

Governmental Decree 200/2000 (Nov 29) on the introduction of a credit transfer system and national credit registration in higher education

As authorised in Article 124/D point b) of the amended 1993 LXXX Act (Act on Higher Education) for the sake of transferability and student mobility between training modules within and among institutions, the Government makes the following regulations on credit transfer in higher education:

General regulations concerning an institutional credit system and credit registration

Article 1

- (1) In accordance with the present decree (hereafter: Decree), the accomplishment of all study requirements prescribed for obtaining a degree or qualification in accredited school-based higher vocational training, undergraduate education, supplementary graduate education, professional further education, PhD or Master's programmes, and in all (full time, correspondence and evening) forms of training offered by state and state-accredited non-state (church, private, and foundation-run) higher education institutions shall be measured in credits.
- (2) The Government orders the development of national and institution-level credit registration in order to promote the registration of higher studies on a uniform basis, with the aim to increase student mobility within and among institutions, and enhance transferability between programmes of different levels. With reference to Article 10 of the Decree, the credit registration scheme is managed by the National Credit Office (hereafter NCO).
- (3) The amount of credits attached to a certain programme is based on a total of student work hours (estimated on the basis of international and national experience) which an average-level student is expected to need in order to accomplish their studies. The total of student work hours expressed in credits includes both contact hours and individual student work hours.
- (4) Within the national credit transfer system – in line with the principles of the European Credit Transfer System – one credit equals 30 student work hours. Within one academic year 60 credits on average are to be accomplished, while one semester of study requires 30 credits (one trimester 20 credits). The national credit registration system is for the administration of institutional credit systems transferred into a unified national system.
- (5) Credits are allocated to student work hours provided that the student fulfils the requirements set in the institutional regulations and is given at least the evaluation 'poor' (2) on accomplishing a course. The amount of credits obtainable for accomplishing a course does not depend on the quality of student performance.

Article 2

- (1) The higher education institution recognises the credits acquired by their students in a different institution on the basis of inter-institutional credit equivalence agreements, individual student contracts or legislation on credit equivalence. Two curricula shall be regarded as equivalent if they cover at least 75% of one another. The extent to which two curricula are similar is determined by an institution (faculty) level credit transfer committee. This equivalence results in the obligatory recognition of credits within and among institutions. The amount of credits that an institution gives for a course outside the host institution equals the amount that is allocated to the course(s) skipped, as set in the curriculum of the given programme of study, however, the originally obtained mark for the given course remains unchanged when credits are transferred. Appeal against the credit equivalence committee's decision may be submitted to the Rector's Office.
- (2) Credits may be allocated to a given accomplished study requirement only once within a programme, but this accomplished requirement may be recognised by (an)other programme(s).
- (3) On study levels prescribed in Article 84 Para (2) of the Higher Education Act, credits obtained on lower study levels and also fulfilling the requirements of higher level study shall be recognised. In doctoral

programmes those activities can be rewarded with credits which are set in the Doctoral Regulations of the institution.

Qualification requirements and the national credit transfer system

Article 3

- (1) On the basis of the provisions in Article 86 of the Act on Higher Education – and within the framework provided in Article 1 of the Decree –, the qualification requirements determine the minimum amount of credits to be obtained in a given programme for a degree or qualification, and the maximum amount of credits recognisable within this framework. In order to obtain a diploma in Hungarian higher education with regard to Articles 1 and 2 of the Decree:
 - a) a college degree requires the minimum amount of 180 credits,
 - b) a university degree requires the minimum amount of 240 credits.
- (2) The amount of credits to be accumulated for obtaining a diploma, as well as the amount of credits allocated to the thesis or diploma work shall be prescribed by the qualification requirements.
- (3) The maximum amount of 60 credits for one's studies accomplished in accredited school-based higher vocational training can be transferred to college level and university level education, regardless of the fact whether these were obtained earlier in secondary or tertiary student status.
- (4) In the case of the qualification requirements for teaching degrees prescribed in the Governmental Decree 111/1997 (June 27), beyond the professional knowledge a minimum amount of 40 credits (in the case of programmes with two majors: 50 credits) shall be obtained.
- (5) The amount of credits to be obtained in university-level two-major programmes and exceeding that prescribed in Article 3 Para (1) has to be regulated in the relevant qualification requirements.
- (6) In supplementary graduate training credits transferred on the basis of one's college-level studies shall be supplemented by further credits for obtaining a university-level qualification.
- (7) In professional further education a minimum amount of 60 credits should be obtained.
- (8) In PhD programmes 30 credits should be accomplished per semester.
- (9) In part-time higher education the total number of credits to be obtained equals that allocated to the full-time version of the given programme of study.

