

Grade distribution tables

at John Paul II University of Applied Sciences in Biala Podlaska in Biała Podlaska

I. What is grade distribution?

Due to different cultural and academic traditions, European educational systems have developed not only different national grading scales but also different ways of using them within the same country, in different subject areas or institutions. While it is essential to acknowledge these differences, it is also important to make them transparent within the European Higher Education Area, so that grades awarded in all countries, subject areas or institutions can be properly understood and correctly compared.

Mobile students have the right to fair treatment and to transparency of their grades when credits are transferred from one institution to another, as access to further studies, grants or other benefits may depend on their level of performance. Transparency of performance levels is equally important for graduates applying for a job in their own or in another country.

To ensure transparent and coherent information on the performance of the individual student, each HEI should provide – in addition to their national/institutional grading scale and an explanation of the scale – a statistical distribution table of the passing grades awarded in the programme or field of study attended by the student (grade distribution table) showing how the grading scale is actually used in that programme. The grade distribution table was first introduced in the ECTS Users' Guide in 2009, as a replacement for the previous ECTS grading scales (A, B, C, D, E), which are not used anymore.

Even in cases when transferring the grades is not necessary in the local academic tradition of receiving institutions, calculating a grade distribution table will facilitate fair treatment of the incoming students on their return to the sending institution. It should be noted that it is also good practice to provide internal boards of examiners with detailed statistical data on examination grading in order to make the process more transparent and indicate any disparities which may indicate issues for further consideration.

II. How to develop a grade distribution table

Grade distribution tables have to be developed in a standardised format for reference groups of students enrolled in degree programmes belonging to the same field of studies. Such groups should be of reliable size in terms of number of students and number of years considered.

1. Identify the reference groups within your institution by using objective and transparent criteria which should be attached to the grade distribution tables produced. In the absence of methods based on comparable learning outcomes, it is recommended to use the ISCED-F classification which offers a standardised and hierarchical classification of fields of study. In order to have reference groups that are large enough for a statistically relevant comparison, it is recommended to use an ISCED code at the “narrow” or ‘detailed’ levels (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014).

2. Calculate the absolute number of passing grades awarded to each reference group identified in at least the last two years. Remember that information on success rates may be provided in general terms but not in this calculation.

3. Calculate the grade distribution in terms of percentages of the passing grades awarded to the reference group and develop cumulative percentages. As a result, there will be a grade distribution table with percentages and cumulative percentages for each reference group identified.

III. Description of the reference group

The basis of reference for developing the grading tables at the University are the actual learning outcomes in individual fields of study for first-cycle studies in the last two academic years (i.e. 2020/21 and 2021/22). The reference group for the analysis was adopted individually for each field of study, on which a possible mobility activities of foreign students is registered.

The data is valid until: **31 December 2023.**

Computer Science

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	7289	28%	28%
4.5	3983	15%	43%
4.0	5779	22%	65%
3.5	3625	14%	79%
3.0	5414	21%	100%
Success rate: 87%			

Nursing

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	44417	59%	59%
4.5	9997	13%	72%
4.0	12755	17%	89%

3.5	3929	5%	94%
3.0	4285	6%	100%
Success rate: 98%			

Tourism and Recreation

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	12777	31%	31%
4.5	6951	17%	48%
4.0	9961	24%	73%
3.5	5142	13%	85%
3.0	5953	15%	100%
Success rate: 92%			

English Philology

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	2275	30%	30%
4.5	1386	18%	48%
4.0	1819	24%	71%
3.5	1193	16%	87%
3.0	1002	13%	100%
Success rate: 79%			

Pedagogy

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	18502	57%	57%
4.5	4820	15%	71%

4.0	5677	17%	89%
3.5	1598	5%	94%
3.0	2037	6%	100%
Success rate: 94%			

Management

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	5341	23%	23%
4.5	3911	17%	40%
4.0	6023	26%	65%
3.5	3546	15%	81%
3.0	4542	19%	100%
Success rate: 87%			

National Security

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	7515	28%	28%
4.5	5374	20%	47%
4.0	7004	26%	73%
3.5	3592	13%	86%
3.0	3777	14%	100%
Success rate: 94%			

Economics

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
5.0	3537	24%	24%

4.5	2467	17%	41%
4.0	3386	23%	65%
3.5	2368	16%	81%
3.0	2714	19%	100%
Success rate: 90%			

The compilation of the grading table is based on the 2015 ECTS User Guide.

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