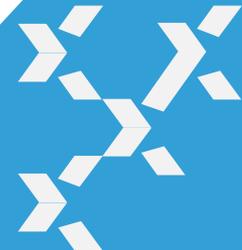




ECTS Users' Guide

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide_en.pdf



Wat is ECTS?

- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation system
- Sinds 1989 deel van het Erasmus programma
- Gebruik van studiepunten (credits) in opleidingsprogramma's
- Heeft de bedoeling de transparantie en vergelijkbaarheid van opleidingen te verhogen en daardoor ook de kwaliteit
- De credits zijn cruciaal voor de erkenning van tijdelijke studies in het buitenland



<http://europa.eu/!KF97qt>

Wat is de ECTS Guide?

The ECTS Users' Guide is behulpzaam bij het toepassen van ECTS for implementing ECTS and bevat referenties naar nuttige documenten. De guide is bedoeld voor:

- **Studenten** om beter te begrijpen wat er van hen verwacht wordt en hoe hun eigen studieprestaties geëvalueerd worden
- **Instellingen** die opleidingen ontwikkelen en ervoor moeten zorgen dat de behaalde resultaten erkend worden als studenten op uitwisseling gaan
- **Docenten** die hun programma's efficiënter kunnen maken
- **Stakeholders** en het brede publiek die kunnen leren hoe het Europese onderwijssysteem georganiseerd is

Nieuwigheden in de Guide van 2015

Nieuwe focus op '**learning outcomes**' in de EHEA.

De versie van 2009 is herschreven door een werkgroep met deelnemers aangeduid door de Bolognalanden en andere stakeholder organisaties

Het **ontwikkelen van programma's** en hoe ze aan te bieden krijgt extra aandacht, en er wordt rekening gehouden met de ervaring van instellingen bij het gebruik van de **qualifications frameworks**.

VERDER

- shift van teacher-centred naar student-centred higher education
- toenemend gebruik van learning outcomes
- de ontwikkeling van nieuwe leer- en doceerstijlen

**Learner-centred
system**

**ECTS Mobility
supporting
documents**

ECTS key features

**Learning
outcomes and
workload**

**Recognition of prior
learning and Lifelong
learning**

**Credits:
allocation, award,
accumulation, transfer**

Benefits for students

- Student-centred learning
- ECTS credits have become a standard for a wide variety of educational programmes, including online or distance courses
- ECTS credits can be used by a variety of students
- Study periods abroad are more easily planned

Benefits for institutions

- Programme design: efficient, flexible and targeted to the learning outcomes of students
- More transparency:
 - Degrees are much more transferable between countries, helping with the planning of mobility periods for students and staff
 - Degrees are more widely recognised internationally

“By using ECTS, programmes are well-structured and well-described, so they become more transparent to the outside world”
– Maria Sticchi Damiani,
ECTS Expert

ECTS programme design

The following steps have been identified as helpful in designing programmes:

- Programme context
- Programme profile
- Learning outcomes
- Programme structure
- Assessment
- Monitoring



<http://europa.eu/!QN37rY>

“It [ECTS] helps you to plan a programme, by giving you clear direction about what to do when”
– Volker Gehmlich, ECTS Expert

ECTS programme design

Programme context

In the **QF-EHEA** there are three main cycles, as well as a short cycle, which are all worth ECTS credits:

- Short cycle: 120 ECTS credits
- First cycle: 180 or 240 ECTS credits
- Second cycle: 90 or 120 ECTS credits
- Third cycle: Varies

QFs

There are two European Qualifications Frameworks:

- The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (**QF-EHEA**)
- The European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning of the EU (**EQF-LLL**)

ECTS programme design

Programme profile

Distinctive features of the programme

Main focus of the programme

Learning environment

Level of the programme

Field(s) of study

Key learning outcomes expected

Learning, teaching and
assessment activities

ECTS programme design

Learning outcomes

Recommended: 10-12 learning outcomes at programme level
6-8 learning outcomes for educational components

Guidelines

Learning outcomes should:

- reflect the context, level, scope and content of the programme
- be succinct and not too detailed;
- be mutually consistent
- be easily understandable and verifiable
- be achievable within the workload
- be linked with appropriate learning activities, assessment methods and assessment criteria

