institutions allow for more flexible, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary pathways among programmes.

Whatever the method for credit allocation, the main element determining the number of credits is the estimated workload needed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

The number of contact hours alone must not be used as a basis to allocate credits, since contact hours are only one element of students' workload. Proper credit allocation should be part of the internal and external quality assurance for higher education institutions.

4.1.2 Estimation of workload in ECTS *

* (Pages 18-19 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The learning activities may vary in different countries, institutions and subject areas, but typically the estimated workload will result from the sum of:

- **the contact hours for the educational component** (number of contact hours per week x number of weeks)
- **the time spent in individual or group work required to complete the educational component successfully**
i.e. preparation beforehand and finalising of notes after attendance at a lecture, seminar or laboratory work; collection and selection of relevant material; required revision, study of that material; writing of papers/projects/dissertation; practical work, e.g. in a laboratory
- **the time required to prepare for and undergo the assessment procedure** e.g. exams
- **the time required for obligatory placement(s)** (See section 4.1.3).

Other factors to take into consideration for estimating students' workload in the various activities are for example:

- **the entry level of students for whom the programme, or its components, is designed.** By "entry level" is meant the level of learning outcomes learners are expected to have already achieved when entering the programme
- **the approach to teaching and learning**
- **the learning environment** e.g. seminars with small groups of students, or lectures with very large numbers of students
- **and type of facilities available** e.g. language laboratory, multi-media room.

Since workload is an estimation of the average time spent by students to achieve the expected learning outcomes, the actual time spent by an individual student may differ from this estimate. Individual students differ: some progress more quickly, while others progress more slowly.



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**INTERNSHIP
35 ETCS
875 hours minimum –
160 face-to-face hours minimum**

Total amount of hours of face to face experience as sole therapist, where the trainee therapist is responsible for preparing and leading client sessions

It is recommended to include:

- 1. Minimum 160 hours face to face (FF)/sole therapist hours, where the trainee therapist is leading sessions with client/s,**
- 2. Minimum of two client populations, with experience in mental health settings where possible,**
- 3. Group and 1:1 work where possible.**

4.1.3 ECTS credits and work placements *

**(Pages 19-20 of ECTS Users' Guide)*

If work placements or internships are required to complete the programme (or a component) they are part of students' learning outcomes and workload and necessitate an allocation of credit. In such case, the number of credits allocated to the work placement should be included within the overall number of credits for the particular academic year.

As with any other educational component, the teaching staff should define the learning outcomes to be achieved through work placements when designing the curriculum. These learning outcomes should be accompanied by the appropriate assessment methods and criteria. It is important that the assessment methods be compatible with the nature of work placements (e.g. observation and evaluation by a tutor or production of a report by the student).

If a work placement is part of organised mobility (e.g. an Erasmus placement), the Learning Agreement for the placement (or Training Agreement, see key documents in section 6) should indicate the number of credits to be awarded if the expected learning outcomes are achieved.

In the case of placement experiences undertaken during a formal learning process but not required by the programme, it is nevertheless advisable to define the learning outcomes and the workload in a Learning Agreement. The learning outcomes achieved through non-compulsory work-placements should then also be documented for example in student's Transcript of Records, the Diploma supplement (see key documents in section 6) or Europass Mobility document. They can also be recognised by an award of corresponding ECTS credits which are in that case additional to the standard number of 60 ECTS credits for the academic year.

4.1.4 Monitoring of credit allocation *

*(Pages 19-20 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The credit allocation to a new programme or component should be validated according to national and/or institutional rules. During programme delivery, the credit allocation should be regularly monitored to establish whether the estimated workload is realistic. Both validation and monitoring of credit allocation, like other aspects of a credit system, should be part of institutions' internal quality assurance procedures.

Monitoring can be managed in different ways. Whatever method is used, student and staff feedback should constitute an essential element for checking and revising credit allocation. Data on completion times and the assessment results of programmes and their components are also part of the monitoring of credit allocation.

If evaluations reveal a discrepancy between the anticipated workload and the time actually taken by the majority of students to achieve the expected learning outcomes, a revision of the workload, learning outcomes or learning and teaching methods becomes necessary. This revision should not be done during an academic year but should apply to upcoming academic years.

4.2 Awarding ECTS credits *

*(Pages 20-21 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Learners are awarded ECTS credits only when appropriate assessment has shown that they have achieved the required learning outcomes for a component of a programme or for the qualification. Credits are awarded by authorised awarding institutions.

If the required learning outcomes are achieved in non-formal or informal contexts, the same number of credits as foreseen in the formal programme is awarded following the appropriate assessment. To validate non-formal or informal learning, higher education institutions can put in place different forms of assessment than those used for learners enrolled in the formal programme (see section 4.5). In any case, the assessment methods should be publicly available.

