EAST AFRICAN CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER SYSTEM (EACATS) IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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1. Introduction

1.1.   Background

IUCEA is an institution of the East African Community (EAC) responsible for coordinating the development of higher education and research. One of the interventions that IUCEA has been carrying out as part of her mandate is the development of systems for harmonization of higher education in EAC. The process started in 2006, initially focusing on the development of a regional quality assurance system for higher education in East Africa by harmonizing the national systems in a common regional framework. However, when the Protocol for the Establishment of the East African Common Market came into force in 2010, the harmonization process was broadened in order to:

- Establish systems that would facilitate mutual recognition of education and training systems, and qualifications attained/awarded among the EAC Partner States; and

- Facilitate operationalization of Article 11 of the Protocol, in particular to provide mechanisms for free movement of persons and mutual recognition of qualifications.

 In this process, IUCEA has been working very closely with various stakeholders on the region to develop harmonized systems, guidelines and procedures for that purposes. The stakeholders among others include, national commissions/councils for university/higher education in the EAC Partner States, as well as higher education institutions, ministries responsible for higher education, and other higher education stakeholders including the private sector through the East African Business Council, and professional and employers' associations in the EAC Partner States.

The process of harmonization of higher education in East Africa constitutes establishment of a harmonized regional quality assurance system that provides appropriate quality assurance guidelines, quality assessment tools, procedures and standards, and benchmarks for academic programmes. The system is linked to the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education that articulates harmonization of education and training systems and the qualifications attained by clearly defining the programme learning outcomes appropriate

for each level of learning, and the different qualifications levels, a credit system, articulation and exit pathways, and recognition of prior learning, among others. These developments on harmonization of higher education culminated into the declaration of the EAC a Common Higher Education Area by the 18th Summit of the EAC Heads of State on 20th May 2017 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Most important to note is that the Declaration requires that national higher education and training systems shall operate and be guided by the common regional framework under which curricula, examinations and certification as well as academic and professional qualifications, and the quality of the education and training output in higher education will be harmonized.

The operationalization of the Common Higher Education Area has been entrusted to IUCEA to provide the necessary technical support to the EAC Council of Ministers that is charged with overall oversight in the implementation.

1.2. Rationale for developing the East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (EACATS)

The need to establish systems to support mutual recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas, degrees and other academic qualifications in higher education in the African States is a long-standing agenda. Thus, in order to guide such process, on 5th December 1981 UNESCO adopted the Arusha Convention on recognition of qualifications in higher education in Africa. For the purpose of improving the focus of the Arusha Convention, taking into consideration developments taking place in the higher education sub-sector, particularly after the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education that was held in 1998, the Arusha Convention was revised in 2002. The Arusha Convention was further revised and renamed The Addis Ababa Convention 2015, to provide for current developments in higher education at continental level on development of education and strategies. At the same time, elsewhere in the world particularly in Asia and Europe, qualifications frameworks have been developed as instruments that provide a platform enabling harmonization of education and training systems, and for facilitating recognition of qualifications including professional qualifications, within countries and across borders.

In all aspects of recognition of studies and qualifications, credits are key building blocks and determinants to attain the intended objectives.

The EAC Common Higher Education Area will facilitate and enable the mobility of students and teachers and promote the free movement of labour, people and services as envisioned under the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community signed in 1999 and the Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Community Common Market in 2010.

1.3. The Purpose and Benefits of CATS

Credit has an increasingly important role to play in recording learners achievement and providing support for learners and their progression both into and within the given higher education system and also for promoting life-long learning and student mobility. Credit can also serve as a tool for describing the comparability of learning achieved in terms of its volume and intellectual demand. It is designed to help education providers to design modules/programmes in different disciplines and contexts which are similar in volume and intellectual demand. It also provides a basis for recognising learning achieved in other institutions or elsewhere. Credit values give information about the amount of learning and academic demands of that learning.

The credit architecture is particularly designed to:

1) Acknowledge, codify and provide clarity about the relative demand and level of diverse HE and professional development qualifications;

2) Provide a 'route map' showing progression routes to enable students to navigate personal learning pathways more easily;

3) Facilitate the accreditation of small amounts of measurable learning which can build confidence and encourage further learning;

4) Enable students to interrupt their studies and/or transfer more easily between and within institutions, while maintaining a verified record of achievements (credit transcript) to date;

5) Provide a common language supporting curriculum development within and between HEIs;

6) Support the achievement of consistent student workloads across programmes within different disciplines;

7) Encourage and facilitate partnerships between institutions; and facilitate students' entry to an international education arena where national credit frameworks can be recognised as a passport to mobility.

2. Regional Credits Systems and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes

According to the definition of the European Commission for European Credit and Transfer System (ECTS), *a Credit System is a systematic way of describing an educational programme by attaching credits to its components*. The definition of credits in higher education systems may be based on different parameters, such as student workload, learning outcomes and contact hours.

Credit Transfer is the process whereby credit already achieved for a complete or incomplete qualification at a quality assured tertiary institution is recognized towards another qualification. It involves the evaluation of a student's transcript, course outlines and other information relevant to the application.

The spread of a wider variety of programmes and their proliferation, led to increased student mobility. This made it critically important to evolve cogitative measures for transferable, quantitative units of educational accomplishment, resulting in the formation of Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes.

