



Republic of the Philippines  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
**COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**



**CHED MEMORANDUM ORDER (CMO)**

No. 33

Series of 2013

**SUBJECT: POLICIES AND GUIDELINES ON UNIVERSITY MOBILITY IN ASIA  
AND THE PACIFIC (UMAP) CREDIT TRANSFER SCHEME (UCTS)**

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In accordance with the pertinent provisions of Republic Act (RA) No. 7722, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994," and for the purpose of establishing a credit transfer scheme to be used by UMAP Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the promotion of student mobility and mutual recognition of credits, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) hereby adopts the following policies and guidelines.

**Article I  
GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES**

1. The CHED recognizes the developments brought about by internationalization of Philippine higher education in response to globalization and liberalization of trade in goods and services worldwide with expanded opportunities for student mobility and cross-border employability;
2. The Commission acknowledges the University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) as key player in promoting mobility programs among HEIs across Asia Pacific. UMAP provides opportunities for exchange, joint programs and research consortia, between and among UMAP member HEIs and other participating HEIs and nurtures a strong sense of belongingness amidst cultural diversity via cross-cultural exchange;
3. The Commission recognizes the UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) as a viable system of credit transfer to facilitate students' earning of credits among UMAP HEIs participating in an exchange program;
4. The Commission also strongly encourages all UMAP member HEIs to participate in UMAP Programs for purposes hereabove mentioned.

## **Article II DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Home Institution** – the institution which sends a student for a UMAP Study Program;

**Host Institution** – the institution which receives a student for a UMAP Study Program;

**Record of UMAP Study Program** – the form used in recording all phases of the student's Study Program;

**UCTS** – UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme is a credit conversion scale established to promote student mobility by ensuring that units earned by students on exchange with HEIs abroad are credited by the home institutions;

**UCTS Credit Points** – the number of units taken or earned by the student on a UMAP study program;

**UMAP** - University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific is a voluntary association of government and non-government representatives of the higher education sector in the region for student and faculty mobility;

**UMAP Council Inc. -Philippines (UCIP)** - an organization of PHEIs duly registered at the Security Exchange Commission as a non-stock, non profit organization; UCIP acts as the advocacy arm of CHED for UMAP related programs /projects and activities ;

**UMAP Credit Points Scale** – numerical measure of the student workload;

**UMAP Exchange Program** – a program whereby student exchange is enhanced and facilitated between individual accredited HEIs, or consortium of institutions on the basis of mutual acceptance of regulatory accreditation;

**UMAP International Secretariat (UMAP IS)**– The UMAP IS is responsible for the management and administration of the day to day operations of UMAP and serves as the liaison with Member National Secretariats;

**UMAP Member HEI** - any public or private HEI in UMAP Member Countries/Territories duly recognized by the participating home/host Country/Territory eligible to participate in UMAP programs;



**UMAP Member PHEI** – any public or private Philippine higher education institution recognized as UMAP member by the UMAP Council Inc. - Philippines and confirmed by the UMAP National Secretariat (CHED-International Affairs Service);

**UMAP Student** – an individual (student/faculty/staff) who applies and meets the UMAP qualifications requirements;

**USCO** – UMAP Student Connection Online is a web database of courses and subjects open for UMAP exchange students.

*Source: UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme Users' Guide – Revised Edition 2003.*

### **Article III OBJECTIVES**

1. Encourage and facilitate HEIs' participation in UMAP activities and programs;
2. Facilitate greater student mobility in the Asia Pacific Region by providing a framework for establishing credit transfer arrangements;
3. Ensure that credit is received by students when on exchange with other UMAP member universities;
4. Raise awareness of HEIs' professional involvement in admission and credential evaluation of UMAP exchange students;
5. Promote mutual recognition of academic credits among universities of member countries/territories, and prospective member HEIs

### **Article IV IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES**

#### **A. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTIES INVOLVED:**

1. **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)**
  - 1.1 UMAP Philippine HEIs entering into a pledge of agreement with UMAP member countries/territories HEIs shall submit the signed pledge of agreement to the CHED-International Affairs Service (IAS) for recording/documentation and transmittal to the UMAP International Secretariat.



