

Guidelines for bridging South East Asian Student Workload with other contexts

I. What is the student workload?

Student workload, also sometimes referred to as student learning time, is all the time a student needs to spend learning in order to achieve the learning outcomes of a particular study period/unit - a course or a programme.

Student workload can and should be calculated regardless of the approach to programme design that is currently in place: (1) outcomes-based student-centred or (2) objectives & input based/ teacher centred. If a programme has already been redesigned following the outcomes-based education (OBE)/ student-centred approach principles, student workload of a particular course will mean the time the students need to achieve the course-level outcomes. If the programme is still based on objectives/inputs, this will refer to the time students need in order to get a minimal passing grade for a given course.

Student workload includes:

- a) hours of direct interaction in a face-to-face or virtual learning environment between teacher and students. This includes lectures, seminars, laboratory or workshop activities, clinical and field activities, internships, and any curriculum activity that requires a physical or virtual presence of the student with the lecturer, teaching assistant, internship supervisor or another person responsible for the learning process (often referred to as contact hours);
- b) time spent by students (in addition to contact hours) to achieve the learning outcomes of a given study period/unit. This time includes all the activities the teacher requires students to complete in order to prepare for the lectures, seminars, etc. (learning periods that happen as part of the contact hours) - e.g. reviewing notes, compiling and selecting information, reviewing and studying learning materials, completing assignments, preparing projects or dissertations, carrying out individual and group practical work.

It is important to remember that preparing for and completing assessment tasks - intermediate, final, oral, written, group, individual, etc. - is seen as an integral part of the learning process; be this during the contact hours or beyond the contact hours. Therefore, the time students spend on assessment(-related) activities they must complete in order for the faculty member to verify

that the students have achieved the intended learning outcomes also forms part of the student workload.

The student workload based programme design was initiated in the Northern part of Europe in the second half of the 1970s. It further became popular with the emergence of theories such as student-centred learning, active learning, participatory learning, and experiential learning introduced by such theorists as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Carl Rogers, and Lev Vygotsky.

Student workload is a key element of the learning-outcomes based education and student-centred paradigm, which compared to the traditional teacher- & input-based paradigm - requires quite radical changes in (1) how the student and teacher roles are conceived, (2) the importance given to learning versus teaching, (3) the place of assessment activities in relation to the general learning process.

More specifically, this shift involves changes in:

- the role played by the student, who needs to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes, and
- the role played by the teacher, whose main task now is to create contextualised learning experiences that will allow students to achieve the intended learning outcomes within the expected time.

Importance of considering time required to achieve the intended learning outcomes was at the heart of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) - an initiative introduced to promote the mobility of students through facilitating recognition of periods of studies and degrees in the framework of the Erasmus programme at the end of the 1980s.

ECTS was taken on board by the Bologna Process in 1999 (and included in the Bologna declaration), which eventually led to the 48 signatory countries committing to the implementation of an academic credit system based on the student workload. Other regions of the world have declared their interest in moving towards higher education systems where student workload is a key programme design component (Latin America, Central Asia, & Africa). Thus, this approach seems to be part of an emerging global trend.

II. Why is it important to articulate student workload if we aim to facilitate recognition of degrees and periods of studies, promote student mobility and/or ensure that our programmes meet global quality standards?

Regardless of the world region where a higher education institution (HEI) is based, if quality and/or internationalisation form part of institutional strategic priorities, it is important to articulate student workload and consider student workload when (re)designing HE programmes.

Articulation of student workload is directly linked to making curriculum design more transparent and easier to analyse by different stakeholders.

This means that with student workload articulated, it becomes possible to

- (1) involve different institutional actors in the review of programmes/curricula based on the analysis of data collected through different tools to measure total student workload,
- (2) identify possible inconsistencies between the actual student workload and the one foreseen at the stage of course and curriculum design,
- (3) improve the quality of study programmes/curricula through greater consistency between the estimation of theoretical time and the actual time students need to complete the programme; and
- (4) facilitate the recognition of entire programmes and periods of study at inter-institutional and international level.

III. How can we install the culture of measuring student workload at my institution?

- **Who needs to be involved?**

If you want to install the culture of measuring student workload at your institution, it is important to engage different actors in the process: academics, students, programme directors/coordinators, administrators, those responsible for academic mobility programmes and university authorities at different levels, including those responsible for accreditation and quality assurance.

Academics need to be involved because they are the ones who design and teach courses, and, thus, are the ones who need to make sure that the teaching, learning and assessment activities can be done by students in the time allocated to a course in question (monitor that student learning time corresponds to the allocated student workload).

Students need to be involved because they are the only ones who can provide information about the time the learning process actually requires of them; they might even suggest ways to use the learning time more effectively.

