



European Commission
Supporting and improving education and training in Europe

BG CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HR HU IT LT LV MT NL PL PT RO SK SL SV

This information is only available in EN for the moment. Other language versions will be added shortly.

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

What is it?

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool that helps to design, describe, and deliver study programmes and award higher education qualifications. The use of ECTS, in conjunction with outcomes-based qualifications frameworks, makes study programmes and qualifications more transparent and facilitates the recognition of qualifications.

Why is it needed?

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

ECTS is closely related to the modernisation of higher education in Europe. In particular, it is a central tool in the Bologna Process ([link to page](#)) which aims to make national systems more compatible.

How does it work?

Participating institutions publish their course catalogues on the web, including detailed descriptions of study programmes, modules, 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 documents help with credit transfer and accumulation
course catalogues

[learning agreements](http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/higher-education/quality-framework_en.htm) (http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/higher-education/quality-framework_en.htm)

transcript of records and

the Diploma Supplement (DS).

Find out more

ECTS Users' Guide

The ECTS Users' Guide (http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/ects-guide_en.pdf) provides guidelines for implementation of ECTS. It also presents the ECTS key documents. The Guide is being revised, in order to take account of recent developments in student-centred learning. The new Guide will be ready in 2015.

Translations: (DISCLAIMER - translations provided by national agencies, in case of dispute only the English version is valid). Hard copies of the ECTS Users Guide can be ordered at the EU Bookshop.