

Implementation of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

Raimonda Markeviciene

Kyiv, October 25-26, 2012

Resistance factors

Less risky to do nothing than attempt change

Culture of competition, cooperation rarely rewarded

Tradition inside and outside the academy

Staff cautious of unknown even if it is not happy with the known

Assessment and accountability are viewed as evils rather than as tools for improvement

Constant change factors

Rapidly changing technology

Growing cooperation with professional world

Growing number of educational providers

Mass education

Need for constant modernization of curricula

Change attitude, change thinking, change behaviour, change reality



???

!!!

Teaching and learning

What is taught?

- The focus is not on what is taught but on promotion of effective learning
- Student learning - preoccupation of the teacher (not the facts to be fed)
- The student is supported in making sense of their 'journey' through knowledge construction

What is learned?

- The unique character of each student
- The abundance of information sources

Student centered learning

Teachers need:

- *To help students to discover their own learning styles, motivation and to acquire study skills valuable throughout their lives.*

Teacher's role is:

- *to help students set achievable goals; encourage students to assess themselves and their peers; help them to work co-operatively in groups and ensure that they know how to exploit all the available resources*

Learning becomes:

- *more a form of personal development than a linear progression that the teacher achieves by rewards and sanctions*

Is it that we are moving from this...



...to this?



Principles

- *The learner has full responsibility for her/his learning*
- *Involvement and participation are necessary for learning*
- *The relationship between learners is more equal, promoting growth, development*
- *The teacher becomes a facilitator and resource person*
- *The learner experiences confluence in his education*
- *The learner sees himself/herself differently as a result of the learning experience.*

