

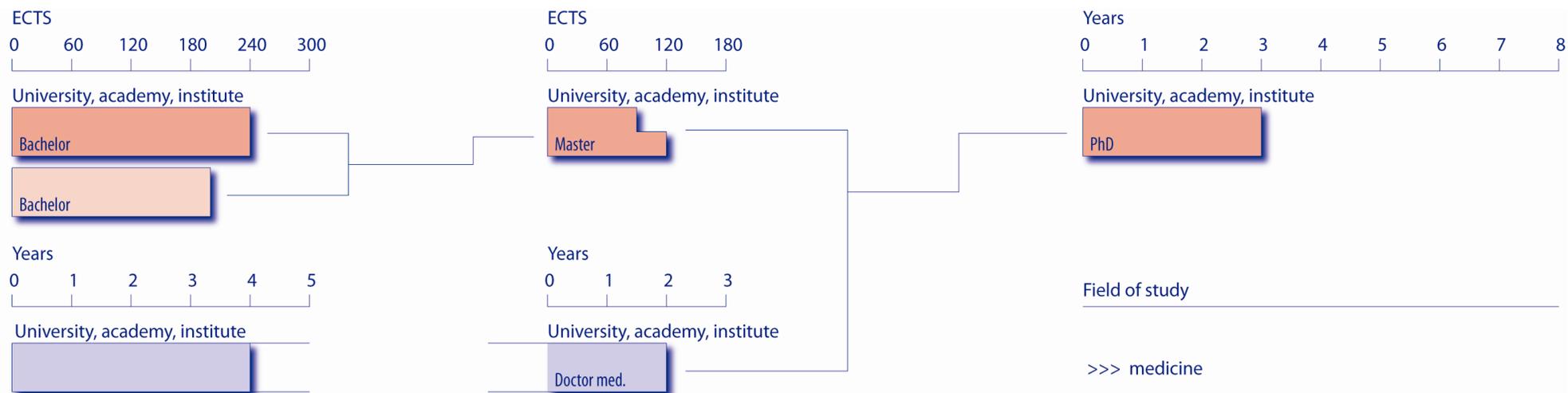


HIGHER EDUCATION IN AZERBAIJAN



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The higher education system in Azerbaijan



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme

ECTS

Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
ALL	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△

Source: "Focus on Higher Education in Europe 2010 - The impact of the Bologna Process" (Eurydice, 2010).

I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The principle goal of the system of higher education in Azerbaijan is to educate and train highly-skilled specialists, as well as scientific and pedagogic staff in line with the demands of the community and labour market. The system is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Law on Education, other normative and legal acts on education, as well as international agreements co-signed by the Republic of Azerbaijan. In 1993, the higher education system became a two-tier higher education system consisting of undergraduate education (*bakalavr təhsil pilləsi*) and post-graduate education (*magistr təhsil pilləsi*). Since then, significant reforms have been carried out in the higher education system, as the existing regulations were improved and a credit system was adopted by the higher education institutions. After the first Bachelor degree alumni graduated in 1997, a total of 32 higher education institutions (both public and private) started providing post-graduate education in the second tier of higher education.

In order to advance quality and ensure equity in education by providing fair and valid entrance examinations and centralised students admission for higher education institutions, the State Commission for Student Admission (Tələbə Qəbulu üzrə Dövlət Komissiyası - TQDK) was set up in 1992. The SSAC developed an open system which integrates the following main stages: development of examination content, reception of applications, exam administration, creation of databases and information processing. Since 2005, the State Commission has been responsible for the enrolment of students to post-graduate courses. Although in the 1990s some considerable attempts to carry out reforms in the higher education system of Azerbaijan were made, the lack of relevant mechanisms hindered the implementation of these reforms systematically. The situation changed only after approval of the Reforms Program for Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1999. Within the framework of this Program the higher education system underwent structural modifications, the network system of higher education institutions was improved and the institutions were granted autonomy.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

The new Law "On Education" adopted in June 2009 introduced a three-cycle higher education system. Since then the higher education system of Azerbaijan is comprised of the following levels:

- 1) Undergraduate (with the exception of medical studies) - *bakalavriat*;
- 2) Post-graduate (with the exception of medical studies) - *magistratura*;
- 3) Doctorate (*doktorantura*)

Undergraduate courses generally take four years (five years for part-time programs) and cover a wide range of domains. Their content and organizational standards are defined by the relevant executive body. Undergraduate courses provide students with the possibility of employment in certain specialized jobs after graduation. Upon completion of undergraduate courses, students are awarded the academic title "*bakalavr*" (Bachelor degree), within a specific field, and they can work in various fields except in scientific and pedagogical areas at scientific research institutes and higher education institutions.

