

Bologna Process – key points

- The Bologna Process calls for the development of a “European Higher Education Area” by 2010.
- The overall aim of the Bologna Process, through its ten “Action Lines”¹, is greater compatibility and comparability of national systems of higher education.
- 46 governments, including UK, are committed to promoting it, but it is not a legally-binding agreement. In the UK, it is for individual HEIs to determine their own responses.
- The latest Ministerial Conference (Leuven, April 2009²) looked for increased momentum and commitment beyond 2010. Its communiqué emphasized *inter alia* the importance of widening participation, lifelong learning, employability and mobility, setting a target of 20% student mobility by 2020.
- The Scotland and England/Wales/Northern Ireland have successfully self-certified their qualifications frameworks as compatible with the EHEA Qualifications Framework.
- The European Commission “owns” the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which it developed in the context of the Erasmus mobility programme; it has become the standard credit system for the EHEA.
- The Commission published an updated ECTS Users Guide in 2009³, following which the UK HE Europe Unit issued guidance on the relationship between UK arrangements for academic credit and the ECTS⁴. This includes guidance on how to relate UK credits to the ECTS. It advises that “*UK institutions need to be aware of the basic elements of ECTS and familiar with the Users’ Guide, particularly in discussion /meetings with colleagues and partner HEIs which have adopted ECTS. It should be stressed that the Users’ Guide is exactly that, a guide, and should be respected as such, as is evident as the guide oscillates between prescription, advice and recommendations*”.
- All UK HEIs are encouraged to provide Diploma Supplements to all successful students⁵. A number also assign ECTS credits to their courses.

¹ http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/bologna_process/10_bologna_process_action_lines.cfm

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<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/675&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/ects/guide_en.pdf

⁴ http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europe_unit2/resources/E-09-06_ECTS_Users'Guide.pdf

⁵ <http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/resources/GuideDS.pdf>