



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

How the University of Gothenburg applies the ECTS Grade Interpretation Scheme

The University of Gothenburg uses a criterion-referenced grading system, based on learning outcomes, with a three-grade scale, grades Pass with Distinction, Pass, and Fail, as a principal rule. For some programmes and courses a two-grade scale, grades Pass and Fail, or a four-grade scale, grades Passed with Distinction, Passed with Credit, Pass and Fail, is used. The scale used for each course is established in the syllabus and is marked on the transcript of record and degree certificate with a footnote.

The so called ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) grading scale was developed for the Erasmus programme and is used internationally as an instrument for translation to facilitate the comparison of different national grading systems. Students studying abroad within certain exchange programmes get ECTS grades directly. The seven-grade ECTS scale is norm-referenced with the purpose to rank, on the basis of statistics, students in relation to others who have taken the same course or programme. Thus, unlike grades in a criterion-based system, the ECTS grades do not give any information about how well the student has succeeded in reaching the goals for the course or programme. In order to emphasize the fact that the ECTS grading scale is not intended as a generally applied international grading scale but rather as an instrument for comparison of different national grading systems, it is, as from the 2007 edition of “ECTS Users’ Guide”, renamed ECTS Grade *Interpretation* Scheme (EGIS) and is no longer a key feature of the ECTS.

The differences between the criterion-referenced system that the University of Gothenburg uses and the norm-referenced ECTS grading system make a translation from the one system to the other inevitably misleading. However, in order to contribute to the understanding of its own grades, the University of Gothenburg has established a set model for translation of the grades to their approximate equivalents in the EGIS scale. The model is based on statistics of the number of students at the University of Gothenburg who have achieved the different grades (there are no statistics for the grade Fail).

Two-grade scale	Three-grade scale	Four-grade scale	EGIS (% of successful students normally achieving the grade)	
Pass	Pass with Distinction	Passed with Distinction	A	10 %
		Passed with Credit	B	25 %
	Pass	Pass	C	30 %
			D	25 %
			E	10 %
Fail	Fail	Fail	FX	--
			F	--