



EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE JOINT EUROPEAN DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

Status: adopted by The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region at its 4th session in Bucharest, Romania 19 June 2007

Since the Diploma Supplement was adopted in 1999, it has been adopted as part of national legislation in many countries. Since 1999, there have been significant developments within higher education, notably as concerns the development of joint degrees¹ and of transnational or crossborder higher education provision². Other significant developments include the development of external quality assurance and/or accreditation and the introduction, within the European Higher Education Area, of national and overarching qualifications frameworks. Within the Bologna Process, Ministers have committed to issuing the Diploma Supplement automatically, free of charge and in a widely spoken European language by 2005.

¹ See the Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint degrees, adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee in 2004, available at <http://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=836481&BackColorInternet=9999CC&BackColorIntranet=FFBB55&BackColorLogged=FFAC75>

² 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, 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>.

The Diploma Supplement has also been incorporated in the Europass established by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers in 2004³.

Where qualifications are issued as joint degrees, double or multiple degrees or under transnational/borderless education arrangements, this should be noted in the Diploma Supplement, in particular in points 2.1, 2.3, 2.4 4.1, 4.3 6.1 and 8. Consortia offering joint degrees would be well advised to provide information packages on their degrees. Where relevant, these may be included with the Diploma Supplement.

(The numbers below refer to the numbered sections in the Diploma Supplement.)

1 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 1.1 Provide the full family or surname(s).
- 1.2 Include all given/first names.
- 1.3 Indicate day, month and year of birth.
- 1.4 This should identify the individual as a student enrolled on the particular programme which is covered by 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

- 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). Indicate if the award confers any nationally accepted title on the holder and what this title is e.g. *Doctor, Ingénieur* etc, and, if appropriate, a specific professional competence, such as "teacher of French". Indicate if the title is protected in law. If the qualification is a joint degree, this should be indicated.
- 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.

³ <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).

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, with indication of the institution at which the major part of the qualification has been obtained, if applicable.

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. 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 private non-university institution which has undergone external quality assurance by agency X in [name of the country] in 2003 with satisfactory results”.

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 that other institution 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 Indicate the language(s) by which the qualification was delivered and examined.

3 INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION

3.1 Give the precise level of qualification and its place in the specific national educational structure of awards (explained and cross-referenced to the information in section eight). For countries that have established a national qualifications framework, give the place of the qualification within the national qualifications framework. The framework itself should be described in point 8. Include any relevant information on “level indicators” that are nationally devised and recognised and which relate to the qualification.

3.2 Explain the official duration or workload of the programme in weeks or years and the actual workload including information on any major sub-components i.e. practical training. Preferably, the workload should be expressed in terms of total student effort required. This consists of the normal designated time on the programme including taught classes and private study, examinations etc. Where possible, the effort should be described in terms of credit, and the credit system should be described. European

countries should translate the workload required for the qualification into the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)⁴.

- 3.3 List or explain the nature and length or workload of access qualification(s) or periods of study required for access to the programme described by this Diploma Supplement 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 to the named qualification.

4 INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED

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

- 4.2 Where available, provide details of the learning outcomes, knowledge, skills, competencies and stated aims and objectives associated with the qualification. This information, which relates to outcomes rather than procedures of learning, will increasingly be the key basis on which qualifications are assessed.

If applicable, provide details of the regulations covering the minimum requirements to secure the qualification, e.g. any compulsory components or compulsory practical elements, whether all elements have to be passed simultaneously, any thesis/dissertation regulations etc. Include details of any particular features that help define the qualification, especially information on the requirements for successfully passing it.

- 4.3 Give details of each of the individual elements or parts of the qualification and their weighting. For institutions that issue transcripts of studies, it will be sufficient to include the transcripts.

List the actual marks and/or grades obtained in each major component of the qualification. Entries should be as complete as possible and in accordance with what is normally recorded at the institution concerned. Cover all examinations and assessed components and/or fields of study offered in examination, including any dissertation or thesis. Indicate if the latter were defended or not. All this information is often available in the form of a transcript (a useful format for transcripts has been developed for the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System [ECTS], see point 3.2 above). Many credit-based systems employ detailed transcripts that can be integrated into the wider framework of the Diploma Supplement. If information on the credit allocation between course components and units is available it should be included.

If the qualification is a joint degree, indicate what parts of the qualification have been earned at which institution.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/index_en.html

- 4.4 Provide information on the grading scheme 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. A mark of 70% in some academic cultures is highly regarded whilst in other countries it is regarded as average or poor. Information on the use and distribution of grades relating to the qualification in question should be included. If more than one grading scheme is used, e.g. in the case of joint degrees, information should be provided on all schemes used for the qualification in question.
- 4.5 If appropriate, indicate the overall classification for the final qualification i.e. *First Class Honours Degree, Summa Cum Laude, Merit, Avec Distinction* etc.

5 INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

- 5.1 Indicate if within the country of origin, the qualification normally provides access to further academic and/or professional study, especially leading to any specific qualifications, or levels of study e.g. access to Doctoral studies in Hungary. If this is the case, specify the grades or standards that have to be obtained to allow progression. Indicate if the qualification is a terminal (end) award or part of a hierarchy of awards.
- 5.2 Give details of any rights to practise, or professional status accorded to the holders of the qualification, in accordance with national legislation. What specific access, if any, does the qualification give in terms of employment or professional practice and indicate which competent authority allows this. Indicate if the qualification gives access to a 'regulated profession'.

6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 6.1 Add any additional information not included above but relevant to the purposes of assessing the nature, level and usage of the qualification e.g. whether the qualification involved a period of study/training in another institution/company/country or, include further relevant details about the higher education institution where the qualification was taken. If the qualification is a joint or double/multiple degree, or if it was earned under a transnational or borderless education arrangement, this should be noted here.
- 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 institution; 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

- 7.1 The date the Diploma Supplement was issued. This would not necessarily be the same date the qualification was awarded.
- 7.2 The name and signature of the official certifying the Diploma Supplement.
- 7.3 The official post of the certifying individual.
- 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

Give information on the higher educational system: its general access requirements; the national qualifications framework (where applicable), types of institution and the quality assurance or accreditation system⁵. 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 2005⁶. 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 as a result of this project and 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.

⁵ 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.

⁶ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/BASIC/050520_Framework_qualifications.pdf