

**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 2010 to 2013.

### 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 January 2010 (as per postmark)**. 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 January 2010.

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 1.2.1 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 three annexes, including a list of **common pitfalls** (errors made by applicants in 2009).

The three sections in the application form are as follows:

- a first section for the identification of the applicant institution;
- 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;
- and 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 Languages

##### 1.2 Applicant institution

#### *Section 2 – Documents required*

- 2.1 Information package/Course catalogue
- 2.2 Complete ECTS files concerning three outgoing students
- 2.3 Three complete ECTS files concerning three incoming students

*Section 3 - Declaration*

**3.2 Structure of the DS label application form**

*Section 1 – Identification*

- 1.1 Languages
- 1.2 Applicant institution

*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. Assessment procedure**

The assessment procedure for applications will involve a decentralised approach combined with a supplementary centralised evaluation at European level.

**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 independent 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 jury 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 four-year period (2010 – 2013).

#### **4.2 Information on approved applications**

The final results will be published on the Executive Agency's website in May 2010 at [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/lp/erasmus/erasmus\\_en.htm](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/lp/erasmus/erasmus_en.htm)

The EACEA will inform all institutions individually by letter about the evaluation results.

Subsequently, the accepted institutions will receive the ECTS/DS labels signed by 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 and date of the applicant institution (per each ECTS student file/DS copy provided).

#### **5.1 Quality criteria for the ECTS label**

Broadly the same quality criteria will apply as under selection 2009.

The criteria for the award of the ECTS label are (see section 2 of the ECTS application form):

- An Information Package/Course Catalogue in English (obligatory) and in the regional/national language (optional) which covers all the items in the checklist for the Information Package/Course Catalogue (see Annex 2 of the Application Form for the ECTS label) and is easy to reach;
- Correct use of ECTS 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/course catalogue must provide the information requested.

The ECTS label assessment is based on written evidence that an institution is applying ECTS mechanisms in all first and second cycle degree programmes (and/or for all the one-

tier programmes, if these are still on offer). Institutions have to make their entire Information package/Course catalogue accessible online.

The assessment procedure will be as follows:

- The Assessors will review the Information/Course Catalogue of the institution to confirm that it covers all the items on the ECTS checklist (see Annex 2 of the Application Form for the ECTS label).
- They will evaluate three degree programmes normally in three different faculties and three of the course units within these degree programmes to ensure that they provide the information specified in the checklist.
- They will examine the ECTS dossiers of three outgoing and three incoming students.

## **5.2 Quality criteria for the Diploma Supplement Label**

Broadly the same quality criteria will apply as under selection 2009.

The criteria for the award of the DS label are (see section 2 of the DS application form):

- 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 in a widely spoken European language and free of charge to every student upon graduation.

The assessment will be made by examining the four certified copies of completed and signed Diploma Supplements, issued to graduates of the applicant institution.

A Diploma Supplement label will be awarded to institutions which deliver a Diploma Supplement, to all graduates in all first and second cycle programmes offered by that institution, (the delivery of Diploma Supplements to third cycle graduates is optional), in accordance with the model developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO.

The DS is composed of a preamble and eight sections. Transparent information in all eight sections should be provided. Where information is not provided, an explanation should give the reason why. Institutions have to apply to the DS the same authentication procedures as

for the diploma itself. Also a description of the national higher education system within which the individual named on the original qualification graduated has to be attached to the DS.

It is highly recommended that each Diploma Supplement starts with the preamble published either on the European Commission, Council of Europe or UNESCO/CEPES websites.