

**UMAP Exchange Program
and
UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme
(UCTS)**

Users' Guide

(Revision-1.1)

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INTRODUCTION

a. Why is a Common Educational Framework, UCTS, in Asia Needed?

International educators need a permeable framework, including a common credit transfer system, for higher education in the Asia-Pacific region if they want to mobilize a large number of students for educational exchanges.

University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) has developed a UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) to facilitate greater student mobility in the region by providing a framework for establishing credit transfer arrangements. The UCTS model originally adopted the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). However, a research conducted in 2010 discovered that there were some similarities in credit systems of higher education among 13 ASEAN+3 nations. Based upon this finding, a new concept of credit transfer system, temporary called as “Asian Academic Credits” (hereafter AACs) was developed.

The concept of AACs was proposed to UMAP International board as a new version of UCTS in 2011. After many discussions and revisions of original concept of AACs through UMAP Board meetings, in May 2013, finally, the UMAP International Board officially adopted the concept of AACs as a new system of UCTS in order to simplify the process of credit transfer among Asian higher education institutions. This new concept of UCTS is different from ECTS, which we had referred to in the past. Moreover, the concept of AACs (=UCTS) was also adopted at “the Forth ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers’ Meeting as a part of “ASEAN Plus Three Guidelines on Transcripts and Supplemental Documents for Academic Records of Exchange Students” in November 1, 2019. The concept of AACs (=UCTS) was also introduced in an internationally well-known journal, the *Journal of Studies in International Education*, in January 2019¹.

This Users’ Guide intends to illustrate standardized measures to harmonize specific differences among institutions regarding their educational contents in

¹ Hotta, T. (2019) The Development of “Asian Academic Credits” as an Aligned Credit Transfer System in Asian Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, (First Published online, January 11, 2019) 23 p. doi.org/10.1177/1028315318822797

order to improve their level of mutual understanding and trust.

As a result, use of the framework will help promote student mobility among participating institutions. As the number of participating institutions and mobility students rapidly increases, it becomes difficult for institutions to manage large-scale international mobility without a simple (transparent, compatible, and systematic) system to process the attendant paperwork. The newly introduced UMAP Credit Transfer System (UCTS) is a part of the permeable framework. It has the potential to promote student mobility not only among higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region, but also with other parts of the world by providing a simple, systematic measurement tool to count academic credits in the Asia-Pacific region.

b. Who will benefit from UCTS and what are its advantages?

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit system among countries/territories covered by UCTS can be compared easily, making it simple to determine the correct credit equivalencies at the home institutions. • The number of courses/credits taken abroad that can be transferred back to the home institutions can be calculated easily. • Knowing the correct number of credits to transfer to their home institution through UCTS, students can be assured that they can complete their coursework requirements back home and graduate on time.
Faculty and staff members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit systems and equivalencies across regions and countries are easy to compare, making it simple to advise students on the number of courses they need to take abroad. • Simple, hassle-free method for calculating credits and facilitating transfer from host to home institution. • Reduces the time needed to understand and calculate credit equivalencies. • Increases your chances of finding new student exchange partners around the globe by letting UCTS resolve difficulties in transferring credits.

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1. What is UMAP?

Growth in the internationalization of higher education is driving the expansion of tertiary systems and institutions throughout the world. It articulates cross-border collaboration as well as intensifies student mobility. In order to respond to this significant development and trend in higher education, Asian countries decided to develop a collaborative model of a student mobility scheme on a regional basis, which would not only increase student mobility but also strengthen economic integration within the region.

In 1991, the countries in Asia and the Pacific established an international network entitled “The University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP)”. It aims at enhancing student mobility and talent circulation through exchange programs and joint research projects to achieve a better and international understanding within each of the countries and territories in the Asia-Pacific region. As a voluntary organization, it mainly comprises governmental sectors and higher education institutions. Not-for-profit higher education institutions located in the Asia-Pacific region and accredited by its home accreditors are eligible to participate in UMAP. As of July 2019, UMAP has 21 countries/territories with Full membership among 36 eligible countries/territories and more than 600 institutional members.

According to its purpose, UMAP developed two types of regional mobility initiatives, including semester and summer programs for student exchanges and research nets for academic collaboration. Participating institutions are expected to waive tuition fees for UMAP semester exchange students, and to grant credits towards the student’s home institution degree for study undertaken while on exchange. In addition, UMAP provides scholarships for students who participated to Program C (Super Short-Term Program). In terms of the research net, the researchers, academics, and staff members from higher education institutions of UMAP member countries/territories are encouraged to collaborate with each other in the areas of cross-border higher education as well as to explore the possibilities of facilitating communication and mutual understanding across cultures.

2. UMAP Student Exchange Program

Under the UMAP Exchange Program, student exchange is enhanced and facilitated between individual accredited higher education institutions, or consortium of institutions on the basis of mutual acceptance of the appropriateness of national accreditation determinations.

UMAP has been administrating the following students exchange programs.

Program A	<p>UMAP Multilateral Student Exchange Program [UME]</p>	<p>Multilateral exchange program in which UMAP Pledged institutions send and receive two students per semester in principal. However, institutions that accept more than two students per semester will be allocated an equal number of additional quotas for outbound exchange student. The quotas can be used from the following semester without expiration date.</p> <p>Exchanges are made between UMAP Pledged institutions on a tuition-waiver basis. Programs (at the undergraduate or postgraduate level) can last one or two semesters, beginning in the fall or spring semester.</p> <p>The UMAP National Secretariat in each participating member country/territory acts as the coordinator for UME. The host institution waives tuition fees and manages to assist or provide exchange students in accommodation.</p> <p>Member institutions are encouraged to use the UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) to facilitate the transfer of earned credits to the participants' home institutions.</p>
Program B	<p>UMAP Bilateral Student Exchange Program [UBE]</p>	<p>Bilateral student exchange made between any two UMAP Pledged institutions that would like to exchange more than two students per semester. Conditions for the waiver/non-waiver of tuition fees will depend on the host institutions. Programs (at the undergraduate or postgraduate level) can last one or two semesters, beginning in the fall or spring semester.</p> <p>If a particular institution would like to accept more than two students with tuition fee, it can do so by offering their program under Program B.</p> <p>The UMAP National Secretariat in each participating member country/territory acts as the coordinator for UBE between UMAP Pledged institutions.</p> <p>Participating institutions are encouraged to use the UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) to facilitate the transfer of earned credits to the participants' home institutions.</p>

