

Austria – Switzerland: Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Equivalences in Higher Education

Recommendations of the Permanent Experts Committee according to Article 6 of the agreement¹

1. Scope of application (Art. 1)

1.1 Institutions of higher education:

in Austria the public universities
 the private higher education institutions
 the universities of applied sciences
 the university colleges of teacher education

in Switzerland the universities
 the universities of applied sciences, including those in the arts
 the university colleges of teacher education

1.2 Academic degrees:

in Austria at the public universities:

- Bachelor, Master²
- diploma degrees (Magistra/Magister..., Diplom-Ingenieurin/Diplom-Ingenieur)
- doctoral degrees (Doktorin/Doktor, PhD)

 at the private higher education institutions:

- Bachelor, Master
- diploma degrees (Magistra/Magister..., Diplom-Ingenieurin/Diplom-Ingenieur)
- licence degree

¹ These recommendations have been elaborated by both Contracting Countries on the basis of the experiences in the application of this agreement, and have passed the Permanent Experts Committee lastly on 22nd September 2010. These recommendations are not legally binding.

² The former designations *Bakkalaurea/Bakkalaureus* and *Magistra/Magister* are not any more awarded upon the completion of degree programmes according to the Bologna system.

- doctoral degrees (Doktorin/Doktor, PhD)

at the universities of applied sciences:

- Bachelor, Master
- diploma degrees (Magistra/Magister FH..., Diplom-Ingenieurin/Diplom-Ingenieur FH)

at the university colleges of teacher education:

- Bachelor of Education
- Master of Education

in Switzerland

at the universities:

- Bachelor, Master
- diploma degrees (Lizentiat, Diplom)
- doctorate and PhD

at the universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education:

- Bachelor, Master
- diplomas

Beyond that, in both countries exist Master's degrees in further education, which are awarded not on the basis of a degree programme, but of university continuing education courses, and which therefore are not in the scope of application of the agreement (art. 1).

1.3 Examinations:

All kinds of examinations and other proofs of achievement which are prescribed in the course of a given degree programme in the study regulations of the relevant institution of higher education.

1.4 Third countries:

The agreement shall apply to all persons regardless to their nationality. On the contrary, studies are covered only insofar as they have indeed been carried out at institutions of higher education of the both countries. In case that only parts of them have been carried out in one of the two countries the agreement shall apply only to these parts. The recognition in one of the two Contracting Countries, however, is an indicator for the quality of the studies in a third country.

1.5 More favourable national provisions:

More favourable national provisions shall remain unchanged.

2. Recognition of examinations (Art. 2)

2.1 Achievements (ECTS credits):

The achievements which have been attested by an institution of higher education shall be recognized by an institution of higher education of the other country as equivalent to the prescribed achievements, provided that the study programme has been subject-relevant. Whether or not this is the case, shall be identified by the receiving institution by means of an overall assessment of the contents (not on the basis of a detailed review).

2.2 Examinations:

2.2.1 Examinations in equal subjects (i.e. subjects which on principle correspond to each other and in which the ECTS credits are equal or only slightly differing) should be mutually recognized without deliberating the extent and the contents of the examinations in detail.

2.2.2 On the occasion of a switch to the relevant other Contracting Country after having passed successfully a part of the relevant studies in the valance of four semesters or, respectively, 120 ECTS credits only those special requirements according to art. 2 para. 1 last phrase shall be demanded which are possibly prescribed in the receiving country after such a part of studies; on the contrary, those educational requirements which are prescribed at an earlier stage, especially before admission to the first semester, are considered fulfilled.

3. Admission to further studies (Art. 3)

A person who has completed a study programme in one country by a diploma according to art. 1 para. 2 of the agreement shall on principle be entitled to be admitted to a subject-relevant magister or master, doctoral, post-graduate, or post-diploma programme in the other country. The subject-relevance shall be identified by the receiving institution on the basis of its study regulations. Prerequisites for that shall be the proof of the right to be immediately admitted to the respective further study programme at an institution of higher education of the sending country, as well as the existing possibility of such a transfer according to the law in the receiving country. A detailed review of the preceding higher education programme which has been completed in the other country shall not take place. – Admission to a further study programme and the completion of it does not include the validation (*Nostrifizierung*, i.e. the transformation into a national diploma) of the preceding diploma.

4. Use of academic degrees (Art. 4)

Academic degrees from one country may be used in the respective other country like in the country of award, either in full wording or in the official abbreviation (according to the diploma of award and/or the legal provisions of the country of origin), in front or, respectively, behind the name; on demand they shall be registered in official documents. In that, in Switzerland the reguations of CRUS, EVD and EDK shall apply. In Austria, art. 88 of

the Universities Act 2002 – UG shall apply; Swiss degrees shall be registered in official documents like those of the EEA countries. The corresponding academic degree of the receiving country shall not be used. The right to use academic degrees does not cause further rights; especially it does not include the validation (*Nostrifizierung*, i.e. the transformation into a national diploma), even in case that with regard to the designation of some academic degrees there is no difference to academic degrees of the respective other country; in those cases the distinction can be made only on the basis of the diploma of award. – Professional designations, professional titles or other titles do not have the character of academic degrees and are therefore not covered by art. 4.

5. General provisions (Art. 5)

All other provisions on admission to studies, e.g. questions of university entrance qualification, the requirement of artistic aptitude tests, restrictions of study places, admission procedures, as well as special admission periods and quotas for foreigners, remain unchanged and are therefore applicable also between Austria and Switzerland.

6. Information

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