ECTS – shift of paradigm

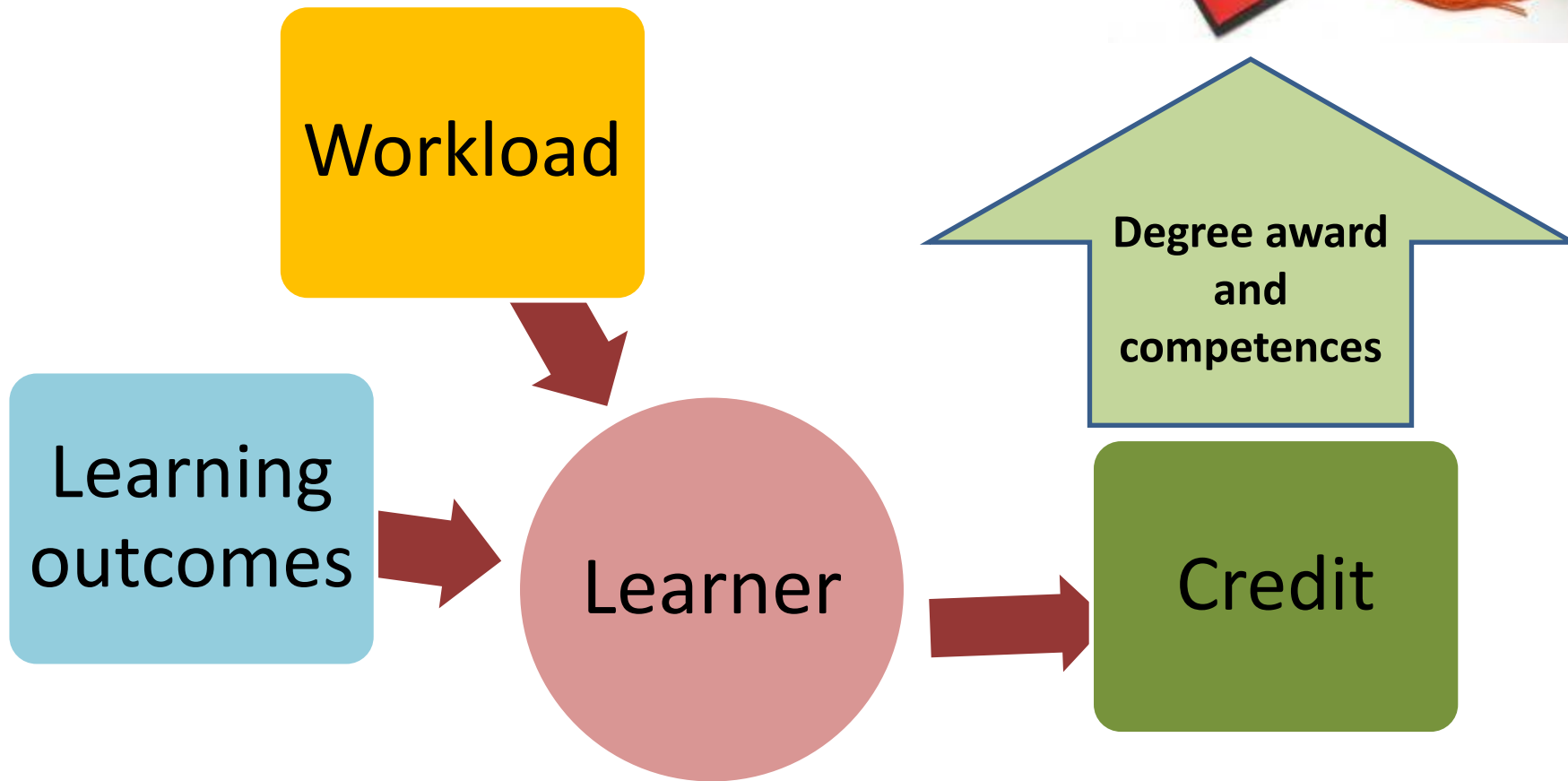


ECTS is a **tool** that helps to design, describe and deliver programmes and award higher education qualifications.



It is a **learner-centered** system for credit accumulation and transfer based on transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes.

ECTS in a nutshell



Overview of national regulations on the number of learning hours per academic year

Emphasis:

1. Attention to credit as a measure for the student workload;
2. Variety: absolute number of hours per year and credit VS “corridor”;
3. Hierarchy of various legal documents: law, ministerial decrees, recommendations of rector’s conferences, etc...

Countries	Hours range/academic year	Hours range/credit	Status of the proclamation
Austria	1,500 h	25 h	Law
Belgium (Fl)	1,500/1,800 h	25/30 h	Decree (law on the Flemish level)
Belgium (Fr)	1440 h	24 h	Decree (law of the French Community)
Czech Republic	1,500/1800 h	25/30 h	Good practice, recommendation of ECTS Key Features.
Cyprus	1500h/1800 h	25/30 h	New Law for Higher Education (under consideration in 2008)
Denmark	1,650 h	27/28 h	Letters from the Ministry
Estonia	1,560 h	26 h	University Act law
Finland	1,600 h	27 h	Act of the Council of State
France	1,650 h	25/30 h	Recommendation by the University Presidents’ conference
Germany	1,800 h	30 h	KMK (Kultusministerkonferenz = Standing Conference of the Ministers of the Federal States). Element of Accreditation
Greece	1,500/1,800 h	25/30 h	Ministerial Decision
Hungary	1,620/1,800 h	30 h	Act on Higher Education and attaching Governmental Decree
Iceland	1,500/2,000 h	25/33 h	No proclamation, but understanding among universities
Ireland		20/30 h	Recommendation on the principles and operational guidelines devised by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
Italy	1,500 h	25 h	Ministerial Decrees
Latvia	1,600 h		Law
Lithuania	1,600 h		Law and Decree

Main approaches to ECTS implementation on national levels

Legal

- based on law and/or ministerial decrees (strong presence of the state authorities and regulations)
- Level of implementation depends on precision and prescriptions of the legal acts, experience of HEIs, traditions & collaborative culture

Consensus-based

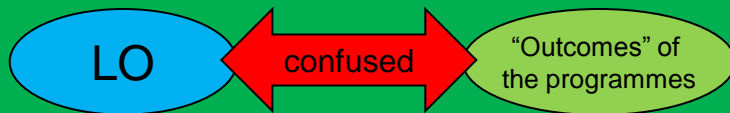
- based on rectors' (presidents') conferences, qualification authorities, informal agreement among HEIs of a country (state authorities are not actively involved, decisions are taken by the immediate actors of HE system – HEIS and/or quality assurance agencies)
- Provides elaborate methodological support – guidelines. Is permissive rather than prescriptive

Recommendation-based

- no express regulations from the state and no recommendations. ECTS is seen as a good practice.
- The HEIs relate directly to European documents in the spirit of open-coordination method – informal consensus model

Implementation of ECTS – evaluation in Bologna reports

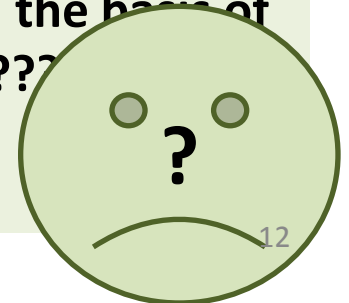
Bologna stocktaking report 2009 m.