Program C	Super Short-Term Programs (SSTP)	<p>SSTP are short-term (one to eight-week long) programs offered by UMAP Pledged institutions. Programs are generally offered between June and September, and are available in a wide range of disciplines: cultural studies, language proficiency courses, vocational training, entrepreneurship, and more.</p> <p>The UMAP National Secretariat in each member country/territory acts as the coordinator for UMAP Pledged institutions participating in Exchange Programs. More specifically, they assist UMAP in promoting the courses, and can collect information about the courses to distribute.</p> <p>Institutions offering SSTP may charge or waive tuition fees for students coming from UMAP Pledged institutions in other countries/territories.</p> <p>Participating institutions decide whether or not to offer credits for SSTP. If credits are offered, they can be transferred using the UCTS.</p>
UMAP Summer Program	UMAP Discovery Camp	<p>UMAP Summer Program is a special summer program provided by UMAP. Place and content of the program differs every year depending on the organizer of the program. It started in 2016 as “UMAP Discovery Camp 2016 (UDC2016)” in Philippines and continued the programs in Japan in 2017, in Thailand in 2018 and in Taiwan in 2019. UMAP Summer Program 2020 in Malaysia and Program 2021 in China are planned.</p>
UMAP-COIL Honors Program		<p>UMAP-COIL Honors Program is a special tie-up program between COIL and UMAP. COIL stands for “Collaborative Online International Learning” a form of teaching which uses Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to connect students in different countries so that they can participate together in projects designed to boost their understanding of various fields or to help them acquire specific skills.</p>

3. Eligible Members

All public or private higher education institutions located in UMAP Full member countries/territories, and recognized in the participating home country/territory as nationally accredited, are eligible to participate in UMAP programs. It is required to obtain an endorsement of National Secretariat of the country/territory and to sign the “Pledge of Agreement” with UMAP IS in order to participate in Program A&B and C.

Host institutions are expected to waive tuition fees for UMAP exchange students (only Program A), and to grant credits towards the student’s home institution degree for study undertaken while on exchange.

UMAP member countries/territories and their higher education institutions agree to work toward standard arrangements for recognition of study undertaken by UMAP students. These institutions have agreed to use UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) on a voluntary basis for transparency in the conversion of credits between different higher education systems.

Students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, from UMAP participating institutions undertake a period of formal study, a minimum of one semester and a maximum of two semesters, while on exchange.

4. Three Main Components of UMAP Student Exchange Program

1) UMAP Pledge of Agreement

To participate in the UMAP Exchange Programs, institutions are required to sign the Pledge of Agreement with UMAP International Secretariat in advance in order to accept the principles of the UMAP exchange program concerning obligations of home and host institutions, and the preconditions concerning funding arrangements, especially to waive tuition fees for exchange students on a reciprocal basis.

Once signed, the agreement is valid until the termination is notified by either the university or UMAP IS in writing at least (6) months prior to the proposed termination date. In the event of termination, respective parties will honor all commitments to students currently participating in the program.

2) Announcement of UCTS

To participate in the UMAP Exchange Programs, institutions are encouraged to announce their use of UCTS as a conversion scale for credit to other participating institutions. Institutions are required to show the number of UCTS credits for each course and issue a transcript that uses UCTS credits.

3) UMAP Study Plan

Once assigned to a host institution, students are required to make a UMAP Study Plan and submit it to the host institution. Students need to find courses at the host institution relevant to their courses at their home institution. This can be done by comparing course descriptions, syllabi, or the institution catalogs of the host and home institutions, after which they complete the form with their selected courses, credits and also UCTS credit equivalence. The host institution should offer advice to the student's study plan and help him/her to finalize his/her course selections for the coming semester.

THE PLEDGE OF AGREEMENT
on
UMAP MULTILATERAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM
between
[.....]
AND UMAP INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

..... (University), (Country),
as a participating institution of the University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) Multilateral Student Exchange Program (UME), hereby pledges to the UMAP International Secretariat (UMAP IS) as the representative of UMAP, that (University) will agree upon the following terms for the implementation of exchanges of undergraduate or graduate students (hereinafter referred to as “exchange students”) under the UME:

1. All participating exchange students should be currently enrolled students from participating universities.
2. The selection of exchange students will be subject to the authority and discretion of each host university. The maximum number of inbound and outbound exchange students for each university will not exceed two (2) per semester (Program A).
3. Regardless of Article 2 above, universities that accept more than two (2) exchange students in a given semester will be allocated an equal number of additional quotas for outbound exchange students. The quotas can be used from the following semester without expiration date.
4. The provisions of the preceding two paragraphs shall not preclude bilateral agreements made between any two (2) participating universities that hope to exchange more students (Program B: UMAP Bilateral Student Exchange Program (UBE)).
5. Exchange students shall be permitted to stay at the host university not longer than one year.
6. Exchange students will not be subject to fees for examinations, admission and tuition at the host university.
7. Exchange students will receive a letter of enrollment or note from the host university to apply for VISAs for a length of time equivalent to the exchange term in the country where the host university is located.
8.(University) shall host or participate in Program A. This shall not prevent its students from participating in Program B and/or Super Short-Term Programs (Program C) before the university hosts or participates in Program A.

