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WORKLOAD COMPARISON GUIDE

EAHEA Credit Systems

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Approval

Prepared by the EAHEA Quality Assurance Commission and approved by the Secretary General of the European Association for Higher Education Advancement (EAHEA).

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About this Guide

This guide is for **institutions that receive EAHEA credits** (for example when they decide on advanced standing), **employers** who read a transcript, **learners**, and the **authorized providers** that issue the credits. It shows how the workload and the level that EAHEA credits stand for compare with ECTS, CATS, U.S. credit hours and other credit systems of state higher education systems.

Every figure in this guide is indicative: The guide compares the *volume* of study and gives *reference* levels. It is not a recognition, an equivalence or a conversion, and it does not bind any institution. Chapter 5 explains what a receiving institution still has to decide.

1. Purpose and Status

1.1 Purpose

The EAHEA Credit Systems (MUC, PAC, ILC and EUC) measure the total nominal workload of a program. Institutions that know ECTS, CATS, U.S. credit hours and other credit systems of state higher education systems often ask what an EAHEA credit means in terms they already use. This guide answers that question with one method that anyone can repeat.

1.2 What this guide is not

- It does not make EAHEA credits equal to credits of ECTS, CATS, U.S. credit hours and other credit systems of state higher education systems. The EAHEA Credit Systems are independent of them.
- It does not convert credits between MUC, PAC, ILC and EUC. A credit belongs to the system in which it was awarded.
- It does not state that any institution must accept an EAHEA credit. The receiving institution or organization decides, under its own rules.
- It does not replace the rules of a country, an accrediting body or an institution.

2. How the Comparison Is Made

2.1 Principle

EAHEA credits are based on workload. A credit stands for a range of hours of Total Nominal Workload, and a program carries the credits that result from its total workload and from the conversion ratio that its provider has declared. Because the credits are measured in hours, they can be compared with any other credit system that is also measured in hours.

2.2 Reference values of the other systems

System	Hours of work behind one credit	Note
ECTS	25 to 30 hours (27.5 is used as the midpoint)	A full-time year of study is 60 ECTS, which commonly stands for 1,500 to 1,800 hours.
CATS (United Kingdom)	13.75 hours (derived from ECTS)	A full-time year of study is 120 CATS credits. One ECTS credit stands for two CATS credits.

System	Hours of work behind one credit	Note
U.S. credit hour (semester)	55 hours (derived from ECTS)	A full-time year of study is about 30 semester credit hours. One U.S. credit hour stands for two ECTS credits.

ECTS is the reference of this guide. The values for CATS and U.S. credit hours follow from the ratio that is used when credits are transferred between these systems: a full-time year is 60 ECTS, 120 CATS credits or 30 U.S. semester credit hours. The hours of work behind a credit differ between institutions, accreditors and countries, so this guide does not use a separate hour value for each system.

2.3 Formula

> **Workload in hours = EAHEA credits × the conversion ratio of the provider**
>
> **ECTS = workload in hours ÷ 27.5**
>
> **CATS credits = ECTS × 2**
>
> **U.S. credit hours = ECTS ÷ 2**

If the provider has not declared another ratio, the standard ratio (the midpoint of the range) applies: 12.5 hours per MUC, 22.5 per PAC, 27.5 per ILC and 32.5 per EUC. The result is shown with one decimal and is **not** rounded up to a whole credit.

3. Comparison Tables

3.1 Factors for one EAHEA credit

The table shows how many credits of the other system one EAHEA credit corresponds to at the standard ratio. The range in brackets covers every ratio from the lowest to the highest hours per credit of the EAHEA credit and of ECTS (25 to 30 hours), so it shows how much the result can vary. CATS and U.S. credit hours follow ECTS at the ratios of section 2.2.

EAHEA credit	Workload behind one credit	ECTS	CATS	U.S. credit hours
1 MUC	10 to 15 hours (standard 12.5)	0.45 (0.33 to 0.60)	0.91 (0.67 to 1.20)	0.23 (0.17 to 0.30)
1 PAC	20 to 25 hours (standard 22.5)	0.82 (0.67 to 1.00)	1.64 (1.33 to 2.00)	0.41 (0.33 to 0.50)
1 ILC	25 to 30 hours (standard 27.5)	1.00 (0.83 to 1.20)	2.00 (1.67 to 2.40)	0.50 (0.42 to 0.60)

EAHEA credit	Workload behind one credit	ECTS	CATS	U.S. credit hours
1 EUC	30 to 35 hours (standard 32.5)	1.18 (1.00 to 1.40)	2.36 (2.00 to 2.80)	0.59 (0.50 to 0.70)

3.2 Examples at the standard ratio

EAHEA credits	Hours	ECTS	CATS	U.S. credit hours
4 MUC	50	1.8	3.6	0.9
15 PAC	338	12.3	24.5	6.1
30 PAC	675	24.5	49.1	12.3
60 PAC	1,350	49.1	98.2	24.5
120 PAC	2,700	98.2	196.4	49.1
15 ILC	413	15	30	7.5
30 ILC	825	30	60	15
60 ILC	1,650	60	120	30
90 ILC	2,475	90	180	45
60 EUC	1,950	70.9	141.8	35.5
90 EUC	2,925	106.4	212.7	53.2
120 EUC	3,900	141.8	283.6	70.9

Reading the table: 60 ILC stand for 1,650 hours. That is about 60 ECTS, 120 CATS credits and 30 U.S. credit hours, which is the volume of a typical one-year master's program. 120 PAC stand for 2,700 hours, about 98 ECTS, 196 CATS credits and 49 U.S. credit hours. This is less than the volume of a typical bachelor's degree, because the PAC programs that EAHEA describes are professional and executive programs. The comparison shows volume, and programs of different volume are different programs.