The number of credits awarded to the learner is the same as the number of credits allocated to the component. The full number of credits is always awarded if the student achieves a passing grade.

ECTS credits do not express how well the learner performed in satisfying the requirements for the award of credit.

The quality of the learner's performance is expressed by the institutional or national grading system.

Some national or institutional regulations foresee condoning'/compensation procedures. (Condoning is the term used when an examination board exempts a student from reassessment in a failed or marginally failed component if the other related components are passed with sufficiently high grades). In such cases, the details of that process should be transparent.

4.3 ECTS credit accumulation and progression *

*(Page 21 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Credits may be accumulated with a view to obtaining qualifications, as decided by the degree-awarding institution.

At European level, the Bologna Qualifications Framework defines the credit ranges that a learner is required to accumulate in order to receive a qualification corresponding to the first and second cycle (see section 3.3).

The credit ranges for qualifications within National Qualifications Frameworks are compatible with the Bologna credit ranges.

At national or institutional level, progression rules or programme requirements enable learners to progress within a given cycle in order to obtain a specific qualification. (See section 4.3, pg. 21 of ECT Users' Guide)

Accumulation of credits is documented in an official institutional Transcript of Record, so that learners can have a record/ proof or confirmation of what they have achieved at each stage of their educational pathway.

4.4 Credit transfers in ECTS *

*(Pages 21-22 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Credits awarded in one programme may be transferred into another programme, offered by the same or another institution. This transfer can only take place if the degree-awarding institution recognises the credits and the associated learning outcomes. Partner institutions should agree in advance on the recognition of periods of study abroad.

Academic recognition of credits is the process through which an institution certifies that certain learning outcomes achieved and assessed in another institution satisfy certain requirements of one of the programmes they offer.

A flexible approach to recognition of credits obtained in another context is recommended. "Fair recognition" rather than perfect equivalence is to be sought. Such "fair recognition" should be based on the learning outcomes – i.e. what a person knows and is able to do - rather than on the formal procedures that have led to the completion of a qualification or its component.

(Adam, S 2004: Final report and Recommendations of the Conference: Improving the recognition systems of degrees and study credit points in the European Higher Education Area). http://www.aic.lv/rigaseminar/documents/Riga_Final_ReportP_S_Adam.pdf

The recognition process should be transparent.

The Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications, as adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee states that:

“Recognition of foreign qualifications should be granted unless a substantial difference can be demonstrated between the qualification for which recognition is requested and the relevant qualification of the State in which recognition is sought. In applying this principle, the assessment should seek to establish whether the differences in learning outcomes between the foreign qualification and the relevant qualification of the country in which recognition is sought are too substantial to allow the recognition of the foreign qualification as requested by the applicant.

In recognising foreign qualifications, the assessment should seek to establish whether the differences in learning outcomes between the foreign qualification and the relevant qualification of the country in which recognition is sought are too substantial to allow the recognition of the foreign qualification as requested by the applicant.

(For the full document see: Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications as adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its second meeting, Riga, 6 June 2001),

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/Criteria%20and%20procedures_EN.asp#TopOfPage

Recognition means that the number of credits gained for suitable learning outcomes achieved, at the appropriate level, in another context will replace the number of credits that are allocated for these learning outcomes at the awarding institution.

For example, in practice a 4 ECTS credit component in one institution can replace a 5 ECTS credit component in another institution if learning outcomes are equivalent. The student will then be awarded 5 ECTS credits.

Decisions on credit recognition and transfer are taken by the qualification-awarding institution on the basis of reliable information on the learning outcomes achieved, as well as on the means of assessment and their validation. Institutions should make their recognition policies known and easily accessible.

In ECTS, credit recognition for the purpose of accumulation and transfer are facilitated by ECTS key documents like the Course Catalogue, the Learning Agreement, and the Transcript of Records

(See section 6 of ECTS Users' Guide)

4.4.1 ECTS and periods of study abroad *

*(Page 22 of ECTS Users' Guide)

In the case of agreed student mobility, the three parties involved – the home institution, the host institution and the student – should sign a Learning Agreement for mobility (see section 6.3.1) prior to the mobility period. In such cases, recognition of the credits by the home institution is automatic if the conditions stipulated in the learning agreement have been fulfilled.

All learning components to be followed abroad should be listed in the Learning Agreement.

Where a student is awarded credits for learning components other than those specified in the Learning Agreement it is up to the home institution to decide whether or not to recognise these. In case of changes to the programme of study agreed with the learner, the Learning Agreement may be amended, but the amended version must be signed again by the same three parties concerned within an agreed period

The recognition of credits in the framework of joint programmes is stipulated in the regulations of the programme.