There are several regional and country-wide Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes (CATS) being used in the universities of the world. There is no global CAT scheme in operation as at present. Ad-hoc arrangements as well as formal ones between universities within countries have existed for long periods of time. The CAT schemes have been in existence since the commencement of the use of credit as a measure of the volume of learning and they originated in North America, mainly to accommodate the two tiers of post-

secondary educational institutes which existed since the 1950s. The different tiers are the two-year Community Colleges and the four-year universities. The USA has the largest higher education system in the world with about 4900 universities and Community

Colleges.

2.1 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Driven by the movement for greater European integration, the European Union (EU) considered mechanisms to formally recognize and validate the academic achievements of its students not only in the completed higher education qualifications but also in parts of study programmes.

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was developed to provide a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements, and facilitating their transfer from one institution to another. Its aim was to make study programmes in Europe easier to read and compare.

ECTS was introduced in 1989 as a part of the ERASMUS framework. The aim of the ERASMUS programme, established in 1987, was to encourage and support academic mobility of students and teachers in higher education institutions within the European Union, the European Economic Area countries of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein as well as candidate countries (such as Turkey). It is the only credit system which has been successfully used across Europe. The ERASMUS Programme, together with a number of other independent programmes, was incorporated into the Socrates programme established in 1995. The Socrates programme ended on 31st December 1999. ECTS has clearly emerged as *the* European credit system with 46 countries following its general framework as at present. In most of those countries, it has become a legal requirement while some other countries with national credits systems are ensuring their compatibility with ECTS.

2.2 Asia Pacific Region Credit Transfer System

University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP), an organization comprising the countries and territories of the Asia Pacific region, has decided to adapt the ECTS model for its own

university credit transfer schemes. The University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) was introduced in 1999 as a pilot scheme to assist in improving the recognition of study programmes in the UMAP institutions. It is currently used by Australian universities for student exchanges in the Asia-Pacific region.

2.3 United Kingdom Credit Transfer System

In the United Kingdom, there are a number of CAT schemes in operation namely, Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (SEEC), Northern Universities Consortium for Credit accumulation and Transfer (NUCATS), Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (NICATS), the Scottish Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (SCOTCAT) and Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales (CQFW). It should be noted that other regional CAT schemes in the UK, though established primarily to cater to the collection of universities in their particular region, are almost identical and are fully transferable within the UK.

All of the above entities aspire to establish common frameworks and approaches between consortium members and eventually to achieve increased volumes of credit transfer. Fundamentally, the approach of all these groups is similar but they differ in such details as the number of credits in a year or in a Bachelor degree programme and the qualifications ladder.

2.4 Latin American Countries Credit Transfer System

Sistema de Creditos Academicos (SICA, System for Academic Credits) and Complemento al Titulo (CAT, Complement to the Title) are new tools that have been developed to help create a common academic credit system in Latin America. Both of these tools are part of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean Common Space for Higher Education (UEALC) project—a "bottom-up initiative" of higher education institutions and organizations from across Latin America.

2.5 South African Development Community (SADC) Credit Transfer System

SADC is in the process of developing a sub-regional credit and transfer system, which is part of the SADC Qualifications Framework. The Qualifications Framework document states, "The SADC Regional Qualification Framework (RQF) will recognise the variety of credits awarded by Member States and develop a mechanism that will allow for comparability and transfer. This may ultimately evolve into a Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) system" The production of the SADC-CATS document is based on the premise that a CATS system is not only a logical development within the implementation of the SADCQF, but that if the harmonisation of higher education is to be accelerated, a regional CATS needs to be put in place as a matter of urgency.

3. Development of the East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System

In 2015, the EAC Council of Ministers approved the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE) for its operationalisation. The EAQFHE aims to serve as a convergence platform for harmonisation of qualification levels and types, entry requirements, and articulation and exit pathways for the qualifications level and types. Thus, contribute towards harmonisation of education systems and consequently transforming East Africa into a common higher education area. One of the key aspects of the EAQFHE that needed to be developed for operationalisation of this policy documents is a harmonised regional credit accumulation and transfer system. This is the essence that prompted IUCEA to develop an East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (EACATS) through a participatory and consultative process involving representative experts drawn from national commissions and councils for higher education, national qualifications authorities and higher learning institutions/universities.

3.1.   Objectives of EACATS

The objectives of EACATS are to:

i. <u>Fa</u>cilitate the development of credible, efficient and transparent process both for the accumulation and transfer of credit within an institution or country, from institution to institution, from country to country, and between different educational sectors and contexts of learning (i.e. formal, non-formal, informal and work-based learning);

ii. Provide for the development and implementation of CAT as an integral component of qualification design within the EAQFHE and NQFs;

iii. Benefit individuals seeking to progress within the same or different NQF;

iv. Facilitate arrangement for the accumulation of credits and the transfer into a single differentiated system;

v. Facilitate the use of agreements on recognition of qualifications;

vi. Facilitate the recognition and allocation of credits through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL); vii. Provide easy ways to create and document flexible learning pathways, thus allowing students greater autonomy and responsibility; and

viii. Promote transparency and reliability of the education systems.

3.2. Scope of EACATS

The EACATS shall apply to:

i. Higher education systems in East Africa;

ii. All qualifications obtained through formal, and or non-formal, and or informal learning registered in the EAQFHE and offered in EAC; and

iii. Qualifications acquired from outside East Africa, seeking for recognition by national competent authorities responsible for regulating higher education.

