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## PARIS COMMUNIQUÉ

Paris, May 25<sup>th</sup> 2018

Meeting in Paris on 24 and 25 May 2018, twenty years after the Sorbonne Declaration was signed, we, the Ministers responsible for higher education, wish not only to celebrate the progress made in building the European Higher Education Area over the past two decades, but also to make strong and ambitious commitments for its further development.

We are proud of what the Bologna Process has achieved. We have built something unique: a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in which goals and policies are agreed upon at European level, and then implemented in national education systems and higher education institutions. This is an area where governments, higher education institutions and stakeholders are shaping the landscape of higher education together; that demonstrates what a joint effort and continuous dialogue among governments and the higher education sector can attain. Through the EHEA, we have paved the way for large-scale student mobility and improved not only the comparability and transparency of our higher education systems, but also increased their quality and attractiveness. The EHEA has promoted mutual understanding and trust, and has enhanced cooperation among our higher education systems.

Academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education form the backbone of the EHEA. Having seen these fundamental values challenged in recent years in some of our countries, we strongly commit to promoting and protecting them in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation.

Since the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations, the EHEA higher education systems as well as institutions have undergone major reforms. At a moment when Europe is facing important societal challenges – ranging from unemployment and social inequality to migration-related issues and a rise in political polarisation, radicalisation and violent extremism – higher education can and must play a decisive role in providing solutions to these issues. It must also play a key role in establishing the facts on the basis of which public debates are conducted and decisions made. By providing students and other learners with opportunities for lifelong personal development, higher education enhances their prospects of employment and stimulates them to be active citizens in democratic societies.

We therefore commit to developing policies that encourage and support higher education institutions to fulfil their social responsibility and contribute to a more cohesive and inclusive society through enhancing intercultural understanding, civic engagement and ethical awareness, as well as ensuring equitable access to higher education.

### ***Progress in implementing agreed reforms***

As the 2018 Bologna Process Implementation Report shows, progress has been made while implementation remains uneven, both between policy areas and between countries.

Quality assurance is key in developing mutual trust as well as increasing mobility and fair recognition of qualifications and study periods throughout the EHEA. We therefore recognise

the progress made in implementing the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) into national and institutional practice in most countries, and we commit to removing the remaining obstacles to their implementation in national legislations and regulations. In order to encourage the development of more joint programmes and joint degrees, we will also enable and promote the use of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes” in our higher education systems. We welcome and will promote the development of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR).

In order to further develop mobility and recognition across the EHEA, we will work to ensure that comparable higher education qualifications obtained in one EHEA country are automatically recognised on the same basis in the others, for the purpose of accessing further studies and the labour market. To this end we renew our commitment to ensure full implementation of ECTS, following the guidelines laid down in the 2015 ECTS Users’ guide.

We will work to implement the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention and its Recommendations, in particular on the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation. We also urge the adoption of transparent procedures for the recognition of qualifications, prior learning and study periods, supported by interoperable digital solutions.

We approve the proposed revised Diploma Supplement and commit to working for its adoption in identical versions within the respective frameworks of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and Europass. To further promote student and graduate mobility, we welcome and support initiatives such as the digitalisation of the Diploma Supplement, and commit to support higher education institutions to pursue further student data exchange in a secure, machine-readable and interoperable format, in line with data protection legislation. We also note with interest the current “European student card” EU pilot project, which could potentially be broadened to support and facilitate student mobility throughout the entire EHEA.

In many of our systems, ECTS-based short cycle qualifications play an increasingly important role in preparing students for employment and further studies as well in improving social cohesion by facilitating access for many who would otherwise not have considered higher education. We are therefore including short-cycle qualifications as a stand-alone qualification within the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA (QF-EHEA). Each country can decide whether and how to integrate short cycle qualifications within its own national framework.

### ***Unlocking the full potential of the EHEA: taking implementation forward***

We acknowledge that the reforms driven by the Bologna Process require both successful implementation and full ownership of all of our agreed goals and commitments throughout the EHEA. Fulfilling our commitments depends on the concerted efforts of national policy-makers, public authorities, institutions, staff, students and other stakeholders as well as coordination at EHEA level.

In order to unlock the full potential of the EHEA and ensure the implementation of Bologna key commitments, we are adopting a structured peer support approach based on solidarity, cooperation and mutual learning. In 2018-2020, thematic peer groups will focus on three key commitments crucial to reinforcing and supporting quality and cooperation inside the EHEA:

- a three-cycle system compatible with the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA and first and second cycle degrees scaled by ECTS
- compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention,
- and quality assurance in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

We mandate the Bologna follow-up group (BFUG) to implement, coordinate and monitor the adopted peer support approach, and to do so with the aid of the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group established to that end. It will analyse the first round of peer support and through the BFUG suggest the direction that the activity should take in the future, and report back to us at our next EHEA Ministerial conference in 2020.

We encourage the use of the Erasmus+ programme for increasing cooperation, beyond mobility, and achieving progress on the key commitments.

Belarus joined the EHEA in 2015 on the basis of an agreed roadmap. We acknowledge that some first reforms have been initiated, but also that substantial challenges remain. We welcome Belarus' commitment to work with and be supported by partners in the implementation of the proposed strategy for 2018-2020.

### ***Innovation in Learning and Teaching***

For the past 20 years, the core mission of the Bologna Process and the main objective of structural reforms have been to ensure and enhance the quality and relevance of learning and teaching. Lifelong learning is increasingly important to our societies and economies as well as to our citizens' wellbeing. Now it is time to add cooperation in innovative learning and teaching practices as another hallmark of the EHEA. We therefore commit to developing new and inclusive approaches for continuous enhancement of learning and teaching across the EHEA, and can succeed only if we do so in close collaboration with the European higher education community, in full respect of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

The success of the European Learning and Teaching Forum launched by the European University Association last year demonstrates the value and potential of collaboration in learning and teaching, with tangible benefits for higher education institutions, staff and students. Therefore, in addition to measures at national level, we will develop joint European initiatives to support and stimulate a wide range of innovative learning and teaching practices, building on existing good practice in our countries and beyond.

This will encompass the further development and full implementation of student-centred learning and open education in the context of lifelong learning. Study programmes that provide diverse learning methods and flexible learning can foster social mobility and continuous professional development whilst enabling learners to access and complete higher education at any stage of their lives.

We will support higher education institutions to develop and enhance their strategies for learning and teaching. We also encourage them to provide inter-disciplinary programmes as well as to combine academic and work-based learning. Students should encounter research or activities linked to research and innovation at all levels of higher education to develop the critical and creative mind-sets which will enable them to find novel solutions to emerging challenges. In this regard, we commit to improving synergies between education, research and innovation.

