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DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

Graduates in all the countries taking part in the **Bologna Process** have the right to receive the **Diploma Supplement** automatically, free of charge and in a major **European language**.

Diploma Supplement

The Diploma Supplement is a document accompanying a higher education diploma, providing a standardised description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies completed by its holder.

It is produced by the higher education institutions according to standards agreed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The Diploma Supplement is also part of the Europass framework transparency tools.

The purpose of the supplement is to provide sufficient independent data to improve international 'transparency' and fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc.). It should be free from any value judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition.

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Founding Principles

The Diploma Supplement is designed as an aid to help (but not to guarantee) recognition – it is not a CV or a substitute for the original qualification. It is based on the following important founding principles that respect national and international academic autonomy. **The Diploma Supplement is**

a flexible, non-prescriptive tool, capable of adaptation to local needs. It can be used to replace or augment current approaches.

a device that has national and international applications. It has been designed to aid the resolution of international recognition problems as well as domestic ones.

a system to aid recognition for academic and professional purposes. It is potentially useful for all higher education institutions, professional bodies, students, employers, public bodies, governments and citizens.

an approach that specifically excludes claims and value-judgements concerning equivalence by providing sufficient objective information to allow the recipient to make his or her own judgements about the qualification in question.

a tool that should be used with sensitivity. The recognition of foreign qualifications should be viewed as a process for the assessment of the competence, experience and knowledge acquired, recognising that 'fair recognition' and not exact equivalence should be sought (focusing on the outcomes of the learning that has taken place and making judgements using the qualitative and quantitative information provided).

a set of guidelines that avoids the inclusion of too much detail in order not to confuse the user.

an addition to the original credential. The credential should remain unchanged from its normal state, and the supplement should accompany the authentic credential that certifies the award.

Diploma supplements contain the following eight sections of information:

1. the holder of the qualification;
2. the qualification;
3. the level of qualification;
4. the contents and results gained;
5. function of the qualification;
6. additional information;
7. certification of the supplement;
8. details on the national higher education system concerned (provided by the National Academic Recognition Information Centres [NARICs]).

Benefits for higher education institutions:

- more transparent qualifications;
- informed judgements about qualifications that can be understood in other educational contexts;
- time saving – by answering many of the questions commonly asked of institutions about the content and portability of their qualifications;
- continued national/institutional autonomy within a common framework accepted throughout Europe;
- enhanced employment prospects for their graduates, both at home and abroad;
- greater visibility of the institution abroad.

Benefits for students:

- qualifications that are more readable and easily comparable abroad;
- a precise description of their academic career and the competencies acquired during their studies;
- easier access to opportunities for work or further studies abroad.

Diploma Supplement Labels

The Diploma Supplement (DS) Labels are honorary distinctions and are awarded to higher education institutions that apply the Diploma Supplement correctly in all respects.

General information:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/diploma-supplement_en.htm or <http://www.europass.at/en/was-ist-europass/diploma-supplement/>

Description of DS:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/ds_en.pdf

Examples:

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/european-skills-passport/diploma-supplement/examples>