Programme directors/coordinators need to be involved because they have the best overview of the structure of the whole programme and, thus, can best decide - in consultation with academics and students - how to best distribute the workload across the different programme components in a balanced and realistic way. They are also responsible for monitoring that academics who teach programme courses respect the student workload assigned to the course(s) in question and do not 'overload' students.

Administrators need to be involved because they need to understand and embrace the new approach to designing higher education programmes in order to find solutions for all administrative procedures required to put this system in place (programme documentation, students' transcripts of records, teachers' contracts, etc.).

Those responsible for academic mobility programmes need to be involved because they need to be able to explain student workload arrangements to their counterparts in other institutions and make sure that credit mobility works in the most beneficial way for the students who can make use of it.

Participation of the university authorities at different levels is essential because they need to update the norms, internal regulations, and key institutional policy documents; for this they need to be involved from the beginning for all the other actors involved to feel their leadership and support.

- **What do they need to know & do?**

Once those who will lead the process have been identified, provisions need to be made for them to work in teams in order to:

- 1) Explain to colleagues and students why measuring student workload is important to (a) facilitate recognition of full programmes and study periods at inter-institutional and international levels and (b) improve quality of higher education programmes through a better consistency between theoretical time estimation and the real time students need to spend to complete the programme
- 2) Test different tools and approaches for estimating full student workload in order to identify what works best in particular programme/course/disciplinary contexts
- 3) Analyse the results of student workload estimations in order to (a) identify possible inconsistencies between the actual student workload and the one planned for at the course and curriculum design stage and (b) take data-informed decisions to recognise full programmes and study periods at inter-institutional and international levels
- 4) Engage different stakeholders in revising higher education programmes and courses based on the analysis of the data collected through different tools for measuring student workload
- 5) Contribute to a national, ASEAN-level and global discussion in order to promote the use of student workload as a basis for a more coherent regional recognition system

- **What is the best tool to use to measure the student workload?**

Each institution needs to identify the ‘best’ combination of tools to measure the student workload. Four complementary tools that you might want to build on are as follows:

- (1) **Desk estimation** - a tool that invites academics to estimate the student learning time for their course(s) and provides an overview of the estimated student workload for a complete degree programme, each programme year and term, and each course/programme component
- (2) **End-of-Semester Questionnaire** - a survey conducted at the end of a semester in order to compare students’ and academics’ estimations of the time that was necessary to achieve the learning outcomes of courses offered during that semester, as well as of the time dedicated to different types of learning activities used during the course
- (3) **Logbook/Diary** - a instrument that zooms in on a period of several weeks and compares the planning related to student workload made by an academic - activity by activity - with the actual time reported by students as spent on these activities
- (4) **Focus Group Discussion** - a data collection technique that allows to obtain qualitative information from students and/or academics in order to understand differences in students’ and academics’ estimations of student workload

Please take into consideration that for the culture of student workload measurement to be introduced at the level of at least one programme, you must use (one of) the other three tools in combination with Tool no 1 - the Desk Estimation. The Desk estimation is the starting point of all the other data collection exercises and discussions; it will allow you to get the complete overview of the student workload estimation in every component of the programme and ‘map’ the findings from the other tools onto this structure.

All the information about how you can apply and analyse the data collected through the use of the four tools can be found in [the CALOHEA Protocols for monitoring student workload consultation and analysis](#).

IV. Are there any international level agreements or standards that we need to take into consideration to make sure our student workload is compatible with that of other institutions in other countries?

While the main barrier to comparability is not having student workload articulated (e.g. counting contact hours only), it will certainly also help to consider the following:

Global references for the total number of hours of student workload per academic year

Region/ Countries	Student Workload per year (in hours, 1 hour = 60 min)
European Higher Education Area (ECTS - European Credit Transfer System)	1500 - 1800
Austria, Italia, Malta	1500
Belgium (Flemish Community), Czech Republic, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland	1500 – 1800
Belgium (French Community)	1440
Denmark, France	1650
Estonia	1560
Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania	1600
Germany	1800
Hungary	1620 – 1800
Iceland	1500 – 2000
The Netherlands	1680
Portugal	1500 – 1680
Romania	1500 – 1640
Latin America (CLAR - Crédito de Referencia Latinoamericano)	1440 - 1980
Africa (ACTS - African Credit Transfer System)	1350 - 1850

Cambodia

Involved in the CALOHEA project, both institutions' value was added not only to the national level but toward regional and international recognition.

At the institutional level, SWL and Authentic assessment have been brought into a continuous discussion at the management level, particularly the faculty program involved in the CALOHEA project. Authentic assessment, rubric, and PBL. As a result, short-term and medium-term plans have been developed to enhance the application of Authentic Assessment. To move forward, RM1 has been raised for the next topic of alignment to the PLOs of the program with the CALOHEA framework.