Digitalisation plays a role in all areas of society and we recognise its potential to transform how higher education is delivered and how people learn at different stages of their lives. We call on our higher education institutions to prepare their students and support their teachers to act creatively in a digitalised environment. We will enable our education systems to make better use of digital and blended education, with appropriate quality assurance, in order to enhance lifelong and flexible learning, foster digital skills and competences, improve data analysis, educational research and foresight, and remove regulatory obstacles to the provision of open and digital education. We call on the BFUG to take the issue of digitalisation forward in the next working period.

As high quality teaching is essential in fostering high quality education, academic career progression should be built on successful research and quality teaching. It should also take due account of the broader contribution to society.

We will promote and support institutional, national and European initiatives for pedagogical training, continuous professional development of higher education teachers and explore ways for better recognition of high quality and innovative teaching in their career.

### ***Beyond 2020: a more ambitious EHEA***

The EHEA has proved its role as a unique framework for higher education co-operation in Europe. To develop the EHEA further, we will intensify cross-disciplinary and cross-border cooperation as well as develop an inclusive and innovative approach to learning and teaching. We call on the BFUG to submit proposals in time for our 2020 meeting in order to enable higher education to fully play its role in meeting the challenges faced by our societies.

We will foster and extend integrated transnational cooperation in higher education, research and innovation, for increased mobility of staff, students and researchers, and for more joint study programmes throughout the whole EHEA. We take note with interest of the recent EU initiative on 'European Universities' and we will encourage all our higher education institutions to work in such new settings. We call on the BFUG to establish interaction with the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) by 2020 in order to develop synergies between the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA).

We commit to developing the role of higher education in securing a sustainable future for our planet and our societies and to finding ways in which we, as EHEA Ministers, can contribute to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at global, European and national levels.

As a follow-up to the Bologna Policy Forum, we mandate the BFUG to enter into a global policy dialogue to improve regular cooperation with other regions and international organisations. This dialogue should focus on promoting mutual learning and joint initiatives on issues of common interest, such as social inclusion and the wider role of higher education. We welcome the work on the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications.

We recognise that further effort is required to strengthen the social dimension of higher education. In order to meet our commitment that the student body entering and graduating from European higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations, we will improve access and completion by under-represented and vulnerable groups. Therefore, we mandate the BFUG to take this issue forward by the next EHEA Ministerial conference.

### **Preparing the 2020 EHEA Ministerial conference**

For our 2020 conference, we mandate the BFUG to develop a Bologna Process Implementation Report assessing the main developments in the EHEA since the Bologna Process began, including to what extent we have fulfilled the mobility target agreed in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve in 2009.

We also ask the BFUG to submit proposals for the main priorities for the next decade, in close cooperation with higher education institutions, staff and students, and for the governance of the EHEA.

We gratefully accept the offer by Italy to host the next Ministerial conference of the EHEA and the Bologna Policy Forum in 2020.

## **Appendices**

### ***Measures adopted:***

- Structured peer support approach for the implementation of the three Bologna key commitments
- Belarus strategy for 2018-2020
- Short cycle qualifications as a stand-alone qualification level within the overarching Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)
- Revised Diploma Supplement, with a recommendation for its adoption in identical form in the respective frameworks of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and Europass



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## Appendix I: Structured peer-based support for the implementation of the Bologna key commitments

### SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY BOLOGNA COMMITMENTS

#### *Proposed support for the implementation of key Bologna commitments*

Support for the implementation of key Bologna commitments takes place through a programme with dedicated peer groups, which aim to improve the implementation of specific key commitments of the Bologna Process. It is based on the established reporting mechanisms of the Bologna Process and the principles of collaboration, equality, mutual learning, peer support and peer-counselling. Its main purpose is to improve full and effective implementation of key Bologna commitments throughout the EHEA.

The three key commitments BFUG has identified as the focus for further work in the period 2018-2020 are:

- A Three-Cycle System compatible with the QF-EHEA and first and second cycle degrees scaled by ECTS: Programmes are structured according to the three cycle-system of the Bologna model and scaled by the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Qualifications achieved in each cycle are defined in a National Qualification Framework (NQF) which is compatible with the Qualification Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA).
- Compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC): Cross-border recognition practices are in compliance with the Lisbon Recognition convention, including promoting through the national information centres or otherwise, the use of the UNESCO/Council of Europe Diploma Supplement or any other comparable document by the higher education institutions of the Parties
- Quality Assurance in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG): Institutions granting degrees assure the quality of their programmes leading to degrees within the three-cycle system following the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015). External quality assurance (be it at programme or institutional level) is performed by Agencies that have demonstrably complied with the standards and guidelines stipulated in the current ESG. This is best ensured where only those agencies registered on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) are allowed to operate in the country.

The proposal follows the Bologna philosophy of peer- and process review which fits well with the collegiate and improvement-oriented ethos of the EHEA and aims to make implementation of key commitments more transparent.

The timeframe proposed for a single round is the period between Ministerial Conferences, thus following the normal monitoring timeframe in the EHEA. The programme will be supported by the facilitating Bologna Implementation Coordination Group, which includes but is not limited to the chairs of the peer groups involved and appointed during the Ministerial Conference.



## Steps of support for implementation of key Bologna commitments



1. **Survey:** The level of implementation of the key commitments is surveyed based on data submitted during the BFUG's normal monitoring procedures, using the scoreboard indicators in the Bologna Process Implementation Report. The implementation of the key commitments is addressed in a supplementary report thereon.
2. **Invite:** The BFUG delegates of all EHEA countries are formally invited by the BFUG Co-chairs to take part in one or more thematic peer group, each focusing on one key commitment. Based on the information surveyed and reported in step 1, countries will be asked to self-identify their needs and expertise to commit to the mode through which they can contribute to the improved implementation of key commitments of the Bologna Process in the EHEA as a whole.
  - (a) Countries that self-identify as having **successfully implemented a key commitment** (indicated by none of the relevant scoreboard indicators being red, and not more than one being orange) will be invited to suggest ways in which they are willing to support countries having difficulties with implementation of that key commitment, e.g. through peer-learning, reverse peer-review or other activities designed to share their examples of successful implementation and aid others in achieving the same.
  - (b) Countries that self-identify as **not or insufficiently having implemented** a key commitment (identified by having one or more red scoreboard indicators, and two or more that are orange) will be invited to indicate what peer support would be beneficial to aid implementation and how it aims to use that support.