Post-graduate courses typically last for 2 years (two and a half years for part-time programs), provide students with training in a certain field of study from scientific research or professional viewpoints and enable them to engage in professional activity, scientific research and pedagogical activity. Upon completion of graduate courses, students are awarded the academic title "*magistr*" (Master degree). The content and organizational standards, as well as the requirements for awarding a Master degree are defined by the relevant executive body.

Medical education includes basic education courses and post-graduate studies based on education programs and state education standards. Upon completion of medical education the graduates are awarded the academic title of doctor.

Doctoral education is the highest level of the higher education system and is carried out at higher education institutions and academic departments (*doktorantura*) of scientific organizations (the equivalent department in military education institutions is called *adyunktura*). Upon completion of doctoral studies students are awarded the academic title of Doctor of Philosophy –Ph.D. (*Fəlsəfə elmləri doktoru*) or Doctor of Science – D.Sc.

(*Elmlər doktoru*) specifying the relevant field of study. Scientific degrees are awarded upon application by the Thesis Board (Dissertasiya Şurası) of higher education institutions and scientific organizations in accordance with the legislation.

In 2009 the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan approved the following list of Undergraduate Programs (qualifications):

- Education;
- Humanities and Social Sciences;
- Culture and Art;
- Economy and Management;
- Natural Sciences;
- Technological Sciences;
- Agricultural Sciences;
- Healthcare, Welfare and Services.

Types of tertiary education institutions

The system of higher education institutions includes mainly universities (*universitet*), academies (*akademiya*), institutes (*institut*).

There are 53 higher education institutions in Azerbaijan. 37 of these institutions are public (*dövlət ali təhsil müəssisəsi*), while the other 16 are private (*özəl ali təhsil müəssisəsi*) institutions.

Some 141.697 students study at higher education institutions in Azerbaijan.

In Azerbaijan, vocational education is part of post-secondary education. Vocational education is provided by vocational schools and culminates in the receipt of a professional diploma. College type institutions provide education leading to a Pre-Bachelor diploma (*subbakalavr*).

2. Distribution of responsibilities

Higher education is governed by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan (*Azərbaycan Respublikası Nazirlər Kabineti*) and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan (*Azərbaycan Respublikası Təhsil Nazirliyi*).

The Cabinet of Ministers decides the education strategy, supervises implementation of the Law on Education and the relevant legislative acts and documents, as well as defines the regulations for the establishment, restructuring and liquidation of higher education institutions. Moreover, the Cabinet of Ministers establishes, restructures and closes vocational institutions, as well as approves the list of qualifications, education regulations and rules. It also makes

certain proposals on the development of the budget and funds for the development of education, and defines state standards for education funding, as well as regulations for scholarship and salary payment.

The Ministry of Education is the central executive body governing the education system of the country. It participates in the development and implementation of the state policy for education.

3. Governing bodies of the Higher Education Institutions

Responsibilities in higher education institutions of Azerbaijan are distributed among the following bodies:

- Scientific Board;
- Rector;
- Vice-rector;
- Board of Faculties;
- Deans;
- Heads of departments

Public higher education institutions are led by a rector appointed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The "Scientific" Board (*Elmi Şura*) is the senior governing body of a public higher education institution. The rules of establishment and responsibilities of the Scientific Board are defined in the statutes approved by the Cabinet of Ministers and in the internal regulations of the higher education institutions concerned.

Private higher education institutions are led by a rector appointed by the Board of Founders (*Təsisçilər Şurası*) the members of which may include the founders, trustees, etc. of the institution.

The Vice-rector, faculty deans and heads of departments also participate in the governance of the higher education institutions.

With the exception of the bodies responsible for education management, other public or private organisations are excluded from intervening in issues related to the governance of any higher education institution.

4. Financing

Public higher education institutions are financed by the Cabinet of Ministers applying state budgetary resources.