There may be no need for Learning Agreements for mobility in the case of joint programmes as the credits achieved in the partner institution are automatically recognised if the rules of the joint programme are followed and the conditions are satisfied.

(Further guidance on how to organise periods of study abroad within the framework of bilateral agreements can be found in Annex 2 of ECTS Users' Guide on page 39)

4.5 ECTS and lifelong learning *

*(Page 23 of ECTS Users' Guide)

«ECTS is widely used in formal higher education and can be applied to other lifelong learning activities. If students have achieved learning outcomes in other learning contexts or timeframes (formal, non-formal or informal), the associated credits may be awarded after successful assessment, validation, or recognition of these learning outcomes».

The use of ECTS for lifelong learning enhances the transparency of learning programmes and achievements not only when it comes to the main higher education degrees (bachelor, master or doctorate) but for all types of learning activities provided or learning outcomes recognised by higher education institutions.

The fact that all learning achievements are documented and awarded a corresponding number of ECTS credits makes it possible for learners to have this learning recognised with a view of achieving a qualification, when these learning outcomes satisfy the requirements of the qualification

4.5.1 ECTS and continuing education *

*(Page 23 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Not all learners are full-time students enrolled in regular learning programmes. A growing number of adult learners follow 'stand-alone' training, without necessarily pursuing a

specific qualification. Higher education institutions face increasing demands to satisfy the needs of adult learners and/or employers and to provide individual learning pathways.

When using ECTS for continuing education, the same principles for credit allocation, award, transfer, and accumulation apply. Like for credits allocated to components which are part of programmes, credits allocated to continuing education are based on the workload typically needed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

Credits awarded for continuing education may be recognised and accumulated towards a qualification or not, depending on the desire of the learner and/or the requirements for the award of the qualification. Some learners may only be interested in following a particular educational component without wishing to obtain the qualification.

4.5.2 ECTS and recognition of non-formal and informal learning *

**(Pages 23-24 of ECTS Users' Guide)*

Recognition of non-formal and informal learning opens up the possibility to achieve a higher education qualification to people who have not been able or have not wished to do so in the traditional way, but often possess valuable competences acquired outside higher education institutions, through other types of learning activities, work or life experience.

Higher education institutions should have the competence to award credits for learning outcomes acquired outside the formal learning context through work experience, hobbies, or independent study, provided that these learning outcomes satisfy the requirements of their qualifications or components. The recognition of non-formal and informal learning should be automatically followed by the award of the number of ECTS credits attached to the corresponding part of the formal programme. The number of credits awarded should be the same as the credits allocated to formal educational components with comparable learning outcomes.

As with formal education, the award of credit is preceded by an assessment to verify the achievement of learning outcomes. The assessment criteria and associated methods should be constructed so as to measure the achievement of the required learning outcomes at the appropriate level, without reference to specific learning activities.

Institutions are encouraged to publish their recognition policy and practices for non-formal or informal learning prominently on their website. These policies should include elements such as feedback to learners on the results of the assessment or the possibility for learners to appeal. Institutions are also encouraged to create 'assessment facilities' for advice, counselling, and recognition of non-formal and informal learning. These may take different forms depending on national and institutional practices (e.g. they may exist within single higher education institutions or as joint centres for several institutions).

By implementing procedures for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, the social dimension of higher education institutions is strengthened. Institutions fulfil the objective of facilitating access to learners from professional life and a range of non-traditional learning environments, and thus contribute to making lifelong learning a reality.



**European Association of Dance Movement Therapy
(EADMT)
Education and Training Standards
for the profession of Dance Movement Therapy**

CRITERIA FOR ENTRY

Option A (Formal education)

Bachelor degree (BA or BSc) – EQF 6

with strong recommendation for previous voluntary or paid work experience utilising dance & movement, in a community, social and/or health care setting

Option B (Informal, Non-formal education)

3-5 years dance AND movement experience and practice* *and*

3-5 years community, social, and/or health care experience

Option C (Formal education)

For Post-Masters only

Masters in Psychology or equivalent, *and* movement experience

Figure 3 – Example of the use of credit for LLL – Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework (SCQF)20*

*(See page 24 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The SCQF guidelines encourage the use of validation of non-formal or informal learning:

- for personal and career development (formative recognition)
- for award of credit (summative recognition)

The latter involves assessing, and then credit rating learning gained through experience which took place before a learner embarks on a formal programme or qualification. Credit rating is the process through which the credit value of learning is established. In general this means that the receiving institution determines the number of credits a learner can be awarded within a particular programme within that institution or organisation.