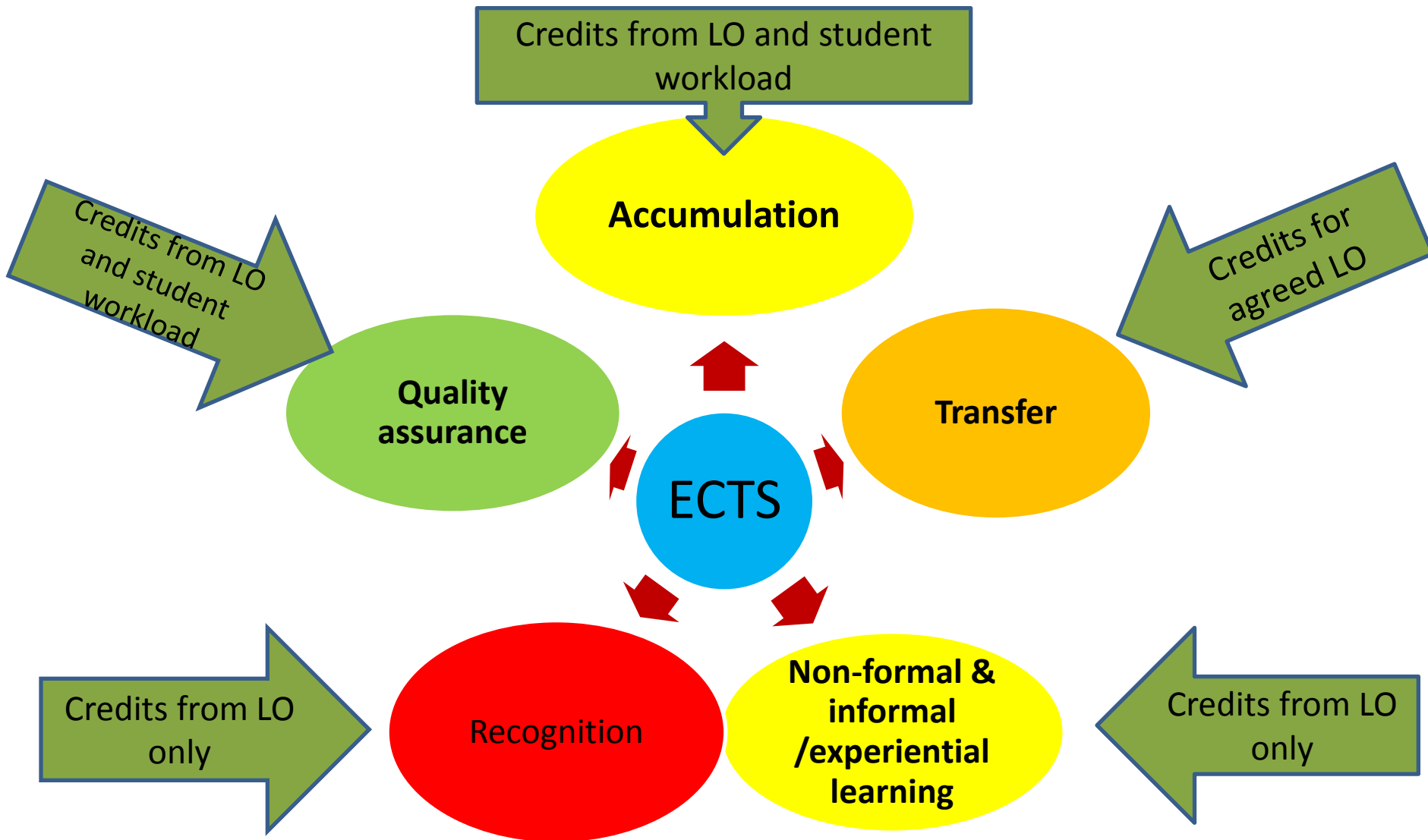
“ One of the concerns...is that HEIS may learn how to provide a technically correct formal description of LO without implementing them in practice.”

Bologna Process Implementation Report 2012

1. The use of ECTS for credit transfer and accumulation has been more or less implemented
2. Linking of credits with LO hinders the full implementation of ECTS???
3. It is positive that no country allocates credits on the basis of contact hours only???



