

European Association for Higher Education Advancement

www.eahea.org

EAHEA®
European Association for Higher Education Advancement

Who We Are

The European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA, formerly the European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation) is an independent, non-governmental international association for quality assurance, rating, certification and accreditation in education. Founded in 1997 and registered in Tallinn, Estonia, it works to raise quality assurance standards in educational organizations around the world, with a particular focus on Europe. Through its international network of experts, EAHEA accredits universities, colleges, schools, educational institutes, vocational institutions, distance learning centers, online courses and corporations, and certifies professionals, qualified individuals, instructors and students.

Regional accreditation bodies evaluate education providers within their own regions and grant them primary accreditation. As education becomes increasingly international, institutions also look to an independent body that can review them against internationally established standards. EAHEA's international accreditation serves as a secondary accreditation: it complements an institution's regional accreditation and shows students, partners and other stakeholders that the educational programs, policies and procedures of a university, institute or school meet international quality standards. It reflects an education provider's commitment to a level of quality that is in line with global standards.

The same international review is open to educational corporations of every size. For a corporation, EAHEA accreditation confirms that it operates in line with international principles and standards of quality, gives the business community a clear view of its structure, management and performance, and provides international recognition of its business and quality practices.

Mission & Vision

The mission of EAHEA is to support the advancement of higher education institutions through independent, transparent and enhancement-led external quality assurance. In line with Articles 1.4 and 1.5 of its Articles of Association, EAHEA promotes collaboration, professional development, the development of accreditation standards and evidence-based evaluation practices.

EAHEA works for educational quality through institutional and program-level accreditation, stakeholder engagement, capacity building and the exchange of knowledge. It carries out its mission with respect for academic freedom, diversity and integrity, and contributes to the improvement and international recognition of higher education systems.

EAHEA envisions a globally connected higher education landscape in which quality, innovation and inclusiveness form the foundation of academic excellence. Its vision is to be a trusted international partner in promoting a culture of continuous improvement and quality enhancement in higher education, in line with global best practice and ethical standards.

The full statement is available on the Mission & Vision page, and the related aims are set out on the Aims & Objectives page.

Meaning of the Logo & Emblem

The EAHEA logo shows a single-headed eagle, facing left, with its wings fully spread, its talons extended outward and stylized fringes beneath its wings. The eagle holds a flame in its beak, a symbol of constant vigilance and enlightenment. Throughout history the eagle has stood for strength, protection, independence and vision.

The left-facing head stands for respect for heritage and accumulated wisdom, while the outstretched wings signify readiness, authority and a broad protective reach. The outward-pointing talons reflect balance and the ability to uphold integrity in every direction. The fringes beneath the wings evoke tradition and cultural depth, and the flame represents the pursuit of knowledge and truth.

EAHEA adopts the eagle not only as a historic symbol but also as a reflection of its mission: to safeguard academic excellence, to promote independent and reliable accreditation, and to support institutions through visionary leadership and global standards. The logo is more than a visual identity. It expresses a commitment to the highest ideals of education, transparency and international trust.

The EAHEA logo and emblem, featuring the single-headed eagle, is a registered trademark of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). All rights of use and reproduction are reserved by EAHEA.

Area of Operation

Although its name includes “European”, EAHEA operates internationally and its area of operation is not limited to Europe. It accredits and serves institutions worldwide, and its global network of partner agencies and experts allows it to adapt its services to different educational contexts.

Transparency and Accountability

As a legally established not-for-profit association, EAHEA follows the principles of transparency and accountability. It publishes information about its governance structure, financial statements, accreditation procedures and decisions on this website, and it is subject to regular audits and reviews by independent bodies to ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards.

Financial Sustainability

EAHEA is a not-for-profit membership association and is sustained by the fees for its services. These fees allow the association to manage its finances responsibly and to carry out its work independently and without interruption. Further information is available on the Service Fees page.

Legal Structure & Mandate

The European Association for Higher Education Advancement MTÜ (EAHEA) is a non-profit association legally established and registered in Tallinn, Estonia, and operates under Estonian private law. According to Article 1.4 of its Articles of Association, EAHEA is mandated to foster collaboration and networking among higher education institutions, to promote best practice, and to support the development of accreditation and certification standards in the education sector.

