



European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

ECTS makes teaching and learning in higher education more transparent across Europe and facilitates the recognition of all studies. The system allows for the transfer of learning experiences between different institutions, greater student mobility and more flexible routes to gain degrees. It also aids curriculum design and quality assurance.

Institutions which apply ECTS publish their course catalogues on the web, including detailed descriptions of study programmes, units of learning, university regulations and student services.

Course descriptions contain 'learning outcomes' (i.e. what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do) and workload (i.e. the time students typically need to achieve these outcomes). Each learning outcome is expressed in terms of credits, with a student workload ranging from 1 500 to 1 800 hours for an academic year, and one credit generally corresponds to 25-30 hours of work.

A series of ECTS key documents help with credit transfer and accumulation – course catalogues, learning agreements, transcript of records and Diploma Supplements (DS).

Although ECTS can help recognition of a student's studies between different institutions and national education systems, higher education providers are autonomous institutions. The final decisions are the responsibility of the relevant authorities: professors involved in student exchanges, university admission officers, recognition advisory centres (ENIC-NARIC), ministry officials or employers.

[...]

ECTS is closely related to other efforts to modernise higher education in Europe. In particular, it has become a central tool in the Bologna Process which aims to make national systems converge.

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