- 1.2 The HEIs shall appoint the following officials responsible for the implementation of UMAP programs:
  - 1.2.1 The UCTS-USCO Coordinator shall negotiate and oversee the student study program;
  - 1.2.2 The Registrar shall officially sign and stamp the UMAP Record of Study form
- 1.3 HEIs participating in the UMAP Exchange Program may agree bilaterally or multi-laterally to implement student exchange and credit transfer under the UMAP General Agreement.

## **2. UMAP Students**

Undergraduate and postgraduate students from UMAP participating Philippine HEIs undertaking a period of formal study for a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of two semesters shall have the following qualifications:

- 2.1 Must be enrolled in a Philippine higher education institution
- 2.2 At least 18 years of age at the time of application
- 2.3 In good academic standing, with no pending incomplete grade
- 2.4 Communicates well in English, oral and written
- 2.5 Of good moral character;
- 2.6 Physically and mentally fit as duly certified;
- 2.7 With written approval or consent from parents/guardians; and,
- 2.8 With endorsement letter from the HEI President/School Head;

## **3. UMAP National Secretariat (NS)**

The CHED-International Affairs Service (IAS) serves as UMAP National Secretariat (NS). The IAS/UMAP NS shall:

- 3.1 Safe keep official records of UMAP;
- 3.2 Coordinate and endorse for the CHED Chairperson's approval documents/agreements of HEIs;
- 3.3 Monitor and facilitate the implementation of exchange programs; and
- 3.4 Coordinate with UMAP International Secretariat on all matters pertaining to UMAP.



#### **4. UMAP Council Inc. – Philippines (UCIP)**

The UCIP shall serve as Technical Working Group (TWG) in terms of :

- 4.1 Meetings, symposia, conferences regarding UCTS;
- 4.2 Information dissemination through newsletters, journals, and other forms of publication and communication; and
- 4.3 Assistance to the UMAP National Secretariat in its general function.

#### **B. OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED:**

The following are adapted from the *UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme Users' Guide – Revised Edition 2003*.

##### **1. Home Institutions:**

- 1.1 Select students participating in the program;
- 1.2 Negotiate study program to be undertaken by the student under UMAP with the host institution;
- 1.3 Record approved study program on the Record of UMAP Study form;
- 1.4 Approve any changes to the program initially approved, by signing amendments to the Record of UMAP Study form;
- 1.5 Arrange the level of financial support to be provided to the student;
- 1.6 Ensure that any preparatory, (e.g. language) courses required by the student, are made available;
- 1.7 Liaise, as necessary, with the host institution on the student's progress during the study program;
- 1.8 Use the UCTS conversion scale provided in Annex A;
- 1.9 Arrange with the registrar, or other appropriate officer of the home institution, to sign the Certification section of the Record UMAP Program form, once this has been signed by the appropriate officer of the host institution; and
- 1.10 Provide pre-departure orientation and debriefing before and after the UMAP Study Program.

##### **2. Host Institutions:**

- 2.1 Negotiate the study program to be undertaken by the student under UMAP with the home institution;
- 2.2 Endorse the approved study program, including any changes by signing Section 4 of the Record of UMAP Study form, and provide a photocopy to the student and home institution;
- 2.3 Ensure that the student receives the agreed tuition fee waiver and other school related fees to complete the approved study program;

- 2.4 Liaise, as necessary, with the home institution on the student's progress during the study program;
- 2.5 Ensure that the student receives appropriate counseling and other support services.
- 2.6 Use the UCTS conversion scale provided in Annex A;
- 2.7 Ensure that the Registrar provides official certification of the Transcript of UMAP Study Program; and
- 2.8 Ensure that a copy of the completed Record of UMAP Study form is received from the home institution and maintained in its student records.

**ARTICLE V**  
**APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVITY**

The policy and implementing guidelines shall take effect 15 days from publication in the Official Gazette.

Issued this October 9, 2013, Quezon City, Philippines.