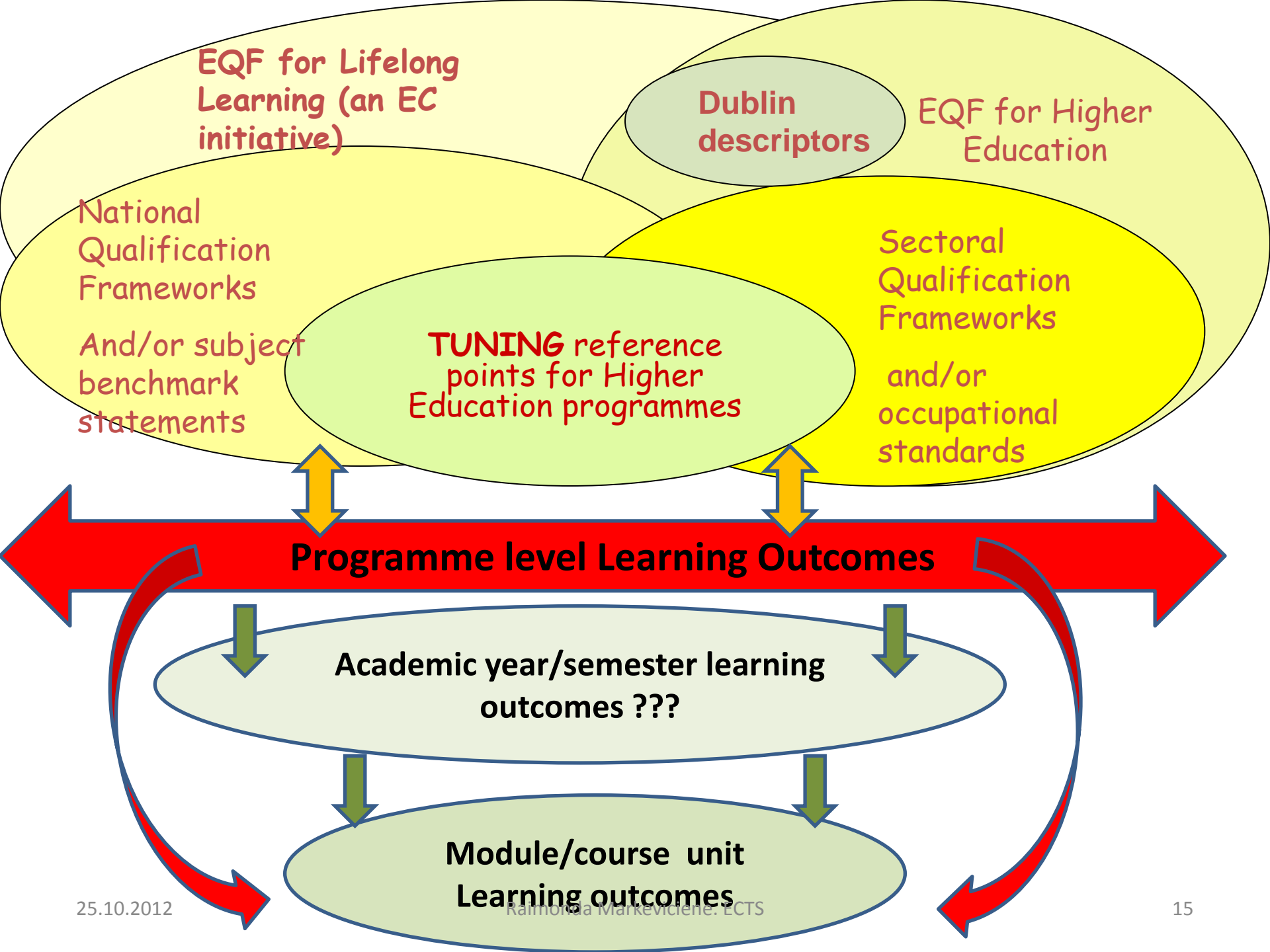
Application of ECTS – macro level



ECTS for accumulation

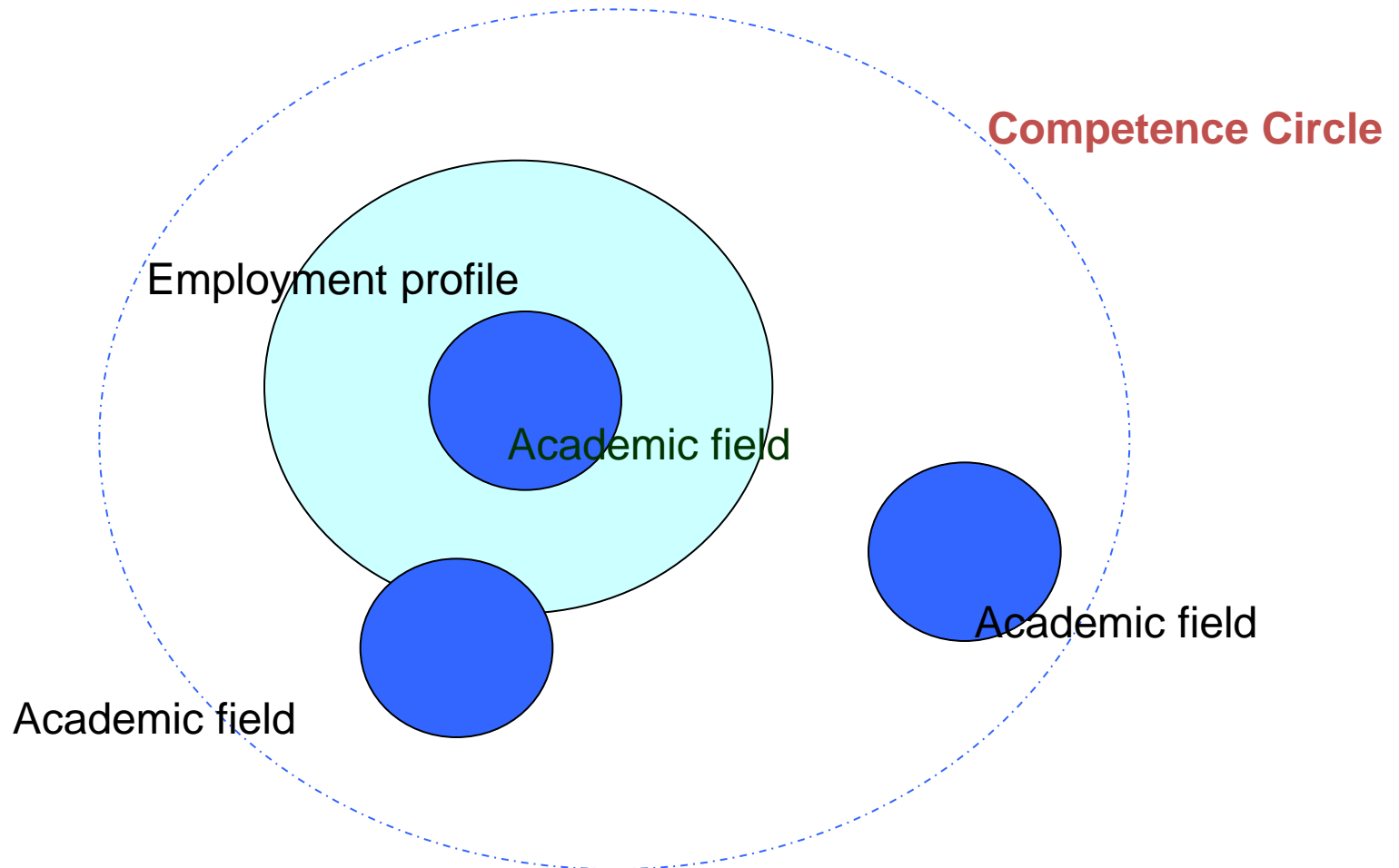


Learning Outcomes
are the building