Formulation

- Use an active verb to express what students are expected to know and be able to do
- Specify what the outcomes refer to
- Specify the way of demonstrating the achievement of the learning outcomes

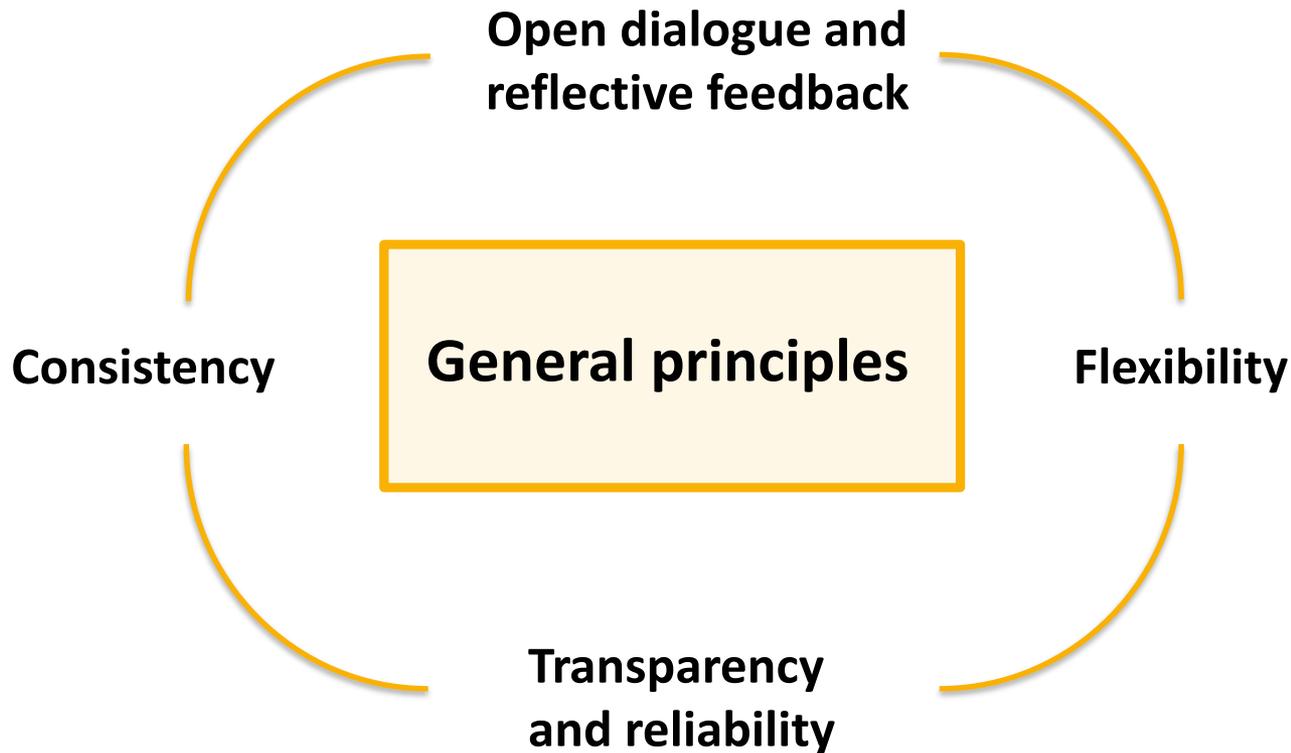
ECTS programme design

Programme structure

- 60 credits for a full-time-equivalent academic year
- Use of modules – benefits for collaboration across subjects and faculties
- ‘Mobility windows’ facilitate learning mobility
- Progression requirements must be explicit
- Independent learners joining a formal programme should receive appropriate counselling/advice to support them