9. Exchange students will comply not only with international exchange and other requirements of the host country, but also with the rules and regulations of the host institution.
10. Exchange students may enroll into any courses/classes offered by the host university, except courses with specific requirements determined by the university.
11. All participating universities agree to accept credits and to transfer credits earned by students from the exchange program via the UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS), subject to the regulations and procedures of the respective universities.
12. All participating universities shall provide exchange students with accommodation or help them acquire their own accommodation.
13. Concerning the implementation of UME, open and widespread participation shall be encouraged; all details shall be discussed and agreed by host and home universities with UMAP IS whenever necessary.
14. As for the implementation of exchange students, written notification is required at least one year earlier to the end date for the termination of this agreement.
15. This Agreement will/shall be valid from the date signed by each participating university with UMAP IS. The Agreement may be terminated by the university giving six (6) months' written notice to UMAP IS. In the event of termination, the respective parties will honor all commitments to students currently participating in the program.
16. The memorandum shall be concluded in English. Any revision or modification of the Agreement shall be made in writing through discussion in UMAP committee and board meetings.

(Signature)_____	(Signature)_____
(Name)_____	Makio Takemura, Ph.D.
(Title)_____	Secretary General
(University)_____	UMAP International Secretariat
(Country)_____	Tokyo, Japan
Date _____	Date _____

5. UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS)

1) Objective

UCTS has been developed to promote student mobility with the objective to ensure that credits are transferable for study undertaken on exchange between UMAP participating institutions, and to facilitate greater mobility between UMAP member countries/territories and other regions.

UCTS concept is designed not to control or standardize any pre-existing rules and regulations at institutions. Rather, it is designed to provide more detailed information regarding the academic experiences of mobility students at host institutions using standardized indicators, while at the same time allowing institutions to retain their own pre-existing systems and regulations.

2) Definition of UCTS

UCTS accepts a range of different teaching hours and student workloads as equivalent when they are used to calculate credits from different nations and higher education institutions. Thus, it will create a common credit conversion scheme where UMAP participating institutions can transfer credits among themselves on a one-to-one basis, thereby promoting student mobility in the Asia-Pacific region.

A teaching hour is defined as a contact hour that a teacher spends in one instruction session. One teaching hour will be counted as one academic hour, not based upon the exact length of teaching hours. The actual amount of time varies from institution to institution. For example, in the case of Japan, 1 academic hour often means 45 minutes of instruction; in the US, many institutions teach approximately 50 minutes; and in Asian institutions, one academic hour can be between 45 to 60 minutes of instruction.

The student workload is defined as the amount of time that students need to complete all learning activities which consists of:

- a. Attending classes/lectures
- b. Fulfilling all other academic requirements such as homework, group projects, team discussion, preparation for examinations, internships, and individual study, etc.

Including 13 to 16 teaching hours, currently, the student workload durations range from 38 to 48 hours in Asia.

Therefore, the definition of UCTS is as follows:

One (1) UCTS = 38–48 hours of student workload.

This includes 13-16 academic hours of instruction.

6. UCTS Credit Conversion with Other Parts of the World

The following table illustrates a recommended conversion of UCTS with various national and regional credit systems. UCTS is equivalent to Asian Academic Credits (AACs).

Country/Region	UCTS	Asia	USA	Europe (ECTS)*	UK (CATS)**
Credit Conversion	1 UCTS	1 credit	1 credit	1.5 ECTS	3 credits
Student Workload	38-48 hrs.	38-48 hrs.	45 hrs.	37.5-45 hrs.	Converted from ECTS
Teaching Hours	13-16 hrs.	13-16 hrs.	15 hrs.	-----	-----

*ECTS – European Credit Transfer System

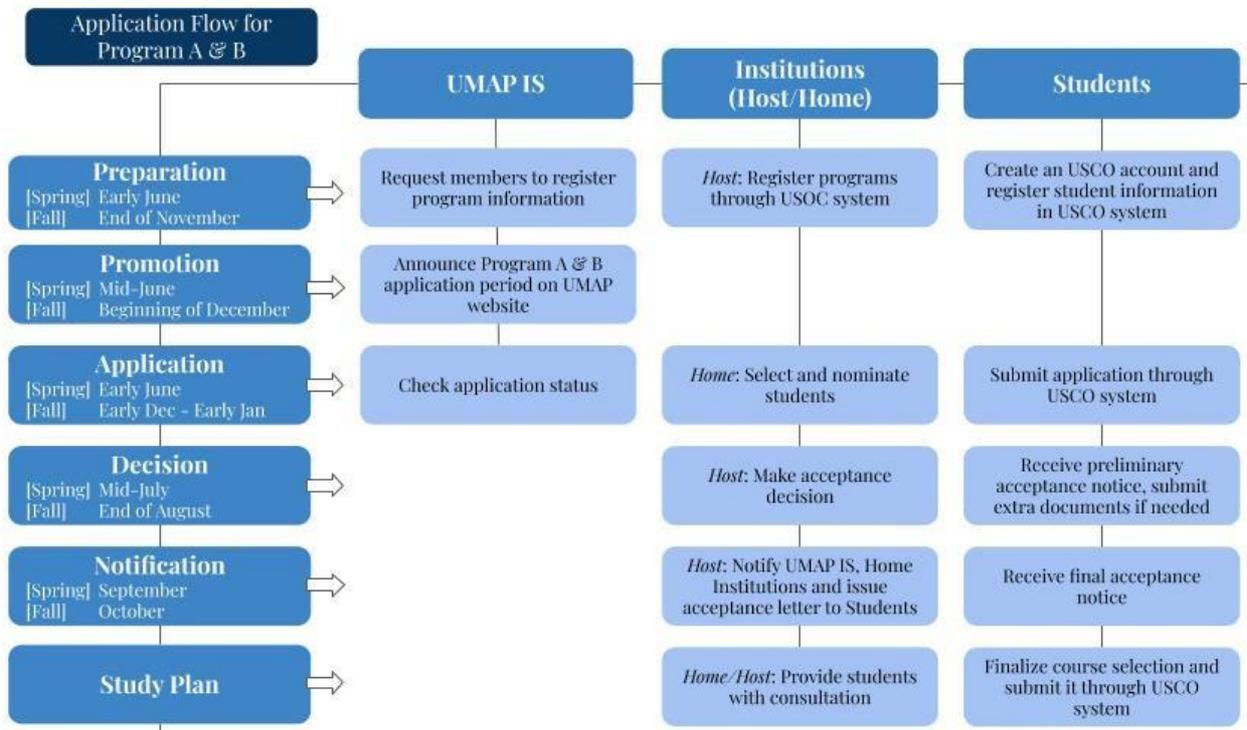
**These 3 British credits are based on the conversion principle of British credits with ECTS defined by the QAA (2008). This principle is effective among all higher education institutions that use CATS (Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme) in the UK.