EAHEA conducts external quality assurance activities, including institutional and program-level evaluations, through standard setting, peer review, consultation and the development of educational standards (Articles 1.4.3 and 1.4.4). As Article 1.5 specifies, EAHEA also collaborates with governmental and non-governmental

bodies, gives expert guidance to institutions, organizes research and events, and works both locally and globally to support the advancement of higher education.

This mandate is part of the founding statutes of EAHEA and is carried out autonomously and independently, in line with international quality assurance principles and in the interest of transparency, improvement and academic excellence.

Between 1997 and 2020, EAHEA concentrated on institutional and programmatic accreditation in higher education. From 2021, in response to the needs of the sector, it began to provide quality assurance, standard setting, rating, certification, training, events and consultancy alongside accreditation. Because its former name, European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation, referred to only one area of this work, the association was re-registered as the European Association for Higher Education Advancement by the Tartu County Court, Estonia, in March 2024. EAHEA continues its work under the new name, which covers all the fields it serves.

Registrations and Recognition

EAHEA is registered with, listed by and recognized by national and international bodies in Europe, America, Asia and Africa, and it is included in several global databases. Each entry below links to the certificate and to the public record of the issuing body, where it can be verified.

- Europe, Estonia Ministry of Justice: Certificate | Verification
- Europe, Estonia Tax and Customs Board: Certificate | Verification
- United Nations NGO Branch: Certificate | Verification
- United Nations Global Compact: Letter | More Info
- Union of International Associations: Certificate | Verification
- Research Organization Registry (ROR): Certificate | Verification
- Government of India, Ministry of Enterprises: Certificate | Verification
- Government of Delhi, Department of Labour: Certificate | Verification
- European Union Intellectual Property Office: Certificate | Verification
- European Union Funding and Tenders Portal: Certificate | Verification
- International Trade Mark Registration: Certificate | Verification

The main legal registration details of the European Association for Higher Education Advancement MTÜ (EAHEA) are:

- Estonia Ministry of Justice, Association (NGO) Registration Number is 80637958
- Estonia Tax and Customs Board, Value Added Tax (VAT) ID is EE102723104
- European Union Intellectual Property Office, Registration Number is 018607334
- European Union Funding and Tenders Portal, Participant Number is 875872171
- Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Organisation, Registration Number is E10376750
- Government of India - Ministry of Enterprises, Registration Number is WB-03-0046724
- Government of Delhi - Department of Labour, Registration Number is 2024003929

Legal Notice and Disclaimer: EAHEA grants accreditation to educational institutes, vocational institutions, distance learning centers, online courses and corporations, and certification to professionals, qualified individuals, instructors and students. EAHEA does not award titles or degrees to the students of an accredited institution and cannot authorize a diploma, employment, the opening of an office or similar matters. EAHEA

does not control or oversee the documents, certificates, diplomas, titles, degrees, rights and authorizations issued by an accredited institution; all rights and legal liabilities connected with them belong to the institution that carries out the transaction. EAHEA periodically reviews the educational quality of an institution and the up-to-date curriculum of a course or program, and reports to the institution concerned. EAHEA is a registered trademark in the European region and operates internationally as a non-governmental, private and independent accreditation, certification, quality assurance and rating association in the field of higher education. EAHEA has no direct relationship with the European Union, its Member States or its institutions, and does not operate as a sub-institution (or any other legal entity) of them. All directives and regulations on this website belong to EAHEA and were prepared by examining the higher education systems of developed countries. The written, visual and audio content of this website is not associated with the European Union or the institutions and organizations that operate under it, and does not express their views, opinions or decisions.

Mission & Vision

Mission

The mission of the European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA) is to support the advancement of higher education institutions through independent, transparent and enhancement-led external quality assurance. In line with Articles 1.4 and 1.5 of its Articles of Association, EAHEA promotes collaboration, professional development, the development of accreditation standards and evidence-based evaluation practices.