According to the Decision on The Implementation of Credit Curriculum and Credit Transfer of the ACC dated 19 November 2004. (Cambodian Language [Khmer]) & Cambodia Qualifications Framework (CQF) (2012) written specifically about credit numbers and only mentioned the minimum number of credits required for a Bachelor's degree for instance a 4-year study requires at least 120 credits and a 5-year study program requires a minimum of 140 credits, and 160 credit hours for a 6-year bachelor degree. There are two semesters per academic year and at least 15 weeks per semester excluding the week of final exams. There are 3 types of learning programs: 1. Theory: 1 credit is a period of teaching 1 hour per week and at least 15 hours per semester. 2. Operational Studies credit for operational studies is rehearse and experiment in the lab which requires 2 hours per week or at least 30 hours per semester. 3. Practice (Authentic): 1 credit of authentic practice is a kind of training in the field, companies, hospital, or other authentic practice of real life/world context. It requires at least 3 hours per week or 45 hours per semester.

Regarding Student workloads (SWL), both universities Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC) and Svay Rieng University (SRU) utilized the 4 tools from the CALOHEA: 1. Desktop estimation: Academic's holistic perspective, 2. End of Semester Questionnaires, 3. Diary /Logbook and 4. Focus Groups with the students from the selected program. As a result, the minimum workload per year is different since ITC provides a 5-year study program while SRU offers a 4-year study program. To ITC, the minimum required workload is 1,380 hours, and the maximum is 1,919 hours per academic year. The requirement from SRU Academic's holistic perspective, students are required to spend a minimum of 1,058 hours and a maximum of 1,172 hours per academic year. The average hours per academic year required from SRU is 1,114 hours, and ITC is 1,785 hours per academic year.

To conclude, the hours spend in a 4-year academic program range between 1,058 to 1,172 hours per academic year, whereas for a 5-year study program ranges from 1,380 to 1,919 hours

per academic year. The average workload hours per academic year of a 4-year study program requires 1,114 while a 5-year study program requires 1,785 hours per.

Recommendations

The findings of the two universities involved in the CALOHEA project are still not sufficient enough to represent the HEIs in Cambodia, so some recommendations are proposed as follows:

- Further studies should be conducted on a comparative study and analysis on student workload and disseminate the findings.
- Cambodian HEIs should join hands in the study or review on SWL and share the findings among HEIs.
- Cambodian Qualification Framework stated the minimum credits requires of a 4-year to 6-year study program, to improve the qualification should be revised and include the SWL as an umbrella so that each HEI can adapt and utilize in their own situation.
- Department of Higher Education (DHE) and/or The Ministry of Education (MoEYS) should organize a forum under the theme of SWL and Authentic Assessment at the Higher education level and promote research and publication to enrich and enhance the documentation regarding SWL.
- A policy should be written, reformed, and enforced at the HEI level
- Follow-up activities should be regularly monitored and evaluated

Indonesia

Universities have increasingly recognized the importance of accounting for student learning time beyond mere contact hours. The student workload measurement is mostly accurate only in terms of contact hours. The student workload beyond contact hours is still hard to measure and observe. We found that the easiest way to implement SWL measurement is through an end-of-semester survey for each subject. Although other tools may provide more accurate results, they are harder to implement. Indeed, occasionally using logbooks and focus group discussions will be beneficial for validating the survey.

Recommendations:

Firstly, the culture of Student Workload (SWL) has been specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 53 of 2023, concerning Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Article 15. However, its implementation cannot yet be fully implemented in education settings because many institutions may not yet be familiar with the culture of measuring SWL. Therefore, what needs to be done is

to socialize on how to implement a SWL measurement culture at various levels, either through including SWL in the syllabus or the Semester Learning Plan.

Second, although the student workload (SWL) policy has been integrated into the university information system for learning evaluation, the continuous and consistent follow-up needs to be addressed seriously. Otherwise, this SWL survey will become too mechanistic and meaningless.

Thirdly, getting the key person on board as also suggested by CALOHEA strategy is such an important variable. Institution and faculty leaders must be involved to ensure that the student's well-being is guaranteed via SWL policy implementation. Many stakeholder needs to be involved for implementation of student workload framework, such as **programme coordinators** as learning designers, those managing courses and contact hours, routinely conduct monitoring and evaluation and make necessary adjustments to the curriculum; we collect information from **students** by having them fill out their workload using Google Forms at the end of each summative exam for each course; **academics** who teach are also asked for feedback during the teaching and learning process with students; and **faculty** needs to be aware and provide support for the results of monitoring and evaluation to implement the newest norms as policy-makers.

