



Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
Education, Science
and Research



Qualifications Frameworks for trust, transparency and diversity (**QUATRA – TPG A**)

The recommendation on short-cycle qualifications in HE

Academic Information Centre



EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area



Bologna Thematic Peer Group B meeting,
01.02.2024



Co-funded by
the European Union

Working Group on Short-Cycle Higher Education

(chaired by Academic Information Centre, Latvia)

Bulgaria, Latvia, Azerbaijan, Belgium Flanders (4 from 33)

- Fiche on short-cycle among the working group members
- Survey on short-cycle among the working group members
- Draft recommendation

Structure of the recommendation

1. Main conclusions from the survey of TPG A member countries
2. General characterisation of short-cycle qualifications in higher education
 - 1) The purpose of SCQ in higher education
 - 2) The features of SCQ in higher education
3. Recognition of short-cycle qualifications in higher education
4. Possibilities to refer SCQ in various national higher education systems to the principles of Paris Communiqué

The Paris Communiqué, Appendix III

(adopted on 25.05.2018)

Learning outcomes

ECTS credits

Qualifications that signify completion of the higher education short-cycle are awarded to students who:

Typically include **90-120 ECTS credits**

- have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that **builds upon general secondary education** and is typically at a level supported by advanced textbooks; such knowledge provides an underpinning for a field of work or vocation, personal development, and further studies to complete the first cycle
- can apply their knowledge and understanding in **occupational contexts**;
- have the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems
- can communicate about their understanding, skills and activities, with peers, supervisors and clients
- have the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy

The 7 elements to be considered 1

1. Access to short-cycle studies. Paris Communiqué (25.05.2018) states that the SCQ “builds upon general secondary education”, need for adequate admission requirements,
2. Duration and/or volume of study programmes (e.g., ECTS credits)
Countries, introducing or developing the SCQ should follow the Paris Communiqué suggestions that the SCQ include 90-120 ECTS credits
3. Access to further studies (i.e., existing bridges to Bachelor’s studies);
countries should ensure strong pathways to further higher education studies
4. QF level of SCQ should correspond to EQF level 5 or QF-EHEA short-cycle to ensure their comparability and international recognition

The 7 elements to be considered 2

5. Quality assurance according to the principles of ESG
6. Differentiation between short-cycle qualifications and micro-credentials
7. Recognition of the short-cycle qualifications (internal and international).
The countries should follow the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary documents providing fair recognition of short-cycle qualifications

From discussions in the National Correspondents' meeting on 8.09.2023

From descriptor

«builds upon general secondary education»

change to

«build upon further education»



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