

Review of the ECTS Users' Guide

14 January 2026

We will start at 11:00



Agenda

11:00-11:05	Welcome
11:05-11:30	BFUG update and follow-up
11:30-12:45	Revised ECTS Users' Guide – openness for use outside HE
12:45-13:45	Lunch break
13:45-15:00	Revised ECTS Users' Guide – grade transparency and conversion
15:00-15:30	Revised ECTS Users Guide – next steps
15:30	End

Welcome and opening

Susanne Conze, European Commission – DG EAC

Head of Unit – B.1 Higher education

BFUG update and follow-up

Susanne Conze, European Commission – DG EAC

Head of Unit – B.1 Higher education

Feedback from the BFUG

- Overall positive reactions
- Update to recent EHEA developments appreciated
- Generally positive on clarity
- Major issue: BFUG divided on opening ECTS (explicitly) for use outside HE
 - Some countries supportive (IE, UK, AD, FI, GE, MT)
 - Some countries have reservations or open questions (AT, ES, LV, NO, RO, SI)

Feedback from the BFUG

- Additional substantial issues raised (meeting and written comments):
 - Indication of QF levels for all ECTS credits (FI, AD)
 - Clarify how ECTS are awarded for informal/non-formal learning
- No comments on grade transparency/conversion by BFUG

Revised ECTS Users' Guide – openness for use outside HE

Colin Tück

Main concerns and reservations

- Reliability of QA arrangements
 - HE sector has very robust and established QA framework with ESG + EQAR
 - No similar Europe-wide framework for other sectors: EQF principles are more generic, and there is no European certification/review mechanism
 - Types of education providers, i.e. could ECTS be used by non-formal providers?
- Trust and transferability
 - Currently, any ECTS credit is at higher education level and should in principle be automatically recognised throughout EHEA
 - When opening, ECTS credits can be at different levels and from different sectors
- Question whether EHEA ministers should decide to open ECTS

Suggested approaches

- Reliability of QA arrangements
 - Emphasise link of credits to national QF and related certification/accreditation processes
 - Award credits only for learning opportunities that are formally part of the NQF
- Trust and transferability
 - Emphasise that ECTS always need to come with a level indication
 - Recognition between levels is fully in the receiving institution's/authority's autonomy
- Question whether EHEA ministers should decide to open ECTS
 - Underline the voluntary nature of using ECTS outside HE