The process of awarding credit to non-formal or informal learning has these three stages:

1. Initial advice and guidance (what does the process involve for the learner, what credit limits there are for non-formal/informal learning, what are the costs, roles and responsibilities of learner and tutor/advisor; and different learning pathways to qualification)
2. Support (reflective process; understanding learning outcomes; identifying own learning outcomes; evidence gathering and selection)

3. Recognition/assessment (assessment of evidence of achievement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria)

4. Award of credit (credit awarded through this process is of same value as credit gained through formal learning)

This summary is based on the presentation by Ruth Whittaker, Caledonian Academy, Glasgow Caledonian University, made during the Bologna seminar on Learning Outcomes based Higher Education (21-22 February 2008, Edinburgh). The full presentation can be found on: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/Edinburgh2008.htm>

5. Quality assurance and ECT *

*(Pages 25 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The primary responsibility for quality assurance lies with each institution.

(See Document: Realising the European Higher Education Area: Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Berlin on 19 September 2003).

Internal quality assurance involves all procedures undertaken by higher education institutions to ensure that the quality of their programmes and qualifications meets their own specifications and those of other bodies legitimately empowered to make specifications.

External quality reviews undertaken by quality assurance agencies provide feedback to institutions and information to stakeholders.

Taken together, internal quality assurance and external quality review aim to implement the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2005) Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area : <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/Standards-and-Guidelines-for-QA.pdf>

The use of ECTS is in line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* and notably standards 1.2 and 1.7, which state that:

- *Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards. (Standards and Guidelines, p. 16).*

The quality assurance of programmes and awards is expected to include:

- *development and publication of explicit intended learning outcomes (Ibidem, p.16)*
- *careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content (Ibidem, p.16)*
- *Institutions should regularly publish up-to-date impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering (Ibidem, p.19)*

The implementation and use of ECTS by higher education institutions should be quality assured through appropriate processes (e.g. internal and external quality reviews and students' feedback).

Figure 4 – Good practice on ECTS and quality assurance *

*(Page 26 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Regarding the quality assurance of ECTS and of related processes, it is good practice that higher education institutions' quality assurance processes ensure that for all their higher education programmes:

- educational components are expressed in terms of appropriate learning outcomes, and clear information is available concerning their level, credits, delivery and assessment
- studies can be completed in the time officially allocated to them (i.e., the workload associated with a semester, trimester or academic year is realistic)
- annual monitoring examines any variations in patterns of achievement and results gained
- students are provided with detailed information and advice so that they have the appropriate prerequisites and co-requisites for any studies undertaken and are not allowed to select educational components that are at an inappropriate level or that they have previously studied at the same level.
(Prerequisites: required prior knowledge, usually defined in the form of the successful completion of other previous educational components.
Co-requisites: educational components which require that some other components be undertaken at the same time or immediately following the successful achievement of the learning outcomes corresponding to that component).

With regard to mobile students and recognition this means that:

- credit transfer processes are included in the normal monitoring, review and validation procedures
- appropriate staff are designated as responsible for credit transfer and recognition matters
- Learning Agreements are completed in all cases; their development, and any subsequent changes to them, should be subject to sensitive yet robust approval processes.
(The notion of sensitive 'fair recognition' and not strict equivalence should be used in developing learning agreements, as associated with the 1997 Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Explanatory Report:
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/165.htm>)
- mobile students undertake normal educational components from the existing Course Catalogue; they follow the validated full assessment regime for those components and are graded alongside home students
- detailed transcripts are provided recording the credits and grades awarded
- recognition is given to all credits associated with successfully completed educational components undertaken as part of any approved learning agreement; results should be issued and transmitted promptly
- objective procedures exist for interpreting the grades awarded, so that also grades – and not just credits – are properly reflected in any final qualifications gained.

6. ECTS key documents*

*(Pages 27-30 ECTS Users' of Guide)

«Credit transfer and accumulation are facilitated by the use of the ECTS key documents (Course Catalogue, Student Application Form, Learning Agreement and Transcript of Records) as well as the Diploma Supplement».

The ECTS key documents described in this section constitute a widely used and accepted way of communicating those elements of information which are useful for all learners (including mobile and non-mobile students), academic and administrative staff, employers and other stakeholders. Using ECTS key documents correctly ensures transparency and enhances quality in higher education.

Increasingly, institutions keep track of learners' achievements in a systematic way within a computerised student records system which integrates the data contained in the ECTS key documents and other documents such as the Diploma Supplement (which is part of the package of Europass transparency tools).

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Introduction/navigate.action> (The Diploma Supplement is also part of the package of Europass transparency tools).

6.1 ECTS Course Catalogue*

*(Pages 27-28 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The first key document is the Course Catalogue. This is the regular guide for all students attending the institution. The exact format of the Catalogue is to be decided by the institution.