7. UMAP Student Exchange Application Procedures

UMAP Student Connection Online (USCO) system is a user-friendly platform for communication, data storage and synchronization between students, home institutions and host institutions. The system can be used for Program A&B and Program C for upload of offered programs, application of preferred programs by students, nomination by home institutions, admission to host institutions and submission of study report by students after their completion of exchange programs.

As for Program A&B, UMAP offers two programs per year depending on the start of the study period (spring and fall semester student exchange). Each program has two application cycles so that Universities/Institutions may choose one or both cycles depending on their internal schedule of sending/accepting exchange students. This is to adjust the difference in academic year by country/territory and to provide students with more opportunity to study abroad. Regarding Program C UMAP provide three cycles for difference of program periods which is generally between June and September.

Application Flow for Program A & B



*The schedule above are for the 1st cycle of each [Spring] and [Fall] semesters.
The schedule for the 2nd cycle of both semesters are sometime later after the 1st cycle.

1) Student registration and application on USCO System

It is required for students to create an account and register their information in USCO system before they apply various student exchange programs under UMAP. The link to student registration is the shown here (<https://usco.umap.org/std/login.php?>).

The student must find subjects relevant to the course at the home institution and detailed information about the number of credits for each subject at the home and host institutions for credit transfer. And they need to select proposed programs that students would like to take at a host institution up to the limit of the system (e.g. Program A&B: 5), and Additional information about UCTS may need to be provided for the credit transfer process and complete the study plan with selected subjects and credits before the start of study abroad. List of UMAP programs are shown on the UMAP website (<https://usco.umap.org/>).

Before applying preferred programs on USCO System, they need to prepare necessary documents for application which are different depending upon each institution. For example

- Transcripts (required)
- Certificate of Official Language Exams (required*)
- Motivation Letter(s) (depends on each institution)
- Copy of Passport (depends on each institution)
- Medical Certificate (after acceptance has been confirmed, depends on each institution)

For the details of application procedure, refer to the USCO System Student Manual online at (<http://umap.org/usco/#students-manual>).

2) Nomination/acceptance by home/host institutions

When students apply for UMAP Programs through USCO System, the information will be passed to host institution coordinators. Decisions to nominate those students or not are required to be made by the nomination deadline in the USCO System. If applicants are more than two students (if the institution has Quota, two plus number of the Quota), the coordinator need to select students for Program A (tuition waived). The application will be transferred to UMAP IS for confirmation and then passed to host institutions.

The host institutions are requested to decide the acceptance or refusal of each applicant by

the deadline shown on the Timeline. If a number of applicants exceed the number of registered acceptance limit, the host institution must select students to accept. If that is not done by the registered Timeline, applications will be passed to the next priority institution after the deadline.

Information obtained by host and home institutions shall be handled with the same level of confidentiality as personal data obtained from their own students. For the details of procedure in USCO System, refer to the USCO System Institution Manual online at (<http://umap.org/usco/#institutions-manual>).

3) UMAP Study Plan

After student's application has been accepted, it is recommended to prepare a study plan even though it is not mandatory. Accepted students are able to download the template of UMAP Study Plan and upload it after the completion of the form in the USCO System. The study plan is to be completed by the student in consultation with the home and host institutions. It indicates: chosen subjects, subject credits of host and home institutions, UCTS credit equivalency of host and home institutions.

Three signatures are required for approval of the study plan: from the student, staff member at both home institution and host institution. The UMAP Study Plan Form with UCTS serves as a self-contained record of the student's attendance and achievements at the host institution, and of recognition to be provided by the home institution.

8. Appendix

1) Resource data for UCTS

TABLE 1: A Comparative Chart of Three Asian Credit Transfer Systems and ECTS

Name of system	Student workload per credit ⁽¹⁾	Total number of credits annually
ECTS (Europe)	25-30h	60 ECTS credits
(original)AUN-ACTS	25-30h	60 AUN-ACTS credits
ACD-ACTS	40h	30 ACD-ACTS credits

Source: The table was made by the author based upon the following documents in European Commission (2009), University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (1999), Association of Southeast Asian Nations University Network (2009) and Asian Cooperation Dialogue (2011)

NOTE:

- (1) Student workload includes academic contact hours in classes, but also other educational activities performed by students, such as homework, writing academic reports, attending internships and doing field research.

TABLE 2: General Trends in Academic Credit Regulations in 24 Asian Countries and Territories⁽¹⁾

(As of March 2015)

	Number of academic contact hours in class per credit⁽²⁾	Amount of student workload per credit⁽³⁾	Average number of credits students earn per year
Bangladesh	No single regulation, but often 13-14 weeks ⁽⁴⁾	Greatly varied No single regulation	Greatly varied, but min. 40 credits (120/3)
Bhutan	No single regulation, but 15 weeks ⁽⁴⁾	Often 1 credit=10 hours	120 credits (360/3)
Brunei Darussalam	No regulation, but 14 hours (and 1 hour for reading)	No regulation, 35-42 hours	No regulation, 31-32 credits (124-130/)
Cambodia	15 hours ⁽⁴⁾	45 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (field work)	* 30 credits ⁽⁵⁾ (120/4)
China	No regulation, but often 15-16weeks ⁽⁴⁾	No regulation, but often 40-45 hours	No regulation, Greatly varied No single regulation
East Timor	No single regulation, but often 1 credit= 14 hours	No single regulation,	40 credits (160 credits/4 years)