To implement SWL measurement in Indonesian HEIs, political decisions and new regulations need to be established to create a standardized framework for workload measurement across all institutions. Training programs for faculty are essential to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the concept of student workload and its importance. Additionally, there should be an integration and digitalization of the tools such as desk estimations, end-of-semester questionnaires, and logbooks to accurately and consistently measure and monitor student workload, also easier to process into data feedback for the faculty.

Lao PDR

At the level of HEIs in Lao PDR, student workload is recognised and implemented. This is reflected in the Lao Qualification Framework (LQF) approved in 2021 and Lao Qualification Standards for Bachelor Degree approved in 2020. In order to implement the student workload measurement in HEIs in Lao PDR, it is important for the Ministry of Education and Sports to issue a new regulation and guideline on this matter. Workshops should be conducted to discuss and design appropriate tools for measuring student workload and how results can be used to enhance student learning and teaching. To ensure it is compatible with the global references, it is vital to adapt from the AUN reference framework and results from the CALOHEA project.

Malaysia

The level of understanding within the faculty and other stakeholders regarding the shift from teaching to learning, the concept of learning outcomes, and student workload is quite comprehensive but also reveals areas for improvement. Faculty members across various institutions, such as USM, UM, and UTM, have developed a deeper awareness of student workload from multiple perspectives, highlighting the importance of managing and distributing it effectively. USM and UTM emphasize the need for direct feedback from students and academics to address discrepancies in workload perceptions, particularly noting that lecturers often underestimate the students' workload. UM's response underscores the significance of time management, balancing outside commitments, and building foundational knowledge for a smooth academic journey. The feedback indicates a consensus on the necessity for open communication, clear guidelines, and ongoing dialogue to align expectations and enhance learning experiences. Moreover, there is an acknowledgment of the need for detailed explanations and resources to better understand the Student Learning Time (SLT) formula. To implement the Student Workload measurement in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the country, policy maker decisions, new regulations, and extensive training for faculty members are necessary. Clearer guidelines with reasonable details on the revised SLT guidelines should be developed by considering inputs from important stakeholders such as students, academics, alumni and associations. The current practice of estimating student workload is between 1200 and 1720 hours per academic session, which is compatible with the global references for the total number of hours of student workload per academic year. These measures aim to create a supportive learning environment with manageable workloads, ensuring assessments are fair and relevant to individual students' abilities and course objectives while aligning with international standards.

The Philippines

Philippine higher education institutions have increasingly focused on estimating student workload to enhance the learning experience and ensure a balanced academic life. Institutions achieve this by requiring faculty members to report their estimated learning hours in their syllabi. These syllabi are reviewed by department heads and approved by deans, ensuring careful consideration and standardization of workload estimates across the institution. Similarly, other institutions have embraced student workload estimation through the CALOHEA project, raising awareness among academics and integrating these practices into their curriculum to varying degrees.

Attention to student learning time beyond contact hours has become a priority. This is driven by the mandate to include estimated learning hours in syllabi, ensuring that students' total

workload, including assignments, projects, and independent study, is considered. This broader understanding recognizes that learning extends beyond classroom interactions and encompasses essential out-of-class activities. However, some institutions are still developing their approach to accounting for student learning time beyond contact hours. Although the concept of student workload is recognized, full integration into curriculum planning and delivery is ongoing, with efforts to incorporate workload into syllabi and authentic assessments marking significant progress.

The level of understanding of the shift from teaching to learning, and the concepts of learning outcomes and student workload, varies among institutions. Some institutions have fostered a common understanding among faculty members through training courses, emphasizing the importance of focusing on learning outcomes and managing student workload effectively. At others, the level of understanding is nascent, with participation in the CALOHEA project initiating awareness among key officials and academics. Regular workshops and seminars are necessary to deepen understanding and ensure all stakeholders, including policy-making bodies and higher education leaders, are well-informed about student workload estimation and its implications for curriculum design.

Engagement of stakeholders in estimating and discussing student workload is crucial for successful implementation. Institutions that require the inclusion of estimated learning hours in syllabi have seen increased engagement from department heads, deans, and faculty members, ensuring that workload considerations are integrated into curriculum planning and delivery. However, at other institutions, stakeholder engagement is still in its infancy. Efforts to involve various stakeholders, including academics, students, and higher education leaders, need to be more structured. The CALOHEA project has been instrumental in initiating these discussions, but ongoing efforts are needed to sustain and deepen stakeholder engagement.