blocks of European
Higher Education
Reform (Stephen Adam 2004)



Competences and Learning outcomes

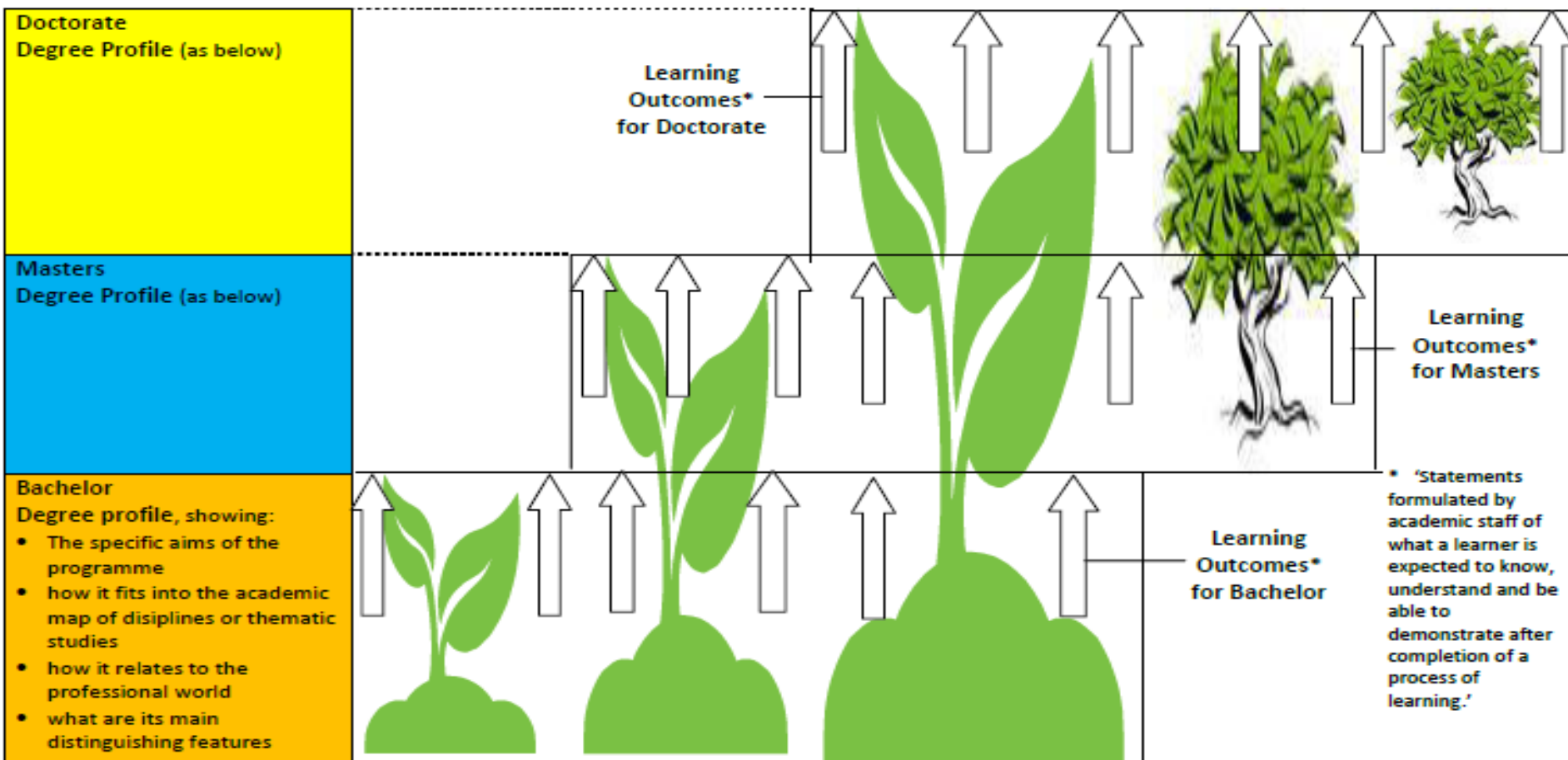
Academic area vs. professional area and competences