	Number of academic contact hours in class per credit ⁽²⁾	Amount of student workload per credit⁽³⁾	Average number of credits students earn per year
Hong Kong ⁽⁷⁾ (2016~)	No single regulation, but often 12 hours (and one hour for final exam)	No single regulation, but often 1 credit=10 hours from 2016, 1 credit =20-30 hours ⁽⁶⁾ at the Univ. of Hong Kong	Greatly varied, but 31 credits (123/4) in one or 60 credits ⁽⁷⁾ (240/4) since 2016 in the other.
India	No single regulation, but often 16 -17 hours	No single regulation, Greatly varied, but 40 hours (recommended)	Greatly varied No single regulation
Indonesia	16 hours (actually 50 min. x 16 weeks ⁽⁴⁾) ⁽⁵⁾	42.7 hours ⁽⁵⁾	36 credits(144/4) ⁽⁵⁾
Japan	15 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (30 hours)	45 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (30 hours) ⁽⁶⁾	31 credits (124/4) ⁽⁵⁾
Laos	16-17 weeks ⁽⁴⁾	No regulations, Min. 48 hours	32-37 credits (130-150 credits/4 years)
Macao	No regulations, but often 14 hours (and 1-2 hours for reading and final exam)	No regulations, but often 42-48 hours (14-16 weeks x 3hours)	Varied, e.g., 42-48 credits (132-135/3 years) & 36 credits (144/4 years) at Univ. of Macao
Malaysia	No regulation, but often 14 weeks ⁽⁴⁾	40 hours ⁽⁵⁾	40 credits (120/3) ⁽⁵⁾
Maldives	No single regulation, but 14 hours (and 2 hours of reading and final exam)	No single regulation, but often 1 credit=10 hours	120 credits (360credits/3 years=120 credits)
Mongolia	15-16 hours	40 hours ⁽⁵⁾	Min. 30 credits (120/4)
Myanmar	16 hours ⁽⁵⁾	No specific regulation, but at least 20 hours ((3+2) x 16 /4)	40-44 credits (162-178 /4)but also btw 168-174
Nepal	13 hours ⁽⁵⁾	No single regulation, 39-45 hours	42 credits (167/4) in a program under semester system
Philippines the	16 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (and 2 hours of reading and final exam)	48hours ⁽⁵⁾ (and 6 hours for reading and final exam)	Greatly varied, but min. 35 (140/4)
Singapore	No single regulation, but 13 weeks	No single regulation, but (e.g.) 39 hours at two institutions	No single regulation, e.g., 34-40 credits (103-120/3)
South Korea Republic of	15 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (30 hours)	45 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (30 hours) ⁽⁶⁾	32-35 credits(130-140/4)
Sri Lanka	15 hours ⁽⁵⁾	No single regulation, but 45-50 hours	30 (90/3)
Taiwan	16 hours ⁽⁵⁾ (and 2 hours for reading and final exam)	No regulation, but often 36-54 hours (2-3 hours x 18 weeks for internship)	min. 32 credits (128/4)
Thailand	15 hours ⁽⁵⁾	Min. 45 hours ⁽⁵⁾ for field work and internships	30 credits ⁽⁵⁾ (120/4)
Vietnam	15 hours ⁽⁵⁾	Min. 45 hours ⁽⁵⁾ for practical education	30 credits (120/4) ⁽⁵⁾

Source: This table was made by the author and 11 other research fellows, based upon the findings of a comparative study of 24 Asian countries and territories conducted between 2012 and 2015 with support from “The Grant for Scientific Research Type B (#24402045)” by the Japanese government.

NOTE:

- 1) All numbers are either a definition of government regulations or estimated numbers commonly used by local universities. Actual numbers often differ greatly depending on the field of study. If there is too large a gap in the difference of hours and credits, the list selects the smallest number since that tends to be the minimum requirement counted as legitimate and qualified by the government.
- 2) The number of academic contact hours means the hours of class sessions students attend. This teaching hour is based upon the academic hour, which is defined by each nation and/or institution. The actual amount of time varies from institution to institution. For example, in the case of Japan, 1 academic hour often means 45 minutes of instruction; in the US, many universities teach approximately 50 minutes. Thus, in this chart, one teaching hour will be counted as one academic hour, not based upon the exact length of teaching hours.
- 3) The amount of student workload includes academic contact hours in class and the amount of time students spend outside of the classroom, on such tasks as homework, preparation for exams and writing reports. If there is no clear policy on this type of self-study, the number of hours used is often the duration of internships or field research per credit.
- 4) The number of weeks per semester was indicated since one credit is often calculated based upon the number of weeks per semester. If the duration of semester is 15 weeks, an institution tends to award one credit for every 15 hours of study in class.
- 5) The number is determined by a national government and applies to all universities in that nation.
- 6) The amount of workload only for seminar, laboratory, and field studies is under this definition by governmental regulations.
- 7) The National University of Hong Kong was now in a transition period to change the length of their bachelor’s degree program from 3 to 4 years at the time the research was conducted in 2014. Those numbers reflect the National University of Hong Kong’s plan, which started from 2016.