Currently, specific tools for estimating student workload are limited. Some institutions rely on faculty estimates and administrative oversight, while others use end-of-semester questionnaires to gather feedback from academics and students, and course syllabi reviews to approximate student workload. However, the lack of standardized tools remains a gap that needs to be addressed for more accurate and consistent workload estimation.

To fully implement student workload estimation and ensure compatibility with the CALOHEA framework, several steps are necessary. Institutions need to formulate policies that integrate student workload measurement into curricular reforms, conducting thorough analyses of existing programs to ensure global compatibility and alignment with international standards. The development and implementation of standardized tools for estimating student workload are essential, providing a consistent method for calculating and monitoring student workload across different courses and programs.

Conducting research studies utilizing tools such as the syllabus-based estimation exercise (SEE), desk estimation exercise (DEE), logbook and diary, end-of-semester questionnaire, and the authentic assessment (re)development framework can provide valuable insights into student workload patterns and inform curriculum design. These studies help institutions refine their workload estimation practices and enhance educational outcomes. Advocacy for national policies supporting student workload estimation is necessary, with CHED including specific policies anchored on internationalization, standardization, and outcomes-based education. National seminar-workshops, led by CALOHEA champions, could further promote these practices across the country.

The CALOHEA project has played a pivotal role in raising awareness and promoting best practices, but more work is needed to standardize tools, engage stakeholders, and implement supportive policies. Addressing these needs ensures that student workload estimation is effectively integrated into curriculum planning and delivery, enhancing the overall educational experience and well-being of students and teachers.

Thailand

In Thailand, most higher education Institutions (HEIs) employ comprehensive strategies to estimate and manage student workload effectively. These institutions encourage students to negotiate and discuss appropriate workloads with their instructors, fostering a balanced academic experience. Learning outcomes are continuously monitored, ensuring that teaching and learning activities align with workload expectations. The Teacher Council of Thailand and the Council of Engineers Thailand plays a crucial role in overseeing the quality of student workloads during internships, guaranteeing that practical training is both effective and equitable. At the program level, specific tools such as workload calculators, feedback systems, and performance tracking mechanisms are employed to measure and manage student workload accurately. These practices are part of a broader effort to create a balanced and effective learning environment, promoting student success and well-being.

To implement student workload measurement in Thai Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and ensure it aligns with global standards, several key initiatives are necessary. These include political decisions to support the standardization of workload measurements, and new regulations to define acceptable workload ranges per academic year. Comprehensive training for faculty and staff on methodologies and tools is essential, alongside engaging all relevant stakeholders in the process. Utilizing advanced technology for accurate tracking, continuous monitoring and evaluation, and fostering international collaborations to learn best practices are also crucial. These steps will ensure an effective and globally compatible system.

Vietnam

In Vietnam, many HEIs have been conducting surveys to assess student satisfaction with the modules they are studying, including the suitability of study workload. However, this is not the case for every institution.

The level of understanding in the responses below is expressed in a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 - very low; 2 - low; 3 - average; 4 - high; and 5 - very high

- + Academics: “3” They are aware of the shift from teaching to learning as this is inevitable with the new generation of students who are more demanding and more distracted in the digital era. The concept of learning outcomes is familiar to all lecturers after the issuance of the Vietnam Qualification Framework, together with the Circular No. 17/2021-BGDDT. The student workload is briefly touched in this Circular as well, but the particular application is still limited because of the lack of methodology.
 - + Students: “2” Vietnamese students remain traditional in the way of teaching and learning and this is the result of the education system at lower levels. They are also oblivious to the publicized PLOs and SLOs on official channels of the universities, and spontaneously react to tasks assigned in class. As such, they are unaware of the concept of workload, and usually do not pay attention to the actual hours spent on a subject.
 - + Program directors/coordinators: “5” All program leaders are properly trained in curriculum design, including pedagogy, learning outcomes at various levels, student assessment and workload calculation.
 - + Administrators: “4” They are aware of the whole process of education reform, and are supportive. Capacity building programs are regularly organized targeting relevant administrators.
 - + Those responsible for academic exchange programmes: “4” Most of these people are administrators, and are aware of the importance of the above issues.
- how engaged are different stakeholders in estimating student workload and discussing student workload?
- + The Faculty and Department management boards and Quality Assurance Unit showed interest and urged for routine management of student workload and preventing student work overload.
 - + However, most lecturers showed little care in this issue. They focused more on how to deliver the learning content and administer homework to meet the learning outcomes than the work the students need to prepare.
 - + Some students incredibly care about their workload. They gave feedback through the end-of-course satisfaction survey. Yet the majority were not prepared to calculate their

workload systematically, merely followed the instructions of the lecturers without questioning.

