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What is ECTS?

ECTS - The European credit transfer and accumulation system is a student-centred system based on the student workload required to achieve the objectives of a programme, objectives preferably specified in terms of the learning outcomes and competences to be acquired.

The three main ways/approaches of ECTS credit introduction at national level :

1. Legal ;
2. Consensus-based;
3. Recommendation-based.

The main ECST elements

ECTS requires to use new elements in approach to study programmes design:

1. student workload;
2. learning outcomes and competences;
3. use of ECTS credits.



1. Student workload

Student workload in ECTS consists of the time required to complete all planned learning activities such as attending lectures, seminars, independent and private study, preparation of projects, examinations, and so forth.

2. Competences and learning outcomes

Competences - dynamic combination of cognitive and metacognitive skills, knowledge and understanding, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills, ethical values and attitudes.

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.

(ECTS Users" guide, 2009)



3. The use of ECTS

1. Credits are allocated to all educational components of a study programme (such as modules, courses, placements, dissertation work, etc.) and reflect the quantity of work each component requires to achieve its specific objectives. Student workload in this context is a very important notion.
2. Credit may be allocated to all types of study programmes, irrespective of their length, composition or nature. Programmes may consist of year-long modules (depending on a notion of modules used) or shorter courses. They may cover work placements and research. They may be first, second or third cycle. Credits can also be used for stand-alone courses offered to learners not engaged in a full cycle programme of study.
3. Credits in ECTS can only be obtained after successful completion of the work required and appropriate assessment of the learning outcomes achieved.



Challenges for HEI

Learning outcomes

- Confusion between competences and LO
- Lack of skills in formulating LO
- Problems of translating the term and using appropriate language

Workload

- There is no tradition to calculate workload and consult students – time and activities do not match
- Organization of teaching and learning still teacher centred

Credits

- No credit thinking in the country and most of the institutions
- Credits are not seen as a tool for programme design
- Limited use of credits to measure student progress (R. Markeviciene)



VGTU case

1. Hours range/academic year: 1600 h
2. Status of the proclamation: Law and decree
3. Scope of studies in Lithuania is measured in credits.
4. 40 hours of study (in classrooms, laboratories, self and others.), it its one working week, or = 1.5 ECTS

5. 1 ECTS = 26, 67 h

6. The average one-year full-time study scope is 60 ECTS (From 2011). Non-modularized system - each course unit can have a different number of credits although the total number for one year - 60 ECTS.
7. VGTU total number of credits for Masters (2 years) – in the range between 90-120 ECTS. In the Faculty of Environmental Engineering – 112 ECTS.
8. VGTU total number of credits for Bachelors (4 years) – 240 ECTS.



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Detailed information:

1. ECTS Users' Guide European credit transfer and accumulation system (ECTS)
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide_en.pdf
2. European credit transfer and accumulation system (ECTS)
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ects/en.pdf
3. The ECTS system <http://www.studyineurope.eu/ects-system>
4. Calculating and measuring student workload and a method to allocate workload (StOEHN)
http://www.stoehn.fh-aachen.de/uploads/media/Workload_tuning.pdf *and etc.*