



Information on Grades/ ECTS at the University of Zurich (UZH)

A. Grades

Switzerland holds a grade system comprising grades from 6, the highest grade, to 1, the lowest grade. The grade 4 stands for a sufficient achievement. Also half grades are given (and sometimes even quarter grades).

Find an overview of the grades implemented at the UZH and their corresponding qualifications in the table below:

Table 1: Overview Grades and Qualification at UZH

Grade	Qualification
6	Excellent. Outstanding performance with no shortcomings. A particularly outstanding achievement.
5.5	Very good. Outstanding performance with minor shortcomings. An achievement that surpasses largely the average standard.
5	Good. Generally good performance with minor shortcomings. An achievement that surpasses the average standard.
4.5	Decent. Generally good performance with multiple shortcomings. An achievement that fulfills the average standards.
4	Satisfactory. Passable performance with significant shortcomings. An achievement that fulfills the average standard despite deficiencies.
3	Failed. Some more work required before the credit can be awarded.
2	Failed. Considerable further work is required.
1	Failed. Very bad performance, total absence or failure to take any exams or do any work.

B. ECTS-Credit Points

ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) is a system that regulates the accumulation and transfer of credit points. This system encourages the transparency within the European higher education system and fosters student mobility within Europe.

One ECTS-credit point (also called 'credit point') stands as an entity that measures the workload of a student from a time perspective. At the UZH, an ECTS-credit point stands for



a workload of 30 working hours and is being allocated on the basis of examined study achievements. ECTS is based on the principle that 60 credits measure the workload of a full-time student during one academic year.

C. Workload and Modules

A module is a unit that is confined in respect of content and time and can consist of multiple courses, e.g. lecture and tutorial. Modules are structural components of study programs and generate a defined workload. For the calculation of a student's workload at UZH, the ECTS-credit points are to be multiplied by the factor 30 (1 ECTS-credit point = 30 hours). The workload that is to be brought up in order to pass the module comprises all learning activities of the student, i.e. contact hours (actual taught course hours) and self-study hours. During the self-study hours the reading of relevant literature (reading assignments), the writing of term papers, and the preparation of oral presentations and/or exams are to be accomplished.

At the UZH, study achievements are assessed for their quality and are graded (grades or "pass/fail"). An awarding of ECTS-credit points is only valid on the basis of a successfully passed module. The module is passed, if it is graded from 4 (satisfactory) to 6 (excellent; see table 7, above). If a course achievement earns grades below 4, the student has failed to pass the module and gets no ECTS-credit points at all.

Within certain guidelines, the UZH faculties are free to design their modules, including the assessment of ECTS-credit points per modules. Therefore, there is no general template of a module structure. However, find in table 8, below, an ideal example of the workload and structure of the two most frequent types of modules at the UZH: lectures and seminars.

Table: Overview Workload and Module Structures for Lectures and Seminars

Activity	Timeframe	Total hours	ECTS
Lecture			
Contact hours	2 lessons of 45min/week	21 hours	
Self-study hours:			
Reading	2 hours/week	28 hours	
Exam preparations	11 hours	11 hours	
Total		60 hours	2
Seminar (with written term paper)			
Contact hours	2 lessons of 45min/week	21 hours	
Self-study hours:			
Reading	1.5 hours/week	21 hours	
Writing of term paper	3-4 weeks of 40 hours	140 hours	
Total		182 hours	6

Source: Projektleitung Studienreformen (2005): Leitfaden zur Gestaltung gestufter Studiengänge mit ECTS der Universität Zürich, pp. 9-10.