The state budget is the basis for financing public higher education institutions. However, there are a number of other resources which can be used for financing:

- tuition fees;

- scientific grants allocated by the government on a competitive basis;
- special-purpose program and/or project resources financed by the government;
- legal revenues obtained as a result of sale of outdated property (vehicles, equipment, etc) belonging to a higher education institution;
- international grants and financial resources;
- grants, allowances and financial assistance legally provided by legal and/or physical entities, non-residents and/or stateless persons, foreign legal entities, etc.

Subsidisation of private higher education institutions is primarily tuition-based. Such institutions are also financed by resources provided by their trustees (founders), various grants, credits, allowances, etc.

5. Students' contributions and financial support

Higher education institutions offer tuition-free and/or fee-paying programmes. These programmes may include both full and part-time courses. Students who enrol on fee-paying programmes have to pay the relevant tuition fee, the amount of which is determined by the higher education institutions themselves.

Although students are not directly provided with full financial support, the government offers certain scholarships including individual scholarships, so as to stimulate educational development. Moreover, students with high entrance scores are granted a Presidential scholarship. All students are provided with free socio-psychological, methodological, medical and informational assistance services at higher education institutions.

The current legislation does not include direct financial assistance to the families (parents) of students. However, students belonging to IDP (Internally Displaced Persons, the population of Azerbaijan which was driven out of their native lands in Karabakh by Armenian armed forces) and/or martyr's families are exempt from tuition fees if they enrol on fee-paying courses.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

According to the legislation, each education institution has to obtain from the relevant executive authority an appropriate licence to carry out their educational activities. Public higher education institutions are provided with a permanent licence by the Cabinet of Ministers, while the licence granted to certain

private and municipal education institutions founded by legal or physical entity of the Republic of Azerbaijan is issued by the Ministry of Education and is valid for five years. The validity of the temporary licence granted to non-residents and stateless persons for establishment of education institutions is three years.

The licence granted to a foreign legal entity, its branches and representations, as well as to non-residents and stateless persons is recognized by the Government of Azerbaijan according to bilateral agreements co-signed by the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Quality assurance and accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes are implemented by the Accreditation Commission (*Akkreditasiya Komissiyası*) under the Ministry of Education. The Commission may be comprised of the Minister of Education (the Chairman of the Commission), Deputy Ministers of Education, directors and experts of the relevant department, Director of the Institute of Education (*Təhsil Problemləri İnstitutu*), as well the representatives of the relevant ministries and organisations cooperating with higher education institutions.

Higher education institutions are accredited so as to ensure the quality of education. Accreditation attests the compliance of the educational process, materials and technical bases of education institutions, education programmes, financial resources and education infrastructure with the approved state standards and legal requirements.

As regards the programmes, the Ministry of Education defines the accreditation and attestation requirements and criteria in accordance with the state education standards and a certificate valid for five years is issued upon accreditation.

7. Admission

All those who have obtained a Secondary Education Certificate have the right to apply for admission to higher education institutions.

No privileges are given to students for admission to higher education institutions (with the exception of the winners of international Olympiads and other such high-level contests).

Graduates of secondary and/or vocational schools or colleges who have been awarded the relevant diploma of completion (or Certificate of Secondary Education - *Orta Təhsil Haqqında Şəhadətnamə*) may apply for admission to universities (for Bachelor studies). Admission is carried out on the basis of central examinations set by the State Student Admission Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan (*Tələbə Qəbulu üzrə Dövlət*

Komissiyası - TQDK). Students applying for programmes requiring special talents (such as sports, arts, etc.) have to take an additional examination in those relevant areas.

Upon completion of undergraduate studies, students may apply for admission to post-graduate studies. Examinations are set by the abovementioned Commission. Further studies to which a student applies should correspond to his/her educational background at Bachelor level.

The admission plan is drawn up by the Ministry of Education. However, the relevant procedures and requirements for admission are developed by the State Student Admission Commission. This Commission also sets out the admission procedures and structure, and implements the admission of Azerbaijani students to the different levels of higher education based on their results at the centralized entrance exams. It also makes a decision on the admission regulations and rules for entrance examinations, monitors application procedures, submits regular reports on admission to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, carries out and issues statistical data on the admission results, etc.

8. Organisation of the academic year

The Ministry of Education is responsible for determining the length/beginning/end and organisation of the academic year.