It may be considered more appropriate to separate the general information for students from the academic information. In any case, all information should be detailed, user-friendly and up-to date.

The Catalogue should be published on the institution's website so that all interested parties can easily access it. It should be published sufficiently in advance for students to make their choices.

A checklist of the recommended contents of the Course Catalogue is given below (section 6.1.1). The checklist indicates the full range of information which should be provided. It is essential that information about the qualifications offered, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures, the level of programmes, the single educational components, and the learning resources available to students be well documented and easily understood.

All learners should be able to identify an individual who will be able to give them relevant advice, at either institutional or departmental/subject level. It is therefore important that the Catalogue should include the names of people to contact, with information about how, when, and where to contact them.

Transparency and accessibility apply equally to language. The publication should be available on the website, not only in the local language, but preferably also in another widely used language in order to enhance transparency at international level. (The second language required for institutions applying for the ECTS label is English).

Links to examples of Course Catalogues can be found on the following web page http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm

6.1.1. Checklist for the Course Catalogue *

*(See checklist in more detail on page 28 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Part 1: Information on the institution:

- name and address
- academic calendar
- academic authorities
- general description of the institution (including type and status)
- list of programmes offered
- general admission requirements
- general arrangements for the recognition of prior learning (formal, informal and non-formal)
- general registration procedures
- ECTS credit allocation based on the student workload needed in order to achieve
- Expected learning outcomes
- arrangements for academic guidance.

Part 2: Information on programmes:

General description:

- qualification awarded
- level of qualification
- specific admission requirements
- specific arrangements for recognition of prior learning (formal, non-formal and informal)
- qualification requirements and regulations
- profile of the programme
- key learning outcomes
- occupational profiles of graduates with examples
- access to further studies
- course structure diagram with credits (60 per full-time academic year)
- examination regulations, assessment and grading
- graduation requirements
- mode of study (full-time, part-time, e-learning...),
- programme director or equivalent.

Description of individual course units:

- course unit title
- course unit code
- type of course unit (compulsory, optional)
- level of course unit (e.g. first, second or third cycle; sub-level if applicable)
- year of study (if applicable)
- semester/trimester when the course unit is delivered
- number of ECTS credits allocated
- name of lecturer(s)
- learning outcomes of the course unit
- mode of delivery (face-to-face, distance learning)

- prerequisites and co-requisites
- recommended optional programme components
- course contents
- recommended or required reading
- planned learning activities and teaching methods
- assessment methods and criteria
- language of instruction.
- work placement(s)

Part 3: General information for students:

- cost of living
- accommodation
- meals
- medical facilities
- facilities for special needs students
- insurance
- financial support for students
- student affairs office
- learning facilities
- international programmes
- practical information for mobile students
- language courses
- internships
- sports and leisure facilities
- student associations

6.2 Student Application Form*

*(Page 28 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The ECTS Student Application Form has been developed for mobile students who will spend a limited study period in another institution. Students who intend to complete their studies at another institution should enrol according to the regular procedures of the institution concerned and will fill in other types of application forms.

The Student Application Form contains all the essential information about a mobile student that a prospective host institution needs. If an institution requires further information (for example, regarding housing, special health requirements) from incoming students, it may request it separately.

This Guide offers the standard Student Application form which can also be found on the following web page http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm.

Institutions may choose to adapt the standard form (adding their logo and other specific information), but they should ascertain that it contains all the elements and that, as far as possible, the sequence is respected.

6.3 Learning agreement*

*(Pages 29-30 of ECTS Users' Guide)

In higher education institutions, students normally register for a programme of study and for a number of specific course units/modules on either an annual or a semester basis. In practice, this represents a Learning Agreement for home students. By registering the student, the higher

education institution enters into an agreement to deliver the courses and to grant credits for the achievement of the expected learning outcomes.

6.3.1. Learning Agreement for mobile students*

*(Page 29 of ECTS Users' Guide)

The ECTS Learning Agreement was originally developed for mobile students in order to provide a binding agreement before the mobility experience.

When used for mobile students, Learning Agreements contain the list of course units or modules or other educational components the student is planning to take at the other institution, together with the code numbers and the ECTS credits allocated to the components.

An ECTS Learning Agreement is drawn up for a semester or a year of study and must be signed by the home institution, the host institution, and the student.

Those signing on behalf of the two institutions must be in a formal position of authority which allows them to commit the institutions. For the host institution, the commitment is to register the incoming student in the planned course units/modules and to provide the required learning activities; for the home institution, it is to grant recognition of the credits gained at the other institution. A student should not be asked to negotiate academic recognition with individual academic staff members.

The Learning Agreement, together with the Transcript of Records, is designed to guarantee full recognition of the programme of study undertaken in the host institution.