Lunchbreak

We come back at 13h30

Revised ECTS Users' Guide – grade transparency and conversion

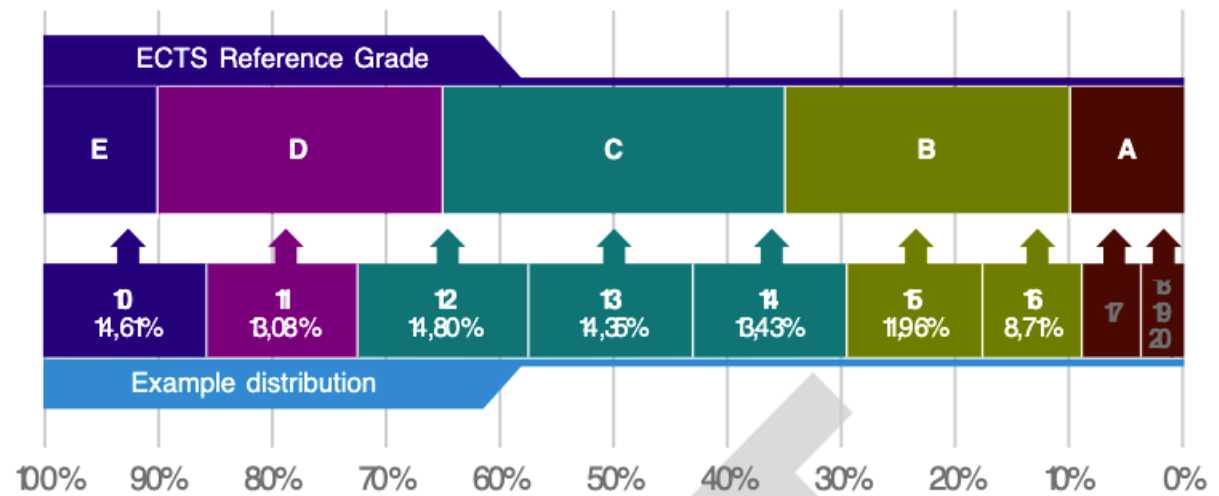
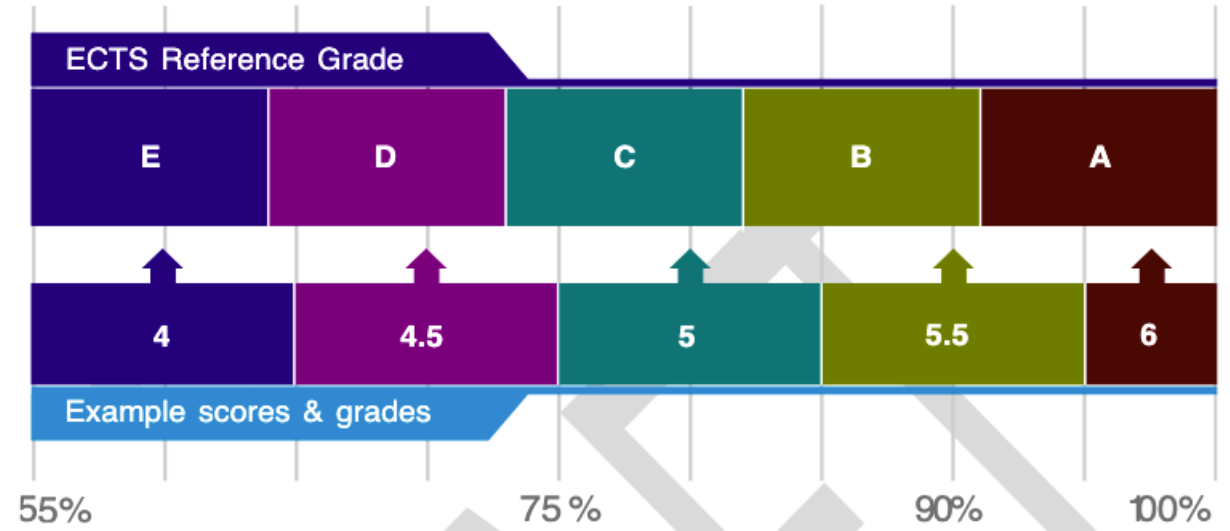
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Remarks on the current proposal

- Pragmatic proposal:
 - Recognise the complexity of the issue
 - Reflect the continued use of the A-E/F scale in practice
 - Not a perfect solution, we will probably never find that – instead:
 - enhance transparency
 - make conversion possible in more scenarios
- Transparency:
 - Original grades are reported
 - Must be accompanied by ECTS reference grade (qualitative)
 - Should be accompanied by grade distribution (statistical)