Relationship between competences and LO

(by Jeremy Cox, Polifonia)

Competences: 'a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities [...] formed in different course units and assessed at different stages'



Competences and Learning Outcomes

Competences – A dynamic combination of cognitive and metacognitive skills, knowledge and understanding, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills, ethical values and attitudes

Learning outcomes - Statements of what the learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do after completion of a process of learning .

confused

Dictated by job market and societal needs. Property of a student which (s)he “takes away” after the process of learning.

Expressed through competences. Show the level of the developed competence. Show the requirements to obtain credits. Formulated by academics. Have to be tested.

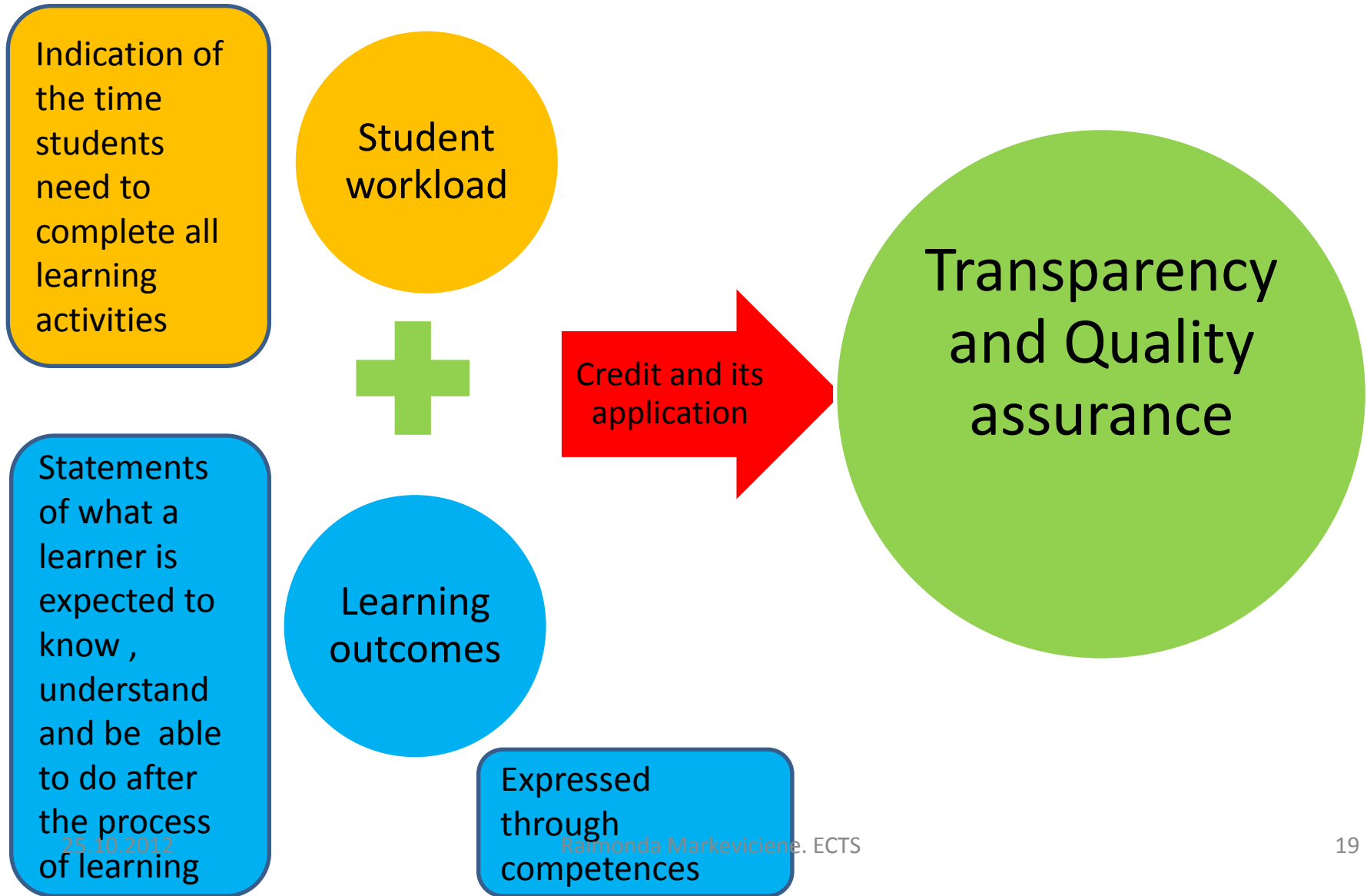
E.g: Awareness of the connections between present -day issues and the past

