

# ECTS CERTIFICATION



**EAHEA<sup>®</sup>**  
European Association for Higher Education Advancement

## ECTS Credits Certifications (For European Educational Institutions)

The European Association For Higher Education Advancement may certify the qualification of an institution to issue ECTS credits for any course, training, or program of study. To obtain this qualification to issue ECTS credits the institution must demonstrate that the corresponding learning outcomes and hours of study hours for the course, training, or program of study have been met.

The European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA) provides guidance to educational institutions on ECTS, recommends improvements based on a comparison of existing study programs with their European counterparts, makes recommendations for the organization of program curricula, and issues a guidance certificate to educational institutions that meet the ECTS criteria, enabling the conversion of existing ECTS credits.

**Get certified by EAHEA if you are interested in issuing ECTS credits.**

### What Are The ECTS Credits?

ECTS means European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

ECTS credits are based on the workload students need to achieve expected learning outcomes. Learning outcomes describe what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do after successful completion of a process of learning. They relate to level descriptors in national and European qualifications frameworks. Workload indicates the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study, and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

Institutions that apply to ECTS publish their course catalogs on the web, including detailed descriptions of study programs, units of learning, university regulations, and student services. Course descriptions contain learning outcomes (what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do) and workload (the time students typically need to achieve the learning outcomes), expressed in terms of credits (and hours of study).

Credit transfer and accumulation are helped by the use of the ECTS key documents (course catalog, learning agreement, and transcript of records) as well as the Diploma Supplement. ECTS can feed into recognition decisions about academic quality and education accreditation. These decisions, however, remain the responsibility of the competent authorities: professors involved in student exchange, university admission officers, recognition advisory centers, ministry officials, or employers.

The EQF - European Qualifications Framework will make the current official validation (homologation) procedures unnecessary in most cases when the education quality and training are provided according to the ECTS guidelines.

Countries around Europe are increasingly emphasizing the need to take account of the full range of an individual's knowledge, skills, and competencies. Recognizing all forms of learning is, therefore, a priority of EU action in education quality and accreditation. Learning takes place in different settings and contexts, formal and non-formal. Learning that is taking place in the formal education and training system is traditionally the most visible and the one likely to be recognized in the labor market and by society in general. In recent years, however, there has been a growing appreciation that learning in non-formal settings is seen as crucial for the realization

of lifelong learning, thus requiring new strategies for the identification and validation of these learning outcomes.

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### **1 ECTS Academic Credit = 25 to 30 hours of study work**

60 ECTS credits are attached to the workload of a full-time year of formal learning (academic year) and the associated learning outcomes. In most cases, student workload ranges from 1.500 to 1.800 hours for an academic year, whereby one credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of study work.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool that enables students to collect credits for learning achieved through higher education. ECTS is a learner-centered system that aims to increase the transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes. It aims to facilitate planning, delivery, evaluation, recognition, and validation of qualifications and units of learning as well as student mobility, education quality, and accreditation. ECTS is widely used in formal higher education and can be applied to other lifelong learning activities.

ECTS credits are allocated to entire qualifications or study programs as well as to their educational components (such as modules, course units, dissertation work, work placements, and laboratory work). The number of credits ascribed to each component is based on its weight in terms of the workload students need to achieve the learning outcomes.

Credits are awarded to individual students (full-time or part-time) after completion of the learning activities required by a program of study or by a single educational component and the successful assessment of the achieved learning outcomes. Credits may be accumulated to obtain qualifications, as decided by the degree-awarding institution.

If students have achieved learning outcomes in other learning contexts or timeframes (formal, non-formal, or informal), the associated credits may be awarded after successful assessment, validation, or recognition of these learning outcomes. Credits awarded in one program may be transferred into another program, offered by the same or another institution.

The European Union does not have legal competencies in matters of education. In other words, education regulations are set by each country's Ministry of Education or designated organism. The ministries of education from the different European countries (including E.U., Turkey & Russia) agreed to sign the Bologna declaration to transform and merge their diverse educational models according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) guidelines. The goal of this declaration was to facilitate international student mobility, to adapt the universities' curricula to actual social demands, and to improve education quality and competitiveness through a better comprehension and transparency of what has been studied in each country.

