

ECTS Credit Allocation Methodology

Western Serbia Academy of Applied Studies with the seat at Užice, Trg Svetog Save 34, offers two levels of study programmes at its departments in the City of Užice and in the City of Valjevo.

The first level includes undergraduate applied studies, lasting 3 years and granting 180 ECTS credits, whereas the second level includes master's applied studies, lasting 2 years and granting 120 ECTS credits upon their completion.

In compliance with the Bologna Process, Western Serbia Academy of Applied Studies uses the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, a student-centred system based on the student workload required to achieve the 'threshold knowledge', i.e. the expected learning outcomes, and aimed at increasing their transparency and validation.

Each course offered by the Academy is allocated a certain number of ECTS credits in compliance with the ECTS Users' Guide, issued by the European Commission, upon a detailed analysis of the student workload needed to complete all learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements, and individual study required to achieve the defined learning outcomes. A student is expected to work 40 hours a week, 20 hours of which are spent in various learning activities, and the remaining 20 hours devoted to individual study. A total of 60 ECTS credits are allocated to the learning outcomes and associated workload of a full-time academic year. The number of ECTS credits per semester is 30.

Given that one semester at most HEIs in Serbia lasts 15 weeks, 600 hours are needed to earn 30 ECTS credits, which means that 1 ECTS credit equals 20 hours of the student workload. However, taking into account the activities relating to practical work and time spent for the preparation of examinations during examination periods, the total workload of a student ranges between 1,500 and 1,800 hours per academic year. This means that 1 ECTS credit corresponds to 25-30 hours of work.

The total student workload per course represents the sum of the time spent on different learning activities and the time spent on individual study. The latter is determined based on students' statements at the end of an academic year. It is due to the use of such a concept that courses within the same study programme and with the same number of classes are allocated different number of ECTS credits, or even that courses with a greater number of classes are allocated fewer ECTS credits than those with a lower number of classes.

The Academy uses the following methodology to allocate ECTS credits to different course elements:

1. Class load: the number of classes per week (lectures + practical classes) x 15
2. Preparation for the exam: the number of classes per week (lectures and practical classes) x 15 x 1.5
3. Pre-exam/preliminary tests: number of pre-exam tests x 2 classes
4. Time needed for the preparation of graphic assignments: the number of graphic assignments x 15 classes
5. Time needed for the preparation of seminar papers: the number of seminar papers x 15 classes
6. Time needed to do the test: the number of tests x 1 class
7. Time needed to perform homework assignments: number of assignments x 10 classes
8. The duration of the oral or written exam: 4 classes

For example: A course with a workload of 2 lectures + 2 practical classes, 1 graphic work, 1 seminar paper and oral exam is assigned ECTS credits in the following manner:

ECTS credits: $(2+2) \times 15 + (2+2) \times 15 \times 1.5 + 15 + 1 \times 15 + 4 = 60 + 90 + 15 + 15 + 4 = 184 : 30 = 6.13 = 6$ ECTS credits

* ECTS credits are expressed as whole numbers. Decimals are rounded in the following way: if the digit in the tenths' place is lower than 5, the number is rounded down, and if it is higher than 5, the number is rounded up.

We also have a precise methodology developed for practical classes, as well as for practical placement of our students enrolled in master's programmes:

1) Practical classes

- Practical work: Number of practical classes x 15 classes
(e.g. Number of practical classes $0 + 4 = 4 \times 15 = 60$ classes)
 - Preparation – keeping a record of professional practice: 1 class per week x 15 weeks = 15 classes
 - Exam duration: 4 classes
- Total: 79 classes: $30 = 3$ ECTS credits

2) Practical placement of students enrolled in master's degree studies

- Practical placement: 8 classes of practical placement per week x 15 weeks = 120 classes
 - Checking students' records of professional practice = 2 classes a day x 15 weeks = 30 classes
- Total: 154 classes: $30 = 5$ ECTS credits
- Practical placement within master's degree programmes is assessed using descriptive grades – 'passed' or 'failed'

3) Final thesis

- Research work including the preparation for the research: 6 classes x 37 days ≈ 220 classes
 - Exam duration/thesis defense = 4 classes
- Total: $224 : 30 = 7$ ECTS credits

4) Master's thesis

- Research work including the preparation for the research: 6 classes x 40 days = 240 classes
 - Exam duration/thesis defense = 4 classes
- Total: $240 : 30 = 8$ ECTS credits

*** ECTS credits are expressed as whole numbers. Decimals are rounded in the following way: if the digit in the tenths' place is lower than 5, the number is rounded down, and if it is higher than 5, the number is rounded up.

Knowledge evaluation

The success of a student in mastering a course is continuously evaluated and expressed in points. It depends on pre-examination activities and the exam. Students earn a certain number of points for each activity (active participation during lectures/practical classes, pre-exam tests, seminar papers, practical placement, etc.).

The maximum number of points students can earn per course is 100 points. The minimum number of points to be earned through the completion of pre-exam obligations is 30, whereas the maximum is 70 points.

Students' success in an exam is evaluated using grades from 5 (failed) to 10 (excellent).

Grading scale

Grades		Points
10 (ten)	excellent	91-100
9 (nine)	exceptionally good	81-90
8 (eight)	very good	71-80
7 (seven)	good	61-70
6 (six)	sufficient	51-60
5 (five)	insufficient	failed