Each country is expected to join at least one of the peer groups.  
As it is possible to face implementation challenges in one or two key commitments while having implemented the other(s) successfully, countries could indicate a need for peer support in certain areas while offering peer support in others, as appropriate.
3. **Response:** The BFUG delegate sends a reply to the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group indicating what the country's implementation goals are when it comes to the key commitments and nominates representatives to the peer groups in those areas where the country requires support or can offer support, respectively. The representative(s) should be people with responsibility for the key commitment concerned, and BFUG delegates are strongly encouraged to involve relevant stakeholders who could offer, or be the recipients of, peer support or peer counselling in the area. In the peer groups they will be able to obtain advice on how to reach these goals.
4. **Peer support:** At this point peer support will start. The Bologna Implementation Coordination Group facilitates the grouping of countries offering peer support and those wishing to take advantage of such support into thematic peer groups. Each peer group will be dedicated to supporting the implementation of a single key Bologna commitment. These peer groups will include both countries that have sufficiently implemented the key commitment concerned and countries coping with challenges to be

addressed for full implementation. Based on the goals identified in step 3 each peer group designs its own action plan with specified activities and impacts for each country concerned, including the expected involvement of relevant stakeholders.

5. **Update:** Each peer group gives an annual update to the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group on how the countries collaborating in that group have used peer support to enhance or support implementation. The Bologna Implementation Coordination Group in turn produces a summary report for the BFUG.
6. **Data:** All EHEA countries submit their data for the next implementation report which will mark the starting point of a new round.  
The supplementary report on implementation of key commitments (see step 1) will show current implementation alongside level of implementation in the previous report for all countries. Submitted plans on implementation of specific key commitments will be highlighted in the supplementary report.

#### *Incentives for improved implementation of key commitments*

The normal reporting process and the proposed support programme act by their very nature as incentives for improved implementation, in the way that the Bologna Process Implementation Report highlights levels of implementation, and the programme supports improvements through targeted peer-learning and support. In addition, it is proposed that countries that have made significant progress will be offered the opportunity to highlight their work on implementation at the Ministerial Conference.

In the event that no action has been taken by a country and no improvement in implementation can be noted from the data submitted during two rounds, the lack of improvement will be brought to the attention of the Ministerial Conference. The Ministers will be asked for recommendations on how to proceed on a case by case basis.





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## Appendix II: Belarus strategy

### **DRAFT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT IN LINE WITH THE EHEA PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS**

The Strategic Action Plan is based on the “Concept of the Development of the System of Education of the Republic of Belarus for the Period till 2020 through 2030” agreed upon by the Republican Pedagogical Conference with the participation of the President of the Republic of Belarus (23-24.08.2017) and approved by the Order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus No. 742 as of 27.11.2017.

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus within its competence re-affirms its commitment to further implementation of the European Higher Education Area (further referred to as the EHEA) principles and tools in the higher education system of the Republic of Belarus and its willingness to joint work on these issues with the Bologna Follow-Up Group (further referred to as the BFUG).

*For this purpose the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus shall do the following:*

- develop and approve in 2018 the “Work Plan for Implementing EHEA Tools in the Education System” based on this Strategic Action Plan;
- appoint in 2018 the National Working Group for further implementation of the EHEA tools in the higher education system;
- create in 2018 the information Internet portal/website and hold regular workshops and seminars aiming at raising awareness of a wide scope of stakeholders about the processes of optimising the higher education system in the Republic of Belarus.

*The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus wishes to invite the BFUG to support Belarus in this work. For this purpose the Ministry of Education will approach the BFUG with the following request:*

- to appoint upon the agreement with the Ministry of Education in 2018 the staff of experts/consultants for the Republic of Belarus having the required experience and professional competencies. Each expert/consultant will be asked to advise on a number of sections of this Strategic Action Plan. Their mission will be to provide Belarus with assistance in the area of further implementation of the EHEA tools and further international cooperation in the field of higher education;
- to assist in arranging in 2018-2020 study visits for higher education specialists from the Republic of Belarus to the EHEA education institutions (organisations) which have successful EHEA tools implementation experience;
- to involve Higher Education Reform Experts of Belarus in consultations regarding the scope of implementing EHEA principles and tools in the higher education system of the Republic of Belarus;
- to hold on a regular basis ongoing consultations to discuss implementation of the major goals and objectives with the above mentioned National Working Group, international consultants/experts and representatives of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus.

## Major Goals and Objectives

### 1. Qualification Framework

By early 2018 the Republic of Belarus had drafted the Higher Education National Qualifications Framework (BelQF) (the 4th step of the development of the NQF). Taking that into consideration, measures will be taken to adopt it by 2019 and to prepare it for self-certification in 2020.

This work will ensure the following:

- introduction of the multi-cycle system of higher education with the bachelor degree of 180-240 ECTS credits and the master degree of 90-120 ECTS credits and, correspondingly, gradual phase-out of the remaining 5-year bakalavr degree;
- harmonisation of the national system of classification of educational programmes (State Classifier of the Republic of Belarus "Specialties and Qualifications" OKRB 011-2009) with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011), which includes referencing education programmes to the BelQF and the QF-EHEA;
- further improvement of HEIs implementation practice of measuring the student workload in ECTS in line with the revised "ECTS Users' Guide".
- International experts/consultants (including experts from Georgia, Italy, Austria, Germany, France) will be asked to advise on implementing measures that are specified in the "Action Plan of Development of the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Belarus" (adopted 04.10.2017). The National Qualifications Framework of Higher Education will be compatible with the QF-EHEA.

### 2. Quality Assurance

The Republic of Belarus has developed the concept of establishing the national independent system of higher education quality assurance. Taking that into consideration, measures shall be taken to further improve the procedures of internal quality assurance in HEIs by 2020 and to develop legal framework for the activities of an independent quality assurance agency with the purpose of launching its full-scale practical activities by 2022.

The activities aimed at establishing the independent higher education quality assurance system and preparing the national independent quality assurance agency to associate with ENQA/EQAR will be carried out in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG-2015).

International experts/consultants, first of all, ENQA/EQAR representatives, will be asked to advise on implementing measures that are specified in the "Action Plan on Development of Independent Higher Education Quality Assurance System of the Republic of Belarus" (adopted 14.02.2017). Development and capacity building of the quality assurance system and activities of the national agency will cover all levels of education.

### 3. Recognition of Qualifications

The Republic of Belarus has been consistently carrying out activities aimed at:

- further extension of mutual recognition of educational certificates with various countries on the basis of respective agreements;
- further improvement of the current system of recognition of qualifications in compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

The result of these activities is positive. It is stated in the Report from the Belgium (Flemish) NARIC center on recognition "Peer-review report of Belarus ENIC" ([http://media.ehea.info/file/20171018-19-Rome/11/6/ENIC-NARIC\\_peer-review\\_report\\_ENIC\\_Belarus\\_final\\_877116.docx](http://media.ehea.info/file/20171018-19-Rome/11/6/ENIC-NARIC_peer-review_report_ENIC_Belarus_final_877116.docx)).