E.g.: is able to describe historiographical tendencies of the last 20 years and to identify the major actors in the debate about modernity , post-modernity and globalization and the related understanding of the relationships between world’s peoples.

Bachelor of History - Generic competence

LO

Application of ECTS at micro level - a study programme perspective



Characteristics of Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do after successful completion of a process of learning.

they must be assessed therefore they need to be obtainable and measurable

they need to contain an appropriate active verb

involve students in undertaking work and therefore have a workload associated with them

need to be written in a holistic context taking into account the Learning and Assessment

Feedback should be given in relation to Learning Outcomes

Programme vs module Learning outcomes



Programme

- Broad
- Achievable
- Integrated
- Generalised version of module LO



Module

- Specific
- Assessable
- Performance based
- Specific to subject area level

Time and Learning outcomes

Time is unchangeable dimension; It is absolute but at the same time relative

- It is basis for organizing life (even smallest activity requires time)
- Becoming competent requires time and experience

The concept of productivity is related to the concept of Learning Outcomes: what can be done (achieved) in the given timeframe. This depends on many factors:

- Diversity of traditions; Curriculum design and context; Coherence of curriculum; Teaching and learning methods; Methods of assessment and performance; Organization of teaching and learning; Ability and diligence of the student; Personal and material means available

The time and a study programme


The notional learning time is the time an average student will need to meet the expected learning outcomes.

The actual time will differ from student to student


These concepts are used to design a degree programme or a course unit or module: a realistic estimation for calculating time

If the notion is accepted that students should work 38 to 40 hours a week during 36 to 40 weeks it implies the following:


A normal study programme has an official load of 60 ECTS credits per academic year



A second cycle programme (Master) of 90 ECTS is normally based on 14-15 study months (57-60 weeks)



For all programmes that last 1520-1680 hours (38-42 weeks) and are given more than 60 credits and explanation should be provided



High level programmes or fast track programmes do not influence the number of credits in the academic year but affect learning outcomes.

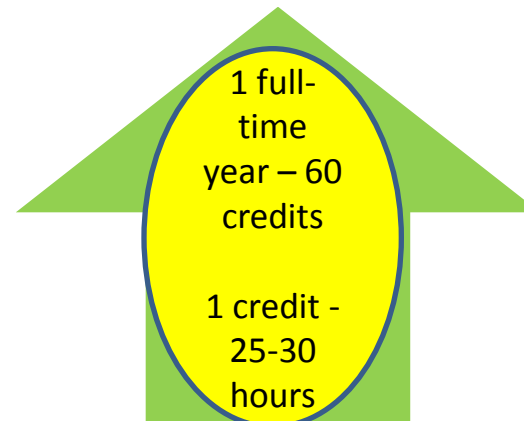
Student workload – tasks have to be consistent with allocated time

Suggestion: studies have to be planned so that student would work about 40 hours per week and 160 hours per month, i.e. standard working week



Workload is affected by: learning environment, LO, teaching methods, assessment methods, cultural peculiarities and differences

Important how students themselves perceive workload. It seems more heavy when: they have to use more different sources; have to reproduce knowledge; the content of subject is not clear; teacher-student relationship is tense.