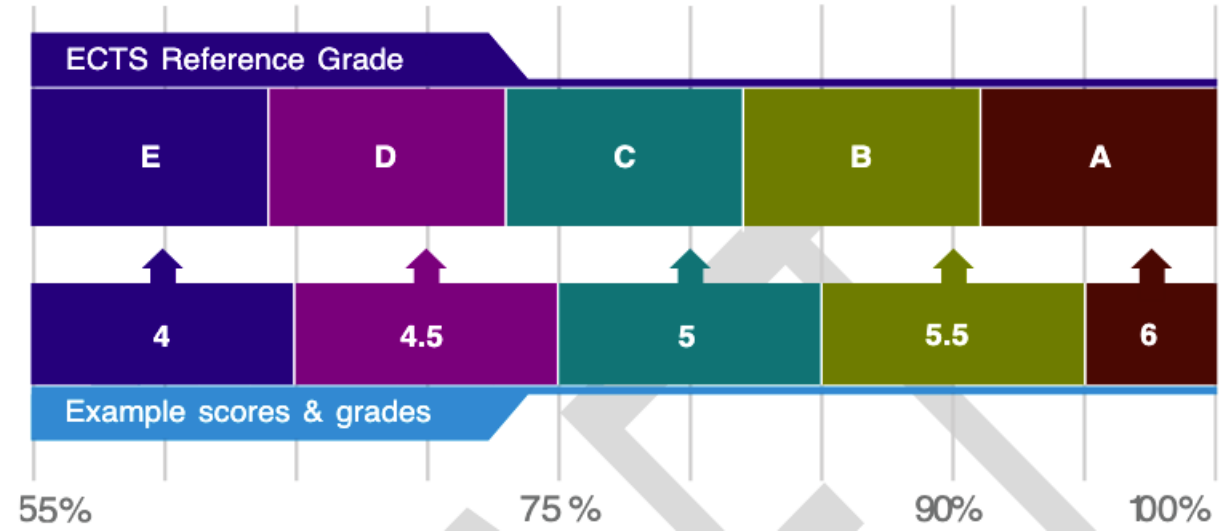
Reference scale

ECTS Reference Grade	Label	Definition	Option 1	Option 2
			Normalised scores (0-100%, 50% threshold)	Indicative distribution (middle points)
A	Excellent	This grade represents outstanding performance in achieving the intended learning outcomes. The learner completed the assessment with only minor errors.	$S \geq 90$	ca. 10% $M \leq 10$
B	Very Good	The learner completed the assessment with some errors, but still exceeding average expected performance significantly.	$80 \leq S < 90$	ca. 25% $10 < M \leq 35$
C	Good	The learner has achieved the intended learning outcomes and completed the assessment and with some errors, representing average expected performance.	$70 \leq S < 80$	ca. 30% $35 < M \leq 65$
D	Satisfactory	The learner has achieved the intended learning outcomes, but completed the assessment with a number of significant errors.	$60 \leq S < 70$	ca. 25% $65 < M \leq 90$
E	Sufficient	The learner has achieved the intended learning outcomes at a minimum level, but completed the assessment with a number of major errors.	$50 \leq S < 60$	ca. 10% $M > 90$
F	Fail	The learner has failed to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The assessment showed several major errors or misunderstandings.	$S < 50$	n/a



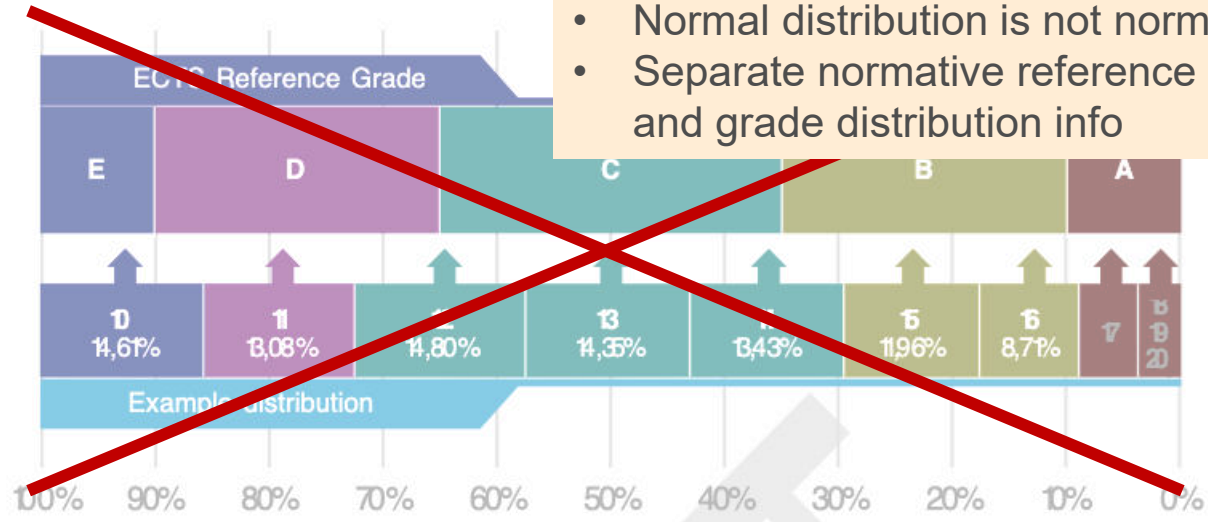
Reference scale

ECTS Reference Grade	Label	Definition	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
			Normalised scores (0-100%, 50% threshold)	Indicative distribution (middle points)	
A	Excellent	This grade represents outstanding performance in achieving the intended learning outcomes. The learner completed the assessment with only minor errors.	$S \geq 90$	ca. 10% $M \leq 10$	
B	Very Good	The learner completed the assessment with some errors, but still exceeding average expected performance significantly.	$80 \leq S < 90$	ca. 20% $10 < M \leq 35$	
C	Good	The learner has achieved the intended learning outcomes and completed the assessment and with some errors, representing average expected performance.	$70 \leq S < 80$	ca. 30% $35 < M \leq 65$	
D	Satisfactory	The learner has achieved the intended learning outcomes, but completed the assessment with a number of significant errors.	$60 \leq S < 70$	ca. 20% $65 < M \leq 90$	
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F	Fail	The learner has failed to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The assessment showed several major errors or misunderstandings.	$S < 50$	n/a	



Drop the indicative distribution:

- Normal distribution is not normal
- Separate normative reference scale and grade distribution info