Taking that into consideration, by 2019 measures will be taken to facilitate the information support of ENIC Belarus activities (presenting information about ENIC Belarus activities in English).

The legal framework for the procedure of prior learning recognition and the procedure of recognition of refugees' qualifications will be developed.

#### *4. Transparency Tools*

Since 2013 the Republic of Belarus has been implementing the national credit units system based on ECTS. Taking that into consideration, by 2020 measures will be taken to implement this system in line with the revised "ECTS Users' Guide".

Special focus will be paid to learning outcomes, curriculum design and delivery as well as assessment and opportunities to implement academic mobility programmes. This process will be based on the outcomes of the Erasmus+ project "Fostering Competencies Development in Belarusian Higher Education (FOSTERC)", Project Ref. 574087-EPP-1-2016-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP.

Legal framework will be developed for issuing a free of charge and multilingual Diploma Supplement in the format approved by the Council of Europe, the European Commission, UNESCO (also in the digital format) to all students.

International experts/consultants, including the ones from the World Bank, will be asked to advise on implementing transition to the digital Diploma Supplement.

#### *5. Mobility of Higher Education Staff and Students, Internationalisation*

The Republic of Belarus has been consistently extending international academic mobility of the teaching staff and students on the basis of respective agreements. It has been also extending the number of higher education specialties with the option of studying in English. Taking that into consideration, the following legal framework will be developed after the adoption of the new version of the Education Code:

- for implementing joint educational programmes and double diploma programmes;
- for providing international students with educational grants for studying in HEIs of the Republic of Belarus.

For this purpose in 2019 the practice of organizing academic mobility will be revised, with the participation of international experts/consultants. In 2019-2020 higher education institutions will develop their own internal procedures of recognition of academic mobility outcomes.

In addition new (3+ generation) educational standards will provide for HEIs to incorporate academic mobility semesters ("mobility windows") in the educational process.

#### *6. Lifelong Learning and Social Dimension of Higher Education*

By 2019 international experts/consultants, including the ones from the European Training Foundation, will be asked to advise on building up grounds for developing legal framework aimed at ensuring prior learning recognition with the purpose of developing the respective procedure in 2021.

In the Republic of Belarus the procedure of university graduates' job placement is carried out by an education institution for the purpose of their social support and meeting the economy's and social sector's needs for specialists, employees and workers. Taking that into consideration, starting from 2020 supplementary measures will be taken for social support of university graduates, including those who studied on tuition fee-paying basis. In addition measures will be taken to study international first job placement schemes with the purpose of developing proposals for the Government of the Republic of Belarus on revision of the current system of university graduates' first job placement.

#### *7. Fundamental EHEA Values*

Since 2011 there have been established and implemented the legal obligations on university staff and students participation in HEIs collegiate governing bodies (the composition of HEI Council must include at least 25% of students). Since 31.01.2015 the Public Republican Students Council has been functioning. It can submit proposals on improving the system of training, education and leisure students' activities to the Ministry of Education. Taking all the above-mentioned into consideration, in 2019-2020 additional measures will be taken to include students' representatives in commissions for educational programmes quality assessment and HEIs accreditation.

In 2018-2019 the HEIs will also develop additional measures for improving the mechanism of students and staff participation in HEI governance.

The procedure of the competition-based nomination of candidates for the position of the head of a higher education institution will be developed (according to Article 203 of the draft Education Code).

The work on further implementation of the provisions from the EHEA Ministerial Conferences Communiqué will be continued.

Further work on incorporating into the national education system of the principles of Magna Charta Universitatum and the recommendations of the Council of Europe (Rec/CV (2012)7) regarding public responsibility for academic freedom and institutional autonomy will be continued.

International experts/consultants will be asked to advise on implementing measures aimed at the development of academic culture in higher education institutions.

## ***8. Implementation***

The National Institute for Higher Education will be responsible for preparing and providing the necessary data on the EHEA tools implementation and carrying out measures of this Strategic Action Plan in the format and by the dates determined jointly by the Ministry of Education and BFUG.

## ***9. Cooperation with the BFUG***

A delegation of 2-3 members with the knowledge of English and required competencies will be appointed to take part in BFUG meetings and ensure the continuity of the Republic of Belarus representation throughout its entire work period.

Participation in relevant seminars and peer-learning events, nomination of candidates for working groups established within the programme of the EHEA work for the corresponding period will be ensured.

In case higher legislative and executive authorities of the Republic of Belarus introduce changes into programme policies of the development of the social sector, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus may change terms for implementing the activities mentioned in this Strategic Action Plan, which will find its reflection in the “Work Plan for Implementing EHEA Tools in the Education System”. In this case the Ministry of Education will timely inform the BFUG about it to ensure transparency, mutual trust and understanding.



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### Appendix III: Overarching Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (revised 2018)

## THE FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

The Paris Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education 24-25 May 2018 adopted the revised overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, implementing the commitment in the Yerevan Communiqué. The revised overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA comprises the short cycle, the first cycle, the second cycle and the third cycle generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the short cycle, first and second cycles. Ministers committed themselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA. While recognising that each country decides whether and how to incorporate short cycle qualifications within its own national framework, the Paris Communiqué underlined the role ECTS-based short cycle qualifications play in preparing students for employment and further studies as well as in improving social cohesion.

Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)		
	Learning outcomes	ECTS credits
Short cycle qualifications	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the higher education <b>short cycle</b> are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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;</li> <li>- can apply their knowledge and understanding in occupational contexts;</li> <li>- have the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems;</li> <li>- can communicate about their understanding, skills and activities, with peers, supervisors and clients;</li> <li>- have the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy.</li> </ul>	Typically include 90-120 ECTS credits
First cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of <b>the first cycle</b> are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;</li> <li>• can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;</li> </ul>	Typically include 180-240 ECTS credits

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgments that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;</li> <li>• can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;</li> <li>• have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.</li> </ul>	
Second cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of <b>the second cycle</b> are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with the first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;</li> <li>• can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;</li> <li>• have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments;</li> <li>• can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;</li> <li>• have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.</li> </ul>	Typically include 90-120 ECTS credits, with a minimum of 60 credits at the level of the 2nd cycle
Third cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of <b>the third cycle</b> are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;</li> <li>• have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;</li> <li>• have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;</li> <li>• are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;</li> <li>• can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;</li> <li>• can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.</li> </ul>	Not specified



