



Student-centred Learning and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

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EHEA 'launched' March 2010

Objectives:

Enhancing quality and relevance of Higher Education -

- * innovation in **student-centred learning**
- * exploiting digital technologies for learning and teaching
- * stronger link between teaching, learning and **research** at **all** study levels
- * incentives for activities that develop **creativity**, **innovation** and **entrepreneurship**
- * **transparent descriptions of learning outcomes and workload**, flexible learning paths and appropriate teaching and assessment methods
- * **involve students**, as full members of the academic community, as well as other stakeholders, **in curriculum design and in quality assurance**.

Fostering employability –

*‘at the end of each study cycle, graduates possess competences suitable for entry into the labour market which also enable them to develop the new **competences** they may need for their **employability throughout their working lives.**’*

Social inclusion

- * widen participation
- * improve **permeability and articulation** between different education sectors.
- * enhance the social dimension,
- * improve gender balance and widen opportunities for access and completion,
- * **international mobility**, for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- * mobility opportunities for students and staff from conflict areas,
- * promote the mobility of teacher education students

Implementing structural reforms:

- * - *Common degree structures*
- * - *Credit system*
- * - *Quality Assurance*
- * - *Mobility*
- * - *Joint Programmes and degrees*
- * - *Recognition of qualifications*
- * - *Recognition of prior learning*

EHEA – Bologna ‘tools’

- * Qualification Frameworks
- * ECTS
- * ESG - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- * European approach for Quality Assurance of joint programmes
- * EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register)
- * Diploma Supplement

Qualification Frameworks – compare – understand - recognise

Framework for qualifications of the EHEA - FQ-EHEA

Four levels/cycles:

- * -**Short** first cycle - within or linked to the First cycle c.120 ECTS credits
- * -**First** cycle 180 -240 ECTS credits
- * -**Second** cycle 90-120 ECTS credits, minimum of 60 at 2nd cycle level
- * -**Third** cycle (*no credits proposed*)
- * Dublin descriptors :
 - * > *knowledge and understanding;*
 - * > *applying knowledge and understanding;*
 - * > *making judgements;*
 - * > *communications skills;*
 - * > *learning skills.*

European Qualifications Framework – EQF

* **Eight** levels

- * Levels 5 -8 correspond to the FQ-EHEA cycles
- * Described in terms of:
 - * *learning outcomes:*
 - * *knowledge,*
 - * *skills and competences.*

National qualification Frameworks

- * 22 countries have implemented qualifications frameworks
- * 14 are close to completion
- * most are in the process of implementation

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System – ECTS

New ECTS guide May 2015

- * ECTS - credit system in virtually all EHEA countries
- * Learning outcomes and associated workload of a full-time academic year or equivalent - **60** ECTS credits
- * Supporting documents (*quality framework*):
 - * Course catalogue
 - * Learning agreement – study and work placement
 - * Transcript
 - * Recognition
- * ECTS grade transfer (statistical profile)
- * EGRACONS - European Grade Conversion System (egracons.eu)

ESG (revised May 2015)

- * All HE (including transnational and cross-border) regardless of mode or place of delivery.

Sections to note:

1.2 **Design and approval of programmes**

Guidelines: Programmes

- * are designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes;
- * are **designed by involving students and other stakeholders**
- * benefit from **external expertise and reference points**;
- * reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe
- * are designed so that they enable smooth student progression
- * define the expected student workload, e.g. in ECTS
- * **include well-structured placement opportunities** where appropriate
- * are subject to a formal institutional approval process

1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

- * Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that **encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process**, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

European approach for Quality Assurance of joint programmes

– May 2015

- removes an obstacle to the development of joint programmes by setting standards based on the agreed tools of the EHEA without applying additional national criteria
- facilitates integrated approaches to quality assurance that reflect and mirror their joint character.
- cooperating institutions select an agency from the **EQAR-register** for **a single evaluation/ accreditation** of the joint programme.
- result is to be accepted in all EHEA countries.
- dependent on the national legal framework, the external quality assurance decision should come into force or be recognised in **all** countries where the programme is offered.

- * If cooperating Higher education institutions are subject to **external quality assurance at institutional level** only and have “self-accrediting” status, they may use the European Approach for joint internal approval and monitoring processes for their joint programmes (according to ESG 1.2 & 1.9)
- * In these cases no additional external evaluation or accreditation procedures at the programme level are necessary.
- * The European Approach may be used for joint programmes offered by higher education institutions within and outside the EHEA.
- * Institutions from non-EHEA countries should check whether their national authorities would recognise the decision of an EQAR-registered agency.

Diploma Supplement

- * Graduates in all EHEA countries **have the right** to receive the Diploma Supplement **automatically**, free and in a major European language
- * Designed to help (but not guarantee) recognition
- * Describes the knowledge and skills acquired by holders of higher education degrees.
- * Provides a standardised description of nature, level, context, content and status of the studies.
- * Produced by HEIs according to standards agreed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO.
- * UK has incorporated the D S in the HEAR

Doctoral education

Extract from 'Structural reforms working group report' to the BFUG 2015

Third cycle qualifications

- * **Higher education institutions** are encouraged to:
 - Design and conduct third cycle programs and provision which ensure that they develop **competences that qualify third cycle graduates for a broad range of employment**, within as well as outside of academia and research more broadly;
 - Describe both **subject specific and generic competences** doctoral candidates are expected to acquire clearly and understandably and in such a way that the competences specific to third cycle qualifications are clearly demonstrated in the research.
 - Third cycle programmes and provision should, as appropriate, include the development of **entrepreneurial competences** and provide good career guidance.

- ★ **Public authorities and higher education institutions** should:
 - provide doctoral candidates with the possibility to include a **stay abroad** and/or a **traineeship, work placement** or similar experience by adapting them to the research-based approach of their studies, *inter alia* by providing adequate **mobility opportunities** for doctoral candidates;
 - provide transparent and understandable information on the competences and skills achieved by doctoral graduates to a wide academic and non-academic audience;
 - public authorities should provide incentives to higher education institutions to establish organizational frameworks (e.g. doctoral schools) aiming at upgrading the generic/transferable skills of doctoral candidates, stimulating inter-disciplinarity, enhancing international cooperation and cooperation with businesses and non-profit and public organizations.

The relevance of Bologna and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Thank you