TABLE 3: A Proposed Conversion Table of AACs with Other Credit (Transfer) Systems

Nation /Region, (Name of credit [transfer] system), and number of countries and territories	Proposed credit conversion with 1 AAC credit ⁽¹⁾	Equivalency in student workload	Teaching/ contact hours
ASIA (AACs), [at least 24 countries and territories]	1 AAC credit	<u>38-48 hours</u>	13-16 hours
USA (2/3 of institutions ⁽²⁾)	1 credit	45 hours	15 hours
Europe & neighbouring countries [47 countries ⁽³⁾]	1.5 ECTS points	37.5-48 hours	-----
England, UK (CATS) ⁽⁴⁾	3.0 CATS points	1 ECTS = 2 CATS points [however, 1 CATS= 10 hours]	-----
Latin America (CLAR) ⁽⁵⁾ [18 countries]	1.5 CLAR credits	37.5-48 hours	-----
Middle East (ANQAHE) ⁽⁶⁾ [15 countries]	1 credit	45 hours	-----

Source: The table was made by the author based upon the following documents: Regel (1992), European Commission (2009), Quality Assurance Agency (2008), Tuning Educational Structure in Europe (TUNING) Project (2013), and Arab Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2012)

NOTE:

- (1) Although actual conversions contain some small fractions, e.g., 1 AAC equivalent to 1.5~ 1.6 ECTS, this proposed conversion table was made based upon the ease of credit transfer among a massive number of universities in a total of at least 106 countries and territories in the world.
- (2) According to Shimizu (1998), about two thirds of American universities count one academic credit as 45 hours of student workload.
- (3) 47 member states participate in the Bologna Process, where the use of ECTS is one of the main requirements.
- (4) The CATS (Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme) has its own definition of one CATS point = 10 hours of student workload. However, CATS points on this table are calculated based upon the conversion principle of CATs points with ECTS, which was explained by the British Quality Assurance Agency. (Quality Assurance Agency, 2008).
- (5) CLAR stands for "Latin American Reference Credit". (Tuning Educational Structure in Europe (TUNING) Project, 2013) It is a regionally aligned credit transfer system recently developed by a group of Latin American governments and universities. 1 CLAR credit=24-33 hours of student workload and requires students to take 60 CLAR credits per year. However, it converts with ECTS on a one to one basis. Thus, in this table, 1 CLAR point is treated the same as 1 ECTS point.
- (6) One academic credit of ANQAHE (Arab Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education) member state's higher education is equal to 45 hours of student workload (Arab Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education, 2012). ANQAHE is an association of 15 member states and territories in the Middle East region. The board member states and territories are UAE, Kingdom of Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Jordan, Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, and other regular members are Kuwait, Palestine – Ramallah, Qatar, Sudan, Yemen, and Gaza – Palestine.

2) Comparative Grading Scales in Asia and the Pacific

General trends of implementation of higher education institutions

This Table is a part of Hotta, Taiji. *et al* (2010) 「ACTS と各国の単位互換に関する研究」(Study on the ASEAN Credit Transfer System and Credit Transfer Systems in Asian Nations) [The Report of Mission Research by the Promotion Fund of Leading University Reform, The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan (MEXT), 2009], Hiroshima University, 403 pp.

(March 2010)

	China	ROK	Japan	Brunei Darussalam	Cambodia	Indonesia	Laos
Range of the number of credits required for the completion of a Bachelor's program	130–180 credits (more for majors and departments with a 5-year system)	128–168 credits	124–163 credits for the 4-year system (in 2007)	124 credits for most departments (However, ASEM conference material states 128 credits)	122–164 credits in 4 years	144–160 credits in 4 years (at the 3 schools surveyed this time)	150–265 credits
Grades and notation policies	Dependent upon each university: mainly a percentage system or ranking system [Percentage system] Excellent (80–100%), Good (70–79%), Pass (60–69%), Fail (0–59%) [Ranking system] Excellent Good Pass Fail	(1)4.5 as highest point: A+ 4.5 (95–100) A 4.0 (90–94) B+ 3.5 (85–89) B 3.0 (80–84) C+ 2.5 (75–79) C 2.0 (70–74) D+ 1.5 (65–69) D 1.0 (60–64) F 0.0 (0–59) (2)4.3 as highest point: A+ 4.3 A 4.0 A- 3.7 B+ 3.3 B 3.0 B- 2.7 C+ 2.3 C 2.0 C- 1.7 D+ 1.3 D 1.0 D- 0.7 F 0.0	It seems that many universities have adopted the following 4-rank evaluation. Very good (A) 80–100%: Good (B) 70–79%; Passing (C) 60–69%; Fail (D) 0–59% ----- However, with the introduction of GPA, more educational institutions have recently been adopting a 5-rank evaluation with “Excellent”. Excellent (S) 90–100%: Very good (A) 80–89%; Good (B) 70–79%; Passing (C) 60–69%; Fail (D) 0–59% * Notation of grades often differs among educational institutions, such as A, A+, and A*, in addition to the above “S”.	<u>Until 2009</u> 80–100 1st Class Honours, 70–79% 2nd Class (upper) Honours, 60–69% 2nd Class (Lower) Honours, 50–59% 3rd Class Honours, 40–49% Pass Degree, 0–39% Fail; However, 0–49% has meant fail since 2009. GPA was introduced in 2009: A+ 90–100%= 5.0 A 80–89% = 4.5 B+ 75–79%= 4.0 B 70–74%= 3.5 C+ 65–69%= 3.0 C 60–64%= 2.5 D+ 55–59%= 2.0 D 50–54% = 1.5 P 40–49% = 1.0 F 0–39% = 0	A 85–100% = 4.00 GP B+ 80–84%= 3.50, B 70–79% = 3.00, C- 65–69% = 2.50, C 50–64% = 2.00, D 45–49% = 1.50, E 40–44% = 1.00, F <0–40% = 0.00>	A 80–100 B 70–79, C 60–69, D 50–59 E 0–49 (E=Fail) A 90–100 B 80–89, C 70–79, D 60–69, E 50–59 F 0–49 (F=Fail)	A (4.00)= Excellent, B+ (3.50)= Very Good, B (3.00)= Good, C+ (2.50)= Fair, C (2.00)= Fair, D+ (1.50)= Poor, D (1.00)= Very Poor, F (0.00)= Fail, (presently researching the percentage)
Presence or absence of GPA	Depends on the university	Present	Used in 41% of universities (in 2007)	Absent (In UBD, introduced since 2009)	Present	Present (will be reflected on the transcript upon completion)	Present
University's own regulations on credit transfer with overseas partner institutions	Nothing in particular; each organization decides for itself.	Up to 1/2 of credits required for graduation	Many universities follow the Standards for Establishment of Universities, Article 28. However, in event that the educational program requires specified course work, the maximum number of credits to transfer is often stipulated separately.	In 2009, UBD started the “New Generation” program. Regulations for credit transfer with foreign universities are based on those in ECTS ^[16] , UCTS ^[17] , and ACTS ^[18] .	Present (Each university has its own regulations.)	Present (by double degree program, etc.)	There is no regulation yet. However, it is now being created by the Quality Assurance Center under the Ministry of Education.

