

European Credit transfer System (ECTS) Information Sheet

Introduction

At most institutions in Europe, the course load is given in ECTS credit points. 1 ECTS equals 28 hours of study. ECTS credits are a value, allocated to course units, to describe the student's workload required to complete a course. They reflect the quantity of work each course requires in relation to the total quantity of work required to complete a full year of academic study at the institution.

This includes preparing for and attending classes, reading books, writing papers, studying for tests and exams etc. In ECTS, 60 credits represent the workload of a year of study. The ECTS is a European-wide used system, used by most universities within the European Union. ECTS credits express a relative value. For countries that provide a different credit system, information on that system will be provided as necessary.

Awarding Credit Points

ECTS Credit Points are awarded when the examination requirements of the course followed have been met. The requirements can be passing an exam with a sufficient mark, obtaining a sufficient mark for one or more written papers, a presentations, a home assignment, a research part, participation in and presence at the lectures. Or a combination of the above. The examination requirements are set per individual course.

Why a European Credit Transfer System?

ECTS was developed by the Commission of the European Communities in order to provide common procedures to guarantee academic recognition for studies abroad. It provides a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements, and transferring them from one institution to another.

ECTS is based on the principle of mutual trust and confidence between the participating higher-education institutions. The few rules of ECTS, concerning information (on courses available), learning agreements (between the home and host institutions) and the use of credit points (to indicate student workload) documented on a transcript of records, are set out to reinforce this mutual trust and confidence. Each ECTS department will describe the courses it offers not only in terms of content, but also by indicating the number of ECTS credits per course.

European Level System

With the new degree (ECTS) system has come a level indication system in which each course/project is assigned one of six levels from 100 to 600. This range covers everything from introductory work to original research.

Level 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introductory course; no course prerequisites - Intensive supervision, guided work groups, etc. - Mostly first year courses, some second year (bachelor's)
Level 200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introductory course; no specific course prerequisites - Independent study techniques required - Mostly second year courses, some first year (bachelor's)
Level 300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Course for advanced students; course prerequisites at level 100 or 200 - Books in various languages (only if relevant) - Examinations test the student's skills in applying acquired knowledge and insights into new problems - Mostly third year courses, some second year (bachelor's)
Level 400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialized course; course prerequisites at level 200 or 300 - Extensive use of scientific articles - Examination may include a small research project, an oral report, or written papers - Third year bachelor's or first year master's course
Level 500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master course: scientifically oriented course - Course prerequisites at level 300/400 - Scientific advanced specialist/professional literature
Level 600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master course: very advanced scientific course with as prerequisite a level 400/500 course - Latest developments in scientific field - Examination consists of a contribution to an unsolved problem, with an oral presentation