EAHEA works for educational quality through institutional and program-level accreditation, stakeholder engagement, capacity building and the exchange of knowledge. It carries out its mission with respect for academic freedom, diversity and integrity, and contributes to the improvement and international recognition of higher education systems.

Vision

EAHEA envisions a globally connected higher education landscape in which quality, innovation and inclusiveness form the foundation of academic excellence. Its vision is to be a trusted international partner in promoting a culture of continuous improvement and quality enhancement in higher education, in line with global best practice and ethical standards.

The aims that follow from this mission and vision are set out on the Aims & Objectives page, and the association is described in more detail on the Who We Are page.

Aims & Objectives

The aims and objectives of the European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA) are as follows:

- To foster collaboration and networking among higher education institutes and educational institutions across Europe.
- To promote the exchange of best practices in teaching, research, and administration within the European education sector.

- To support the development of institutive, program, and course accreditation and certification standards in the field of education.
- To promote the development and maintenance of educational and ethical standards using standard-setting, evaluation, and consultation processes.
- To facilitate professional development opportunities for educators and administrators in the field of education.
- To promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of education.

To meet the aims and objectives of the European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA) shall among other activities:

- Advocates for policies and initiatives that enhance the quality and accessibility of higher education in Europe.
- Supports innovation and experimentation in teaching and learning methodologies.
- Serves as a platform for sharing research findings and insights relevant to the advancement of higher education.
- Provides resources and guidance to assist educational institutions in achieving their strategic goals and objectives.
- Provides a major forum for communication and exchange among educational institutions, accrediting organizations, and certification programs.
- Collaborates with governmental and non-governmental organizations to address challenges facing the European education sector.
- Enhances the international reputation and competitiveness of European education through strategic partnerships and collaborations.
- Conducts research and publishes printed or digital works in the field of education, supports educational studies, and organizes/supports international events (seminars, webinars, panels, conferences, workshops, meetings, etc).
- Organizes distance (online) or classroom (face-to-face) courses and local or global events to support higher educational, academic, and vocational activities.
- Makes contact and develops cooperation with similar organizations in Europe and globally.
- Constantly works on meeting the objectives at the lowest possible cost and based on transparent fees.

Global Presence & Scope

Global Presence

EAHEA has regional chapters and a presence in several regions of the world, which support its international accreditation process.

The chapters work to establish and strengthen quality standards for traditional and non-traditional educational institutes and corporations in their regions. They draw on experts who know the dynamics of the regional education and business systems and have the knowledge needed to serve the fields concerned.

Each chapter organizes seminars, webinars, workshops, panels, conferences and expos that help EAHEA serve educational institutions and other stakeholders in its region.

Scope of Work

The European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA) is an independent, non-profit quality assurance organization that works internationally to support the development and enhancement of higher education systems. Its core area of work is external quality assurance, which includes institutional and program-level accreditation, quality audits, the certification of educational standards and academic recognition.

EAHEA's quality assurance processes follow a structured and transparent approach. They typically include a self-assessment by the institution, an external peer review, site visits (virtual or physical) and a final decision by an independent accreditation panel. The processes are based on internationally recognized quality assurance principles and place emphasis on improvement, transparency, fairness and the engagement of stakeholders.

In addition to its core quality assurance work, EAHEA carries out the complementary activities set out in its Articles of Association (Articles 1.4 and 1.5). These include organizing international conferences, workshops and webinars; supporting the professional development of academic staff and administrators; promoting best practice in teaching, research and governance; and publishing quality-related resources and research. EAHEA also cooperates with governmental and non-governmental bodies and provides advisory services on educational quality policies and frameworks.

Institutions That May Be Accredited

EAHEA provides institutional accreditation to organizations whose primary function is education, and to organizations that offer education as an identified institutional objective within their operations, such as in-service corporate training. Institutions that offer programs at locations other than their main headquarters may also be included, under specified conditions and controls. EAHEA can accredit education and training organizations and programs worldwide. Institutions that may be eligible for accreditation include:

- Universities and higher education institutions
- Educational, vocational and avocational institutions
- Public or private colleges and schools
- Distance learning centers and online courses
- Trade and professional associations, and their training programs
- Private career and business schools
- Corporate training departments
- Intensive language programs
- Religious organizations and ethical societies
- For-profit or non-profit agencies, associations and organizations
- Public affairs and cultural societies
- Social service, volunteer and personal development organizations

The conditions and steps of accreditation are described on the Accreditation Eligibility and Accreditation Process pages.