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## Appendix IV: The Diploma Supplement Template

### I. DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT



#### 1. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

Last name(s)

1.1

First name(s)

1.2

Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

1.3

Student identification number or code (if available)

1.4

#### 2. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

Name of qualification and (if applicable) title conferred (in original language)

2.1

Main field(s) of study for the qualification

2.2

Name and status of awarding institution (in original language)

2.3

Name and status of institution (if different from 2.3) administering studies (in original language)

2.4

Language(s) of instruction/examination

2.5

#### 3. INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL AND DURATION OF THE QUALIFICATION

Level of the qualification

3.1

Official duration of programme in credits and/or years

3.2

Access requirements(s)

3.3



#### 4. INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME COMPLETED AND THE RESULTS OBTAINED

Mode of study

4.1

Programme learning outcomes

4.2

Programme details, individual credits gained and grades/marks obtained

4.3

Grading system and, if available, grade distribution table

4.4

Overall classification of the qualification (in original language)

4.5

#### 5. INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

Access to further study

5.1

Access to a regulated profession (if applicable)

5.2

#### 6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information

6.1

Further information sources

6.2

#### 7. CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT

Date

7.1

Signature

7.2

Capacity

7.3

Official stamp or seal

7.4



## 8. INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

### III. THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT EXPLANATORY NOTES

## DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

### I. PRINCIPLES AND GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THOSE PRODUCING SUPPLEMENTS

The diploma supplement forms an important part of the development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and is an important tool for graduates to ensure that their degrees are recognised by higher education institutions, public authorities and employers in their home countries and abroad. The diploma supplement should build on and include the use of common transparency tools such as learning outcomes, ECTS and how the degrees correspond to the national qualification framework(s) and external national quality assurance and/or accreditation.

The Diploma Supplement is jointly developed by the Council of Europe, European Commission and UNESCO and an updated version was adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee in 2007. Since the introduction of the Bologna Process in 1999 it has been adopted in the national legislations of the participating countries, and Ministers committed themselves to issuing it to all graduates automatically, free of charge and in a widely spoken European language by 2005. The Diploma Supplement was also incorporated in the Europass Framework established by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers in 2004<sup>1</sup>. This revised version was endorsed by the EHEA Ministers in Paris in 2018.

The Diploma Supplement plays a particularly important role in relation to joint degrees<sup>2</sup> and transnational or crossborder higher education provision. A Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate at which institutions and/or in which study programmes the different parts of the degree have been earned.

The Diploma Supplement is intended to facilitate the implementation of the *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region*, Lisbon 1997.

#### Founding Principles:

The Diploma Supplement is based on the following founding principles that respect national and international academic autonomy. These principles also give some further explanation of the purpose and nature of the new version.

The Diploma Supplement is:

1. a flexible, non-prescriptive tool, capable of adaptation to local needs;
2. a device that has national and international applications;
3. a system to aid recognition for academic and professional purposes;
4. an approach that specifically excludes any claims and value-judgements concerning recognition by providing sufficient objective information;
5. a tool to focus on the outcomes of the learning that has taken place;
6. an addition to the original credential, not a substitute of it.

<sup>1</sup> See the Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint degrees, adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee in Paris on 29 February 2016 available at [http://www.enic-naric.net/fileusers/Revised\\_Recommendation\\_on\\_the\\_Recognition\\_of\\_Joint\\_Degrees\\_2016.pdf](http://www.enic-naric.net/fileusers/Revised_Recommendation_on_the_Recognition_of_Joint_Degrees_2016.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See the Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Joint Degrees, adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee in 2001 and revised by the Committee in 2007, available at [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/Code%20of%20good%20practice\\_EN.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/Code%20of%20good%20practice_EN.asp#TopOfPage), and the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education adopted in autumn 2005 in the framework of both Organizations, available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/51/35779480.pdf>. <http://www.europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Downloads/MiscDocs/EuropassDecision/navigate.action> DECISION No 2241/2004/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 15 December 2004 on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass).

### **General Guidelines**

It is strongly recommended that supplements should conform with the following:

1. The brief explanatory note (in the box at the head of the sample supplement) should be reproduced as part of each completed Diploma Supplement.
2. Institutions should follow the structure and sequence of information as provided in the template. Avoid information overload and present information as concisely as possible.
3. In combination with the credential itself, the supplement should provide sufficient information to enable the reader to make an assessment about the qualification. However, it should be clear that it is not designed to replace a curriculum vitae.
4. Supplements should be free from any value judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition.
5. The production of supplements is best done centrally and not devolved to different parts of academic institutions.
6. Institutions should take appropriate action to minimise the possibility of forgery and misrepresentation of their supplements.
7. Information on the higher education system (section eight) should be kept to a two-page maximum. Where possible, information should include diagrams, charts and reference to the national qualifications framework. This section could be produced for each country with the help of national ENICs/NARICs (national information centres), Ministries and Rectors' Conferences. It is particularly important that section eight of the supplement describe the national higher education structure in force at the time the qualification was awarded.
8. The Supplement should be issued automatically at the time the qualification is completed, free of charge and in a widely spoken language. Additionally, Supplements may be produced in the language(s) institutions think appropriate.
9. The original language should be used where indicated in the Guidelines. The glossary of terms associated with the supplement has been specifically produced to overcome linguistic confusions.

## II. OUTLINE STRUCTURE FOR THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

*The purpose of the Diploma Supplement is to provide sufficient independent data to improve the international 'transparency' and fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc.). It is designed to provide a description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by the individual named on the original qualification to which this supplement is appended. It is free from any value judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition. This Diploma Supplement model was developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO.*

### 1 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 1.1 Last name(s):
- 1.2 First name(s):
- 1.3 Date of birth (*day/month/year*):
- 1.4 Student identification number or code (*if available*):

### 2 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

- 2.1 Name of qualification and (*if applicable*) title conferred (*in original language*):
- 2.2 Main field(s) of study for the qualification:
- 2.3 Name and status of awarding institution (*in original language*):
- 2.4 Name and status of institution (*if different from 2.3*) administering studies (*in original language*):
- 2.5 Language(s) of instruction/examination:

### 3 INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL AND DURATION OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 3.1 Level of the qualification:
- 3.2 Official duration of programme in credits and/or years:
- 3.3 Access requirements(s)

### 4 INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME COMPLETED AND THE RESULTS OBTAINED

- 4.1 Mode of study:
- 4.2 Programme learning outcomes:
- 4.3 Programme details, individual credits gained and grades/marks obtained: (*if this information is available in an official transcript this should be used here*)
- 4.4 Grading system and, if available, grade distribution table:
- 4.5 Overall classification of the qualification (*in original language*):

### 5 INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 5.1 Access to further study:
- 5.2 Access to a regulated profession (*if applicable*)

### 6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 6.1 Additional information:
- 6.2 Further information sources:

### 7 CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT

- 7.1 Date:
- 7.2 Signature:
- 7.3 Capacity:
- 7.4 Official stamp or seal:

### 8 INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

*(N.B. Institutions who intend to issue Diploma Supplements should refer to the explanatory notes that explain how to complete them.)*

### III. DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT EXPLANATORY NOTES

*The numbers below refer to the numbered sections in the Diploma Supplement Information in all eight sections should be provided. Where information is not provided, an explanation should give the reason why*

#### 1 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

The purpose of this section is to provide the information required to identify clearly the holder of the qualification.