3.3 Methodology for Developing the EACATS

The EACATS were developed through a participatory process involving stakeholders from all the EAC member states. The EACATS development has undergone rigorous, iterative and scientific process. This entailed documenting, discussing and validating concepts on credit

transfer with a number of relevant stakeholders prior to endorsements by the respective organs. What is critical to observe however, is that each member country had a specific method of the CATS development process, but resulting in a feasible system. The IUCEA Technical Team benchmarked with the EAC member states, regional, and international systems and practices, thereafter formulating the proposed EACATS.

The first main discussion took place in 2014 when IUCEA organized a CATS development seminar with a view to making further improvements of the EAQFHE. IUCEA convened another meeting in May 2018 to harmonize the salient features within the draft EACATS. During the meeting, the Technical Team with representatives from member states developed the draft of EACATS. In October 2018 the Final draft was completed by the Technical Team.

3.4 Comparative Analysis of CATS in East Africa

In all the EAC countries there exist mechanisms for credit accumulation and transfer systems. The approach in the development and implementation of CATS is at different levels. The approaches include centralization of CATS at national level and by the regulatory agencies. For example in Tanzania, the CATS is institutionalized and regulated by TCU. Uganda is developing a centralized CATS system and at the pilot stage. In Rwanda, the HEC has set the guidelines and regulates CATS, the same applies to Burundi. In Kenya, the CUE has developed harmonized criteria for CATs in 14 disciplines and these are to be used by the institutions for credit transfer.

In each of the states, there are criteria and requirements for facilitating the accumulation and transfer of credits in institutions. In all the countries, the minimum entry requirement into higher training institution is set at national level.

Institutions of higher learning admit candidates into certificate and diploma courses and provide credit transfers into degree programmes within the prescribed admission criteria established by relevant national qualifications authority, training institutions and quality assurance agencies for example TVET in Kenya, WDA in Rwanda, NACTE, VETA in Tanzania, BTVET in Uganda.

In the EAC countries, the maximum number of credits that can be transferred are capped at 40%, 49% and 50%, as depicted in Table 1. The transfer of credits are designed to follow pathways across higher education training institutions within similar/equivalent courses/modules. The validity of the accumulated credit is five years across the institutions and the region within which time it can be transferred.

In all of the EAC countries, the approval of the transfer is the mandate of the senates while in Tanzania it is approved by the TCU. There is a process of post verification and equating of the CATs by the Higher Education Regulatory Agencies in EAC.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of CATS in East Africa

Countries	Admission criteria to universities and tertiary training institutions[1]	Validity of Credit Transfer	Maximum credit transfer	Responsible body	Derivation of a credit
Burundi	12years = diplome d'Etat 50%;	5 years	50%	Senates	A credit is equivalent to 25 hours , in which 15 hours are instructional hours and 10 hours are Student personal work
Kenya	12 years = Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education C+ 2.	5years	49%	Senates	A credit hour shall be equivalent to a minimum of 15 instructional hours
Rwanda	12 years =	5years	50%	Senates	A credit in REQF is equated to

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[1] Admission criteria for diploma and certificates are as per the provisions of the EAQFHE, appended in (minimum credits for graduation page 45)

	Secondary School, Certificate 2principal passes				learning outcomes achievable in 10 notional learning hours.
Tanzania	11 years – 2 years A'level certificate with 2prinicipal passes	5years	50% of the core courses[2]	Senates and approved by TCU	10 notional hrs = 1 credit.
Uganda	13 years – 2prinicipal passes	5years	40%	Senates	15 contact hrs or 30 tutorial hrs = I Credit.

4. Harmonized East Africa Credit Accumulation and Transfer System

4.1 Concept of a credit

While the definition of credit in each of the EAC countries as depicted in Table 1 might vary and the general concept agreed upon is that a credit is a measurement for notional or average time spent on a study. Credit means the amount of learning contained in a qualification or part qualification whereby one (1) Credit is equated to 10 notional hours of learning. Notional hours of learning comprises the total amount of time it would take an average learner to meet the outcomes defined in a learning experience and include inter alia face to face contact time, time spent in structured learning in the work place, time for completing assignment and research, and time spent in assessment processes. Part qualification means an assessed unit of learning that is registered as part of a qualification. The typical examples of calculation of credits for a course and a programme are provided in annex 1 and 2 for programmes including practical and instructional hours.

4.2 Principles of CATS

Student transfer between institutions or similar programmes in the same institution is permissible. In that regard:

(a) Courses for transfer must have been from accredited programme by the national accreditation body;

(b) Transfer may be applied to all modes of learning namely, open and distance learning or conventional delivery systems, and can be applied to part-time as well as full-time study programmes;

(c) Credit transfer may take place when the institution is satisfied that a course or a group of courses that have been completed at a different institution or programme are equivalent or relevant to the course or a group of courses in

the programme that the student is about to undertake at the receiving institution;

(d) Releasing and receiving institutions should facilitate credit transfer provided that all the credit accumulation and transfer requirements have been fulfilled;

(e) Transferring students should be aware that a core course or module in the releasing institution may not necessarily be a core course or module in the receiving institution and vice versa;

(f) Approval of equivalency of courses or modules is subject to the consent of the receiving institution;

(g) Transfer students shall earn credits only for successfully completed courses or modules;

(h) Number of credits and grades earned for a course will be included in calculating Grade Point Average (GPA) and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of students.