Suggestion: Students must also be provided time for their independent work and thinking process – essence of learning

Credit allocation

Notes: Credit allocation that ensures quality of studies is a long process that requires student feedback, constant analysis and teachers' team-work.

There is no direct link between contact hours and credits.

Number of credits do not relate to importance or prestige of the course.

- LO are defined for each component, activities foreseen and workload estimated;
- Proposals are collected, analyzed and estimated workload expressed in

Bottom-up
(course unit
system)

- Pre-defined number of credits are allocated per component;
- Feasible LO and learning activities are defined on the basis of the allocated time;

Top-down
(modular
system)

- Staff agrees on components that are given the same number of credits (time);
- LO and learning activities are defined on the basis of allocated time;
- After teaching period the modules are compared – are LO, activities, and time

Comparative
(modular
system)

ECTS key documents

Course catalogue

- Regular guide for all students attending the institution
- Presented on the web according to the included checklist

Student application form

- ECTS Student Application Form for the mobile students

Learning agreement

- Learning Agreement for home students
- Learning Agreement for mobile students
- Learning Agreement for work placements

Transcript of records

- Transcript of Records for all home students
- Transcript of Records for mobile students

ECTS for transfer - key words for mobility

Diversity

- language, culture, academic system, contents, programme teaching methods, housing food, social activities

Transparency

- academic programmes, services, exchange procedures

Cooperation

- between home and host institutions, between academics and administrators, between learners and teachers

Trust

- between cooperating institutions

Recognition

- respect of partner institution's input and efforts in providing experience for our students


Suggestions for recognition

- **Good practice**

Institutional framework

Replacing the whole period (e.g. Study period abroad -30 ECTS credits) – Note: ToR of partner institution should become a part of the DS

Translating /transferring course titles of partner institutions and using partner credits

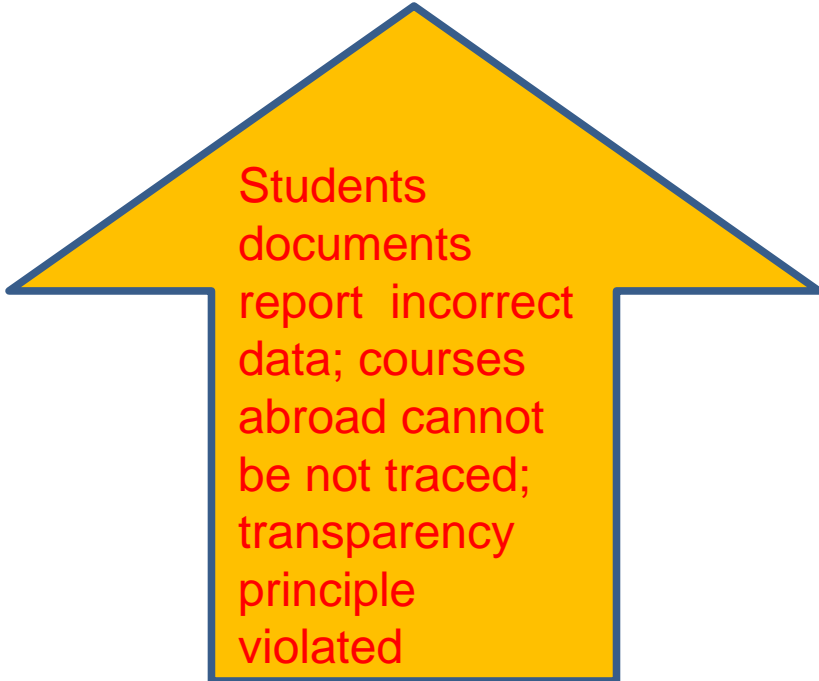


Transparency
in students'
learning path;
Respect to
partners;
Credit thinking

25.10.2012

Not recommended

Replacing partner course titles and credits with those of the applicant institution;



Students
documents
report incorrect
data; courses
abroad cannot
be not traced;
transparency
principle
violated

29

Application of ECTS at micro level - a student perspective

Credit as a tool leading to qualification

Accumulation - how many, what credits (type, level) and when

Transfer from various study contexts into the study programme

Importance of HEI internal regulations:

“Ageing” of the credits

Compensation

Condonment

“Credit” thinking of HEI

“Where a student is granted exemption from part of the programme of study on the basis of credit transfer, the marks obtained by the student for such prior learning will not be used for classification purposes”. U-ty of Kent

Education is not the filling of a pail,
but the lighting of a fire.

William Butler Yeats



Thank you for your attention!