REGIONAL MEETING/WORKSHOP ON THE RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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CREDIT TRANSFER – THE EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER AND ACCUMULATION SYSTEM (ECTS)

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The use of credit and credit systems can lead to revolutionary change, making qualifications more flexible, easier to recognise (more transparent) and therefore facilitating mobility of staff, students and programmes of study.
The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

FOCUS:
1. ECTS and the Bologna reforms
2. What is ECTS designed to do?
3. ECTS Key features
4. ECTS as a recognition tool
5. Issues and lessons learned
6. Latest developments
1. ECTS and the Bologna reforms (EHEA)

- ECTS is a tool that helps to design, describe and deliver higher education qualifications.

- The use of ECTS, in conjunction with outcomes-based qualifications frameworks, makes programmes and qualifications more transparent and facilitates their recognition.

- ECTS is one of the cornerstones of the Bologna Process, which aims at the ‘establishment of a system of credits as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility’.

- ECTS credit ranges have been allocated to the first two cycles of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) overarching qualifications framework (180-240 and 90-120). Credits play an important role in European qualifications frameworks (national and overarching).
2. What is ECTS designed to do?

‘ECTS makes teaching and learning more transparent and facilitates the recognition of studies (formal, non-formal and informal). The system is used across Europe for credit transfer (student mobility) and credit accumulation (learning paths towards a degree). It also informs curriculum design and quality assurance.’
3. ECTS Key features and tools

3.1 ECTS as a learner-centred credit system
3.2 ECTS and learning outcomes
3.3 ECTS, levels and level descriptors
3.4 ECTS credits and workload
3.5 ECTS transfer tools:
   - Course catalogue/information package
   - Application form
   - Learning agreement
   - Transcript of record
   - Grade translation
7 STEPS TO CREDIT TRANSFER

- Institutional commitment
- Credit allocation to course units
- Information Package/Catalogue
- Learning Agreement
- Award of credits to students
- Transcript of Records
- Academic recognition
4. ECTS as a recognition tool

- Recognition is a prerequisite for ECTS mobility
- Aids curriculum transparency - aided by learning outcomes
- Establishes a common academic language – credit
- Promotes cooperation and mutual understanding
- Promotes staff, students and programme mobility
- Links to qualification frameworks + quality assurance
- Directly supports the aims of the three workshops:
  1. Regional awareness and cooperation
  2. National Information Centres
  3. Development of National Qualifications Frameworks
5. Issues and lessons learned (credit transfer)

Implementation of common tools and process to promote credit transfer + the need to promote "fair recognition" of the full recognition of credits and grades

The ECTS pilot scheme was essential to resolve these problems and aid the gradual development of mutual trust and confidence.

The main challenges were due to:

- Language
- Financial and bureaucratic issues
- Unequal mobility flows and patterns
- Academic standards and institutional reputation
- Disjunctions in study patterns and the teaching year
- Credit allocation practices (workload and learning outcomes)
- Reluctance to transfer full credits and the associated grades

All these problems can be overcome!
6. Latest developments

- ECTS is now a credit accumulation and transfer tool and impacts on all higher education programmes – not just classic student mobility (credit transfer).
- ECTS can be applied to all types of programmes, whatever their mode of delivery (school-based, work-based), the learners’ status (full-time, part-time) and to all kinds of learning (formal, non-formal and informal).
We, the Ministers responsible for higher education in the 46 countries of the Bologna Process convened in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, on April 28 and 29, 2009 to take stock of the achievements of the Bologna Process and to establish the priorities for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) for the next decade....
18. We believe that mobility of students, early stage researchers and staff enhances the quality of programmes and excellence in research; it strengthens the academic and cultural internationalization of European higher education. Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters respect for diversity and a capacity to deal with other cultures. It encourages linguistic pluralism, thus underpinning the multilingual tradition of the European Higher Education Area and it increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions. Therefore, mobility shall be the hallmark of the European Higher Education Area. We call upon each country to increase mobility, to ensure its high quality and to diversify its types and scope. In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad.
19. Within each of the three cycles, opportunities for mobility shall be created in the structure of degree programmes. Joint degrees and programmes as well as mobility windows shall become more common practice. Moreover, mobility policies shall be based on a range of practical measures pertaining to the funding of mobility, recognition, available infrastructure, visa and work permit regulations. Flexible study paths and active information policies, full recognition of study achievements, study support and the full portability of grants and loans are necessary requirements. Mobility should also lead to a more balanced flow of incoming and outgoing students across the European Higher Education Area and we aim for an improved participation rate from diverse student groups.