

**ROUND TABLE ON
EDUCATION AND
INTER-UNIVERSITY COOPERATION**

**Building the European Higher Education Area:
a further step forward**

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ECTS and curriculum development - Maria Sticchi Damiani

ECTS AND THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

- DEFINITIONS

- IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SYSTEMS -
THE ITALIAN CASE

- IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

DEFINITIONS

ECTS CREDITS

ECTS credits are based on the student workload required to achieve the objectives of a program, objectives preferably specified in terms of learning outcomes (knowledge and abilities)

ECTS AS AN ACCUMULATION SYSTEM

In an accumulation system a specified number of credits must be accumulated in order to successfully complete a semester, academic year or a full programme of study, according to the requirements of the programme

IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SYSTEMS

THE ITALIAN CASE

Ministerial Decree no. 509/99

MD 509/99

- Credits based on student workload

University educational credits measure “the learning workload, including individual study, required of a student (equipped with adequate initial preparation) to acquire the knowledge and abilities in the educational activities envisaged by the degree course” (art.1)

MD 509/99

- **Hours of student work per credit**

“The university educational credit corresponds to 25 hours of work per student. By means of ministerial decree the said hours for single classes of degree courses may be increased or decreased within a 20% limit for stated reasons”(art.5/1)

MD 509/99

•60 credits a year

“The average annual learning workload of a full time university student is conventionally fixed at 60 credits” (art.5/2)

MD 509/99

•Credits and exams

**“The credits corresponding to each educational activity are acquired by means of the student passing an examination or other form of valid test”
(art. 5/4)**

MD 509/99

•Accumulation of credits

“To obtain a first degree a student must have acquired 180 creditsTo obtain a second degree a student must have acquired 300 credits”. (art.7/1 e 2)

DM 509/99

•Recognition of credits

“The partial or full recognition of the credits acquired by a student for the purpose of continuing his/her studies in another course of the same university or in the same or another course of another university is up to the educational institution which accepts the student, in accordance with predetermined procedures and criteria laid down in the General Academic Regulations of the university”. (art.5/5)

DM 509/99

- **Lifetime of credits**

“General Academic Regulations of the University may provide for a form of periodic checks of the credits acquired , in order to evaluate whether the knowledge contents are obsolete or not” (art. 5/6)

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Curriculum structure

- Credits as building blocks of curricula

- Modularization

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Curriculum design: a possible approach

Classes of study programs - macro level

- Broad definition of professional profile and desired learning outcomes of the class of degree programs

- Indication of types of educational activities and subject areas leading to the desired learning outcomes

- Indication of percentages of total student workload to be devoted to each educational activity/subject area

Single study programs - meso level

- Translating percentages into credits

- Defining learning outcomes for each year of study

- Distributing the credits available for each type of educational activity/subject area over the years of study (60 credits each year)

- Allocating credits to single units/modules

Single units/courses - micro level

•Defining learning outcomes for each unit/module

•Developing syllabus/materials for each unit/module on the basis of credits allocated (student learning time available)

•Monitoring the correspondence between credits allocated and actual workload required by each unit/module

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Transparency of curriculum components

- Expected learning outcomes

- Credits as measure of student workload

- Subject matter

- Level of educational activity

- Type of educational activity

- Teaching/learning approaches