4.3 Criteria for credit accumulation and transfer

A student who intends to transfer for purposes of accumulating credits on a specific course or module shall be required to fulfil the following conditions:

(a) Must have been registered in the programme to which the credit will be accumulated;

(b) The course or module intended for credit accumulation must be relevant to the programme to which the student is registered;

(c) The course or module has been successfully completed before credits can be earned;

(d) Transfer of accumulated credits takes place within a period of five years from the time they were earned;

(e) A student who intends to transfer for purposes of graduating in another institution, shall be required to earn more than 50% of the total credits from the receiving institution. The student should spend more time in the awarding institution.

4.4 Main features of EACATS

4.4.1 Use of credit value

Institutions shall use credit in the design of their programmes to indicate how much learning would be undertaken. They shall decide for themselves on the range of module sizes that are available at each level taking into account the flexibility needed for programme design. Credit is also used in determining the levels of qualifications in learners' mobility and in recognition of prior learning.

The credit framework is premised on the concept of intended learning outcomes which are approved by the higher education awarding body for individual modules/units, and for programmes as a whole, and which are assessed. The credits assigned to each module or unit are based on the approximate number of hours (notional hours of learning or its equivalent) a student is expected to spend learning to achieve the learning outcomes for that module.

The EACATS recognizes that one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning or its equivalent. This includes not only formal contact hours, but also preparation for project work, dissertation or thesis, private reading and study, and the completion of formative assessment tasks and revision. The EACATS takes cognizance of the fact that each EAC state has different entry requirements as described in Table 1 above. The entry means that there may be different exits in the training process prior to completion.

4.4.2 Progression Pathways

This EACATS is designed to facilitate flexibility in progression pathways, which necessitate the accumulation of credits at each programme level. The pattern and sequence of credit accumulation in any program pathway shall be clearly indicated in the curriculum design and integral to program policies on progression, transfer, repeat or even multiple entries and exits. The qualifications framework provides for admission of learners into programmes so long as they have acquired prerequisite learning outcomes. Similarly, the EACATS provides for certification and recognition of credits obtained by learners who exit programmes at defined levels.

4.4.3 Credit Values and Credit Requirements

Credit gives an indication of the volume of learning required by a programme in form of learning time required to complete a programme of outcomes. In some cases, where the programme is well established, it will be possible to do this by reference to experience; and/or making comparisons with well-established and previously credit-rated programmes; but in some cases the process will have to be carried out from scratch.

Credit is expressed as a numerical value linked to notional learning time. The precise definition of notional learning time may vary from system to system. The EACATS works on the basis that one credit point represents the outcomes of learning achieved through a notional 10 hours of learning for an average learner. Notional learning time will include all learning activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes, including:

    i) Formal learning (classes, training sessions, structured coaching, seminars and tutorials);

    ii) Non-formal learning (community groups, community-based workshops, etc.);

iii) Practical work and practice to gain and refine skills and knowledge (in the workplace, laboratories, workshops, necessary private study, including information retrieval, preparation, revision); and

iv) All forms of assessment.

The use of credit values is particularly important when determining equivalencies between qualifications and components of qualifications for cross-credit and credit transfer purposes, for the recognition of prior learning and for the development of part-time and part-year full-time courses of study. The process is greatly facilitated if a common currency for the determination of credit has been agreed.

Learning hours include direct contact time with trainers, time spent in study, doing assignments and assessment. This time is expressed in terms of credits where **1** credit is **10** notional learning hours or its equivalent. A typical full-time single year of learning may, therefore, translate into **120** credits or its equivalent. Table 2 illustrates the EACATS comparative analysis of credit system as pertains in EAC member states and provides mechanisms of conversion of credits from one system to another. Table 3 shows the grading systems in the East African countries.

Table 2: EACATS Credit Conversion

Country	Academic Calendar Mode	Definition of course/units/credit hours/lecture hours in relation to the academic Calendar			
		Credit	Course/ Unit/module	Lecture hour	Workload
Burundi	2 equal semesters of 16 weeks each	A credit is equivalent to 25 hours , in which 15 hours are instructional hours and 10 hours are Student personal work	A unit is composed of at least 2 courses , every course shall have from 1 to 4 credits and a Unit shall have a maximum of 10 credits	Every hour where the presence of lecturer is needed is considered as instructional hour	The workload of student is 1500 hours: 900 instructional hours and 600 hours of student personal work

| Kenya | 1. Semesters (2) equal divisions 1517 weeks in an academic year.

2.Trimesters: (3) equal divisions 1315 weeks in an academic year

3. Quarters: (4) equal divisions 9-12 weeks in an | A credit hour shall be equivalent to a minimum of 15 instructional hours | A course unit is equivalent to three (3) credits which is also equivalent to forty five (45) lecture hours (law) | One instructional hour shall be equivalent to:
a)   One (1) contact hour in a lecture-designed session;

b)   Two (2) contact hours in a tutorialdesigned or openlearning-designed session;

c)   Three (3) contact hours in a laboratorydesigned or practicum session; and; | A student's workload in a year shall be approximately 1500 – 1800 study hours. |

Country	Academic Calendar	Definition of course/units/credit hours/lecture hours in relation to the academic Calendar			
	academic year.			d) Five (5) contact hours in a farm or similar practice.	

