A Proposal to Establish
AFRICAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEMS

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Key Policy Imperatives

- The Vision of African Union: To build an integrated continent requires a harmonized education system where intra-African mobility and skills portability are key elements in its realization.
Harmonized education and training systems are essential for effective implementation of the **Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA)** and **Agenda 2063** and key to **mutual recognition** of academic qualifications.
Credit: A measure of workload required for a typical learner to achieve the objectives of a program, specified in terms of the Learning outcomes and Competences to be acquired – (student workload required to achieve expected learning outcomes)

Workload: An estimation of the learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements, individual study measured in time, which a learner typically needs to achieve the defined learning outcomes.
Objectives of a Credit System

i. Advances harmonization and promote student mobility

ii. Improve the comparability and compatibility of study programmes

iii. Render more transparency to study programmes

iv. Provide more flexibility and diversity of pathways

v. Facilitate easier development of well-balanced programmes

vi. Promote feasibility of programmes

vii. Enhance quality of programmes

viii. Advance recognition of (periods of) studies taken elsewhere successfully

ix. Facilitate different types of learning such as informal, non-formal, formal, part-time, among others.

x. Facilitate more substantive collaboration among different higher learning and research institutions towards a common higher education space.
Africa lacks a reliable means of measuring and transferring acquired knowledge in the realization of the stated key policy imperatives and the objectives—hence …
Number of CREDITS per ACADEMIC YEAR
Proposal

- The Undertaking to Establish the African Credit Transfer Systems
A Review Survey on workload
— 571 academics
— 5,266 students
— 107 institutions
— Question: What is the extent of workload to learn a unit in a semester in terms of contact hours and independent study?
Fields/Disciplines

- Agricultural Sciences
- Economics
- Civil Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Applied Geology
- Medicine
- Teacher Education
- Higher Education Management
Findings: Hours Needed

- Teacher Education
- Medicine
- Mechanical Eng.
- Economics
- Civil Engineering
- Applied geology
- Agricultural Sciences

[Bar chart showing hours needed for different fields, with categories and corresponding values on the x-axis.]
1 ACADEMIC YEAR

Contact hours + Independent work

1 ACADEMIC YEAR
1 ACADEMIC YEAR

Contact hours + Independent work

1350
1850

Academics

Students

1 ACADEMIC YEAR
Contact hours + Independent work

1 ACADEMIC YEAR
Number of CREDITS per ACADEMIC YEAR

- 30
- 60
- 60
- 60
- 60
- 30
Credit Value

1500 – 1800 per year
25 – 30 per credit

1200 – 1600 per year
40 - 53 per credit

1440 – 1980 per year
24 – 33 per credit

1350 – 1850 per year
22.5 – 30.8 per credit

60

30
i. Credit system has been functional in the African Higher Education systems for many years.

ii. African universities consider credit as a tool for measuring the load of the teacher rather than as an expression of the volume of learning based on defined learning outcomes and associated workload.

iii. In many African institutions, credit is measured based on the contact time with the teacher.

iv. Credit does not have the same value in all the countries and regions. (Anglophone and Francophone credit systems differ.)

v. There is currently no credit transfer system among institutions in Africa.

vi. The load of credit is not comparable among institutions in Africa.
Recommendation

- The general trend is that 60 credits are equivalent to the workload of full-time student during one academic year. We thus recommend to adopt this widespread international trend of 60 credits for Africa.
There is a need for a consensus on the student workload over a period of a year which straddles between 1,350 and 1,800 hours. We thus recommend to adopt between 1,350 and 1,800 hours of workload for Africa which sits well within the international norms.