Article 4

- (1) The institution shall secure that its students may choose from courses suitable for accomplishing a number of credits which exceeds the total number of credits prescribed for the given programme with 20%.
- (2) The institution shall allow their students to exceed the total amount of credits prescribed for their studies by 10%. Students may choose these study units from the list of courses offered by other institutions, or other programmes within their institution. Credit accumulation by completing such study units shall be certified by the institution offering the course.
- (3) In credit-based education students may design their individual study plan for each semester provided that it is in line with the curriculum and the institutional regulations. These individual study plans may differ from the model study plan designed by the institution offering a system of covering study units which secures progress in students' studies at an average pace.
- (4) If a student accumulates the amount of credits prescribed in the qualification requirements of the given programme earlier than the total time of study also set in the qualification requirements, their diploma can be issued only on completion of a minimum period of study as prescribed in Article 85 of the Higher Education Act.
- (5) If a student starts a further programme, the total time of study can be reduced if the minimum amount of credits set in the qualification requirements of the given programme has been accumulated or transferred. At college level, the total time of study may be reduced with a maximum period of one year if the number of transferred credits is at least 60. At university level, the total time of study may be reduced with the maximum period of one year in case of at least 60 transferred credits and with one more year in case of 120 transferred credits.
- (6) If students study in parallel programmes, the completion of a study requirement may contribute to their credit accumulation in both programmes.

Article 5

- (1) If the qualification requirements of the different programmes consist of curricular units (hereafter: modules), it is to be determined how many credits the different modules represent.
- (2) If professionally justified and feasible, training within a programme or within a group of programmes may be built on an introductory module or modules which may be followed by different professional modules leading to different degrees or qualifications.

Regulations on the establishment of an institutional credit system

Article 6

- (1) Within the framework provided by the Decree and the qualification requirements, the institution allocates an amount of credits and a number of contact hours to each study unit (group of study units, module). This allocation of credits is included into the curriculum.
- (2) The institution shall design an Institution's Manual which shall include all regulations concerning the institution, the programmes offered, the curricula, credit accumulation, and credit transfer between different levels of study.
- (3) The Institution's Manual shall include a system of prerequisites, i.e. the system of which study units need to be first completed before taking a certain study unit. A certain study unit may have maximum 3 prerequisites (study units or modules). Certain study units may only be taken parallel with other study units.
- (4) In credit-based education student performance can be monitored with the help of the weighed average mark calculated for a semester, a longer period of study, or the total period of study (this latter: cumulative weighed average). The Institution's Manual shall include procedures concerning the evaluation student performance in the case of students with an individual study plan.
- (5) The Institution's Manual may set a cumulative average to be reached by students for being eligible to continue their studies or obtaining their diplomas.
- (6) The average amount of individual student work hours set for the total time of study shall not exceed: three times the amount of contact hours in the case of full-time programmes; five times the amount of contact hours in the case of evening courses; and ten times the amount of contact hours in the case of correspondence courses.

Article 7

- (1) The Senate of the institution prepares their credit-based Study and Exam Regulations also including the institutional regulations on credit accumulation, the Institution's Manual, and submits these documents to the Ministry of Education (hereafter: the Ministry). For evaluation purposes, the Ministry hands over these documents to NCC. If any discrepancy between the contents of the documents and the Decree, or the qualification requirements is detected; or if the institution does not meet the deadlines set in the Decree, the Council may initiate ministerial legal supervision in accordance with Article 74 Para (1) and Article 74/A of the Higher Education Act.
- (2) For registration purposes, the Ministry hands over the institution's Study and Exam Regulations and the Institution's Manual to NCO.
- (3) In the course of the institutional accreditation process, the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (hereafter: HAC) evaluates the existing conditions for quality education secured on the basis of the institutional credit system.
- (4) The institution shall inform NCO about the changes that have occurred in the institution's credit-related documents and regulations before 15 July each year.