The academic year usually begins on September 15 and ends in early July. It includes two semesters (autumn and spring). Moreover, summer sessions (not exceeding six weeks) may be offered to students. The duration of the academic year is 40 weeks, each semester being 20 weeks. Examination sessions last for five weeks, while vacations are between 8-12 weeks (the duration of winter vacations should not be less than two weeks). An academic hour at higher education institutions is 45 minutes long and each lesson consists of 90 minutes (two academic hours).

9. Curriculum content

The curriculum in Azerbaijan is defined at national level.

Curricula include compulsory and optional subjects. Optional subjects are defined by the higher education institutions concerned. They include academic disciplines, scientific methodologies and techniques. There are also a number of international curricula implemented upon the approval of the Ministry of Education.

Academic programs of Bachelor studies include the following disciplinary categories:

- humanities (15-20%);
- core subjects (80-85%)

Academic programs for post-graduate studies are divided between taught modules and scientific-research. 45-50% of contact-hours are spent on disciplines falling under taught modules which includes both Humanities (20-25%) and Core subjects (75-80%) The other 50-55% falls under scientific-research.

Contact-hours for optional subjects account for 25-30% of the total contact-hours within both under-graduate and post-graduate academic programs. Consequently, compulsory subjects consist of the remaining 70-75% of the total contact-hours of the programs.

10. Assessment, progression, certification and degree

In Azerbaijan, undergraduate and post-graduate students are assessed by separate systems and mechanisms.

A multi-score system is used for assessing the educational progress of undergraduate students. The maximum score within this system is 100 points for each discipline, 50 points of which are accumulated during the semester and the other 50 points during the examination session.

The points accumulated within the multi-score system indicate the followings:

- less than 51 points – unsatisfactory;
- 51-60 points – fair;
- 61-70 points – satisfactory;
- 71-80 points – good;
- 81-90 points – very good;
- 91-100 points – excellent

Post-graduate students are assessed according to a 5-score system, i.e. unsatisfactory, fair, good, very good, excellent. Graduates of higher education institutions may apply to further (additional) studies if the field of study corresponds to their prior qualification or current work area. The criteria for judging the adequacy of the applicant to the studies are defined by the Commission (*Müsabiqə Komissiyası*) set up at the higher education institution concerned.

Undergraduate students have to sit final state exams or defend a thesis in order to be awarded a Bachelor degree and a final grade. Upon completion of undergraduate courses and by the decision of the State Attestation Commission, students are awarded a Bachelor degree which enables them to apply for a Master degree programme.

To be awarded a Master degree and final grade, post-graduate students must defend a thesis. A special Board (*İxtisaslaşdırılmış Müdafiə Şurası*) comprised of the chairman appointed by the Ministry of Education is set up for this purpose.

A Master degree and the relevant final grade gives a student an opportunity to access doctoral programs and work in any field relevant to his\her profile, as well as to teach at higher education institutions.

11. Academic staff

Academic staff of higher education institutions consists of the following categories:

- a) teaching personnel (research and educational staff), which includes professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, lecturers and assistant lecturers
- b) tutors, methodologists, scholars, concertmasters and trainers
- c) academic assistants

Faculty members are employed on a competitive basis and on the basis of a five year contract.

The requirements for the position as a senior lecturer are the following:

- candidates for science posts - at least three years work experience in a scientific and educational domain;
- highly qualified specialists with at least five years work experience and published scientific and methodological work and,
- holders of a Master degree with at least three years work experience in the relevant domain.

The requirements for the position of a lecturer are the following:

- candidates for science posts;
- highly qualified specialists with at least five years work experience and published scientific and methodological work and,
- holders of a Master degree with good educational progress (graduation points should exceed 81 points) and at least one year work experience.

Students successfully completing full-time post-graduate education, as well as holders of a Master degree with Honours may be appointed to a teacher position for a maximum of three years under assignment by the relevant institution.

12. Research activities

Scientific research within the education system

is carried out by scientific research institutes (*elmi-tədqiqat institutları*) in cooperation with the governance bodies in education, as well as by higher education institutions, including scientific research institutes, scientific centres, departments, laboratories, etc.

The Law on Education refers to higher education institutions not only as educational entities, but also as significant research providers. Higher education institutions take part in the elaboration and implementation of various research programs and projects. Scientific research carried out within the higher education system includes fundamental and applied research work and is funded by state budgetary sources, various grants, financial support from different funds, such as the Azerbaijan National Scientific Foundation, US Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF), INTAS (International Association for the promotion of co-operation with scientists from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union), etc., as well as the extra budgetary resources of education institutions.