- + The occupational stakeholders have not shown much care about this issue. They generally see this issue as the responsibility of the education institutions.
- what tools are already used (if any)?
 - Surveys (only questionnaire item related to workload, exploring students' perceptions towards the suitability of the study workload)
 - No specific tools of student workload measurement have been introduced or published in the level of HEIs so far (expect the institutions in the CALOHEA project)
- What would be necessary in order to
 - implement the Student Workload measurement in HEIs in your country (political decisions, new regulations, training, etc.) and Requirement of decisions from all levels of management, consensus from faculty and students, clear regulations, reasonable measurement tools, and thorough training.
 - ensure it is compatible with “Global references for the total number of hours of student workload per academic year” section of the Guidelines?
Generally, most undergraduate programs in Vietnam range from 1500 to less than 1900 hours, which suits the given guidelines. However, medical students have 2000-3000 hours of learning workload per year, which significantly exceeded the guidelines. This might be due to the unique education mechanism of Medicine.

Civil Engineering

CALOHEA Civil Engineering subject area group (SAG) has established the Summary of Recognition Mechanism 2 (Student Workload) in Table 1 (below). At the end of Table 1, some reflections on each tools has been drawn. The recommendations on the use of each of the 4 tools for Higher Education programmes in Civil Engineering subject were concluded in Table 2 (below). For each tool, specific configurations and adaptations are recommended: accurate time estimation for learning activities, detailed questionnaires on task-specific time allocation, structured daily logbooks for diverse activities, and focus groups addressing workload challenges. Stakeholder engagement involves course coordinators, faculty, students, and academic advisors in workshops, questionnaire development, logbook training, and focus groups. Data from these tools is used to review, analyze and adjust course designs, workloads, and resources, ensuring accurate workload reflections and effective student support.

Based on the findings from various institutions, the minimum and maximum number of hours in student workload per year for civil engineering programs vary significantly. However, commonalities can be identified:

- **Minimum Workload:** Approximately 1000 to 1500 hours per academic year or 40 hours per week.
- **Maximum Workload:** Approximately 1800 to 2200 hours per academic year or 57 hours per week .

These ranges reflect the intensive nature of civil engineering programs, which often include extensive practical work, projects, and field activities. To facilitate recognition and ensure consistency, it is recommended that civil engineering programs within Southeast Asia adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Standardize Workload Expectations:** Establish a common framework for estimating and reporting student workload across institutions. This could involve adopting regional guidelines that align with international standards such as ECTS.
- **Enhance Curriculum Design:** Use the data collected from the four tools to refine curriculum designs. Ensure that workloads are balanced and realistic, preventing student overload while maintaining high academic standards.
- **Promote Regional Collaboration:** Foster collaboration between Southeast Asian institutions to share best practices and develop standardized approaches to measuring and managing student workload. This can enhance the comparability and recognition of civil engineering programs across the region.
- **Support Student Mobility:** Implement agreements that facilitate the recognition of credits and workloads between institutions. This will promote student mobility and ensure that students can transfer their learning seamlessly across different programs and countries.

Table 1 : Summary of RM2 Tools for SAG Civil Engineering

Country	Indonesia (ITS)	Malaysia (UM)	Indonesia (UPI)	Vietnam (HUCE)	Thailand (NU)	Laos (SU)	Laos (NUOL)	Cambodia (ITC)	Indonesia (UNHAS)	Malaysia (USM)	Malaysia (UTM)
Tool 1: Desk Estimation (hours/year)	2000-2200	1450-1670	Detailed course-specific workload	2265-1858	1440-1095	1824-1200	1680-1824	1380-1919	1640-1520	1268-1510	1000-1320
Tool 2: End-of-Semester Questionnaire (hours/semester)	750-800	700-760	N/A	42911 (students), 4425 (academics)	580 (students), 615 (academics)	838 (students), 615 (academics)	768 (students), 912 (academics)	1320-1596	718.1 (students), 621.0 (academics)	735.4 (students), 696 (academics)	646 (students), 644 (academics)
Tool 3: Diary/Logbook (hours/week)	10-12	5-7	N/A	6118 for course 1, 3264 for course 2	8.77-7.68	12-13	11-29	42	9.75 for Integrated Civil Infrastructure Design	4.73-5.27	3.73-2.73
Tool 4: Focus Group	40	45	N/A	40 (normal), 50	56.86	52.6	34.75	52	39.45	42.5	46

(hours/week)				(examination)							
Reflections	Contact hours to independent work ratio varies between courses	Even distribution of workload across semesters	Detailed course breakdown but overall yearly workload not summarized	Differences found between students' and academics' workload estimates	Student workload often exceeds 1500-1800 hours, suggesting a maximum of 1200 hours to avoid overload	High ratios of independent work to contact hours highlight the need for balanced workload distribution	Average workload hour per week 48 to 57	Ratio of contact hours to independent work varies from 3/7 to 6/4	Total time on independent work was 3 to 4 times higher than contact hours	Distribution of workload is not similar throughout all semesters and weeks	Independent work is approximately 1 to 2 times higher than contact hours