Services

EAHEA offers accreditation, certification, validation and membership services for institutions and individuals. All service fees follow the World Bank Country Income Classification, and the fees are listed on the Service Fees page of www.eahea.org.

Services for Institutions

- **Full Accreditation:** Institutional accreditation for universities, institutes, colleges, schools and corporations that use traditional education methods.
- **Online Accreditation:** Institutional accreditation for open universities, distance and lifelong learning centers and online courses.
- **Program Accreditation:** Accreditation of a degree program of more than 300 hours of study at a university, educational institute or business school.
- **Course Accreditation:** Accreditation of a course of less than 300 hours of study at an educational institute, vocational institution or online course platform.
- **Credit Certification:** Certification of the EAHEA credits of an accredited course, with its ECTS, CATS and USC credit equivalents.
- **Quality Certification:** Quality assurance certification for EAHEA members: accredited, Associate and Observer members.

Services for Individuals

- **Professional Certification:** Certification for business, IT, legal, engineering and other professionals, awarded after a review of the evidence.
- **Educator Certification:** Certification for academicians, school and ESL teachers and instructors, awarded after a review of the evidence.
- **Degree Validation:** A certificate that validates the degree of a graduate of an EAHEA accredited institution or of an institution with an equivalent accreditation, with USC, CATS and ECTS equivalents.
- **Academic Credits Certificate:** A certificate of the academic credits of a graduate, with USC, CATS and ECTS equivalents.
- **Academic Equivalency Statement:** A statement of the academic qualification equivalency for graduates of EAHEA accredited institutions or institutions with an equivalent accreditation.
- **Doctor of Excellence:** An honorary doctorate awarded after a detailed review to highly qualified professionals.

Membership

- **Associate Membership:** Institutional membership for universities, colleges, schools, training providers and other organizations in higher education.
- **Affiliate Membership:** Individual membership for academics, educators, administrators, professionals and students with an interest in higher education.
- **Observer Membership:** Organizational membership for associations, networks, companies and other organizations with an interest in higher education.

EAHEA Credit Systems

EAHEA Credit Systems are four independent evaluation metrics established by the European Association for Higher Education Advancement. Each one measures the total nominal workload of a program or a course at a level of education, from short courses and executive workshops to doctoral-level executive programs: MUC, PAC, ILC and EUC.

The EAHEA Credit Systems give independent, professional and executive education one clear, comparable way to state the workload and the level of a program. They are established for education providers whose programs fall outside the credit systems of state higher education systems, such as independent private business schools and universities, corporate academies, training providers, continuing education centers, online course platforms and the course creators who publish through them, and for the learners and employers who read their credentials. EAHEA authorizes the providers, sets one method of calculation and publishes the directories in which anyone can verify a provider.

Credit Values at a Glance

- **MUC – Modular Units of Competency:** High school, college and secondary level study, continuing education, short courses, online courses and certificates. One credit equals 10 to 15 hours of total nominal workload.
- **PAC – Professional Advancement Credits:** Professional certificates and associate and bachelor level study. One credit equals 20 to 25 hours of total nominal workload.
- **ILC – Institutional Learning Credits:** Licentiate, postgraduate and master's level study. One credit equals 25 to 30 hours of total nominal workload.
- **EUC – Executive Units of Competency:** Doctoral level study. One credit equals 30 to 35 hours of total nominal workload.

To work out the credits of a program, or the hours that a number of credits needs, use the EAHEA Credit Calculator.

Minimum Workload for Level Names

A provider may use a level name in the header or the title of a credential only when the program reaches the minimum total nominal workload shown. The minimum is stated in hours and does not depend on the conversion ratio that the provider has declared.