13. University-enterprise cooperation

Cooperation between universities and enterprises is carried out independently and institutions themselves may arrange internships and training for their students. However, there are no studies on the impact and quality of such arrangements.

14. International cooperation

The Ministry of Education closely collaborates with major international organizations (the Council of Europe, UNESCO, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, ETF, ISESCO, EU), as well as with international nongovernmental organizations (Education Law and Policy, Open Society Institute, American Council for Collaboration in Education and Language Study (ACCELS), International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), DAAD). Cooperation includes policy dialogue, convening joint conferences, seminars, and workshops on issues related to the implementation of Bologna process requirements, exchange of students, faculty members and researchers, improvement of the content of education, participation in joint projects, etc.

Cooperation between Azerbaijan and the EU is carried out within the framework of Tempus\TACIS, Erasmus Mundus, Twinning\TAIEX and Sigma programs.

Policy dialogues with partners from other regions of the world are held during visits of Ministry officials and exchanges with official delegations at the Ministry of Education and higher education institutions. During recent years such dialogue has expanded to a number

of countries including the USA, Canada, France, Germany, the UK, South Korea, Egypt, Israel, etc. Protocols and agreements on mutual recognition of degrees have been signed with the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Turkey and Austria.

Student mobility is regulated by international agreements and contracts signed between different countries. Azerbaijani students are granted scholarships from the Government of Azerbaijan, which gives them an opportunity to study at various prestigious universities of the world. The "State Scholarship Program for Education of Azerbaijani Youth Abroad (2007-2015)" is financed by the State Oil Fund (Dövlət

Neft Fondu) and aims at educating a total of 5 000 Azerbaijani students abroad.

There are also foreign students studying in Azerbaijan within the framework of bilateral cooperation with overseas countries in the field of higher education. While some of the foreign students study in Azerbaijan in accordance with intergovernmental agreements, most of them are offered fee-paying courses in accordance with the agreements of higher education institutions concerned. Currently, there are 6 813 foreign students in Azerbaijan from about 50 different countries of the world.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

The Ministry of Education is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the requirements of the Bologna Declaration in Azerbaijan. Although some considerable achievements were made within the framework of this process, there are still a number of challenges and needs in the implementation. These challenges could be summarized as follows:

- Activities on the elaboration of training and methodological literature, exemplary curriculum and textbooks in conformity with the standards of national education should be expanded; necessary measures should be taken to allocate finances for this purpose.
- Democratic principles should be applied in the governance of higher education institutions to a larger extent.
- Participation of students should be ensured and the role of the public should be increased. The attention of the public should focus on the problems and needs of education. Democratic principles should be widely applied to the education process.
- All the normative documents on education (decrees, regulations, etc) should be revised, and the existing gaps should be removed.
- The process of attestation and accreditation of higher education institutions should be sped up.
- Necessary measures should be taken for the recognition of degrees conferred by

higher education institutions of Azerbaijan in countries involved in the Bologna process.

- Recognition of the quality assurance mechanism of the Republic of Azerbaijan should be ensured in the countries involved in the Bologna Process.
- A database should be created to allow the Azerbaijani experts take part in the international commissions on quality assurance in education.
- The present legislation for ensuring the academic mobility of academic staff and students should be improved and new legislative acts should be developed.
- A grant system should be created for ensuring the mobility of academic staff and students.

At present, the main goal of the reforms carried out in the higher education system of Azerbaijan is to adapt to the Bologna principles, to guarantee its attractiveness and competitiveness, to satisfy the demands for qualified citizens needed for developing the economy and building an effective higher education system.

On 22 May 2009, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan approved the State Program on the Reforms in the Higher Education System of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2009-2013). The relevant Action Plan was approved on July 10, 2009.

The principal goals of the reforms are:

- to improve the educational content and teaching technologies ensuring the compatibility of higher education qualifications with the demands of the local market and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area;
- to introduce new academic plans/programs, scientific and methodological guidelines on modern training and information techniques;
- to modernize the structure and governance system of HEIs;
- to involve international experts in the accreditation process with a view to promoting the quality of the higher education;
- to encourage close collaboration between higher education and research institutes;
- to supply HEIs with cutting-edge facilities and equipment;
- to establish university campuses and e-libraries;
- to introduce new mechanisms to define budget support for HEIs.

