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Fact sheet: **Grades and Credit Point System at the University of Lucerne**

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 University of Lucerne and their corresponding qualifications in the table 1 below:

Table 1: Overview Grades and Qualification at the University of Lucerne

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. Credit Point System: ECTS

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. The system is used across Europe for credit transfer (student mobility) and credit accumulation (learning paths towards a degree).

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 University of Lucerne, 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.

For more information on ECTS, please check:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm

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 the University of Lucerne, 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 University of Lucerne, 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 5, 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 University of Lucerne 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 6, below, an ideal example of the workload and structure of the two most frequent types of modules at the University of Lucerne: lectures and seminars.

Table 2: 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.

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