ECTS programme design

Assessment and award of credits



ECTS Programme design

Monitoring

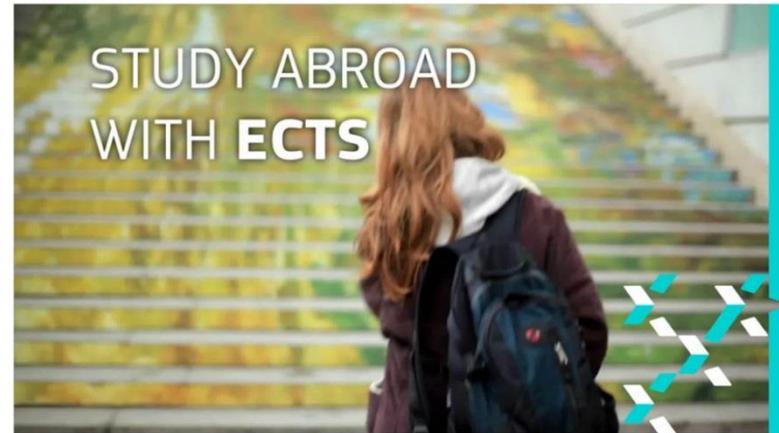
- Are credit allocation, defined learning outcomes and estimated workload achievable, realistic and adequate?
- Methods: questionnaires, focus groups, interviews or results achieved
- Feedback from students, staff and stakeholders
- Revision to the workload, credits, learning outcomes or learning and teaching activities and methods if necessary

Doctoral education

- Doctoral education is in the process of a change
- There a greater variety of routes to a doctorate
- It is being recognised that high level training is helpful to develop third cycle generic (transferable) and subject-specific competences
- In some countries and institutions, ECTS is also used in the third cycle
- If ECTS is used, the guidelines contained in this ECTS Users' Guide should apply, taking into account the specific nature of doctoral degrees

Study abroad with ECTS

- Degree mobility
- Credit mobility
- Grade distribution
- Grade conversion



<http://europa.eu/!cM76Cn>

“ECTS allows you to spend a study period abroad at a European institution, bring results back to your home institution, have them recognised and included towards your final degree in the Diploma Supplement, and this is done via a Learning Agreement”

– Raimonda Markeviciene, ECTS Expert

Study abroad with ECTS

Degree mobility

- Degree programmes can vary in the number of ECTS credits they include
- The programme learning outcomes should be the main factor taken into account for the purposes of recognising qualifications for further studies
- The Lisbon Recognition Convention (1999) provides a legal framework for cross-border recognition
- Substantial differences are differences between the foreign qualification and the national qualification that are so significant that they would most likely prevent the applicant from succeeding in the desired activity (further study, research activities or employment)

Study abroad with ECTS

Credit mobility

Key supporting documents:

- Course Catalogue
- Learning Agreement
- Transcript of Records
- Traineeship Certificate

“The two most relevant documents for a student that is planning to go abroad are the Course Catalogue and the Learning Agreement”

– Stefan Jahnke,
Erasmus Student Network

Study abroad with ECTS

Credit mobility

Before the credit mobility period: the student, sending institution and receiving institution/organisation agree on the programme abroad and formalise a Learning Agreement

After the credit mobility period: the receiving institution provides the sending institution and the student with a Transcript of Records

To simplify and speed up the process:



The golden rule

All credits gained during the period of study abroad or during the virtual mobility – as agreed in the Learning Agreement and confirmed by the Transcript of Records – should be transferred without delay and counted towards the student's degree without any additional work by, or assessment of, the student

Study abroad with ECTS

Credit mobility

To integrate credit mobility into programmes, institutions can:

- Identify the semester or year when a period of study abroad would best fit into the programme
- In that semester/year, schedule in the educational components with achievable learning outcomes
- Identify partner institutions where compatible/complementary learning outcomes could be achieved

Grade distribution

- European HEIs have different grading scales and passing rates
- Mobility students have the right to a fair conversion of the grades they've obtained during a period of study abroad
- Each HEI should produce a grading table for each degree course within a specific subject area
- This will help ensure the transparency of the grading culture and the accurate conversion of grades for mobility students



<http://europa.eu/!kk38Jb>

Grade distribution

Grading table example

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)*	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
10	50	5%	5%
9	100	10%	15%
8	350	35%	50%
7	300	30%	80%
6	200	20%	100%
Total:	1,000	100%	