##### 1.1 Last name(s):

1.1 Provide the full family or surname(s).

##### 1.2 First name(s):

1.2 Include all given/first names.

##### 1.3 Date of birth (day/month/year):

1.3 Indicate day, month and year of birth.

##### 1.4 Student identification number or code (if available):

1.4 This should identify the individual as a student enrolled at the institution on a particular programme which is described in the Diploma Supplement, e.g. through the student's personal code in the institution's database. A national or State personal identification number could be included for those countries that have such systems of identification, in accordance with national legislation.

#### 2 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

The purpose of this section is to provide the information required to identify clearly the qualification and the higher education institution(s) awarding it.

##### 2.1 Name of qualification and (if applicable) title conferred (in original language):

2.1 Give the full name of the qualification in the original language(s) as it is styled in the original qualification e.g. *Kandidat nauk, Maîtrise, Diplom*, etc. The original name of the qualifications may be transliterated into the alphabet or writing system used for the language in which the Diploma Supplement is issued (e.g. Latin characters for Supplements issued in English or Cyrillic for Supplements issued in Russian). However, the original name of the qualification in original alphabet should also be provided. Indicate if the award confers any nationally accepted title on the holder and what this title is e.g. *Doctor, Ingénieur* etc. If the qualification is a joint/double degree or it was earned under a transnational or borderless education arrangement, this should be indicated.

##### 2.2 Main field(s) of study for the qualification:

2.2 Show only the major field(s) of study (disciplines) that define the main subject area(s) for the qualification e.g. *Politics and History, Human Resource Management, Business Administration, Molecular Biology* etc.

##### 2.3 Name and status of awarding institution (in original language):

2.3 Indicate the name of the institution awarding the qualification in the original language. Where a degree is issued jointly by two or more institutions, the names of the institutions issuing the joint degree should be indicated. The status of the institution refers above all to whether it has successfully undergone a quality assurance and/or accreditation exercise or procedure, and this should be clearly indicated. If the responsible QA/Accreditation Agency has been proved to follow the European Standards and Guidelines or similar standards in other continents, e.g. through registration in EQAR and/or membership in ENQA or otherwise, this should be mentioned. It may also be relevant to give the profile of the institution. If the provider is transnational or borderless, this should be clearly noted. As a (fictitious) example, this information could be given in the following form: "[Name of the institution] is a university which has undergone external quality assurance by agency X, that is certified to follow the European Standards and Guidelines [through registration in EQAR and/or membership in ENQA / else], in [name of the country] in 2015 with satisfactory results".

##### 2.4 Name and status of institution (if different from 2.3) administering studies (in original language):

2.4 This refers to the institution which is responsible for the delivery of the programme. This is often, but not always, the same as the institution awarding the qualification (see 2.3 above). Cases are known in which a higher education institution entitles another institution to deliver its programmes and issue its qualifications through a "franchise" or some type of "validation", "affiliation", etc. In some cases a branch campus may be located in a different country. If this is the case it should be indicated here. If there is a difference between the awarding institution and the institution delivering the programme leading to the qualification, indicate the status of both, see 2.3 above.

##### 2.5 Language(s) of instruction/examination:

2.5 Indicate the language(s) by which the qualification was officially delivered and examined.

### 3 INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL AND DURATION OF THE QUALIFICATION

The purpose of this section is to provide the information required to identify clearly the level of the qualification, and describe its duration in years and/or credits.

#### 3.1 Level of the qualification:

3.1 Give the precise level of the qualification and its place in the specific national educational structure of awards, and/or in the National Qualifications Framework, if available (cross-referenced to the information in point 8). Reference should also be made to the corresponding level in the two main overarching Qualifications Frameworks: QF-EHEA and/or EQF, e.g., Second cycle QF-EHEA/Level 7 EQF. Include any relevant information on “level indicators” that are nationally devised and recognised and which relate to the qualification

#### 3.2 Official duration of programme in credits and/or years:

3.2 Indicate the total student workload required and/or the official duration of the programme in years of full-time study. The student workload should be described in terms of credits and the credit system used should be indicated. EHEA countries are expected to make reference to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)<sup>3</sup>, e.g. 2 years /120 ECTS credits.

#### 3.3 Access requirement(s)

3.3 List the qualification(s) or periods of study required for access to the programme described by this Diploma Supplement (cross-referenced to the information in point 8), e.g. *Matura* (for access to a first degree programme) or *Bachelor Degree* (for access to a second degree programme). This is particularly important when intermediate studies are a prerequisite for the named qualification.

### 4 INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME COMPLETED AND THE RESULTS OBTAINED

The purpose of this section is to describe in detail what the holder of the qualification has learned in the programme and the level of his/her performance.

#### 4.1 Mode of study:

4.1 The mode of study refers to how the programme was undertaken e.g. full-time, part-time, intermittent/sandwich, e-learning, distance, etc.

#### 4.2 Programme learning outcomes:

4.2 Indicate the learning outcomes associated with the qualification. Learning outcomes are statements of what the graduate knows, understands and is able to do after completing his/her studies and receiving the qualification (knowledge, skills, competencies). Learning outcomes should be expressed in the present tense, e.g.: “The graduate can analyse consumer behaviour trends and apply them in a given consumer market”. This information is increasingly becoming the key basis on which qualifications are assessed and/or recognized.