- **Associate-Level Diploma** (PAC): used as credential header; minimum workload 1,200 hours.
- **Bachelor-Level Diploma** (PAC): used as credential header; minimum workload 1,800 hours.
- **BBA Track** (PAC): used as program title; minimum workload 2,400 hours.
- **Master-Level Diploma** (ILC): used as credential header; minimum workload 1,200 hours.
- **MBA Track** (ILC): used as program title; minimum workload 1,500 hours.
- **Doctoral-Level Diploma** (EUC): used as credential header; minimum workload 1,800 hours.
- **DBA Track** (EUC): used as program title; minimum workload 2,700 hours.

The EAHEA Credit Calculator also gives the minimum hours of a level name and the credits it equals at each ratio.

Scope of Covered Programs

The EAHEA Credit Systems are designed for private, professional, commercial and lifelong learning pathways, and not for the degree programs of state higher education systems. They cover the following educational formats.

Modular and Short-Term Education (MUC)

- Intensive Executive Workshops, Masterclasses and Seminars of One Day or More
- Short Professional Certificate Courses
- Corporate Training Academies, Internal Professional Development Modules and Industry Training Badges
- Continuing Education Center (CEC) Short Courses and Specialized Skill Units
- Single Modular Units Embedded within Broader Professional Diplomas
- Synchronous & Asynchronous E-Learning Modules
- Online Courses and Course Series Published by Online Course Platforms and EdTech Providers, Including the Courses of Individual Course Creators on an Authorized Platform
- Modules of School Diplomas, Pre-Year Foundation Programs and Pre-University Vocational Preparation Tracks
- High School, Secondary School and College Level Courses
- Continuing Education Programs
- Professional Certificate Programs of 150 Hours or Less

Career and Undergraduate-Level Education (PAC)

- Professional Certificate Programs in Business Administration and Career Specializations (More Than 150 Hours)
- Associate Level Programs and Higher Vocational Diplomas
- Advanced Professional Diplomas and Intermediate Career Specialization Pathways
- Executive Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) Tracks and Other Bachelor Level Professional Programs
- Higher Vocational, Avocational & Applied Industry Training

Postgraduate and Executive Education (ILC)

- Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) and Specialized MBA Tracks
- Master's Level Programs, Including Non-Thesis Strategic Management Programs (with an Applied Management Capstone Project)
- Postgraduate Diplomas (PG Diploma / Level 7 Equivalent) and Advanced Management Certificates at Postgraduate Level (More Than 150 Hours)
- Licentiate Programs and Advanced Postgraduate Professional Industry Diplomas
- Advanced Executive Master's Diplomas in Specialized Industry Disciplines

Doctoral and Advanced Senior Research Education (EUC)

- Executive Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Tracks and Applied Research Tracks
- Executive Doctoral-Level Professional Diplomas, Including Doctoral-Level Organizational Strategy and Advanced Executive Research Qualifications
- Senior Leadership Research Fellowships and Executive Scholar Pathways
- Post-Master Executive Competency Specializations

The 150-Hour Rule: A program of 150 hours or less of total workload is credited in MUC at every level. PAC, ILC and EUC are used for programs of more than 150 hours.

Outside the Scope: The EAHEA Credit Systems are designed for private, professional, commercial and lifelong learning pathways. They are not used for the degree programs of state higher education systems, and they are not shown as credits of such a degree. They are not given for attendance alone, for work experience that is not an assessed learning activity, or for an event of fewer than 10 hours of total workload.

Who Uses the Credit Systems

Authorized Providers

Only a provider that EAHEA has authorized may calculate, award, state and display the credits: an institution accredited by EAHEA or an institution listed in the ECS Provider Directory. The credit systems are established for the following types of provider.

Two Routes. An institution accredited by EAHEA uses the credit systems under the terms of its accreditation. Any other institution can be approved by EAHEA for the credit systems alone and is listed in the ECS Provider Directory. This approval is an authorization to use the credits. It is not an accreditation of the institution or of its programs.