A programme of study may need to be modified after the arrival of the mobile student. In such cases, the Learning Agreement should be amended as soon as possible and endorsed by the three parties: the home institution, the host institution, and the student. Only in this way can the recognition of the period of study continue to be fully guaranteed.

This Guide offers the standard Learning Agreement which can also be found on the following web page http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learningpolicy/doc48_en.htm.

Institutions may choose to adapt the standard form (adding their logo and other specific information), but they should ascertain that it contains all the elements and that, as far as possible, the sequence is respected.

6.3.2. Learning Agreement for work placements – Training Agreement*

*(Page 29-30 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Learning Agreements for work placements or Training agreements are also essential for work placements that are required part of programmes. They should contain the same basic elements as the standard Learning Agreement, although obviously there are differences.

The Training Agreement should clearly indicate the location of the work placement, the period of the placement, the work to be undertaken (job description), the learner's rights and duties, and the expected learning outcomes. It will also need to indicate what assessment and assessment criteria will be used in relation to the expected learning outcomes and who will be responsible for this, i.e. the role of the work placement provider (employer) and, whenever applicable, the host institution.

The Training Agreement should be signed by the three parties – the learner, the home educational institution and the work placement provider (employer). Where a host institution is involved it is also expected to sign the agreement. The primary responsibility lies with the qualification awarding institution.

The Agreement should indicate the number of ECTS credits which will be awarded on achievement of the expected learning outcomes.

This Guide offers the standard Training Agreement which can also be found on the following web page http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learningpolicy/doc48_en.htm.

Institutions may choose to adapt the standard form (adding their logo and other specific information), but they should ascertain that it contains all the elements and that, as far as possible, the sequence is respected.

6.4. Transcript of records*

*(Page 30 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Many institutions produce a transcript of records for each student at the end of each semester or year. This is an important document for the student and institution. It ensures that students have an accurate and up-to-date record of their progress, the educational components they have taken, the number of ECTS credits they have achieved and the grades they have been awarded. The ECTS Transcript of Records is such a certification, in an agreed format. It is an important formal document, providing evidence of progress and recognition.

For mobile students, the home institution firstly issues the Transcript of Records and sends it to the host institution for each outgoing student before departure, to provide information about the educational components already completed their level and the results obtained. Subsequently, the host institution issues another Transcript of Records for each incoming student and sends it to the home institution at the end of their period of study, in order to formally certify the work completed, the credits awarded, and the local grades received during the mobility period.

Since the Transcript is a vital document for recording the progress of all students and for recognising learning achievements, it is crucial to determine who is responsible for producing it, how it is issued and how it is delivered.

This Guide offers the standard Transcript of Records which can also be found on the following web page http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learningpolicy/doc48_en.htm.

Institutions may choose to adapt the standard form (adding their logo and other specific information), but they should ascertain that it contains all the elements and that, as far as possible, the sequence is respected.

7. References for further reading*

*(Pages 31-33 of ECTS Users' Guide)

7.1. Credit and qualifications systems

European Instruments:

- *The framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area*
<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/QF-EHEA-May2005.pdf>
Background report: *A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, 2005
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/050218_QF_EHEA.Pdf
- *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning*
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF>
Other information on the EQF:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learningpolicy/doc44_en.htm#doc
- Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region (CETS 165, 1997)
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/Que-VoulezVous.asp?NT=165&CL=ENG>
Explanatory report on the Convention:
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/165.htm>

Publications at European level:

- Tuning Educational Structures in Europe (2007)
http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/images/stories/template/General_Brochure_final_version.pdf
Further information and outcomes of the Tuning project:
<http://unideusto.org/tuning> or: <http://www.rug.nl/let/tuningeu>

Relevant Bologna Seminar Reports:

- Bologna Seminar on 'Development of a Common Understanding of Learning Outcomes and ECTS' Porto, Portugal, 19-20 June 2008 Final Report and Recommendations
http://portobologna.up.pt/documents/BS_P_Report_20080915_FINAL.pdf
Further information on the seminar (inputs, presentations): <http://portobologna.up.pt/>
- Bologna Seminar on 'ECTS based on learning outcomes and student workload'
Moscow, Russia, 17-18 April 2008 *Conclusions*
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/documents/Moscow_April2008_conclusions_final.pdf
- Wagenaar, Robert (2006) 'An Introduction to the European Credit Transfer and

Accumulation System (ECTS)', in: EUA, *Bologna Handbook. Making Bologna Work*. Berlin: European University Association
<http://www.eua.be/publications/bolognahandbook/>

