



The Diploma Supplement

The Diploma Supplement (DS) accompanies a higher education diploma, providing a standardized description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies completed by its holder.

New qualifications proliferate worldwide and countries are constantly changing their qualification systems and educational structures. With an increasing number of mobile citizens seeking fair recognition of their qualifications outside their home countries, the non-recognition and poor evaluation of qualifications is now a global problem. Since original credentials alone do not provide sufficient information, it is very difficult to gauge the level and function of a qualification without detailed explanations.

The Diploma Supplement is a response to these challenges, aiding mobility and access to lifelong learning opportunities. It promotes transparency in higher education and fair and informed judgements about qualifications. It also accommodates rapid changes in qualifications.

National higher education institutions produce the supplement according to a template jointly developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

It has eight sections of information identifying the holder of the qualification; the qualification, its level and function; the contents and results gained; certification of the supplement; details of the national higher education system plus any additional information.

A description of the national higher education system within which the individual named on the original qualification graduated has to be attached to the Diploma Supplement. This description is provided by the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARICs).

The supplement is designed as an aid to help recognition – it is not a CV or a substitute for the original qualification, and it does not guarantee recognition.

The 48 European countries taking part in the Bologna Process have agreed that each graduate in their respective country should receive the Diploma Supplement automatically, free of charge and in a major European language.

[...]

For students, the Diploma Supplement offers:

- A diploma that is more readable and easily comparable abroad;
- A precise description of their academic career and the competencies acquired during the study period;
- An objective description of their achievements and competencies;
- Easier access to opportunities of work or further studies abroad; and
- It fosters their employability.

For higher education institutions, the benefits are:

- It facilitates academic and professional recognition, thus increasing the transparency of qualifications;

- It protects national/institutional autonomy while offering a common frame which is accepted all over Europe;
- It promotes informed judgements about qualifications that can be understood in another educational context;
- It raises the visibility of the institution abroad;
- It promotes the employability of their graduates at national and international level;
- It helps to save time since it provides the answers to a lot of recurrent questions put to administrative services in institutions about the content and portability of diplomas.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ds_en.htm