The Board for Scientific Coordination (*Elmi*

Koordinasiya Şurası) was established with the aim of implementing the measures set forth in the Action Plan.

According to the principles of the Bologna Declaration, the education progress of students is estimated on the basis of a multi-score system. A credit system is being applied to the teaching process. All teaching programs have been adapted to the requirements of the credit system; students are provided with "tutor services" (academic advisory services) in order to provide them with pedagogical assistance. Summer sessions are organized for those who failed their exams during regular sessions.

The Diploma supplement has been devised, approved and sent to all higher education institutions. Qualifications granted in foreign countries are recognized by the Permanent Commission (*Daimi Kommissiya*).

The accreditation and licensing procedures of higher education institutions are implemented with a view to establishing a quality assurance system. In order to ensure the quality of the higher education system and improve its competitiveness, new mechanisms to define budget support for the institutions (per capita funding) have been introduced.

2. The Bologna Process

The Bologna cycle structure

Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process	Extensive but gradual introduction/ ongoing adaptations or extensions		
Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes			
Bachelor programmes	240 ECTS (4 years)	Master programmes	120 ECTS (2 years)
Bachelor/master cycle structure models most commonly implemented	240 + 120 ECTS credits (4+2 academic year)		

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Legislation on ECTS	Legislation governing the arrangements for implementing ECTS has been introduced.
Level of implementation of ECTS	Over 75% of institutions and programmes use ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Allocation of ECTS is based on contact hours, or a combination of contact hours and student workload.

Diploma Supplement (DS)

Implementation of the Diploma Supplement	Partial and gradual introduction	
Diploma Supplement issued	On request and free of charge	In the language of instruction and/or English

National Qualification Framework (NQF)

Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework		Not yet started formally.
		<u>Step 1</u> : Decision taken. Process just started.
	X	<u>Step 2</u> : The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.
		<u>Step 3</u> : The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.
		<u>Step 4</u> : Redesigning the study programmes is on-going and the process is close to completion.
	<u>Step 5</u> : Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.	

National Quality Assurance System

National Body for Quality Assurance	
Name	Department for Accreditation under the Ministry of Education
Year of establishment	2010
Status	Government-dependent body or ministry
Principal "object" of the evaluations	Institutions plus programmes
Body responsible for	Both public and private higher education institutions
Main outcome of the review	X A decision granting the reviewed institution/programme permission to operate/teach at certain levels/undertake research, etc.
	Advice on how the reviewed institution/programme can improve quality in specific areas

Recognition of qualifications

Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	YES	1998
Adoption of national laws/regulations required to implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention	YES	2000
Institution responsible for recognising foreign qualifications for the purpose of academic study in the country	Ministry of Education	
Institution responsible for recognising foreign qualifications for the purpose of work in the country	Ministry of Education	

III. Participation in EU programmes

1. Tempus

Azerbaijan has participated in the Tempus programme since 1995.

1. Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

	TEMPUS I and II	TEMPUS III	TEMPUS IV		
	1990-1999	2000-2006	2008	2009	2010
Joint European Projects	2	12	3	2	2
Compact Projects	5	0	0	0	0
Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III)	0	2	0	0	0

Structural Measures (Tempus IV)					
Total	7	14	3	2	2

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS I to III (1990-2006)

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JEP	SCM
BAKU STATE UNIVERSITY	5	4	1
AZERBAIJAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY (BAKU)	4	4	0
KHAZAR UNIVERSITY	3	2	1
AZERBAIJAN STATE OIL ACADEMY (BAKU)	3	3	0
AZERBAIJAN AGRICULTURAL ACADEMY (BAKU)	2	2	0
SUMQAYIT STATE UNIVERSITY	2	2	0
AZERBAIJAN UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES (BAKU)	2	0	2
AZERBAIJAN UNIVERSITY OF ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION (BAKU)	2	2	0

2. Impact of the TEMPUS Programme

Tempus projects that were implemented in the country, initiated the modernization process at HEIs, and these projects have been in the majority of cases, the only instrument available for implementation of the Bologna Principles.

