



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Modernisation of Education I: Europe 2020, country analysis, Erasmus+ coordination
Erasmus+ Programme coordination and National Agencies management

Brussels, 31st July 2015
EAC-A3/FP/mgj ARES(2015)
2015/NOT NA DIR/001
(E+/NA/DIR/2015/050)

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE ERASMUS+ NA DIRECTORS

Subject: Update of the ECTS Users' Guide and launch of the Egracons grade conversion tool

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to update you on the revised ECTS Users' Guide, which was adopted by the Ministers at the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Yerevan, May 2015. As you know, the correct implementation by higher education institutions of credit transfer and recognition is a condition of holding the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and so participation in the programme.

The revision was undertaken by experts nominated by 14 different countries and 4 European stakeholder organisations of the European Higher Education Area, and coordinated by the European Commission. The revised Guide takes into account recent developments in the Bologna Process such as the paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred higher education, the increasing use of learning outcomes, the consolidation of lifelong learning, and the development of new modes of learning and teaching. It includes a specific focus on programme design and delivery, and builds on the experience of higher education institutions in applying ECTS principles in academic practice and for learning mobility.

The Guide offers guidelines for implementing ECTS that will be helpful to students, international officers and academic and administrative staff in higher education institutions, as well as to employers, education providers and all other interested stakeholders.

Now that the guide has been revised, it is essential to make sure that the higher education community, students and other stakeholders become more familiar with the concept of ECTS, so that it can achieve its full impact in terms of planning curricula, delivering courses, assessing learning outcomes and improving learning mobility experiences.

We are counting on your support in facilitating the implementation of ECTS in your countries. **We would be grateful if you could circulate the link to the new ECTS website (<http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index.htm>) to your HEIs and to relevant stakeholders** who can help to implement the principles laid down in the Users' Guide.

The website includes the ECTS Guide, along with a glossary and examples of formulating learning outcomes, a suggestion for grade conversion and 5 short videos explaining the underlying principles and use of ECTS.

We have distributed paper copies of the Guide to all Erasmus+ National Agencies. You can obtain further copies through the EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>) (only one copy per person) or if you need more copies, through the Europe Direct Service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm)

In addition, we would like to draw your attention to a current Erasmus project, which aims to provide a web based, easy-to-use tool for converting grades obtained by exchange students abroad. The Egracons Conversion Tool is in its final phase and will be officially launched at the EAIE conference in Glasgow, in September 2015. The tool is fully compatible with the revised ECTS Users' Guide and has been tested with 25 HEIs from 14 countries.

Based on the comparison of grading tables, it provides an objective conversion of a grade from the host institution into that of the sending institution,. To make the tool successful, the developers would need as many universities as possible to provide their grading tables to be incorporated in the tool. This can be done by means of a relatively simple query on each institution's student information system containing the grades given. Egracons has full instructions and examples available on how to do that. **We would like to ask you to inform your HEIs about this possibility and to encourage them to consult the Egracons website at <http://egracons.eu/document/grading-table-instructions-and-template>** for further information. The tool will be continuously updated with data received from HEIs. Institutions are invited to contact Egracons any time when their grade distribution table is available.

With many thanks and best wishes for a well-deserved summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Francesca PAGNOSSIN
Head of Unit

(signed)

p.o. Gerco van der Linden
Head of Sector