* Grading systems/approaches may be established at national level

Grade conversion

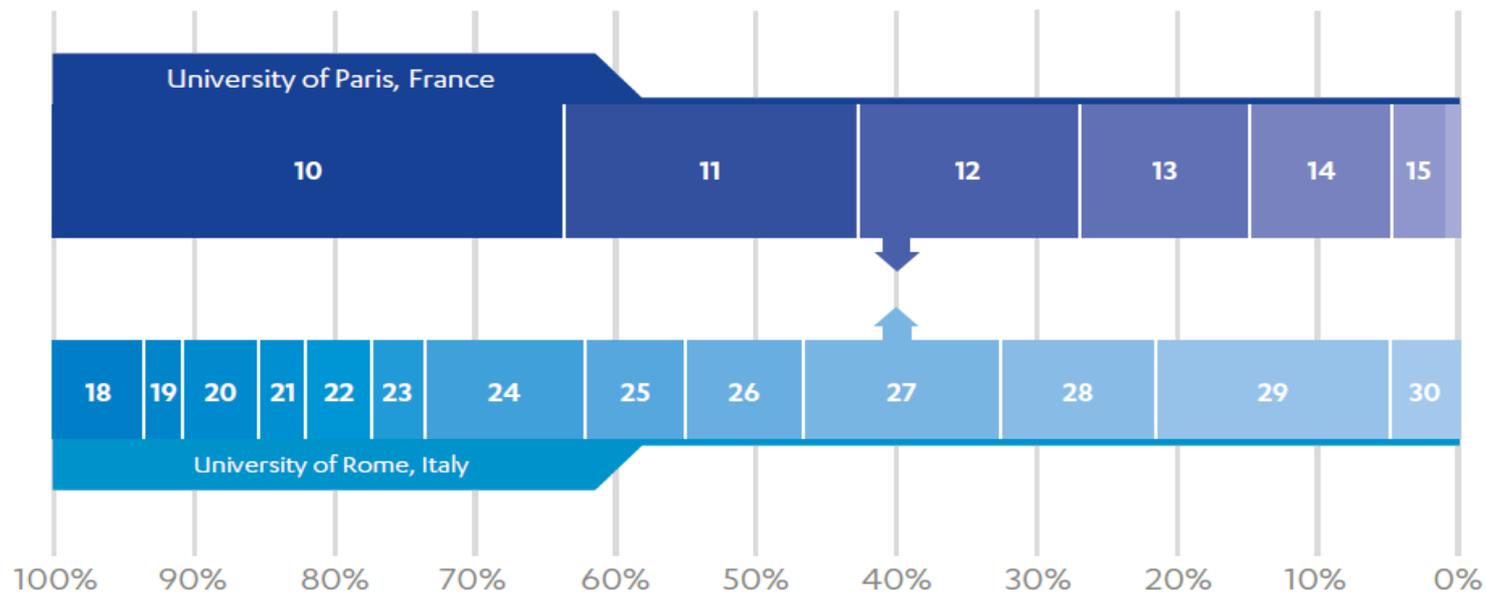
- The grade distribution tables of the sending and receiving institutions should be compared when transferring the grades of mobility students
- The position of each grade within the two tables should be compared, and individual grades converted on the basis of this
- Percentages ranges of grades often overlap. The receiving institution should decide in advance how they will measure the comparable grade of the overlapping ranges (minimum, average or maximum)

“Through the use of grading tables, all grades could be converted in a transparent and fair way for all cases of students’ mobility”

– Maria Sticchi Damiani, ECTS Expert

Grade conversion

Grading conversion table example



● University of Paris, France
ISCED-F Code 023 Languages

● University of Rome, Italy
ISCED-F Code 023 Languages

Tool to convert grades:



ECTS and lifelong learning

- Changing higher education landscape: more diversified student group, need for more flexible learning opportunities, individual learning pathways and different modes of learning, including digital and online technologies
- ECTS can be used in all lifelong learning contexts regardless of the mode, location or country
- Open learning: providers of all 'formally' quality assured higher education courses are encouraged to use ECTS



<http://europa.eu/!HG34Yk>

ECTS and lifelong learning

Flexible learning opportunities

Blended learning

Open Educational
Resources (OER)

New forms of
open online
learning

*“Higher education is opening
up to flexible learning”*
– Nevena Vuksanovic,
European Students’ Union

Continual
Professional
Development
(CPD)

Massive Open
Online Courses
(MOOCs)

Work-based
learning

Self-directed
learning

Individual learning
pathways

ECTS and lifelong learning

Recognition of prior learning experience

- HEIs should develop recognition policies for learning outcomes acquired outside the formal learning context, provided these learning outcomes satisfy the requirements of the qualification or its components
- After appropriate assessment, the same number of ECTS credits as attached to the corresponding part of the formal programme should be awarded
- Appropriate staff and transparent methods
- Advice to learners, counselling opportunities

ECTS and quality assurance

Good practice in using ECTS will help institutions **improve the quality of their programmes** and their **learning mobility offer**.