#### 4.3 Programme details, individual credits gained and grades/marks obtained: (if this information is available in an official transcript this should be used here)

4.3 Indicate the individual units completed in order to obtain the qualification, the credits attached to them and the marks/grades gained. For institutions that issue transcripts of studies, it will be sufficient to include the transcript. Entries should be as complete as possible and in accordance with what is normally recorded at the institution concerned. If the qualification is a joint degree, indicate what parts of the qualification were earned in which partner institution. Similarly, if the programme of study included mandatory/recognized learning activities carried out outside the university such as: a mobility period abroad, a work placement, voluntary work, etc. indicate which components of the qualification were successfully completed in which partner institution/company and duly recognized. This can be done either by including these specific activities directly in the transcript with their original titles, or by linking them in a transparent way with the mentioned activities recognized by the HEI. If the qualification includes a dissertation or thesis, indicate its title (if available). If this section is too long, it can be included in the transcript of records.

#### 4.4 Grading system and, if available, grade distribution table:

4.4 Provide information on the grading system and pass marks relating to the qualification, e.g.: marks are out of a possible 100% and the minimum pass mark is 40%. Tremendous variations in grading practices exist within and between different national higher education institutions and countries. In order to provide information on the use of grades in a specific context, a grade distribution table<sup>4</sup> relating to the qualification in question should be included. If more than one grading system is used, e.g.: in the case of joint degrees,

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index_en.htm)





information should be provided on all systems used for the qualification in question. If this section is too long, it can be included in the transcript of records.

**4.5 Overall classification of the qualification (in original language):**

4.5 If appropriate, indicate the overall classification for the final qualification e.g.: *First Class Honors Degree, Summa Cum Laude, Merit, Avec Distinction, Avec mention etc.* If applicable, a grade distribution table of final grades should be provided.

## **5 INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION**

The purpose of this section is to illustrate/explain how the qualification may be used for academic or professional purposes.

**5.1 Access to further study:**

5.1 Indicate if, within the country of origin, the qualification normally provides access to further academic and/or professional studies, especially leading to any specific qualifications, or levels of study, e.g.: access to Doctoral studies in the country or institution. If this is the case, specify the grades or standards that have to be obtained to allow progression.

**5.2 Access to a regulated profession (if applicable)**

5.2 Give details of any rights to practise, or professional title, accorded to the holder of the qualification, in accordance with national legislation or requirements by a competent authority. Indicate what specific access, if any, the qualification gives in terms of exercising the profession (e.g.: the qualification allows the holder to practise a regulated profession or to access a further stage of professional certification, such as a state exam or approval by a competent authority).

## **6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The purpose of this section is to include any other information which could not be included in the previous sections and is relevant to the purpose of assessing the nature, level and usage of the qualification.

**6.1 Additional information:**

6.1 Indicate any individual learning achievements gained outside of the programme and/or any additional information not included above that have been certified by the institution and are relevant to the purpose of assessing the nature, level and usage of the qualification. For example a mobility period abroad, a work placement, voluntary work etc. for which the student has not received credits or recognition, but which nonetheless contribute to the graduate's learning outcomes.

**6.2 Further information sources:**

6.2 Indicate any further useful information sources and references where more details on the qualification could be sought, e.g.: the department in the issuing institutions; a national information centre; the European Union National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC); the Council of Europe/UNESCO European National Information Centre on Academic Recognition and Mobility (ENIC) and relevant national sources.

## **7 CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT**

The purpose of this section is to certify that the Diploma Supplement is officially issued by the institution awarding the qualification.

**7.1 Date:**

7.1 The date the Diploma Supplement was issued. This would not necessarily be the same date the qualification was awarded.

**7.2 Signature:**

7.2 The name and signature of the official certifying the Diploma Supplement.

**7.3 Capacity:**

7.3 The official post of the certifying individual.

**7.4 Official stamp or seal:**

7.4 The official stamp or seal of the institution that provides authentication of the Diploma Supplement.



## **8 INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM**

The purpose of this section is to provide background information on the national HE system within which the qualification is awarded.

Give information on the higher education system: its general access requirements; the national qualifications framework (where applicable), types of institution and the quality assurance or accreditation system<sup>5</sup>. For countries party to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the national qualifications framework should be compatible with and refer to the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA adopted by Ministers in 2005<sup>6</sup>. For countries which are members of the European Union or party to relevant EU programmes, the national framework should also be compatible with the European Qualifications Framework. This description should provide a context for the qualification and refer to it. A standard framework for these descriptions together with actual descriptions should be available for many countries. These have been created with the co-operation of the relevant National (European Union and European Economic Area) Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), European (Council of Europe/UNESCO) National Information Centre on Academic Recognition and Mobility (ENIC), Ministries and Rectors' conferences.

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<sup>5</sup> Under the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on The Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention), signatories are committed to making arrangements for providing such information. The text of the Convention may be found at [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/LRC\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/LRC_en.asp).

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/BASIC/050520\\_Framework\\_qualifications.pdf](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/BASIC/050520_Framework_qualifications.pdf)



#### **IV.       EXAMPLES OF DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENTS**

## V. GLOSSARY

Definitions and usage of terms vary from country to country. To reduce the possibility of misunderstanding this glossary aims only to cover all the main terms used in the papers associated with the Diploma Supplement initiative. It is partly based and fully consistent with the definition used in the 1997 Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region.

**ACADEMIC RECOGNITION** refers to the recognition of courses, qualifications or diplomas from one (domestic or foreign) higher education institution by another. Usually this is sought as a basis for access to further new study at the second institution (cumulative recognition) or, as recognition allowing some sort of exemption from having to re-study elements of a programme (recognition with advanced standing). A further type of academic recognition is recognition of studies taken elsewhere in another institution (recognition by substitution) that replace a comparable period of study at the home institution (see PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION).

**ACCESS** (to higher education) refers to the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education. Access is distinct from admission, which concerns the individuals' actual participation in the higher education programme concerned.

**ACCREDITATION** is the process by which one higher education institution gains authority to award, and/or gains recognition of, its qualifications from another senior competent authority. This might be the State, a government agency or, another domestic or foreign higher education institution (see FRANCHISE). The term has its origins in the American system and is used in some European countries in the same way as 'recognition'.

**ADMISSION** the act of, or system for, allowing qualified applicants to pursue studies in higher education at a given institution and/or a given programme.

**ASSESSMENT** i) (of institutions or programmes) the process for establishing the educational quality of a higher education institution or programme; ii) (of individual qualifications) the written appraisal or evaluation of an individual's foreign qualifications by a competent authority; iii) (of individual students) the actual testing of a student's ability and skills within a programme (e.g. by examination).

**AWARD** this is used synonymously with qualification.

**COMPETENT RECOGNITION AUTHORITY** a body officially charged with making binding decisions on the recognition of foreign qualifications.

**COURSE UNIT** a part of a programme of studies that is normally self-contained and assessed separately. Complete study programmes are normally composed of several course units.

