



EUROPE REGION

World Confederation
for Physical Therapy

Revision of the Briefing Paper on the Diploma Supplement including Recommendations

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REVISION OF THE BRIEFING PAPER ON THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS

European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (ER-WCPT) Education Matters WG

Purpose and introduction

The purpose of this paper is to inform the ER WCPT MO's and in general all Physiotherapists, mainly those with educational and/or managerial roles, of the existence of the Diploma Supplement (DS). The DS is a document issued by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that, among other aspects, promotes transparency and a fair and informed judgment about the qualifications of their graduates, and in this way can facilitate their mobility, recognition and employability.

The DS is free of charge, and an increasing number of HEIs are now offering it to their graduates.

The ER-WCPT Education Working Group believes it is relevant to promote and disseminate the existence of this tool, and that the MO's, the HEIs, employers and registration authorities discuss its impact on the mobility and employability of physiotherapists.

The paper addresses the following questions:

- What is the diploma supplement?
- What it is not?
- What does the diploma supplement offer to the graduates?
- What does the diploma supplement offer to higher education institutions?
- What does the diploma supplement offer to employers, professional bodies and registration authorities?

What is the diploma supplement?

The Diploma Supplement (DS) is a document attached to a higher education diploma or degree award aimed at improving international 'transparency' and facilitating the academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc.). It is designed to provide a description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by the individual named on the original

qualification to which this supplement is appended. It should be free from any value-judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition. It is a flexible non-prescriptive tool, which is designed to save time, money and workload. It is capable of adaptation to local needs.

The DS is produced by national institutions according to a template that has been developed by a Joint European Commission - Council of Europe - UNESCO working party that tested and refined it.

The DS template is available in the 11 official EU languages:

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

The DS is composed of eight sections:

1. Information identifying the holder of the qualification,
2. Information identifying the qualification,
3. Information on the level of the qualification
4. Information on the contents and results gained,
5. Information on the function of the qualification,
6. Additional information,
7. Certification of the supplement, and
8. Information on the national higher education system.

Information in all eight sections should be provided by the HEI. Where information is not provided, an explanation should give the reason why. HEIs must apply the DS through the same authentication procedures as for the academic award itself.

A description of the national higher education system within which the individual named on the original qualification graduated must be attached to the DS. This description is provided by the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARICs) and is available on the website: www.enic-naric.net

What it is not?

- It is not a Curriculum Vitae.
- It is not a substitute for the original qualification or a transcript.
- It is not an automatic system that guarantees recognition.

What does the diploma supplement offer to graduates?

- A qualification that is more readable and easily comparable abroad.
- A precise description of their academic courses/career and the competencies acquired during the study period.
- Objectivity and a fair judgement of their achievements and competencies.
- Easier access to opportunities of work or further studies abroad.
- It fosters their employability (employers are more interested by the student profile that is provided in the DS).

What does the diploma supplement offer to higher education institutions?

- It facilitates academic and professional recognition, thus increasing the transparency of qualifications.
- It protects national/institutional autonomy within a common framework, which is accepted all over Europe.
- It promotes informed judgements about qualifications that can be understood in another educational context.
- It raises the visibility of the institution abroad.
- It promotes the employability of their graduates nationally and internationally.
- It saves time, as it provides answers to a lot of frequently asked questions put to administrative services in institutions about the content and portability of diplomas.

What does the diploma supplement offer to employers, professional bodies and registration authorities?

New qualifications proliferate worldwide and countries are constantly changing their qualification systems and educational structures in response to economic, political and technological change. An increasing number of mobile citizens are seeking the fair recognition of their qualifications. The non-recognition and poor evaluation of qualifications is now a global problem. Since original credentials alone do not provide sufficient information, it is very difficult to gauge the level and function of a qualification without detailed appropriate explanation.

The Diploma Supplement is a response to these challenges since:

- It promotes transparency in higher education.
- It accommodates rapid changes in qualifications.
- It facilitates mobility, access and lifelong learning.
- It promotes fair and informed judgements about qualifications.

Recommendations

Following the recommendations from the General Meeting in 2014 the Education Matters Working Group (EMWG) explored the relevant content to be included in section **6.1. Additional Information** of the Diploma Supplements issued by HEI.

The EMWG supports **including the following information:**

Clinical training/internships: total hours (and time frame), clinical field, name and location (address) of clinical placements

Title of final year thesis/dissertation project and graduation assignment

International activities (study or training period abroad)

Description of autonomy related competences: brief description about autonomy on clinical decision, capacity to work alone and prescription model

Extra-curricular activities such as: tutoring, research work, project work, additional clinical training

Activities with other departments, professional bodies or companies in collaboration with the HEI

Adding other HEIs involved if the qualification is a joint degree (or double/multiple degree)

Member Organisations and ENPHE should promote these recommendations among national HEIs to be implemented

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Reference

This document is based on the information available on official web sites, and mainly taken from:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/diploma-supplement_en.htm

http://www.aic.lv/ace/ace_disk/Dipl_Sup/about_ds.htm

(Last accessed: 12 January 2016)