Table 2: Recommendations for Bridging South East Asian Student Workload in Civil Engineering with Other Contexts

	Tool 1: Desk Estimation	Tool 2: End-of-Semester Questionnaire	Tool 3: Logbook/Diary	Tool 4: Focus Group Discussion
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<p>Configuration/ Adaptation</p>	<p>Academics should carefully estimate the time required for each learning activity within the course, considering both contact hours and independent work. In civil engineering, special emphasis should be placed on project-based courses, laboratory work, and field activities which typically require more time.</p>	<p>Design questionnaires that capture detailed information on the time spent by students on various activities, including lectures, assignments, projects, and exam preparation. Ensure questions are specific to civil engineering tasks, such as CAD software use, construction site visits, and group projects.</p>	<p>Implement a structured logbook where students can record daily time spent on different learning activities. For civil engineering students, include categories such as lab work, project meetings, study and discussion sessions, and practical training. Example of systematic logbook using digital tools or web-based logbook.</p>	<p>Organize focus groups with a diverse group of students and faculty members to discuss the workload of civil engineering courses. Focus on specific challenges and time-consuming activities such as design projects, internships, and complex assignments.</p>
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<p>Engaging Stakeholders</p>	<p>Involve course coordinators and faculty members in collaborative workshops to standardize estimation practices and ensure consistency across different courses.</p>	<p>Involve students and academic advisors in the development and refinement of the questionnaire to ensure it accurately captures the workload and is easy to understand.</p>	<p>Train students on how to accurately fill out logbooks and emphasize the importance of honest reporting. Encourage faculty to review logbooks periodically to provide timely feedback and support.</p>	<p>Ensure a balanced representation of students from different year levels and specializations within civil engineering. Include faculty members who are involved in curriculum design and course delivery.</p>
<p>Using Data for Improvement</p>	<p>Regularly review and compare the desk estimation data with actual student feedback to identify discrepancies. Use these insights to adjust course designs and workloads, ensuring a more accurate reflection of the time students need to achieve learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Analyze the collected data to identify patterns and outliers. Use this information to modify course content, redistribute workload, and enhance resource allocation to support student learning effectively.</p>	<p>Compare the logbook entries with desk estimations and questionnaire responses. Identify areas where students are spending more or less time than expected and adjust course requirements or provide additional resources accordingly.</p>	<p>Use qualitative data from focus groups to understand the nuances of student workload. Implement changes based on the feedback, such as adjusting deadlines, modifying project scopes, or enhancing support services.</p>

Medicine

The CALOHEA project utilized four tools—desk estimation survey, online student survey, diary/logbook, and focus group discussions—to comprehensively assess student workload (SWL) in medical education across multiple institutions. The student workload survey revealed discrepancies between faculty estimates and student-reported time spent on academic activities, emphasizing the need for more balanced curriculum planning. The range of hours per week by academic was 19.4 to 92.3 hours per week and by students was 48.1 to 97.1 hours per week. The diaries/logbook and FGD highlighted varying workload perceptions influenced by study year, courses, and learning strategies, emphasizing the importance of balanced academic demands. The diary/logbook method provided detailed records of daily activities, showing higher time investments reported by students compared to faculty estimates. Focus group discussions captured distinctive student perspectives on workload, revealing the impact of motivation, learning experiences, and teacher expectations. Utilizing multiple tools - desk estimation, student workload surveys, diaries/logbooks, and FGDs - provides a comprehensive view of student workload. This holistic approach ensures both quantitative and qualitative data are captured, offering a full spectrum of students' experiences and informing balanced curriculum design. These findings indicated the necessity for informed curriculum design to support student well-being and optimize learning environments across the ASEAN region and globally. It is recommended that there is a need for more involvement and commitment from ASEAN medical education providers to work together for credit transfer in the region and globally.

Teacher Education

Bridging Southeast Asian student workload from the CALOHEA project into other contexts involves initiatives aimed at enhancing understanding, sharing best practices, and implementing standardized measures. Common events where teacher education institutions gather to discuss student workload issues and develop mobility programs for students and faculty are essential for maintaining collaboration and networking. These gatherings are crucial in fostering continuous dialogue and creating a platform for

teacher education institutions across Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, and the Philippines to share their experiences and collectively develop solutions.