	Malaysia	Myanmar	The Philippines	Singapore	Thailand	Vietnam
Range of the number of credits required for the completion of a Bachelor's program	120 credits (minimum number of credits to complete the Bachelor's course); 200 credits (Medical Department, etc.)	In general, 200 credits or more for 4- or 5-year Bachelor's courses and 140–200 credits for 3-year Bachelor's courses are needed to graduate.	210 credits in Accounting; 138 credits in Management; 134–152 credits in Law; 185–225 credits in Engineering	NUS: 120 MCs for 3-year programs and 160 MCs + honors project/thesis for 4-year programs. Faculty of Music has a program with 168 MCs. The average number of MCs registered by a student per semester is 20 MCs. Also, there are separate guidelines for the Faculties of Dentistry, Law, and Medicine (excluding Nursing). NTU: 108 AUs for 3-year programs and 144–146 AUs for 4-year programs, except 153–160 AUs for Engineering programs. 3-year programs are Business-related, and others (humanities, social sciences, science & technology) have 4-year programs. The average number of AUs registered by a student per semester is 16–21 AUs.	130–150 credits (130–140 credits are common in humanities and social sciences, 140–150 credits in science and technology)	Usually 135–140 credits (Confirmation necessary.)
Grades and notation policies	(In the case of the University of Malaya) 80–100 A 4.0 Distinction 75–79 A- 3.7 Distinction 70–74 B+ 3.3 Good 65–69 B 3.0 Good 60–64 B- 2.7 Good 55–59 C+ 2.3 Pass 50–54 C 2.0 Pass 45–49 C- 1.7 Conditionally Passed 40–44 D+ 1.3 Conditionally Passed 35–39 D 1.0 Conditionally Passed 00–34 F 0.0 Failed	4: 75–100% Excellent 3: 40–74% Good 2: 0–40% Fail 1: Incomplete	Usually: 1 (Excellent) 2 (Good) 3 (Fair) 4 (Incomplete)	For both NUS and NTU: GPA point A+ = 5.0 A = 5.0 A- = 4.5 B+ = 4.0 B = 3.5 B- = 3.0 C+ = 2.5 C = 2.0 D+ = 1.5 D = 1.0 F = 0	Usually: A Excellent = 4.0 GPT point B+ Very Good = 3.5 B Good = 3.0 C+ Fairly Good = 2.5 C Fair = 2.0 D+ Poor = 1.5 D Very Poor = 1.0 F Fail = 0 There is also a case as below: A Excellent = 4.0 GPT point A- Very Good = 3.67 B+ Good = 3.33 B Fairly Good = 3.00 B- Almost Good = 2.67 C+ Fair = 2.33 C Almost Fair = 2.00 C- Poor = 1.67 D Very Poor = 1.00 F Fail = 0	Present (from lowest: 1 to highest: 10; 5 or lower: Fail)
Presence or absence of GPA	Present	Present (There is an evaluation system which utilizes the grade point average)	Present	Both NUS and NTU have adopted GPA. In NUS, it is called CAP ^[10] . In NTU, TGPA ^[20] (per semester) and CGPA ^[21] (cumulative) are utilized as well.	Present by law	Present by law, but not implemented at universities yet.
University's own regulations on credit transfer with overseas partner institutions	National universities (UM ^[22] and UKM ^[23]) have stipulated the requirement of making a study plan prior to study abroad and regulations on the credit transfer based upon the level of similarity of course contents and minimum GPA. Private universities have fuller affiliation programs with foreign universities and are more flexible in credit transfer than national universities.	Unknown	Present	At both NUS and NTU, credits can be transferred, but grades cannot. Credits earned at other universities can be converted into the credits required to receive a degree. Letter grades will be converted into Pass/Fail and won't be reflected in the GPA or the degree rank. Both universities have their own guidelines on the minimum number (ratio) of credits to be earned at NUS and NTU as below. • NUS: <u>Bachelor's programs</u> —the greater of 50%, or 80 MCs of the required credits for the degree program. <u>Master's programs</u> (course work-based)—a minimum of 50% of the required credits for the degree program. • NTU: <u>Bachelor's programs</u> —a minimum 66 AUs for 3-year programs and 77 AUs for 4-year programs. No guideline is provided for graduate programs at NTU.	Based on the Bachelor's Course Establishment Standards and Graduate School Establishment Standards.	Present. Both domestic and international credit transfer is promoted.

Glossary

1	UBD	University of Brunei Darussalam
2	ASEM	the Asia-Europe Meeting
3	CHED	Commission of Higher Education of the Philippines
4	NUS	National University of Singapore
5	NTU	Nanyang Technological University
6	MC	Modular Credit
7	AU	Academic Unit
8	KCUE	Korean Council for University Education
9	NIAD	National Institute for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, Japan
10	JUAA	Japanese University Accreditation Association
11	JIHEE	Japan Institute for Higher Education Evaluation
12	JACA	Japan Association for College Accreditation
13	BDNAC	Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council
14	ACC	Accreditation Committee of Cambodia
15	FAAP	Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines
16	ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
17	UCTS	UMAP Credit Transfer System
18	ACTS	ASEAN Credit Transfer System
19	CAP	Cumulative Average1 Point
20	TGPA	Term Grade Point Average
21	CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
22	UM	University of Malaya
23	UKM	National University of Malaysia (University of Kebangsaan Malaysia)

3) Example of UMAP Application Form in USCO System

a) Student account registration form:

***Required items**
*Basically please input single-byte alphanumeric characters.

Email *	<input type="text"/>
Password *	<p>Please be sure to use half-width alphanumeric characters and specify the password within 8 to 16 letters. [Available symbols] @!# \$% * + _ -</p> <p>Password <input type="password"/></p> <p>Password (Confirmation) <input type="password"/></p>
Native English *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Language Proficiency Requirements	<p>English Requirements</p> <p>-- Language Proficiency -- -- Score --</p> <p>Other language Requirements</p> <p>-- Language Proficiency -- -- Score --</p>

b) Student application form:

Applicant (Temporarily saved)

Student basic information Update

Student number	<input type="text"/>	Native English	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>	Language Proficiency Requirements	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>	GPA	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>	Memo(Student)	<input type="text"/>
Nationality	<input type="text"/>		
Mailing Address	<input type="text"/>		
TEL	<input type="text"/>		
Home Institution	Country/Territory <input type="text"/>		
	Institution <input type="text"/>		
School year	<input type="text"/>		
Graduation date	<input type="text"/>		

Documents to be submitted

*Required items			
Transcript *	Confirm PDF	Certificate of Official Language Exams *	Confirm PDF
	Delete		Delete
Motivation Letter	PDF not registered	Copy of Passport	PDF not registered
	Upload		Upload
Medical certificate	PDF not registered	Study plan	PDF not registered
	Upload		

4) Example of UMAP Study Plan Form with UCTS

UMAP CREDIT TRANSFER SCHEME (UCTS) STUDY PLAN (For incoming students)

1. STUDENT'S PERSONAL DATA

(NOTE: To be completed by the student. The information provided in this form will be treated in confidence by the home and host institutions. Data from the form may be used for UMAP/ UCTS statistical purpose, but only in an aggregated and non-identifiable manner.)

Student's Name: _____		Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> M/ <input type="checkbox"/> F	Student ID Number: _____
Student's Home Address: _____		Student email: _____	
Home Institution: _____	Home Country: _____	Univ. Year: : <input type="checkbox"/> 1/ <input type="checkbox"/> 2/ <input type="checkbox"/> 3/ <input type="checkbox"/> 4	DEGREE: <input type="checkbox"/> B/ <input type="checkbox"/> M/ <input type="checkbox"/> D
Host Institution: _____	Host Country: _____	Major: _____	

* In the section of DEGREE, B = Bachelor, M=Master's and D=Doctoral Degree

2. BASIC INFORMATION OF HOME & HOST INSTITUTION'S CREDIT TRANSFER WITH UCTS

Our institution complies with the following definition of UCTS. Thus, we will transfer credit on a one-to-one basis with other institutions which use the UCTS.

=====DEFINITION OF UCTS=====

One (1) UCTS = 38-48 hours of student workload. This includes 13-16 academic hours of instruction.

=====

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED UMAP STUDY PLAN FOR ONE SEMESTER (Spring / Fall / Other term [] in Year [])

- To be completed and signed by the student and counter-signed by the academic advisor/staff members of both institutions.

UMAP CREDIT TRANSFER SCHEME (UCTS) STUDY PLAN (For incoming students)

1. STUDENT'S PERSONAL DATA

(NOTE: To be completed by the student. The information provided in this form will be treated in confidence by the home and host institutions. Data from the form may be used for UMAP/ UCTS statistical purpose, but only in an aggregated and non-identifiable manner.)

Student's Name: <u>AAAAAA BBBB BBBB</u>		Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> M/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F	Student ID Number: <u>123456789</u>
Student's Home Address: _____		Student email: _____	
Home Institution: <u>UMAP home University</u>	Home Country: <u>(e.g.) Japan</u>	Univ. Year: : <input type="checkbox"/> 1/ <input type="checkbox"/> 2/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3/ <input type="checkbox"/> 4	DEGREE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B / <input type="checkbox"/> M/ <input type="checkbox"/> D
Host Institution: <u>UMAP host University</u>	Host Country: <u>(e.g.) Thailand</u>	Major: <u>Asian & Pacific Study</u>	

* In the section of DEGREE, B = Bachelor, M=Master's and D=Doctoral Degree

2. BASIC INFORMATION OF HOME & HOST INSTITUTION'S CREDIT TRANSFER WITH UCTS

Our institution complies with the following definition of UCTS. Thus, we will transfer credit on a one-to-one basis with other institutions which use the UCTS.

=====DEFINITION OF UCTS=====

One (1) UCTS = 38-48 hours of student workload. This includes 13-16 academic hours of instruction.

=====

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED UMAP STUDY PLAN FOR ONE SEMESTER (Spring / Fall / Other term [] in Year [])

● To be completed and signed by the student and counter-signed by the academic advisor/staff members of both institutions

BACK

List of course numbers and titles of courses you'd like to register at host institution and transfer to home institution				Credits	
Host Institution		(your) Home Institution		HOST	HOME
Course #	Title	Course #	Title	Credits	Credits
100	Asian Business	aaa	Asian Business Management	5	2
		bbb	Asian Organization Behaviors		2
		ccc	UMAP Short Internship		1
200	Asian Technology	ddd	Technology and Development	3	2
		eee	Introduction of Asian Technology		1
300	Seminar in Asian Study	ggg	Seminar in UMAP Study	1	1

NOTE: If your study requires the 2nd semester registration at the same time, continue filling in the additional course list behind this sheet.

4. CONFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT ON STUDY PLAN BY ALL THREE PARTIES

This form must be signed by student and also counter-signed by the academic advisors/ staff members for both institutions' approval.

Student AAAAAA BBBB	Home institution's academic advisor/ staff member	Host University's academic advisor/ staff member
Signature: 	Signature: 	Signature: 
	Title: Academic Adviser, Professor in Asian Study	Title: Registrar, Office of Academic Affairs
Date: MONTH / DAY / YEAR	Date: MONTH / DAY / YEAR	Date: MONTH / DAY / YEAR