

## Change of University within Austria in the same Field of Study, Recommendation (Anerkennungsempfehlung Österreich)

The “Working Group on Recognition”, composed by representatives of the universities, Universities Austria (uniko), the Austrian National Union of Students (ÖH), and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, has adopted the following recommendation:

### General

After a student has changed from one Austrian university to another, he or she can make an application for recognition of the equivalent examinations according to art. 78 para. 1 of the Universities Act 2002 – UG, BGBl. I No. 120/2002, as amended. However, the examinations which have been passed at one Austrian university for a given subject shall, when continuing the same study at another Austrian university, in any case be recognized for the equal subject, provided that the ECTS credits are equal or differ only to a less extent. The same applies to studies which have been started at a university of the European Union or the European Economic Area, and continued in Austria. Such kinds of recognition can be laid down in the curriculum in a general way.

### Correspondence of subjects and studies

#### - Ascertainment of the “same study”:

Although there do not exist two identical studies at two different universities, certain fields of study can, with regard to their technical and didactical orientation, correspond so far that they can be treated as the “same studies”. For that, especially the correspondence in the designations of the fields of study, in the core subjects and in the orientation according to the qualification profiles can be of relevance. In some cases also the ECTS information package, particularly the annotated list of courses, can be useful.

For the practical work it is recommended to make use of the compilations on the range of studies at all universities, which are published on the homepage of the BMWFW under “[Studying in Austria](#)”, as well as under “[Studienwahl](#)”.

### **- Ascertainment of the “equal subject”:**

The following criteria should in any case be used for the assessment of the examinations passed at the respective other university, and be measured to the corresponding criteria of the own curriculum:

- Function of the examination subject within the overall scope of the curriculum, especially with regard to the essence, the aim and the qualification profile of the study concerned (core subject, supplementary subject, minor subject, specialization or others)
- contents of the examination subject (restricted to its main areas)
- extent of the workload linked to the examination subject (especially based on the ECTS credits)
- kind of assessment of performance.

The particular examination result, however, should not be used for the assessment of the „equality“.

It is recommended, in the case of correspondence of the ECTS credits of at least 80%, to assume the recognizability of the subject concerned anyhow, in the case of a minor extent of correspondence to do so on a case-by-case basis.

The semester hours can serve as an additional aid of information, particularly for the question of the kind of assessment of performance, or, respectively, as a compensation for ECTS, where this has already not been fully applied. A correspondence of the semester hours could serve as a compensation for a certain difference with regard to the ECTS credits.

### **Criteria for the equivalence of examinations**

#### **- “Main areas” of curricula:**

Because of different curricula for the same studies it is recommended that the authorities who are responsible for study matters according to art. 19 para. 2 subpara. 2 UG have reprocessed the curricula within their responsibility in a standardized way, which would make possible an effective execution of applications for recognition.

One possible approach for that would be the introduction of “main areas”:

- Out of the curriculum those examination subjects will be identified which have in any case to be passed in order that the given study program can be completed. These examination subjects will form the characterizing framework and the distinguishing profile of this respective program. They are not necessarily identical with the term “required subjects” – which is not any more a legal term –, because the latter can in some cases be replaced by equivalent other subjects. This framework would in case that the study would completely be executed at the receiving university absolutely compulsory, and will build, as a consequence of that, a first scale (“Main area 1”). Where there has been an identified substantial correspondence between certain universities, it

is recommended to use the possibility of global recognition of a main area or parts of it. ("Package recognitions"), at which one could rely on the ECTS credits and approve admission to further studies at the receiving university at that stage which corresponds to the position reached with regard to ECTS credits.

- Where in the curriculum exist possibilities for the choice of subjects out of a binding catalogue – this would mean on the one hand the "restricted elective subjects" according to the terminology of the Universities Studies Act – UniStG, BGBl. I No. 48/1997, in the last version in force, but on the other hand also such examination subjects for which there exists under certain requirements the possibility of compensation by equivalent other subjects –, all kinds of laid down alternatives will build an equivalent scale ("Main area 2").
- All other examinations which are laid down in the curriculum (according to the terminology of the UniStG that would mean the "elective subjects") will build a remaining pool which will not be further defined ("Extensive area").

This classification makes possible a simple comparison of the required achievements and offers a rather transparent kind of recognition, equilibration and equal treatment of all students concerned.

Those examinations which can be assigned neither to Main area 1 nor to Main area 2, should be assigned to the Extensive area, and, if possible, be recognized as a compensation for a subject which would otherwise be required.

This model would not mean an amendment to curricula, but only their standardized, internal reprocessing for recognition purposes. In doing so, there could be identified subjects of equal contents and be defined as a "must" for a given field of study. Consequently, technical depictions of the single study programs, as they already exist for the purposes of examination evidences, transcripts and Diploma Supplements, should be used for recognition procedures to a bigger extent.

Provided that these efforts would be done with regard to the „same studies“ in a coordinated way between different universities, changes between them could happen in a rather satisfactory way.

#### **- Modularization:**

Where it seems possible from the view of the respective curriculum, there should be initiated a modularization of the study program with specific regard to optimal trespasses and paths of recognition. The European average for that corresponds more or less to:

- 5 modules per semester each with 6 ECTS credits, or
- 6 modules per semester each with 5 ECTS credits, or
- a multiplicative of it.

## **Duration of procedure**

The duration up to the presentation of the complete documentation varies because of the different standards and formalities and, as a consequence of that, the administrative efforts. From the date of the filing of the respective application, the duration shall be not more than two months according to art. 78 para. 8 UG.

There should be the utmost effort in order to decide a major part of the admission applications in the first instance.