Rwanda	Semester: Two of equal division of about 15-17 weeks each. Trimesters: Three (3) of 12 week each.	A credit in REQF is equated to learning outcomes achievable in 10 notional learning hours. One credit is equated to 10 hours of student learning.	No credit is earned if the learning outcomes are not achieved or if no module is successfully completed. A Module bears 10-15 and in some cases it takes 20 credits.	Teaching: 4 hr lectures per week for 15 weeks (semester) 60hrs.	The minimum number of credits in one academic year of study is 120 and this amounts to 1200 notional learning hours.
Tanzania	Semesters: (2) equal divisions 15-17 weeks in an academic year.	10 notional hrs = 1 credit.	A course has a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 credits.	'Notional' or 'average learning' time includes all the activities which the learner is expected to undertake in order to achieve the learning outcomes. They are divided as: -Lecture is 40%, -Tutorials 20%; -Assignments 10%; -Independent Study 20% -Practical Training	The volume of learning of Bachelor degree in a year is a minimum of two semesters with 120 credits an equivalent to 1200 hours.
Country	**Academic Calendar**	**Definition of course/units/credit hours/lecture hours in relation to the academic Calendar**			
				10%.	

Uganda	1.Semesters: (2) equal divisions 1517 weeks in an academic year. 2. Trimesters: (3) equal divisions 1315 weeks in an academic year.	15 contact hrs or 30 tutorial hrs = I Credit.	A course has a minimum of 3 credits.	A lecturer hour means a period of time equivalent to one hour representing one such continuous hour in lecture form, two in tutorial session; three in laboratory practicals and five in farm or similar practice.	The workload of a student in an academic year is equivalent to 1200 hours for taught courses for undergraduate degrees. A student workload is computed as: 8hrs per day x 5 a week x 15 weeks a semester x 2 semesters per year=1200 notional hours.
South Sudan					

Table 3: National Grading systems in East Africa

Country	Grading and classification systems			
	Grading Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Classification of Degrees (GPA)
Burundi	90% and above	N/A	N/A	TGD First class Honours
	80-89%	N/A	N/A	GD Second class Honours
	70-79%	N/A	N/A	D Second class Honours
	60 -69%	N/A	N/A	S Satisfactory
	50 -59%	N/A	N/A	Pass
	45-49%	N/A	N/A	**Below 50% is a Fail**
	Under 45%	N/A	N/A	
Kenya	70% and above	A	4.0	3.68-4.00 First Class Honours
	60% to below 70%	B	3.0	3.33-3.67 Second Class Honours(Upper Division)
	50% to below 60%	C	2.0	3.00-3.32 Second Class Honours (Lower Division)
	40% to below 50%	D	1.0	2.00-2.99 Pass
	Below 40%	E	0	* **A 5 point system may also be applied.**
Rwanda	80% and above	N/A	N/A	First class
	70- 79%	N/A	N/A	Second class honours upper division
	60 – 69%	N/A	N/A	Second class hours lower division
	50-59%	N/A	N/A	Pass
	Below 50%	N/A	N/A	Fail
Tanzania	80- 100%	A	5	4.5-5.0 First Class
	70 - 79%	B+	4	3.5 – 4.4 Upper Second Class
	60 – 69%	B	3	2.6 - 3.4 Lower Second Class

	50 - 59%	C	2	2.0 – 2.5 Pass
	35 - 49%	D	1	
	0 -34%	E	0	**Below 50% is a Fail**
Uganda	80 - 100%	A	5	4.4 - 5.0 First Class
	75 - 79%	B+	4.5	3.6- 4.39 Second Class (Upper division)
	70 – 74%	B	4	2.8-3.59 Second Class (Lower division)
	65 - 69%	C+	3.5	2.0-2.79 Third Class (Pass)
	60 - 64%	C	3	
	55- 59%	D+	2.5	**Below 50% is a Fail**
	50- 54%	D	2	
	0 – 49%	F	0	

4.4.4 Validity of Accumulated Credits

The EACATS also facilitates transfer of credits from one institution/programme to another. The accumulated credits to be transferred shall be valid for a maximum of 5 years. This is in line with the common practice of programme review cycle. The institution to grant an award shall own at least 51% of the total core credits required for graduation.

Within the EACATS framework credit transfer shall be time bound. However:

i) In line with the above credit transfer applications for formal study completed within the last 5 years are considered automatically;

ii) In certain institutions, a longer period may be applied for specified qualifications and applications are considered on a case-by-case basis; and

iii) Also learners on non-formal and informal programmes may have their cases considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.4.5 Assessment and Award of Credit

Institutions shall specify in their individual assessment regulations what their requirements are, including the number of credits to be achieved, both for progression within a programme and for the award of a qualification. Institutions will also specify, within their assessment regulations, their position with regard to compensation for, or disregard of, failure and the provision for re-sit and reassessment opportunities and any implications of these for credit awarded.

Institutional decision-making processes regarding academic standards for awards shall and are, properly and entirely, the responsibility of each higher education institution.

4.4.6. Recognition of Prior Learning

A Higher Education awarding body shall recognize (accredit) learning which has taken place (or is concurrently taking place, for example, work-based learning) elsewhere and count this towards the requirements of its own qualifications. This might involve the recognition of certificated learning completed in another formal educational setting (a process known as recognition of prior certificated learning). Alternatively, it might involve the assessment and

recognition of experiential learning (for academic purposes) that has taken place in an informal setting such as the workplace or voluntary sector known as recognition of prior experiential learning.