ECTS should be quality assured through appropriate evaluation processes and continuous quality enhancement.

Evaluation indicators

- Educational components are expressed in terms of appropriate learning outcomes, and information is available concerning their level, credits, delivery and assessment
- Studies can be completed in the time allocated to them
- Annual monitoring examines any variations in patterns of achievement and results, and follows up with appropriate revision
- Students are provided with detailed information and advice
- Students are informed promptly of their results

Supporting documents

Course Catalogue

Includes detailed, user-friendly and up-to-date information on the institution's learning environment.

Recommended elements

- Name and address
- Description of institution
- Academic authorities
- Academic calendar
- Programmes offered
- Admission requirements
- Recognition of credit mobility
- ECTS credit allocation policy
- Academic guidance
- Information on programmes
- Information on individual educational components
- Student affairs office
- Accommodation and meals
- Cost of living and financial support
- Learning and medical facilities
- Insurance
- Facilities for students with disabilities/special needs
- International mobility possibilities
- Language courses
- Work placement possibilities
- Sports and leisure facilities
- Student associations

Supporting documents

Course Catalogue

Information on programmes:

- qualification awarded
- length of programme
- number of credits
- level of qualification according to the National Qualification Framework and the European Qualifications Framework
- field(s) of study (e.g. ISCED-F)
- specific admission requirements (if applicable)
- specific arrangements for recognition of prior learning (formal, non-formal and informal) (if applicable)
- qualification requirements and regulations, including graduation requirements (if applicable)
- profile of the programme (see chapter on programme design)
- programme learning outcomes
- programme structure diagram with credits (60 ECTS per full-time equivalent academic year)
- mode of study (full-time/part-time/e-learning etc.)
- examination regulations and grading scale
- obligatory or optional mobility windows (if applicable)
- work placement(s) (if applicable)
- work-based learning
- programme director or equivalent
- occupational profiles of graduates
- access to further studies

For joint programmes, some additional elements are recommended:

- information on the form of the diploma and Diploma Supplement (joint/double/multiple)
- members of consortium and their role
- mobility structure of the programme

Supporting documents

Course Catalogue

Information on individual educational components:

- code
- title
- type (compulsory/optional)
- cycle (short/first/second/third)
- year of study when the component is delivered (if applicable)
- semester/trimester when the component is delivered
- number of ECTS credits allocated
- name of lecturer(s)
- learning outcomes
- mode of delivery (face-to-face/ distance learning etc.)
- prerequisites and co-requisites (if applicable)
- course content
- recommended or required reading and other learning resources/tools
- planned learning activities and teaching methods
- assessment methods and criteria
- language of instruction

Supporting documents

Learning Agreement for credit mobility and work placements

Outlines the learning activities to be carried out by the student within the receiving institution.

Recommended elements

- Name and contact details of student
- Names, addresses and contact details of sending and receiving institutions
- Student's field of study at sending institution
- Study cycle
- Period of study at the receiving institution
- Study programme abroad
- Educational components that the student will be exempted from at the sending institution if the components taken abroad are successfully completed
- Signatures of the three parties

Supporting documents

Transcript of Records and Work Placement Certificate

Records the educational components taken, the number of ECTS credits achieved and the grades awarded during the mobility period.

Recommended elements

- Name of student
- ID and/or contact details of the student
- Names and contacts of the institution
- Field of study of the student and/or name of programme
- Current year of study
- Educational components taken at the institution
- Description of the institutional grading system
- Grade distribution information
- Date of issue and signature of the responsible person

Structure of the ECTS Guide

Introduction

Sections

1. ECTS Key features
2. ECTS and the EHEA
3. ECTS for programme design, delivery and monitoring
4. ECTS for mobility and credit recognition
5. ECTS and lifelong learning
6. ECTS and quality assurance
7. ECTS and supporting documents

Annexes

1. Glossary
2. Examples: grade conversion
3. Recommended Reading list
4. Examples: programme profiles
5. Examples: learning outcomes

Thank you for your attention

Valère Meus
Ghent University

(adapted from the EU presentation, see also
http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/introduction_en.htm#ectsTop)