Non-formal education initiatives are not affected by the Bologna declaration but from the legal framework of their respective countries. The European Higher Education Area has recognized the importance of non-formal education initiatives and recommends following the ECTS credits guidelines to promote better understanding and acceptance of these initiatives.

Following the ECTS credits guidelines does not imply the automatic and obligatory acceptance of the credits from any third-party institution or organization. Each institution is free to accept and validate any ECTS credits obtained at other institutions, whether formal or non-formal. Although, the fact that any program of education is expressed in the ECTS format facilitates its comprehension and potential recognition.

### **How Are The ECTS Credits Certified?**

Any educational institution that wished to issue ECTS credits must demonstrate through the Application for Accreditation (Self Assessment Report) that several of the standards set forth by the European Association For Higher Education Advancement are met. To apply for the certification to qualify for issuing ECTS credits, the school or institution must:

- Go to the Online Application page and fill out the EAHEA Application Form for ECTS Credits Certification.
- Pay the secretary services fee and wait for an approval email from EAHEA Secretary.
- Pay the certification fee after the approval email. There are no refunds for this fee.

EAHEA will apply the same procedures described in the process of educational accreditation with some limitations and adaptations resulting from the European Higher Education Area guidelines about the ECTS credits.

The application for the certification to issue ECTS credits is the same as the application for accreditation, but not all the standards listed for the accreditation need to be addressed. 12 of the 26 accreditation quality standards described in the application for accreditation are required. Consequently, the cost of this process is less.

Once the application is received, the EAHEA will guide the educational institution to adapt and meet the European Higher Education Area guidelines to issue the ECTS credits.

**The certification to issue ECTS credits is exclusive for European educational institutions.**

The certified school will receive an evaluation report noting any improvement or adaptation requirements to meet the European guidelines concerning the ECTS credits. The school will also receive a certification diploma once the whole process has been satisfactorily accomplished.

The certified educational institutions may be included in the list of accredited institutes from the European Association For Higher Education Advancement provided that the corresponding yearly maintenance fee is paid.

### **Important Clarifications:**

ECTS is the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. The ECTS is not an organism, they are a directive. The European Union does not issue or recognize ECTS credits. The E.U. defines the ECTS credits and encourages institutions to use this system for a better understanding and acceptance of educational achievements.

The Bologna declaration is an agreement, not an institution. The different Ministries of Education made the compromise to change their diverse educational systems into the common ECTS credits. Each country has set monitoring accreditation entities to control correct adherence to the ECTS System for the institutions affected by the Bologna declaration. These accreditation bodies should monitor formal education within their countries. Non-formal education may be or not be assessed by these accrediting bodies. Often it is not possible to evaluate non-formal education within the formal educational setting.

Any educational institution may issue ECTS credits provided that they meet the requirements established by the European Higher Education Area. Issuing ECTS credits does not change the legal or recognition status of the educational institution. ECTS credits issued by official or formal educational institutions are considered with official validity, the one's issue by non-formal educational institutions are considered non-formal ECTS credits. ECTS credits issued by non-formal institutions are more likely to be accepted provided that they meet the requirements established by the European Higher Education Area. ECTS credits not meeting these requirements will be considered fraudulent and will involve legal consequences.

The European Association for Higher Education Advancement is not an official institution. The EAHEA is an independent organism that promotes education quality and helps educational institutions by promoting good educational standards through accreditation and advising how to comply with the ECTS credits regulations.

The European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA) provides guidance to educational institutions on ECTS, recommends improvements based on a comparison of existing study programs with their European counterparts, makes recommendations for the organization of program curricula, and issues a guidance certificate to educational institutions that meet the ECTS criteria, enabling the conversion of existing ECTS credits. This certificate does not replace an official authorization document, it is an advice and guidance certificate.





## **Contact Us**

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