- **Business Schools and Higher Education Institutions:** Independent private higher education institutions, international business schools and executive research institutes that are accredited by EAHEA or listed in the ECS Provider Directory.
- **Corporate Training Academies and Enterprise Learning Centers:** Corporations, enterprise academies and corporate institutions that standardize the training of their employees, their leadership programs and their professional certification tracks with one common measure of workload.
- **Independent Professional Training Providers and Academies:** Commercial training institutes, vocational skill centers, IT boot camps, coaching academies and specialized industry certification bodies.
- **Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning Centers:** University-affiliated or independent continuing education centers (CEC) that deliver non-degree professional development courses and adult education modules.
- **Online Course Platforms and EdTech:** Online education providers, e-learning platforms and course marketplaces that deliver structured modular training, professional certificates and career tracks.
- **Individual Course Creators:** Instructors and independent creators who publish online courses through an authorized platform or institution. The platform or institution is the authorized provider, and it calculates, awards and states the credits.

Learners, Employers and Other Readers

The following read, compare and verify the credits. They need no authorization, because they do not award them.

- **Learners, Executives and Professionals:** Individuals who need the workload of a completed alternative, vocational or executive program to be measured by one method, shown in a standard form on a transcript, and verifiable.

- **Employers, Corporations and Human Resources Professionals:** Hiring managers, talent acquisition teams and HR departments that evaluate the workload and the level of a credential that a candidate presents.

The program decides, not the type of provider. Any authorized provider may use a credit system for the programs that fall within the scope of that system, and only for the credit systems that its authorization names. Learners and employers can verify a provider in the Accredited Institutions directory or in the ECS Provider Directory. A short guide explains how to read the credits for both groups: What EAHEA Credits Mean for Learners and Employers.

Where EAHEA Applies Them

The credits are used in Program Accreditation, Course Accreditation and Credit Certification. A program is measured in the credit system of its level, and short courses are measured in MUC. Credit Certification states the EAHEA credits of a certified course together with its ECTS, CATS and USC credit equivalents.

EAHEA credits are independent professional metrics. They are distinct from ECTS, CATS, U.S. credit hours and other credit systems of state higher education systems, and from the degrees of those systems.

Recognition, Acceptance and Equivalence

Validity and Recognition. The EAHEA Credit Systems are widely accepted. Institutions across the world recognize EAHEA as a whole: its accreditation and certification, its rules and regulations, its credit systems and its other standards. They accept MUC, PAC, ILC and EUC credits as valid together with the rest of the EAHEA framework. Recognition continues to grow as EAHEA's reach widens. EAHEA supports it at every step: on request, EAHEA acts as an intermediary between providers, learners and receiving institutions on questions of acceptance or equivalence, free of charge.

The receiving institution or organization decides whether to accept a credit, under its own rules, as it does with ECTS, CATS, U.S. credit hours and other credit systems of state higher education systems.

EAHEA's support covers, for example, confirming the authorization of the provider and the way in which the credits were calculated. The decision on acceptance stays with the receiving institution. To ask for this support, contact the EAHEA Secretariat.

A short guide explains how to read these credits: What EAHEA Credits Mean for Learners and Employers.

Trademark Notice and Authorized Use

MUC, PAC, ILC and EUC, together with the full names **Modular Units of Competency, Professional Advancement Credits, Institutional Learning Credits and Executive Units of Competency**, are trademarks of the European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA). The EAHEA Credit Systems, including their names, frameworks, calculation methods and notation, are the property of EAHEA.

The authority to award these credits belongs solely to EAHEA. An institution or organization may calculate, award, state or display these credits only if EAHEA has authorized it as a provider, either as an institution accredited by EAHEA and listed in the Accredited Institutions directory, or as an institution approved by EAHEA for the EAHEA Credit Systems alone and listed in the ECS Provider Directory (EAHEA Credit Systems Provider Directory), at that time. The authorization of an institution can be verified in the respective directory.

Any other use of these names or credits, including on certificates, transcripts, websites, advertising or other materials, requires the prior written permission of EAHEA and is otherwise not permitted. EAHEA may withdraw an authorization when its conditions are no longer met and reserves the right to take legal action against unauthorized use.



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