3.3 Commonly cited volumes of state degrees (for reference only)

Level	ECTS	CATS (United Kingdom)	U.S. credit hours
Short cycle, associate, foundation degree	About 90 to 120	240	About 60

Level	ECTS	CATS (United Kingdom)	U.S. credit hours
Bachelor's degree	180 to 240	360	About 120
Master's degree	60 to 120 (90 or 120 is common)	180	30 to 36 (some programs 48 to 60)
Doctorate	No credit requirement	No credit requirement	Varies by program

These values differ between countries and institutions. They are given only so that a reader can place an EAHEA credit total next to a figure that is already familiar.

4. Level Comparison

4.1 Reference levels

EAHEA describes each credit system by what a learner **knows**, can **do** and is **responsible for**. These three dimensions follow the structure of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The levels below are for reference. They are not a classification of any program.

EAHEA credit system	EQF level (reference)	UK FHEQ level (reference)	U.S. degree level (reference)
MUC	Not fixed: the level of a module follows its learning outcomes	Not fixed	Not fixed
PAC	5 to 6	4 to 6	Associate to bachelor level
ILC	7	7	Master's (graduate) level
EUC	8	8	Doctoral level

4.2 How a program is placed at a level

A program is placed at a level by its **own learning outcomes**, not by its credit system alone. A receiving institution compares the learning outcomes in the program specification with the descriptors of the level that it has in mind, and decides.

4.3 Minimum workload for EAHEA level names

EAHEA allows a provider to use a level name in the header or the title of a credential only when the program reaches a minimum total nominal workload. The minimum follows the level that the name states, whatever the field of the program: a level name with a field of study, for example Bachelor-Level Diploma in Engineering,

follows the minimum of its level, and the BBA, MBA and DBA tracks keep their own minimums. The table shows these minimums and what they correspond to in ECTS at the standard ratio (27.5 hours per ECTS credit).

Level name	Credit system	Used as	Minimum workload	About ECTS
Associate-Level Diploma	PAC	Credential header	1,200 hours	44
Bachelor-Level Diploma	PAC	Credential header	1,800 hours	65
BBA Track	PAC	Program title	2,400 hours	87
Master-Level Diploma	ILC	Credential header	1,200 hours	44
MBA Track	ILC	Program title	1,500 hours	55
Doctoral-Level Diploma	EUC	Credential header	1,800 hours	65
DBA Track	EUC	Program title	2,700 hours	98

Some of these minimums are below the volume of a full-time state degree of the same level (a bachelor's degree is commonly 180 to 240 ECTS). The names show the level of the learning outcomes of a professional or executive program. They do not claim the volume of a full-time degree.

5. Guide for Receiving Institutions

5.1 Steps for a decision on advanced standing

1. **Verify the provider:** Look the provider up in the Accredited Institutions directory or in the ECS Provider Directory. Only a listed provider is authorized to award the credits.
2. **Check the certificate and the transcript supplement:** The certificate names the credit system (for example *60 ILC*). The transcript supplement states the conversion ratio and the grading scale and carries the EAHEA notice.
3. **Work out the volume:** Multiply the credits by the declared ratio and divide by 27.5 to get ECTS. CATS credits are twice the ECTS and U.S. credit hours are half of them (Chapter 2). Use one decimal.
4. **Compare the level and the outcomes:** Read the program specification and compare the learning outcomes with your own requirements (Chapter 4).
5. **Decide under your own rules:** Record the decision and its reasons.

Example: A learner holds 30 ILC from a provider whose declared ratio is 25 hours per ILC. The workload is 30 × 25 = 750 hours. This corresponds to 750 ÷ 27.5 = 27.3 ECTS, 54.5 CATS credits or 13.6 U.S. credit hours. The institution then compares the level and the outcomes and decides what the learner is credited with.

5.2 What EAHEA can do on request

On request, EAHEA acts as an intermediary between a provider or a learner and a receiving institution on questions of acceptance or equivalence. For example, EAHEA confirms the authorization of the provider and the way in which the credits were calculated. **This support is free of charge.** The decision on acceptance stays with the receiving institution. To ask for this support, contact the EAHEA Secretariat at eahea@eahea.org and name the provider and the program.

6. Notes for Employers and Learners

- Read the credit system and the credits together: *60 ILC* tells you the level and the volume.
- Use Chapter 3 to place the volume next to a familiar figure, and Chapter 4 to place the level.
- Verify the provider in the directories before you rely on a credential.
- A credential that carries EAHEA credits is a professional or executive qualification under the authority of the provider that issues it. It is not a state-recognized academic degree, and EAHEA does not award degrees.

7. Legal Notices

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 comparisons in this guide are indicative. They are made by EAHEA for information, they do not form a recognition or an equivalence under any law, and EAHEA accepts no responsibility for a decision that another institution or organization takes on their basis. EAHEA reviews the values at least once a year.