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## WAYS TO ARRANGE THE INDIVIDUAL ACADEMIC WORK OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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### Abstract

The article discusses the basics of organizing the individual learning activities of students in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the creation of favorable environment for the development of education, providing quality and personalized learning, as well as preparation for the challenges and needs of today's society and labor market.

**Keywords:** *Credit-unit system, learning process arrangement, rating system of assessment, information block, effective learning technology*

### Introduction

Social and economic development of Uzbekistan defines the fundamental improvement of the higher education system. The importance of personnel training is increasing, and conditions are being developed for re-training specialists with higher education to meet international standards.

Given the needs of public life and economy, one of the key tasks of the higher education system upgrading is the introduction of advanced forms and technologies in teaching based on the international practices.

With a view to defining priority trends of the higher education system reformation in the Republic of Uzbekistan, raising the process of training of independently-minded qualified personnel with advanced knowledge and high moral and ethical qualities to a new level, as well as upgrading higher education, development of the social sphere and

economic sectors in line with the advanced learning technologies, the decree of the President Sh. M. Mirziyoyev "On Approval of the Concept of the Higher Education System Development" dated October 8 was adopted. Initially, under the Concept for the Higher Education Development, the credit-unit system should be implemented in 16 percent of higher education institutions in 2023, in 57 percent in 2025, and in 85 percent in 2030.

The goals of the credit-unit system are to broaden access to higher education, to increase the mobility of students and faculty, and to focus curricula and academic programs on qualifications in demand on the labor market. This system is attractive since it ensures the comparability of educational programs of various universities and promotes the educational systems harmonization with European countries. The credit-unit system encourages the mobility of students and teachers and

simplifies the transition from a university to another by specifying the amount of work to be done for the entire cumulative hours.

In Uzbekistan, the education system has been gradually shifting to a credit-unit system of education in recent years, and there are positive results so far. Some examples include branches of foreign universities in the country and domestic higher education institutions that implement the educational process by introducing international standards. This practice has gradually been adopted in some national higher education institutions. For example, pursuant to the Decree № PDD-5349 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 19.02.2018 “On Measures for Further Improvement of the Information Technologies and Communications Sphere”, the Tashkent University of Information Technologies named after Muhammad al-Kharazmiyah (TUIT) has been gradually transitioning to a credit-based learning system since the 2018–2019 academic year. Apart from the above-mentioned university, other universities such as the National University, Law University, University of Oriental Studies, Tashkent Medical Academy, Fergana Polytechnic Institute and others have introduced the credit-unit system of education. One of the advantages of introducing the credit system of education in these universities is that it complements and supports the national standards of qualifications.

### **Materials and methods**

The credit-unit system of education is a model for organizing the educational process, which is based on a combination of modular learning technologies and credits or credit units of learning. Learning process organization and implementation is quite a versatile and complex system of activities and cooperation. The credit-unit system focuses on two of its attributes:

- the independent work of students;
- the introduction of a credit-unit system of organizing the educational process and a rating system to assess the academic progress of students.

Modular learning is the organization of the learning process whereby the academic information is divided into modules (complete and independent units, parts of information).

A module is a package of information that includes a logically completed unit of academic content, a target program of activities and guidelines to ensure the achievement of goals; the content and scope of the module may vary depending on didactic tasks, profile and level-sensitive differentiation of students, students’ wishes to choose an educational institution and the individual path of progress in an educational course. The module concept contains the scope of training material, which ensures the initial acquisition of certain theoretical and practical skills to perform some specific work. Modular learning is the most coherent, clear and effective learning technology that ensures the quality of training of qualified specialists. The professionals who are trained on modular technology programs have knowledge as well as skills of their profession and specialty of choice: decision-making, service delivery and performance of works.

The combination of modules shall allow the necessary degree of flexibility and freedom in the choice and customizing of the required teaching material for training (and self-study) of a certain group of students and the achievement of special didactic and occupational goals.

It is widely assumed that the education system in Uzbekistan was formed in the conditions of deficiency and limited access to information. Therefore, the teacher’s activity in higher education institutions was limited, first of all, to informative functions. The teacher was the most critical source of information. Since the student is the target of the learning process and simultaneously the subject of perception and assimilation of information, the learning process was planned in such a way that the majority of the work was done in classrooms.

### **Result and discussion**

The current state of the information support offers a wide range of opportunities for access to information sources and, consequently, partially shifts the focus in the planning of the educational process towards independent work. The credit-unitsystem, as an integral attribute of the Bologna Declaration, has two primary functions:

1. Facilitating mobility of students and faculty and making the transition from one university to another easier.

2. A clear definition of the scope of work to be completed by the student, addressing all academic and research activities. The number of credits specifies the capacity of a student enrolled in a particular academic course.

The introduction of the credit-unit system is an essential stimulus for the effective teacher-student performance.