**PATRICIA B. LICUANAN, Ph.D.**  
Chairperson



# UMAP standard application form and study plan using UCTS

## 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 e-mail:	
Home Institution:	Home Country:	Univ. Year: <input type="checkbox"/> 1/ <input type="checkbox"/> 2/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3/ <input type="checkbox"/> 4
Host Institution:	Host Country:	Major:
Foreign Language Proficiency: (name of Language(s))	(Level)	Health Insurance: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I have / <input type="checkbox"/> No, I don't have If yes, name
* In the section of DEGREE, B = Bachelor, M=Master's and D=Doctoral Degree		

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

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

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

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### 2-(1) Use of UCTS at Home and Host Institution for credit transfer

UCTS at HOME institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my HOME institution complies with UCTS / <input type="checkbox"/> No, my HOME institution does not complies with UCTS
UCTS at HOST institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, HOST institution complies with UCTS / <input type="checkbox"/> No, HOST institution does not complies with UCTS

### 2-(2) If "NO" to both or either institution(s) regarding the use of UCTS in question A above, please provide detailed information below.

*Home Institution	ONE CREDIT at Home institution = _____ hours of Student Workload	And/or, = _____ hours of Teaching Hour
*Host Institution	ONE CREDIT at Host Institution = _____ hours of Student Workload	And/or, = _____ hours of Teaching Hour

\*NOTE: Even if your home or host university does not use UCTS, the definition of credit in that institution can be counted as One Credit = One UCTS, if that definition satisfies the definition of UCTS explained above. [If it does not match the UCTS concept, please ask your home institution for its own way of calculation.]



**3-(1) DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED UMAP STUDY PLAN - Which SEMESTER and YEAR? ( Spring /  Fall /  Other term [ ] in Year [ ])**

List of course numbers and titles of courses you'd like to register at host institution and transfer to home institution

Host Institution		(your) Home Institution		Credits	
Course #	Title	Course #	Title	Credits	HOME Credits

**3-(2) Which SEMESTER and YEAR? ( Spring /  Fall /  Other term [ ] in Year [ ])**

List of course numbers and titles of courses you'd like to register at host institution and transfer to home institution

Host Institution		(your) Home Institution		Credits	
Course #	Title	Course #	Title	Credits	HOME Credits

**NOTE:** If necessary, continue the list on a separate sheet, including any changes to the approved program.

**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 advisor/ staff members for both institutions' approval.

Student	Home institution's academic advisor/ staff member	Host University's academic advisor/ staff member
Signature: _____	Signature: _____	Signature: _____
Title: _____	Title: _____	Title: _____
Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____



## INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW UCTS CONCEPT AND ITS USE

(As of May 20, 2013)

### I. WHY IS A COMMON EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK (e.g., CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM) IN ASIA NEEDED?

We need a permeable framework, including a common credit transfer system, for higher education in Asian and Pacific region if we want to mobilize a large number of students for educational exchanges as well as academic degree seeking programs within the region. The permeable framework is a set of various types of measurement tools which can show the actual amount and magnitude of educational values in each institution with the same standard of measurement. It intends to show exact differences among institutions regarding their educational contents by using the same framework, so that those institutions can improve the level of mutual understanding and trust. Hence, it will promote student mobility among those institutions. Moreover, once the number of participating universities as well as mobility students rapidly increases, it is difficult for universities to handle large scale international mobility without a simple (transparent, compatible, and systematic) system to process the paperwork for student mobility. The newly introduced UMAP Credit Transfer System (UCTS) is a part of permeable frame work and a simple system which has adopted a concept of Asian Academic Credits (AACs)<sup>1</sup> developed under the study of HOTTA (2010). It has a potential to promote student mobility not only among higher education institutions in Asian and Pacific region, but also with other parts of the world by providing a simple systematic measurement tool to count academic credits in Asian and Pacific region.