Article 8

- (1) The institution's credit-based Study and Exam Regulations shall regulate:
 - a) the minimum amount of credits to be obtained in a certain study period (e.g. one academic year);
 - b) the detailed conditions of obtaining institutional credits;
 - c) the maximum amount of credits (beyond the amount of credits prescribed for a degree or qualification) obtainable in the institution within the legal framework provided by the Decree;
 - d) the conditions of transferring credits obtained at other levels of study, programmes or institutions;
 - e) the institutional conditions of enrolling for a semester;
 - f) the institutional regulations on credit accumulation;
 - g) how many times a student may take a certain study unit, how many times they may have their performance evaluated in a semester, on what conditions may they continue their studies, what is the maximum number of semester they may enrol in the course of their studies.
- (2) Parallel to the introduction of the institutional credit system, the following shall be organised:
 - a) administration of the number of contact hours and the number of credits obtained;
 - b) study counselling for students in preparing their individual study plans;
 - c) information to students, the operational structure of information flow;
- (3) Parallel to the operation of the institutional credit system, the following information shall be published via traditional or electronic information carriers before enrolment:
 - a) the structure of the academic year;
 - b) information on the institutional student advisors;
 - c) regulations concerning the submission of individual study plans;
 - d) description of academic services and devices (libraries, studios, laboratories, other special services and devices);
 - e) description of departments and study units;
 - f) a list of obtainable qualifications and degrees;
 - g) curriculum;
 - h) list of study units (code, level of study, prerequisites, teacher, period of time, teaching/learning method, way of evaluation, number of classes and credits);
 - i) information on credit transfer concerning credits obtained at other levels of study or programmes;
 - j) credit equivalence agreements with other institutions.

Regulations and documents concerning the institutional credit system shall be amended due to changes before 15 July each year and made available for students via traditional or electronic information carriers before enrolment.

The institutions of national credit counselling and credit registration

Article 9

- (1) The Minister appoints an advisory board (NCC) consisting of higher education experts and researchers (max. 15 members) for enhancing the introduction of institutional credit systems, providing credit-related information and counselling to the institutions. One student delegate of the National Conference of Student Councils participates in the work of NCC with the right for discussion.
- (2) NCC takes part in the preparatory work of harmonising the qualification requirements with the national credit system, expresses their opinion on the Institution's Manuals as well as those provisions of the Study and Exam Regulations which concern credit-based education, furthermore, in co-operation with the Hungarian Equivalence and Information Centre, the Council overviews and analyses the Hungarian and the foreign credit systems, and prepares recommendations for the Hungarian higher education institutions and decision-makers.
- (3) On consultation with the higher education bodies and considering a proportional representation of professional fields and levels of study, the Minister appoints the president and members of NCC for three years. The appointment of the NCC president and the members can be prolonged for another three years.
- (4) NCC membership expires if:
 - a) the appointment expires;
 - b) the member resigns;
 - c) the appointment is withdrawn;
 - d) the member passes away.
- (5) On the recommendation of the NCC president, the Minister withdraws the appointment of the member who – due to his own fault – has not fulfilled their duties as a member for more than three months.
- (6) The operational regulations of NCC are defined by the Council itself.

- (7) NCC members are offered a honorarium for their professional services, which is to be secured within the budget of NCO. The amount of the honorarium is defined by the Minister on an annual basis.