More than 80% of the Tempus projects in Azerbaijan have been implemented in the field of curriculum development and university management. Currently 15 universities (public and private) are already involved in Tempus projects in different priority areas. Three of the six provincial universities have already benefited from the Tempus projects in areas such as management, engineering and rural subjects. At present preference is given to projects involving universities from different regions of Azerbaijan. The main curriculum development priority areas covered have been: engineering (in particular, oil and gas), environmental sciences, economics, telecommunications, information technology, and EU studies. University management projects have focused on quality assurance, self-evaluation systems, and the establishment of international relations offices. In the framework of institution building, training has been provided in the field of public administration management. As regards Structural and Complementary Measure projects, the design of quality assurance and evaluation systems is a national priority and two projects concerning the quality assurance systems and accreditation and licensing issues were selected in 2006.

Most successful curriculum development programmes supported by Tempus are in the field of engineering (mainly oil and gas, and also biomedical). For instance, the project "Masterstudium für Energiemanagement in Aserbajdschan" (2004) has been followed by a

second Tempus project "Masterstudium in Energiemanagement für Erdöl/Chemieindustrie" (2006), thus introducing an Energy Management program at Master level at the Azerbaijan State Oil Academy and Sumgayit State University. The Master program is highly-equipped with state-of-the-art computer and technical labs.

The introduction of quality assurance (QA) is a key element in the Bologna Process both at national and institutional levels. Several projects have been implemented in the field of QA so far. Two joint projects supported the development of institutional QA mechanisms: "Designing Quality Assurance Systems in Azerbaijani Universities" (2006); and "Quality Assurance Tools for the Management of Internationalization" to assist Universities to strengthen their strategy of internationalization policy in compliance with a Quality Assurance Strategy (2008). One Structural Measure project "State Accreditation and Licensing Agencies and Procedures in Azerbaijan" provided the leading Azerbaijani professionals in accreditation and licensing with a knowledge of European standards and best practices, through an in-depth training session on the European best practices in accreditation and licensing systems. The intensive training on best practices in quality assurance and accreditation was realised with the participation of West European experts from Belgium and the Netherlands.

It should be noted that the interest in Tempus projects from the regional universities in Azerbaijan is all the time increasing. Several universities that never participated in Tempus before are now starting to work together on Tempus projects with bigger universities in the capital, thus building strong national and regional networks of higher education institutions.

2. Erasmus Mundus

Erasmus Mundus (2009-2013) is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education with a strong international focus. It operates through three actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates)

Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Masters Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 123 Masters and 24 Doctorate programmes offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars from all over the world.

Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window)

Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and from a particular region in the world on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – bachelors, masters, doctorate, post-doctorate – and for academic staff. The programme is focused on geographical "lots" of countries or regions covered by the EU's financial instruments for cooperation. These lots include most Tempus countries. New partnerships are selected each year through Calls for Proposals.

Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects

This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. HEIs (and other key players in the HE sector) may apply.

More information: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action1)

	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Students	2	-	1	5	3	1
Scholars	-	-	-	-	1	N/A

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2008-2009 (scholars).

Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

Year of Grant Allocation	2007	2008	2009
Undergraduate	15	10	10
Master	12	9	8
Doctorate	8	7	7
Post-Doctorate	2	5	5
Academic staff	3	3	3
Total	40	34	33

Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2010

Institutions	Action 1 Joint Programmes	Action 2 Partnerships	Action 3 Attractiveness projects
GANJA STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
KHAZAR UNIVERSITY		X	
XEZER UNIVERSITY TGT/ KHAZAR UNIVERSITY SOA		X	
AZERBAIJAN TOURISM INSTITUTE		X	

IV. Bibliographical references and websites

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- <http://ww.edu.gov.az> - Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- <http://xaricdetehsil.edu.gov.az> – State Scholarship Program
- <http://tqdk.gov.az> – State Committee for Students Admission
- <http://mfa.gov.az> - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- <http://parlament.az/?/az/content/232> - Milli Majlis (National Parliament) of the Republic of Azerbaijan \ Committee for Science and Education
- <http://www.tempus-az.org> – National Tempus Office in Azerbaijan
- <http://www.euroeducation.net/prof/azerco.htm> - The European Education Directory
- <http://www.scribd.com/doc/22996231/Higher-Education-in-Europe-2009-Developments-in-the-Bologna-Process> - Higher Education in Europe 2009: Developments in the Bologna Process

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