Credit can be a useful aid to the recognition of prior learning and the accreditation of work-based learning. Institutions may make reference to credit level and credit volume when deciding how much and at what level they might formally recognize the learning presented for accreditation as part of a specific programme.

5.Roles of Key Stakeholders

In processing credit accumulation and transfer, different stakeholders play important roles. This document stipulates the role of key stakeholders such as students, higher education institutions, councils/commissions, professional bodies and IUCEA. The student is the main initiator in the process CATS and other stakeholders play a role of regulating, advising, supporting, facilitating and promoting the implementation of CATS in the region. The development and implementation of CATS is therefore a joint responsibility of the key stakeholders. The following are the roles of each key stakeholder:

5.1 Roles of the students

The student intending to transfer the accumulated credit(s) shall:

(i)   Identify the receiving institution and the programme where the course(s) are available for the transfer;

(ii)   Study the rules and regulations guiding the credit accumulation and transfer in the sending and receiving institutions;

(iii)   Complete the necessary documentation of the sending and receiving institutions;

(iv)   Provide necessary academic and non-academic documents to the receiving institution;

(v)   Seek necessary information and advice to enable the student to cope with the learning environment at the receiving institution;

(vi)   Confirm acceptance of the terms and conditions set by receiving institution;

(vii)   Notify the sponsor(s) about the transfer through the receiving institution where applicable; and

(viii)   Comply with necessary immigration requirements where applicable.

5.2 Roles of the sending institutions

The sending institution shall:

(i)   Develop and implement the appropriate policy and guidelines regarding credit accumulation and transfer;

(ii)   Facilitate the student's transfer by providing the necessary information about the student (academic and non-academic) and the programme to the receiving institution and national council/commission;

(iii)   Provide relevant transfer documents regarding the credits and grades attained by the student;

(iv)   Prepare and submit regular reports on credit accumulation and transfer to the national council/commission as appropriate;

(v)   Review the CATS policies and guidelines regularly; and

(vi)   Align the curriculum with the national qualification framework and programme/subject benchmarks to facilitate the implementation of CATS

5.3 Roles of receiving institutions

The receiving institution shall:

5.3.1 Develop and implement the appropriate policy and guidelines regarding credit accumulation and transfer;

5.3.2 Receive, evaluate and approve or reject the credit transfer request as submitted by the student and sending institution;

5.3.3 If approved, orient and counsel the student on compliance requirements for any variation between the programmes and courses;

5.3.4 Provide necessary information and advice to enable the student to cope with the learning environment;

5.3.5 Notify and provide necessary transfer documents to the national council/commission and any other relevant authority that the student has reported for
studies;

5.3.6 Prepare and submit regular reports on credit accumulation and transfer to the national council/commission as appropriate;

5.3.7 Review the CATS policies and guidelines regularly; and

5.3.8 Align the curriculum with the national qualification framework and programme/subject benchmarks to facilitate the implementation of CATS.

5.4 Roles of National Councils/Commissions

The national council/commission shall:

(i) Develop and disseminate national policy and guidelines for credit accumulation and transfer;

(ii)   Ensure that higher education institutions in the country have developed relevant credit accumulation and transfer policies, principles and guidelines;

(iii)   Regulate the implementation of CATS within the country and in the Region;

(iv)   Disseminate the EACATS to national and institutional levels, through:

- Sensitization meetings;

- Seminars/ workshops;

- Publications

(v)   Establish the database to capture information regarding implementation of EACATS;

(vi)   Establish and manage monitoring and mediation processes to advise the higher education institutions regarding credit accumulation and transfer;

(vii)   Ensure that the process of credit transfer is expedited;

(viii)   Conduct surveys in collaboration with higher education institutions, professional bodies and national quality assurance networks on CATS to improve its outcomes;

(ix)   Identify, document and disseminate best practices on credit accumulation and transfer systems within the country; and

(x)   Prepare and submit country reports on EACATS implementation to IUCEA as appropriate.

5.5 Roles of professional bodies and other regulatory agencies

The professional bodies and regulatory agencies shall:

(i)   Initiate and participate in partnership with national council/commission and higher education institutions to recognize and promote CATS;

(ii)   Participate and contribute to the work of national council/ commission and IUCEA on CATS through representatives; and

(iii)   Provide career advice services on pathways and articulation
          routes.

5.6 Roles of IUCEA

The IUCEA shall:

(i)   Disseminate the EACATS to councils/ commissions and higher education
         institutions in the region;

(ii)   Establish the mechanism to monitor and evaluate the
         implementation of EACATS;

(iii)   Establish database to capture information regarding implementation of
         EACATS;

(iv)   Advise the national councils/ commissions, professional bodies and member
         universities on implementation of the EACATS;

(v)   Conduct research in collaboration with national council/ commission,
         professional bodies, higher education institutions and EAQAN on CATS to
         improve its outcomes;

(vi)   Identify, document and disseminate best practices on CATS within the region;
         and

(vii)   Translate EACTS document into French and Kiswahili.

6. Implementation of EACATS

6.1 Mechanisms for institutionalization of EACATS

(i)   Disseminate the EACATS at national and institutional levels, through:
         • Sensitization meetings;
         • Seminars/ workshops;
         • Publications.