The level of understanding of student workload among faculty and stakeholders in Malaysia is relatively strong but can be improved. Faculty members have become increasingly aware of the importance of managing student workload effectively. However, there is a need for direct feedback from students to address discrepancies in workload perceptions. Often, lecturers underestimate students' workload, highlighting the necessity for better communication. A comprehensive guidebook for academics and preservice teachers could help effectively measure and estimate student workload. This guidebook should include suggestions for authentic assessments, expectations for preservice teachers, estimated time frames for tasks, and engagement strategies.

In Cambodia, applying the four tools for student workload has provided insights but requires further efforts. Recommendations include conducting comparative studies, encouraging Cambodian higher education institutions to collaborate and share findings, and revising the Cambodian Qualification Framework to include student workload considerations beyond credit requirements. Organizing a forum on student workload by the Department of Higher Education or the Ministry of Education and developing policies at the institutional level are also suggested. These measures are essential for creating a more standardized and effective approach to managing student workload across Cambodian higher education institutions.

In the Philippines and Thailand, several recommendations and actions have been identified. Higher education institutions should conduct seminar-workshops on student workload to raise awareness and engage administrators, academics, and students. Integrating student workload into syllabi as part of curriculum planning and considering it in program outcomes, teaching activities, and assessments is crucial. Additionally, securing funding to support the CALOHEA project is necessary. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should create policies on student workload based on internationalization and outcomes-based education. Conducting seminar-workshops for many higher education institutions, with ASEAN region institutions sharing expertise, is essential. Research studies using the four tools across various programs will further support these efforts.

In the Philippines, the creation of a national technical working group to study and implement student workload measures across higher education contexts is recommended. Close collaborations with ASEAN public and private entities, conducting comparative

analyses of teacher education programs for possible accreditation, and including student workload and authentic assessment in AUN-QA tools for program assessment are advised. Implementing workload-based curriculum planning and formulating student workload policies by governing bodies across Southeast Asia regions are crucial. Tools, processes, and practices should be shared with different ASEAN countries, and comparative research on student workload and authentic assessment should be conducted.

Institutions in the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand have increasingly focused on estimating student workload to enhance the learning experience and ensure a balanced academic life. Institutions achieve this by requiring faculty members to report their estimated learning hours in their syllabi. These syllabi are reviewed by department heads and approved by deans, ensuring careful consideration and standardization of workload estimates across the institution. Similarly, other institutions have embraced student workload estimation through the CALOHEA project, raising awareness among academics and integrating these practices into their curriculum to varying degrees.

Attention to student learning time beyond contact hours has become a priority. This is driven by the mandate to include estimated learning hours in syllabi, ensuring that students' total workload, including assignments, projects, and independent study, is considered. This broader understanding recognizes that learning extends beyond classroom interactions and encompasses essential out-of-class activities. However, some institutions are still developing their approach to accounting for student learning time beyond contact hours. Although the concept of student workload is recognized, full integration into curriculum planning and delivery is ongoing, with efforts to incorporate workload into syllabi and authentic assessments marking significant progress.

The level of understanding of the shift from teaching to learning, and the concepts of learning outcomes and student workload, varies among institutions. Some institutions have fostered a common understanding among faculty members through training courses, emphasizing the importance of focusing on learning outcomes and managing student workload effectively. At others, the level of understanding is nascent, with participation in the CALOHEA project initiating awareness among key officials and academics. Regular workshops and seminars are necessary to deepen understanding and ensure all stakeholders, including policy-making bodies and higher education leaders, are well-informed about student workload estimation and its implications for curriculum design.

To fully implement student workload estimation and ensure compatibility with the CALOHEA framework, several steps are necessary. Institutions need to formulate policies that integrate student workload measurement into curricular reforms, conducting thorough analyses of existing programs to ensure global compatibility and alignment with international standards. The development and implementation of standardized tools for estimating student workload are essential, providing a consistent method for calculating and monitoring student workload across different courses and programs.

Conducting research studies utilizing tools such as the syllabus-based estimation exercise (SEE), desk estimation exercise (DEE), logbook and diary, end-of-semester questionnaire, and the authentic assessment (re)development framework can provide valuable insights into student workload patterns and inform curriculum design. These studies help institutions refine their workload estimation practices and enhance educational outcomes. Advocacy for national policies supporting student workload estimation is necessary, with CHED including specific policies anchored on internationalization, standardization, and outcomes-based education. National seminar-workshops, led by CALOHEA champions, could further promote these practices across the country.

The CALOHEA project has played a pivotal role in raising awareness and promoting best practices, but more work is needed to standardize tools, engage stakeholders, and implement supportive policies. Addressing these needs ensures that student workload estimation is effectively integrated into curriculum planning and delivery, enhancing the overall educational experience and well-being of students and teachers.