- Le Mouillour, Isabelle, commissioned by Cedefop (2005) *European approaches to credit (transfer) systems in VET*. Cedefop Dossier 12. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Upload/Information_resources/Bookshop/424/6014_en.pdf
- Adam, Stephen (2004) *Improving the recognition system of degrees and study credit points in the European Higher Education Area*. Bologna Seminar on Recognition, University of Latvia, Riga, 3-4 December 2004, organised by Latvian authorities and the Council of Europe, supported by the EU Socrates programme. Final report and recommendations of the conference.
http://www.aic.lv/rigaseminar/documents/Riga_Final_ReportP_S_Adam.pdf
<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/Standards-and-Guidelines-for-QA.pdf>
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2005) *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Helsinki: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- Gehmlich, Volker (2006) 'The Added Value of Using ECTS' in: EUA, *Bologna Handbook. Making Bologna Work*. Berlin: European University Association
<http://www.eua.be/publications/bologna-handbook/>

7.2. Curriculum design

- Volker Gehmlich, Andy Gibbs, Raimonda Markeviciene, Terence Mitchell, Graeme Roberts, Anne Siltala, Marina Steinmann (2008) *Yes! Go! A Practical Guide to Designing Degree Programmes with Integrated Transnational Mobility, DAAD*
<http://eu.daad.de/eu/mocca/06493.html>

7.3. Learning outcomes

- Bologna Seminar on 'Learning Outcomes Based Higher Education - The Scottish Experience' Edinburgh, UK, 21-22 February 2008 *Conclusions and Recommendations*
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/documents/Edinburgh/Edinburgh_Feb08_Final_Conclusions_and_Recommendations.pdf
Final Report
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/documents/Edinburgh/Edinburgh_Feb08_final_report.pdf

Further information on the seminar (inputs, presentations):

- <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/Edinburgh2008.htm>
- Adam, Stephen (2008) Learning Outcomes Current Developments in Europe: Update on the Issues and Applications of *Learning Outcomes Associated with the Bologna*

Process. Edinburgh: Scottish Government Presented to the Bologna Seminar: Learning outcomes based higher education: the Scottish Experience (February 2008, Edinburgh).

http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/documents/Edinburgh/Edinburgh_Feb08_Adams.pdf

- Adam, Stephen (2004) *Using Learning Outcomes: A consideration of the nature, role, application and implications for European education of employing learning outcomes at the local, national and international levels*
<http://www.pedagogy.ir/images/pdf/usinglearning-outcomes-eu.pdf>
- Kennedy, Declan, Hyland, Aine, and Ryan, Norma (2006) 'Writing and Using Learning Outcomes: A Practical Guide' in: EUA, Bologna Handbook. *Making Bologna Work*. Berlin: European University Association
<http://www.bologna.msmt.cz/files/learningoutcomes.pdf>
Presented to the Bologna Seminar: Using Learning Outcomes (July 2004, Edinburgh).
http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/Bol_sem/Seminars/040701-02Edinburgh/040620LEARNING_OUTCOMESAdams.pdf
- Cedefop (2008) *The Shift to Learning Outcomes: Conceptual, political and practical Developments in Europe*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities Synthesis:
http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Upload/Information_resources/Bookshop/494/4079_en.pdf The full report is to be published.

7.4. National publications

Each country has published, or is in the process of publishing, information on its national qualifications and credit systems. Two examples are Scotland and Ireland.

- The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
<http://www.scqf.org.uk>
- National Qualifications Authority of Ireland –National Framework of Qualifications
<http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/index.html>
- HRK (2007) *Bologna Reader II, Neue Texte und Hilfestellungen zur Umsetzung der Ziele des Bologna-Prozesses an deutschen Hochschulen*, Bonn
http://www.hrk.de/bologna/de/Bologna_Reader_gesamt.pdf
- Gehmlich, Volker (2008) *Die Einführung eines Nationalen Qualifikationsrahmens in Deutschland – DQR – Untersuchung der Möglichkeiten für den Bereich des formalen Lernens*, Osnabrück: Univ., Fak. für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwiss
- Meijers, van Overveld, Perrenet with the co-operation of Borghuis and Mutsaers (2005) *Criteria for Academic Bachelor's and Master's Curricula*
http://www.jointquality.nl/content/descriptors/AC_English_Gweb.pdf
- Hildbrand, Tremp, Jäger Tückmantel (2008) *The Curricula Reform at Swiss Institutes of Higher Education: An Analysis of the Current State and Perspectives in the Bologna Reform*

8. Glossary*

*(Pages 35-36 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Accumulation

The process of collecting credits awarded for achieving the learning outcomes of educational components or other learning activities.

Allocation of Credit

The process of assigning a number of credits to qualifications/ programmes or to other educational components.

