

**ECTS Label
DS Label**

**GUIDELINES FOR
APPLICANTS**

1. Introduction

1.1 Period of validity of the ECTS/DS labels

Once approved, the ECTS and DS labels remain in principle valid from **2011 to 2014**.

1.2 Eligible countries

In order to be eligible, applicant institutions must be located within the EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Turkey.

1.3 Eligible institutions

Applications for the ECTS/DS labels can be submitted by an institution which has been awarded a Standard or an Extended Erasmus University Charter (Standard Charter and Student placements) until the end of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

1.4 Language of the application

To be eligible, the application for the ECTS/DS labels must be submitted to the National Agency concerned and prepared in one of the official languages of the European Union: Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish, Slovak, Slovene or Swedish.

1.5 Where to obtain the application forms

The National Agency of the applicant will provide the application forms:

Webpage or postal address of National Agency (to be added by the NA concerned)

2. Submission of applications

2.1 Deadline for submission

Applications must be sent by **15 May 2011** (as per postmark) to the National Agency concerned. Applications bearing a postmark after this date will not be considered.

It is strongly recommended sending applications by such means that allow a **proof of dispatch** (registered post, express courier, etc.).

2.2 Application Form

Applicants shall submit their application for the ECTS/DS labels by using the **official application form** provided by the National Agency concerned.

The applicant must send one **complete original version** of the application (and all annexes) **duly signed** by the legal representative of the applicant organisation and **two identical copies** (with annexes).

Applicants are also required to send an electronic version of their application to their National Agency by 15 May 2011.

Please note that applications sent by email or fax only will not be accepted.

2.3 Sending of the application

Applications must be sent by the deadline (by post/special carrier) to the following address of the National Agency of the applicant:

Postal Address and email of NA (to be added by NA)

2.4 Acknowledgement of receipt

Applicants will receive an acknowledgement of receipt from the National Agency concerned via e-mail sent to the e-mail address provided in section 1.1 of the application form.

3. Structure of the application forms

There are two different application forms, one for the ECTS label and one for the DS label. Each of those two application forms consists of three sections. They also both contain annexes with important information for applicants, including a list of **common pitfalls** (i.e., reasons for which applications were considered unsuccessful in 2009 and 2010).

The three sections in the application form are as follows:

- a first section for the identification of the applicant institution and provision of contact details;
- a second section in which the applicant institution is asked to provide the documents/information which will be assessed for the award of the ECTS/DS labels;
- a third section which must be signed by the legal representative of the applicant institution.

These three sections are embedded in the following structure:

3.1 Structure of the ECTS label application form

Section 1 – Identification

1.1 Applicant institution – legal representative

1.2 Applicant institution – ECTS coordinator

The contact information provided in this section will be used in all subsequent correspondence. Please notify any changes in this information if necessary (e.g. change of rector, etc.)

Section 2 – Documents required

2.1 Information package/Course catalogue

2.2 Complete ECTS student files (for three outgoing students and three incoming students)

Section 3 - Declaration

3.2 Structure of the DS label application form

Section 1 – Identification

1.1 Applicant institution – legal representative

1.2 Applicant institution – DS coordinator

Section 2 – Documents required

2.1 Examples of Diploma Supplement issued

2.2 Confirmation

2.3 Public information on the Diploma Supplement

Section 3 - Declaration

4. Selection procedure

The selection procedure for applications will consist of evaluation at national level by Bologna Experts in the applicant's country followed by a screening of all pre-selected applications by a panel of external experts at European level. The final selection decision will be taken by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and the European Commission.

4.1 The two-step evaluation procedure

1. Decentralised pre-selection coordinated by National Agencies

- Those Higher Education Institutions showing interest in obtaining the ECTS label and/or the DS label should fill in the official application form and submit it to the National Agency of the country where it is located.
- The National Agency will organise an evaluation with the assistance of Bologna experts, bearing in mind possible conflicts of interest.

- If the National Agency considers that a Higher Education Institution meets the criteria for the award of the ECTS/DS Labels, the National Agency will forward the application to the Executive Agency for a final evaluation and decision.
2. *A final selection by the Executive Agency, in consultation with the European Commission, assisted by a jury of external experts*
- The Executive Agency will nominate an ECTS / DS panel of external experts, who will examine all the applications for the ECTS/DS label put forward by the National Agencies. The Executive Agency, in consultation with the Commission, then takes the final decision about the award of the label. The Executive Agency may also organise an annual award ceremony.
 - The ECTS and DS labels will be honorary distinctions, and will be awarded for a three-year period (2011 – 2014).

4.2 Information on approved applications

The final results will be published on the Executive Agency's website at http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/selection_results_en.php

The EACEA will also inform all applicants individually by letter providing detailed feedback on the assessment results.

Subsequently, successful applicants will receive the ECTS/DS labels signed by the Executive Agency and the European Commission.

5. Assessment criteria

These guidelines refer to “**certified files/copies**”. Certification is to be given by means of one official stamp, signature of the authorised person of the institution and date of the applicant institution (per each ECTS student file/DS copy provided). Applications that are not correctly certified will be considered ineligible.

5.1 Quality criteria for the ECTS label

The criteria for the award of the ECTS label are:

- An Information Package/Course Catalogue in English which covers all the items in the checklist for the Information Package/Course Catalogue and is readily accessible on the applicant's website;
- Correct use of ECTS documents for mobile students (each ECTS student file must be certified);
- Proof of academic recognition.

To be eligible for the award of an ECTS label, an institution must be able to demonstrate that all departments within the institution use the ECTS mechanisms. Even in the case of

departments where there are no mobile students the Information Package/Course Catalogue must provide the information requested.

The ECTS label assessment is based on written evidence that an institution is applying ECTS mechanisms correctly in all first and second cycle degree programmes (and/or for all the one-tier programmes, if these are still on offer). Institutions must make their entire Information package/Course catalogue accessible online in English.

The assessment procedure will be as follows:

- The assessors will review the Information Package/Course Catalogue of the institution as published in English on the applicant's website.
- They will evaluate three degree programmes in three different faculties and three of the course units within these degree programmes.
- They will examine the ECTS files of three outgoing and three incoming students.

Assessment sheets will be prepared by EACEA and provided to all assessors at national and at European level.

5.2 Quality criteria for the Diploma Supplement Label

The criteria for the award of the DS label are:

- Issuing of the Diploma Supplement to all graduates in first and second cycle programmes offered by the institution (including for all the one-tier programmes, if these are still on offer), and, if so desired, in third cycle programmes, free of charge and in a widely spoken European language;
- Use of the standard DS model developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO;
- Public information (online) about the availability of the DS for all graduates, plus a filled-in example.

Four samples of **certified copies** of original Diploma Supplements actually issued to students should be provided.

The DS label assessment is based on written evidence that an institution is issuing the Diploma Supplement and on a written public statement that the DS is being issued automatically, in a widely spoken European language and free of charge to every student upon graduation.

The assessment procedure will be as follows:

- The assessors will examine the four certified copies of completed and signed Diploma Supplements, issued to graduates of the applicant institution.
- They will examine the public information about the DS made available on the applicant's webpage.

Assessment sheets will be prepared by EACEA and provided to all assessors at national and at European level.