**CREDENTIAL** a term sometimes used to refer to a qualification (see QUALIFICATION).

**CREDENTIAL EVALUATOR** the individual who makes a judgement on the recognition of foreign qualifications (see COMPETENT RECOGNITION AUTHORITY).

**CREDIT** the 'currency' providing a measure of learning outcomes achieved in a notional time at a given level. Usually associated with credit-based modular courses (see ECTS).

**DE FACTO RECOGNITION** refers to situations of unregulated recognition for professional purposes, such as where no national legal authorisation to practice a particular profession exists or is required. This is the most problematic area of professional recognition (see PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION and RECOGNITION).

**DE JURE RECOGNITION** refers to the recognition of the right to work in a specific country in a regulated profession (e.g. medical doctor) in the European Union or European Economic Area. These situations are subject to various European Union Directives whereby if a citizen is a fully qualified professional in one Member State, he or she has a right to exercise that profession and be recognised as a professional in another Member State (see REGULATED PROFESSION, PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION and RECOGNITION).

**DIPLOMA** here refers to any formally awarded qualification/credential. In some educational systems the term refers to a specific category or type of qualification. It is not being used in this restricted sense here.



**DOUBLE/MULTIPLE DEGREE** Two or more national degrees which are awarded by higher education institutions offering a joint programme.

**ECTS** the European Credit Transfer System credits express the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload. 60 ECTS credits are allocated to the learning outcomes and associated workload of a full-time academic year or its equivalent, which normally comprises a number of educational components to which credits (on the basis of the learning outcomes and workload) are allocated. ECTS credits are generally expressed in whole numbers.

**ENIC** European National Information Centre on Academic Recognition and Mobility (Council of Europe/UNESCO).

**FRANCHISE** the situation where an institution agrees to authorise another institution (nationally or internationally) to deliver an approved programme whilst normally retaining overall control of the programme's content, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements. However, significant variations in franchise relationships exist.

**FIELD OF STUDY** the main disciplines or subject areas of a qualification.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION TABLES** show how the existing national or institutional scale is being used in the institution – whether in open access or selective systems – and allow for comparison with the statistical distribution of grades in a parallel reference group of another institution. They represent the statistical distribution of positive grades (pass and above) awarded in each field of study in a specific institution.

**HIGHER EDUCATION** all types of courses of study, or sets of courses (programmes), training, or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to its higher education system. Higher education builds on the level of competence, knowledge and skills generally acquired through secondary education (see **HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION** and **PROGRAMME OF STUDY**). Higher education normally comes after secondary education in time and is normally offered through higher education programmes at higher education institutions. However, it should be noted that higher education institutions may give courses of study that are not higher education level. Conversely, institutions which are not considered as belonging to the higher education system may offer some higher education programmes. The exact definition of higher education and higher education institutions vary from country to country. For example, in some countries, nursing is considered to be a field of higher education, whereas in other countries, nursing is considered to be part of post-secondary education without being higher education.

**HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION** an establishment providing higher education and recognised by the competent authorities as belonging to its system of higher education (see **HIGHER EDUCATION** and **PROGRAMME OF STUDY**).

**JOINT DEGREE** A single document awarded by higher education institutions offering a joint programme and nationally acknowledged as the recognised award of such joint programme

**LEARNING OUTCOMES** statements of what the individual knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process.

**LEVEL** the place of a qualification in the higher education system or in the National Qualifications Framework. The number of levels of higher education qualifications vary between countries and/or kinds of higher education (see **LEVEL INDICATORS**).

**LEVEL INDICATORS** these can range from any general information on the role of the qualification to highly detailed specific statements about the nature, skills and competencies associated with the successful completion of parts or all of a qualification (see **LEVEL**).

**LISBON RECOGNITION CONVENTION** refers to the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region adopted in Lisbon April 1997.

**MODULE** a separate and coherent block of learning. Part of a modular programme of studies where the curriculum is divided into a range of similar sized segments.



**NARIC** National Academic Recognition Information Centre (European Union and European Economic Area). Some NARICs also have responsibilities for professional recognition

**PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION** refers to the right to practise and the professional status accorded to a holder of a qualification. In the European Union recognition for professional purposes is defined as the legal act by which a competent authority in a host Member State recognises that the qualifications obtained by an applicant in another Member State are suitable for the pursuit on its territory of a professional activity whose practice is legally regulated (see **REGULATED PROFESSION**, **DE JURE RECOGNITION**, **DE FACTO RECOGNITION** and **RECOGNITION**).

**PROGRAMME OF STUDY** a set of course units, the various components of which complement and build on each other in order to provide the student with a higher education qualification (see **HIGHER EDUCATION**, **HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION** and **COURSE**). 'Programme' also denotes the academic fields of study and requirements that collectively define the qualification (see **FIELD OF STUDY**).

**QUALIFICATION** i) higher education qualification: any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority attesting the successful completion of a higher education programme; ii) qualification giving access to higher education: any diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority attesting the successful completion of an education programme and giving the holder of the qualification the right to be considered for admission to higher education (see **HIGHER EDUCATION**, **HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION** and **PROGRAMME OF STUDY**). Also termed as any higher education award given for the successful completion of a programme of learning; a generic term that refers to the wide variety of higher education qualifications at different levels and across different countries.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE** refers to the internal and external processes by which the quality of academic provision is maintained.

**RECOGNITION** a formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the value of a foreign educational qualification with a view to access to educational and/or employment activities. An assessment of individual qualifications. Such assessment may be any kind of statement on the value of (in this case) a foreign qualification. Recognition refers to a formal statement by a competent recognition authority acknowledging the value of the qualification in question and indicating the consequences of this recognition for the holder of the qualification. For example a qualification may be recognised for the purposes of further study at a given level (academic recognition), or for the use of a title, or for the exercise of employment purposes (professional recognition) (see **COMPETENT RECOGNITION AUTHORITY**, **QUALIFICATION**, **ACADEMIC RECOGNITION** and **PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION**). Recognition can also refer to the accreditation of a higher education institution by another authority (see **ACCREDITATION**).

**REGULATED PROFESSION** refers to professions whose practice is regulated in some way by law or administrative rules. A given profession may be regulated in one country and not in another (see **DE JURE RECOGNITION**).

**TRANSCRIPT** an official record or breakdown of a student's progress and achievements. Many credit-based education systems employ detailed transcripts that show the credits and grades for units undertaken (e.g. ECTS Transcript of Records). **VALIDATION** the process by which a recognised awarding institution judges that a programme of study leading to a qualification is of appropriate quality and standard. This can be a programme of its own or that of a subordinate institution.