(ii)   Development of institutional Credit Accumulation and Transfer policies based on
         EACATS and institutional academic policies;

(iii)   Programmes documents should provide for provisions for Credit Accumulation and transfer;

(iv)   Develop harmonized programme benchmarks at regional and national level that incorporates CATs;

6.2 Monitoring and evaluation of EACATS

(i)   Reporting progress of implementation of EACATS to national Councils/ Commissions and IUCEA annually;

(ii)   Carrying out evaluative studies on progress made in the implementation of EACATS by national Councils and Commissions and providing feedback to IUCEA;

(iii)   Development of database to capture information on implementation of EACATS;

(iv)   Councils and Commissions shall establish complaints and appeals procedures arising from CATS;

7 Review of EACATS

IUCEA will periodically review the EACATS by involving stakeholders to address emerging issues There shall be review of policies, regulations, guidelines, standards and curricula by regional, national and institutional bodies

8. Annexes

Annex 1: Typical examples on the use of Notional hours in the determination of Credits for Practical based Programme

NOTIONAL HOURS TO CREDIT UNITS IN EAST AFRICA FOR COURSES WITH PRACTICAL TRAINING

Country	Definition of credit units
Rwanda	1 CU = 10 hrs
Tanzania	1 CU = 10 hrs
Burundi	1 CU = 25 hrs*
Uganda	1 CU = 10 hrs
Kenya	1 CU = 15 hrs**

Credit unit in different East African countries are defined using the 10, 15 or 25 notional hours to make 1 credit unit regardless of the lecture or practical based courses. (*For Burundi, the 25 notional hours for 1 Credit Unit includes 15 contact hours and 10 hours of self-study, **In Kenya, the instructional hour for Practical is 2 hours).

Annex 2: Example of Course matrix from one University in Tanzania for Medical Laboratory Science

Course code	COURSE TITTLE	LH	TH	AH	ISH	PH	Total	CU
SEMESTER I: YEAR I								
BC 140	Biochemistry	120	50	40	20	30	260	26.0
AN 140	Functional Anatomy and Histology	100	40	20	30	40	230	23.0
IT 140	Laboratory practice informatics	30	20	25	10	25	110	11.0
LP 140	Medical laboratory practices	30	20	20	10	30	110	11.0
TOTAL		280	130	105	70	125	**710**	**71.0**
SEMESTER II: YEAR I								
PH 140	Basic Physiology	60	30	20	20	40	190	19.0
MB 140	Molecular Biology	120	50	20	25	35	250	25.0
ER 140	Bio-statistics and Epidemiology	90	20	20	30	30	190	19.0
DS 140	Development studies 1	50	20	20	20	-	120	12.0
TOTAL		320	120	80	95	105	**740**	**74.0**
SEMESTER I: YEAR II								
PE 240	Parasitology and Entomology	100	20	30	40	80	270	27.0
MM 240	Microbiology/Immunology	110	20	30	70	80	310	31.0
DS 240	Development studies 2	70	30	30	30	10	170	17.0
TOTAL		280	70	90	140	170	**750**	**75.0**
SEMESTER II: YEAR II								
SM 240	Clinical Microbiology	30	10	15	15	130	200	20.0
CC 240	Clinical Chemistry	30	10	15	15	130	200	20.0
PM 240	Public Microbiology	20	5	5	5	65	100	10.0
MP 240	Pathology, Hematopathology and Blood transfusion	115	15	15	25	80	250	25.0
TOTAL		195	40	50	60	405	**750**	**75.0**
SEMESTER I: YEAR III								
HT 340	Histotechnology and Cytology	80	15	15	30	160	300	30.0
SH 340	Hematology and Blood transfusion	45	15	10	10	100	180	18.0
DT 340	Molecular diagnostics techniques	60	15	15	20	110	220	22.0
TOTAL		185	45	40	60	370	**700**	**70.0**
SEMESTER II: YEAR III								
EF 340	Laboratory Rotation and Field Project	10	15	15	20	580	640	64.0
ES 340	Entrepreneurship	40	15	8	7	-	70	7.0
MG 340	Laboratory Management and Planning	30	20	10	20	10	90	9.0
TOTAL		80	50	33	47	590	**800**	**80.0**
							4400	**440.0**

KEY

LH: Lecture Hours   PH: Practical or Field work hours

TH: Tutorial Hours   ISH: Independent studies hours

AS: Assignment hours

CU: Credit Unit

1 Credit Unit = 10 Notional Hours

Annex 3: An example of Biomedical Laboratory Sciences programme in Rwanda

1st Year

Module code	Name of module	Credits	Face to face hours	Self study	Practice	Assignment / exercise	Total
Semester 1							
LAN 101	Languages and Communication	10	34	30	20	16	100
ICT 101	Introduction to Computer Sciences and Research	10	30	20	30	20	100
MPB 101	Medical Psychology and Bioethics	10	34	30	20	16	100
BMS 101	Bioinstrumentation	15	51	40	30	29	150
BMS 102	Analytical and Physical Chemistry	15	45	40	45	20	150
Semester 2		**60**					
BMS 103	Cell Biology & Genetics	10	34	30	20	16	100
BMS 104	Biochemistry	10	30	20	30	20	100
BMS105	Anatomy and Physiology	10	40	30	20	10	100
CLS 101	Haematology I	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS 102	Microbiology I	10	40	25	20	15	100
CLS 103	Parasitology and Entomology	10	34	30	20	16	100
		60					
Total		**120**					1200