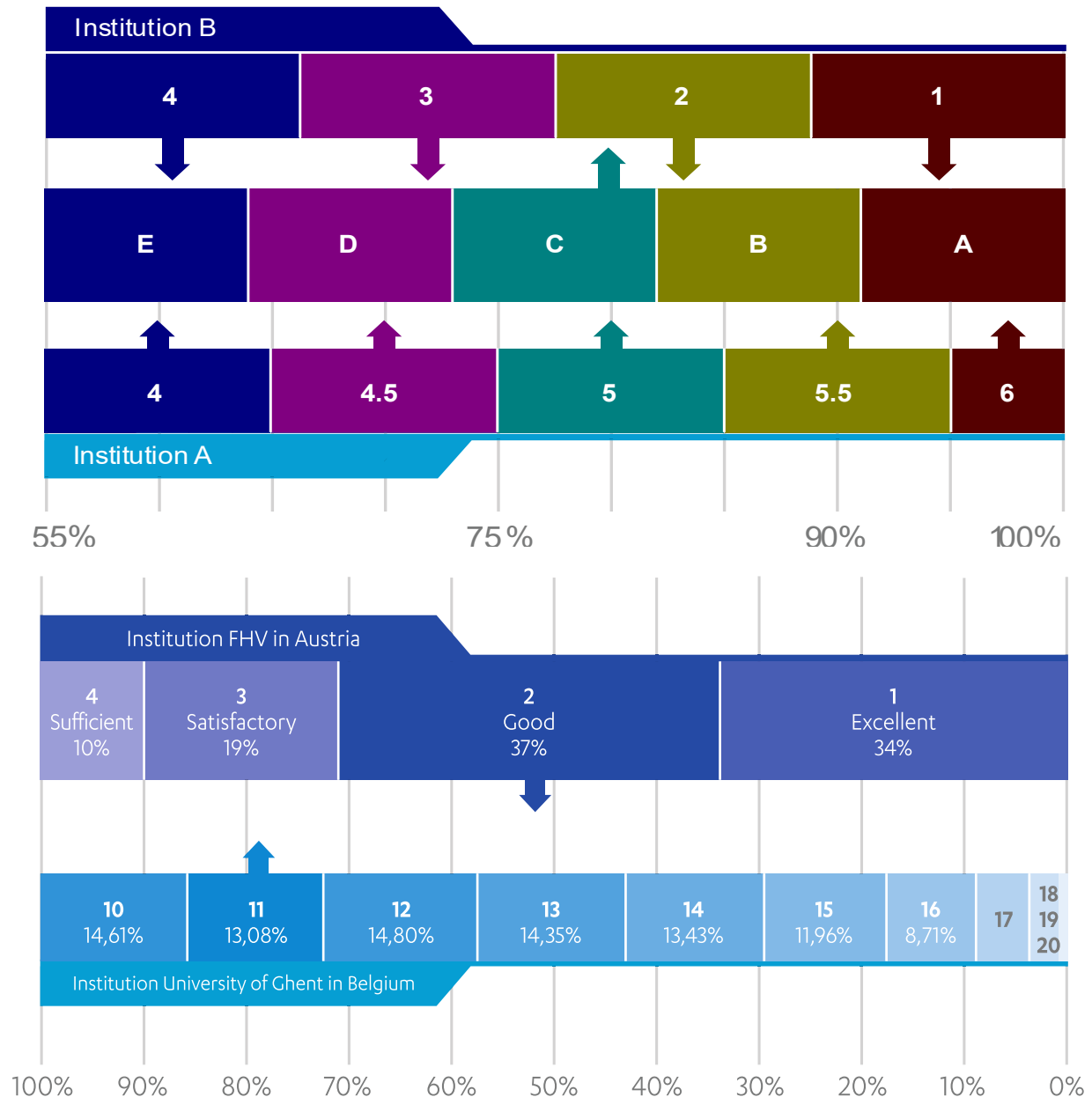
Grade conversion

Method A:

- Via reference table
- Newly added/reintroduced
- Works if mapping is available, should be a requirement

Method B:

- Direct distribution comparison
- Same method as in 2015 Guide, ensure backwards compatibility
- Both distributions needed



NB: methods that can be used, but only if needed or desired

Revised ECTS Users' Guide – next steps

Colin Tück

Next steps

- Optional:
 - Circulate new draft to BFUG by 20 January
 - Comments until 10 February
- Incorporate and final draft to AG & BFUG by 23 February
- BFUG on 9/10 March (should endorse final draft)

Thank you!