The modules are structured as a system of training elements grouped by the attribute of matching a certain subject of professional activity. The latter is regarded as a certain volume of training information of the logical structure and content, which allows you to use this information in the process of thinking activity of the learner. The modular academic discipline involves more than merely transferring curriculum sections into academic modules mechanically. It entails conducting in-depth analytical and logical assessments of the semantic content of the discipline, organizing it as a system, and not an arbitrary amalgamation of scientific knowledge. In the credit-unit system of the learning process the content of the discipline is split into content modules (2–4 modules per semester), i.e. the academic discipline is formed as a system of content modules. The second requirement for the implementation of the modular principle of the discipline content is the ability to identify the general end-to-end ideas of professional activity, which each module is aimed at disclosing and studying. The student, as a young specialist, needs not only to comprehend and assimilate information, but also to master the ways of its practical use and making decisions. Such conditions reduce the share of direct, third-party information and the use of interactive forms and methods of student activities guided by a teacher (tutor) and complete individual work in laboratories, reading rooms, at the sites of future professional activity, which is especially relevant for the system of distance learning.

The introduction of a credit system should facilitate the comparison of courses taken and maximise student mobility. A credit is a nominal unit for measuring a student's academic load during the study of a consolidated curriculum or a specific discipline (course) completed by a student during the study process. A credit unit is a minimum value that is precisely recorded; often refers to one week's

study (the total of a student's class work and independent work).

The credit system is understood as a systematic definition of all major aspects of the learning process that is based on the use of a credit unit (credit) as an index of the academic workload, thus reflecting the totality of all the aspects related to the organisation of the learning process.

Credit units were first introduced at universities in the United States at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries as part of the liberalisation of university education that began during this period. The introduction of credit units as a quantitative equivalent of the content of study and the level of learning of academic curricula allowed students to independently plan the learning process, make fundamental changes in quality control and evaluation of the educational process, and created conditions for improving educational technologies. ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) is the most recognised among a variety of credit systems in Europe, a credit system that has been successfully tested and is now used throughout Europe. ECTS was originally designed to transfer credits when students transfer from one institution to another. The system facilitated the recognition of the study periods abroad and thus contributed to an increase in the quality and scope of student mobility in Europe. More recently, ECTS has evolved into a cumulative system to be implemented at regional, national and European levels. This is one of the most crucial goals of the Bologna Declaration signed in June 1999 (Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, 2017). The Bologna Declaration mentions ECTS only as an example, but no other European system has emerged. On the contrary, ECTS has spread rapidly throughout Europe and has been included in many countries in the system of higher and postgraduate education: Bachelor's degree – level of higher education; Master's degree, doctoral degree – level of postgraduate education (Davydova O.V., Zvonnikov V.I., Chelyshkova M.B. 2010). The implementation of the Bologna Process parameters includes a comprehensive approach to upgrading various components, the primary of which is a qualitative revision of educational curricula focused on learning outcomes. The basis of the educa-

tional curriculum should be the competence approach, which ensures personal and professional socialisation in the learning process.

During the teaching experiment conducted by the leading universities of Uzbekistan, the volume of ECTS credits was set at 36 academic hours and the annual academic load of a student was set at 60 ECTS credits. This is due to the fact that the academic year lasts an average of 40 weeks. The number of ECTS credits for an academic discipline is calculated by dividing the total number of hours planned for the discipline by the credit value (rounded down to 0.5 credits). For example, if the total of 108 hours is given for the study of the discipline, it equals to three credit units. Here the discipline is divided into three modules. It is more convenient to determine the specific weight of each discipline in the total load by the number of classroom hours and proportionally distribute 30 credits earned during the semester, between the disciplines studied in a given semester. It is recommended to convert the academic load into credit units by calculating the mathematical division of the total (classroom and independent) academic load for the semester by the coefficient 36 (36 hours of total academic load). A bachelor's degree must be at least 180 credits (three years under the 60-credit limit) or at least 240 credits (four years) in duration; a master's degree must be at least 300 credits in total. Hence the correlation between the

duration of a master's degree and the duration of a bachelor's degree.

The introduction of the credit-unit system considerably changes the way teachers work and the intensity of the learning process, and makes the Uzbek education system more exposed to international co-operation. The transition to credits requires a long period of work, as the cumulative credit system should cover all types of academic work, including not only classroom workload, but also practical classes, laboratory and research work, and various certification activities.

Given all of the above, we can conclude that credit points are a valid measure of achievement in learning. Learning outcomes should be stated not only at the level of formal qualifications such as a degree, but also at the level of modules or courses. The inclusion of learning outcomes in the curriculum and its components contributes to its coherence and logic. They specify exactly what the student is expected to learn. Clear learning achievements facilitate the transfer and accumulation of credit and allow for accurate identification of achievements for which credit is or has been awarded.

This approach to defining learning outcomes will allow for the development of universal standards that should form the basis for internal, national and international quality assessment and assurance.

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