Article 9

- (1) The Minister establishes NCO, whose task shall be to register the documents of the institutional credit systems and to perform services concerning the development of these systems.
- (2) NCC shall place all information available at the disposal of NCO for completing their tasks.
- (3) NCO director is appointed by the Minister on considering the recommendations of the presidents of the Higher Education Council (hereafter: HESC), HAC and the higher education conferences. The Minister also exercises the employer's rights over the NCO director. The director and the employees are civil servants. The employer's rights over the NCO employees are exercised by the director.
- (4) The duties of NCO are:
 - a) to operate a national credit-database, which administers the main credit-related documents of national and foreign higher education institutions;
 - b) in co-operation with the NCC president, to keep regular contact with the Ministry, HESC, and HAC for the proper operation and harmonisation of the institutional credit systems;
 - c) to provide the governmental bodies controlling higher education, the Ministry, and the higher education institutions with information about the operation of the national credit transfer system;
 - d) to issue credit-related professional publications, information brochures and guides, and provide expert's reports on request.
- (5) Information accumulated in NCO is available to the governmental and higher education bodies, the Hungarian higher education institutions as well as their students free of charge.
- (6) The organisational and operational regulations of NCO shall be endorsed by the Minister.

Article 10

Definitions

- a) *introductory module*: all study units and the knowledge indispensable for the given programme of study, on which further (professional) modules (primarily modules of programmes within the given group of studies) can build;
- b) *ECTS (European Credit Transfer System)*: fosters student mobility among member higher education institutions in Europe;
- c) *individual student work hours*: that part of individual student workload - expressed in hours - which is conducted by the student individually outside classes (contact hours) – including the time spent with studying in the exam periods – in order to acquire the given course material and meet the given requirements for obtaining credits;
- d) *individual study plan*: the institutional Study and Exam Regulations as well as the curricular regulations allow students to design their own work plan (i.e. choose from the study units offered) for each study period with regard to the institutional regulations and the relevant curricular requirements;
- e) *total student work hours*: the time (in hours) needed for an average-level student (with average talent and performance) to fulfil the requirements of a study unit successfully (under average circumstances), i.e. the total number of contact hours and the individual student work hours;
- f) *institution*: university, college as listed in Appendix 1 of Act 80/1993;
- g) *credit*: a unit of measurement designed on the basis of student work hours, a relative MÉRŐSZÁM related to the total student work hours; in line with international conventions, 30 work hours are allocated to 1 credit;
- h) *credit accumulation*: Students accumulate credits throughout their studies. These credits are accumulative, i. e. newly obtained credits are added to the earlier ones as long as the student acquires the amount of credits prescribed for a degree or qualification;
- i) *credit allocation*: the allocation of credits to an average amount of student work hours needed for fulfilling study requirements set in the curricula;
- j) *module*: a curricular unit including study units which thematically or professionally are related to each other; modules can be interchangeable or serve as foundations for other modules;

- k) *class (contact hour)*: the period of time when students participate in activities requiring the work of teaching staff
- l) *study unit (subject, competence-module)*: the basic unit in the curricular structure of a given programme, to which prerequisites and further requirements can be attached;
- m) *model study plan*: the grouping of study units prescribed in the curriculum into study periods in a way so that students can progress in their studies at an average pace by obeying the system of prerequisites, obtaining 30 (± 3) credits per semester, and fulfilling the given study requirements by the end of each study period;
- n) *study period (academic year, semester, trimester, etc)*: the period for which students enrol, select study units (following the model study plan, or disregarding it but still obeying the system of prerequisites), and fulfil the given study requirements by the end of the study period.

Transitional and closing regulations

Article 11

- (1) This Decree shall enter into force on the 8th day following its publication.
- (2) The qualification requirements newly developed or re-designed, i.e. harmonised with credit-based education on the basis of the provisions of Article 3 shall be published by 31 December 2001.
- (3) All higher education institutions shall prepare drafts of the institutional regulations and their enclosures as prescribed in Articles 8 and 9 as well as drafts of the credit-based curricula before 1 November 2001. These drafts shall be overviewed by the National Credit Council. Should these drafts – on the basis of the comments provided by NCC and the ministerial decision based on Article 74/A of the Higher Education Act – need further development, they shall be finalised and published by 31 March 2002.
- (4) All higher education institutions shall introduce a credit system in their undergraduate education (except for theology programmes), professional further education, and accredited school-based higher vocational training as of 1 September 2001. In the case of PhD and Master's programmes, the deadline is 1 September 2004.
- (5) On the Decree's taking effect, the Governmental Decree 90/1998 (May 8) on the Introduction of a Credit Transfer System and Uniform Registration of Institutional Credit Systems shall become void.

Viktor Orbán
Prime Minister