2nd Year

Module code	Name of module	Credits	Face to face hours	Self study	Practice	Assignment/ exercise	Total
Semester 1							
BMS207	Genetics	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS202	Hematology II and Immunohematology I	15	51	40	30	29	150
CLS203	Histotechnology I	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS204	Chemical Pathology II	15	50	30	40	30	150

BMS205	Molecular Biology I	10	34	30	20	16	100
Semester 2		**60**					
BMS206	Microbiology II	15	51	40	30	29	150
BMS207	Immunology and Virology	15	46	35	35	34	150
CLS208	Phlebotomy and Laboratory Safety	10	25	25	35	15	100
CLS209	Clinical Attachment I	20			200		200
		60					
Total		**120**					1200

3th Year

Module code	Name of module	Credits	Face to face hours	Self study	Practice	Assignment/ exercise	Total
Semester 1							
CLS307	Chemical pathology III	15	45	40	35	30	150
CLS308	Microbiology III	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS309	Parasitology III	10	30	30	25	15	100
CLS310	Histotechnology II	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS311	Molecular Biology II, Medical Genetics Engineering and Bioinformatics	15	30	30	50	40	150
Semester 2		**60**					
CLS312	Applied Immunology	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS313	Hematology III and Immuno-haematology II	10	25	30	35	10	100
CLS314	Pharmacology and Toxicology	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS315	Clinical attachment II	30			300		300
Semester 2		**60**					
Total		**120**					1200

4th Year

Module code	Name of module	Credits	Face to face hours	Self study	Practice	Assignment/ exercise	Total
Semester 1							
CLS416	Microbiology IV	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS417	Haematology IV and Immunohaematology III	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS418	Parasitology IV	10	34	30	20	16	100
CLS419	Health Measurement and Research	20	68	60	40	32	200
CLS420	Biomedical Laboratory management	10	34	30	20	16	100
Semester 2		**60**					
CLS421	Clinical Attachment III	30			300		300
CLS422	Research Project	30					300
		60					
Total		**120**					1200

Annex 4: DETERMINING WORKLOAD IN RELATION TO CREDITS AND NOTIONAL HOURS

This determination of credits and corresponding notional hours was made inspired by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)'s description of credits related to 'notional hours' as part of a system of outcomes-based education (OBE). The SAQA equates one credit with ten notional hours of learning. Notional hours are defined in terms of the amount of time it takes for an average student to achieve the learning outcomes. It is generally understood that one credit equals to ten notional hours (one credit = 10 notional hours).

A typical example on the use of notional hours and determination of credits for non-practicalbased programmes (Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities) is as shown below:

12 credits = 120 notional hours		
Lectures		
Seminars/workshops/tutorials		
Practical classes / Case analysis / field trips/ service learning)		
Structured exercises (class activities based on course content as formative assessment/evaluation)		
Set reading (recommended readings, core texts, online resources, etc....)		
Self-directed study (library search, group discussion, peer collaborative learning, interviews, e-learning forums, ...)		

Assignments (research and report writing,...)		
Examination (preparation and semester/ trimester exams)		
Other (e.g. guest expert speaker, ...)		
Total notional hours of a 12 credits module/course		

Example:

If an undergraduate programme takes 3 years, this would be the likely distribution of credits:

Year 1	Semester 1	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6 modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	120 credits
	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6 modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Year 2	Semester 1	5 modules/courses/courses of 12 credits each 60 credits or 6 modules/courses/courses of 10 credits each 60 credits	120 credits
	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6 modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Year 3	Semester 1	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6 modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	120 credits
	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6 modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Minimum credits required for graduation			**360 credits**

If an undergraduate programme takes 4 years, this would be the likely distribution of credits:

Year 1	Semester 1	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	120 credit

	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Year 2	Semester 1	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	120 credit
	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Year 3	Semester 1	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	120 credit
	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Year 4	Semester 1	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	120 credit
	Semester 2	5 modules/courses of 12 credits each = 60 credits or 6modules/courses of 10 credits each = 60 credits	
Minimum credits required for graduation			**480 credit**

Annex 5: List of the technical team that developed the EACATS

No	Name	Institution	Country
1	Dr. Bizimana Isaac	National Council for Higher Education	Burundi
2	Dr. Bisore Simon	Ecole Normale Superieure	Burundi
3	Dr. Jean Marie Barambona	Universite Martin Luther King	Burundi
4	Dr. Beatrice Odera-Kwach	Commission for University Education	Kenya
5	Prof. Bonaventure Kerre	University of Eldoret	Kenya
6	Prof. Ruth Otunga	University of Eldoret	Kenya
7	Dr. Baguma Abdallah	Higher Education Council	Rwanda
8	Dr. Leon Mugabo	University of Rwanda	Rwanda
9	Dr. Niyonzima N. Francois	Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur de Ruhengeri-	Rwanda
10	Dr. Cyruss Ssebugenyi	National Council for Higher Education	Uganda
11	Sr. Dr. Maria Goretti Kaahwa	Kyambogo University	Uganda
12	Prof. Michael Mawa	Uganda Martyrs University	Uganda
13	Dr. Kokuberwa Katunzi-Mollel	Tanzania Commission for Universities	United republic of Tanzania
14	Prof. Erasmus Kamugisha	Catholic University of Health Sciences	United republic of Tanzania
15	Dr. Jenifer Sesabo	Mzumbe University	United republic of Tanzania