### II. A NEW DEFINITION OF UCTS AND ITS COMPATIBILITY

The new definition of UCTS introduced since 2013 is as follows:

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

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In October 2012, the UMAP International Board officially adopted a new concept for the UCTS, which was developed based upon the concept of AACs in order to simplify the process of credit transfer among Asian higher education institutions and is completely different from the original UCTS model based on the European Credit Transfer System. This new 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 “UMAP Academic Credit Zone” where UMAP participating institutions can transfer credits among themselves on a one-to-one basis, thereby promoting students mobility in the Asian and Pacific region. Furthermore, this one UCTS = 38-48 hours of student workload will also make credit transfer among Asian, Pacific, the following countries’ and region’s higher education institutions much easier than ever before:

A Conversion table of this new UCTS with various nations’ and region’s credit systems

Nation /region	Asia	UCTS	USA	ECTS	UK
<b>Credit Conversion</b>	<b>1credit</b>	<b>1 UCTS</b>	<b>(About) 1credit (Need a negotiation in each case)</b>	<b>(About) 1.5 ECTS</b>	<b>(About) 3 credits*</b>
Student workload	38-48 hours	38-48 hours	(Around) 45 hours (in 2 semester system)	37.5-45 hours	Converted from ECTS
Teaching hours**	13-16 hours	13-16 hours	(Around) 15 hours (in 2 semester system)	-----	-----

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

\*\* This teaching hour is based upon the academic hour which is defined by each nation and/or institution. It varies the actual amount of time from instruction to institution. For example, in case of Japan, 1 academic hour often means 45minutes of instruction; in the US, many institutions teach around 50 minutes; and in Asian institutions, one academic hour may be between 45 to 60 minutes of instruction. In this chart, one teaching hour will be counted as one academic hour, not based upon the exact length of teaching hours.

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<sup>1</sup> Asian Academic Credits (AACs) is the concept which can be used as a common credit transfer system for Asian higher education. It was developed from the result of research, namely HOTTA (2010), and defines as “1 AACs = 38-48 hours of student workload which includes 13-16 academic hours of instruction.”

This duration, ranging from 38 to 48 hours of student workload and 13 to 16 hours of teaching is based on different governmental definitions and/or general tendencies of the credit systems in the higher education of ASEAN+3 nations (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam + China, South Korea and Japan). Moreover, it is now clear that this system can also accommodate other Asian nations such as Taiwan and India. Thus, this new 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.

### III. FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTIONS OF UMAP PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

The new UCTS concept DOES NOT have any function related to measuring the level of difficulty or the equivalency of content in courses through comparison with courses at the home institution. Thus, each institution has to make their own measurements based upon data provided from the host institution. UMAP will continue to promote the idea that all participating institutions provide three types of information—(1) the university brochure and homepage to explain the concept of this new UCTS for the UMAP participating students, (2) the UMAP Study Plan (Standard UMAP Application Form), and (3) a UMAP Transcript from the host institution. The UMAP will promote participating institutions to provide the following information and documents.

- (1) Since there is not much “credit conversation” required among many Asian and Pacific institutions with this new UCTS concept, the first and most important thing your institution needs to do is declare that “our university has formally adopted the concept of UCTS for our student mobility under the UMAP mobility scheme.” This statement should appear on your homepage, along with a link to your exchange program brochure and other forms of public announcements so that partner institutions and potential partner institutions will understand the manner in which you intend to handle credit transfer for student mobility.

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

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- (2) The second important activity is to exchange a UMAP study plan (Standard UMAP Application Form) containing information about courses, numbers of credits, and other information regarding an exchange student, including one’s home and host institution. All three parties should sign the form to agree about what the exchange student intends to study at the host institution.
- (3) Finally, at the end of the educational experience, the host institution should provide information about its credit system and the conversion of credits earned into UCTS by providing a UMAP Transcript.

Although the use of UCTS and the three types of information and documents are dependent upon the decision of each institution, the UMAP community strongly believes that this new UCTS concept in conjunction with the three types of actions to improve transparency of institutions’ education will greatly promote “mutually trusted” student exchanges and other forms of mobility among higher education institutions in the Asian and Pacific region.

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REFERENCE:

- (1) Quality Assurance Agency (2008) Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England, (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 23 pp. (retrieved from <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/creditframework.pdf> on April 21, 2013)
- (2) 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.