Assessment

The total range of methods (written, oral and practical tests/examinations, projects and portfolios) used to evaluate learners' achievement of expected learning outcomes.

Assessment criteria

Descriptions of what the learner is expected to do, in order to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.

Award of Credit

The act of delivering learners the number of credits that are assigned to the component or a qualification. The award of credit recognizes that learners' learning outcomes have been assessed and that the learner satisfies the requirements for the educational component or the qualification.

Competences

A dynamic combination of cognitive and metacognitive skills, knowledge and understanding, interpersonal, intellectual, and practical skills, ethical values and attitudes. Fostering competences is the object of all educational programmes. Competences are developed in all course units and assessed at different stages of a programme. Some competences are subject-area related (specific to a field of study), others are generic (common to any degree course). It is normally the case that competence development proceeds in an integrated and cyclical manner throughout a programme.

Condoning

Condoning is the term used in some national contexts when an examination board exempts a student from reassessment in a failed (or marginally failed) component if other related components are passed with sufficiently high grades.

Contact Hour

Hours (typically a period of 45-60 minutes) spent by students on activities guided by teaching staff.

Credit (ECTS)

Quantified means of expressing the volume of learning based on the workload students need in order to achieve the expected outcomes of a learning process at a specified level.

Cycle

All qualifications in the European Higher Education Area are located within three cycles. One of the objectives indicated in the Bologna Declaration in 1999 was the “adoption of a system based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate.” In 2003 doctoral studies were also included in the Bologna structure and referred to as the third cycle.

Cycle (Level) Descriptors

Generic statements of the broad expected outcomes of each of the three cycles. A good example of general cycle (level) descriptors is the so-called Dublin Descriptors, which have served as one of the foundations (along with ECTS) for the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Educational Component

A self-contained and formally structured learning experience (such as: course unit, module, seminar, work placement).

Formal learning

Learning typically provided by an education or training institution, structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and leading to certification. Formal learning is intentional from the learner’s perspective.

Informal learning

Learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and typically does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional but, in most cases, it is non-intentional (or incidental)/random).

Learner

An individual engaged in a learning process (formal, non-formal or informal learning).

Learner-centred (approach or system)

An approach or system that supports the design of learning programmes which focus on learners’ achievements, accommodate different learners’ priorities and are consistent with reasonable students’ workload (i.e. workload that is feasible within the duration of the learning programme). It accommodates for learners’ greater involvement in the choice of content, mode, pace and place of learning.

Learning Outcomes

Statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do after successful completion of a process of learning.

Level Descriptor

General statements of the typical achievement of learners who have been awarded a qualification at a certain level in a qualifications framework.

Module

A course unit in a system in which each course unit carries the same number of credits or a multiple thereof.

Non-formal learning

Learning that is not provided by an education or training institution and typically does not lead to certification. It is, however, structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective.

Programme (educational)

A set of educational components, based on learning outcomes that are recognized for the award of a specific qualification.

Progression

The process which enables learners to pass from one stage of a qualification to the next and to access educational programmes that prepare for qualifications at a higher level than those he/she already possesses.

Progression rules

Set of rules that define conditions for learners' progression within qualifications and towards other qualifications.

Qualification

Any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority attesting the successful completion of a recognised programme of study.

National Qualifications Framework (higher education)

The single description, at national level or at the level of an education system, which is internationally understood and through which all qualifications and other learning achievements in higher education may be described and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between higher education qualifications.

Quality Assurance

The process or set of processes adopted nationally and institutionally to ensure the quality of educational programmes and qualifications awarded.

Recognition of credit

The process through which an institution certifies that learning outcomes achieved and assessed in another institution satisfy (some or all) requirements of a particular programme, its component or qualification.

Recognition of non-formal and informal learning

The process through which an institution certifies that the learning outcomes achieved and assessed in another context (non-formal or informal learning) satisfy (some or all) requirements of a particular programme, its component or qualification.

Student

Learner enrolled in a formal educational programme

Transfer

The process of having credits awarded in one context recognised in another context for purposes of obtaining a qualification.

Workload

Indication of the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

Annex 1 Learner's perspective in using ECTS*

*(See page 37 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Annex 2 Suggestions of recognition of periods of study abroad in the framework of bilateral agreements*

*(See pages 39-40 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Annex 3 ECTS Grading Table*

*(See pages 41-43 of ECTS Users' Guide)

Annex 4 Key documents*

*(See pages 44-58 of ECTS Users' Guide)

- Student Application Form
- Learning Agreement
- Training Agreement and Quality Commitment
- Transcript of Records
- The Diploma Supplement

Annex 5 Overview of national regulations on the number of learning hours per academic year*

*(See pages 59-60 of ECTS Users' Guide)