4. CREDITS & REQUIREMENTS

Credit system

Cornerstone is a member of, and accredited by the **EEAA (European Evangelical Accrediting Association)**. It uses the **European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)**.

1 ECTS credit equals **28** (clock) **hours** of learning activities.

ECTS credits are allocated to **all learning activities** within the study programme, not just to the contact hours with the lecturer. This means that learning activities like private study, writing of assignments, exams + preparation, ministry programmes, internships, mentoring programme, are also included in ECTS credit counting.

Course System

Cornerstone's teaching is **modular**. Most of our instruction is done in blocks called **modules**. Most of our modules are incorporated in **courses**.

➢ By a **module** we understand one block of teaching on a specific subject.
➢ By a **course** we understand a group of modules that deal with a common subject. The overarching courses were formed in order to stimulate cooperation between the lecturers and avoid unnecessary overlap.

-A **course syllabus** for each course at Cornerstone describes its rationale, general learning objectives, content, instructional methods, assessment and evaluation criteria. It is given to the students on **green paper**.
The workload displayed in a syllabus refers to the notional time in which an average learner might expect to complete the required learning outcomes.

-A **module information** for each module at Cornerstone contains the dates of the course, its specific learning objectives, its timetable, learning tasks, due dates and a working bibliography. It is given to the students on **yellow paper**.

Basic and advanced requirements

1. Lecturers give the **same assignments to all students**.

2. Together with the assignment topic the lecturer indicates in the student syllabus some **minimum (basic) requirements** that the students have to fulfil in order to get a mark beyond 50%. But lecturers are strongly encouraged to give some **advanced (supplementary) requirements** in order to challenge the students to dig deeper into the topic. Fulfilling these advanced requirements can produce a better mark, which can lead to the award of a **merit** in your Cornerstone Diploma or Certificate (see Chapter 6.5.). However, there is no guarantee of a better mark if the rest of the assignment is of low quality. Both basic and advanced requirements include content criteria (questions, categories) and formal criteria (format, bibliography, etc.) and should leave some space for creative research in order to avoid just slavish answering of given questions.

Attendance

Under the heading **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE CREDITS**, our course syllabi contain the following words:
Attend at least 50% (or sometimes: 75%) of the class contact hours.

Attendance in class is an essential part of the learning experience. The statement in the syllabus tells you that, if you did not attend the minimum number of classes, you cannot get the credits. This is true even if your absence was permitted by the College.
Important: This passage only talks about **absence for emergency reasons** (sickness, funeral, etc.). An absence request has to be handed in and permission has to be given by the college.

Due dates

A reduction of 10% will be made in marks awarded for each piece of work handed in late.

Work which is handed in more than three weeks after its due date cannot be accepted, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the lecturer.

5. LEVELS OF ACCREDITATION

Certificate During their first year at Cornerstone students are introduced to the foundational features and principles of the six fields of Study (BIB, THE, COM, PFI, MIN, GEN). Special emphasis is laid on
- Studying the Bible (Bible Survey, Introduction to Exegesis),
- Introductory Theology,
- Interpersonal Relationships, Teamwork & Conflict Management,
- Evangelism and Discipleship,
- Spring Mission (3 weeks of field experience in small teams).

Diploma The second year at Cornerstone builds on the foundations of year 1. The learning activities are designed to enhance the critical and evaluative faculties of the students. Students are expected to demonstrate research skills. Special emphasis is laid on
- Exegetical Studies,
- History and Theology of Missions,
- Intercultural Studies,
- Church Planting,
- Internship (6 weeks of cross-cultural field experience).

Both Cornerstone Certificate (one year programme) and Diploma (two year programme) are accredited by the European Evangelical Accrediting Association (EEAA).

6. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

6.1. CERTIFICATE IN INTERCULTURAL STUDIES
In order to obtain a Cornerstone certificate, students are required to have **at least 60 ECTS**.

6.2. PARENTS PROGRAMME
According to our Cornerstone philosophy of missionary training we want both parents to participate in the training programme. This includes all learning experiences, both academic (classroom-based) and non-formal and informal courses (ministry experiences and supervised experience-based learning). Of course we are aware of the fact that parents with small children will not always be able to do the full training programme. Therefore we offer the possibility of a reduced "Parents' Programme" as follows.
1. One of the parents of families with small children can complete the required 60 ECTS for the EEAA accredited Certificate over a time span of two years.
2. Parents who choose to do the EEAA accredited Certificate programme over a time span of two years are allowed to do a limited number of second year courses during their second year at the college. The conditions for this are the following:
- At least 30 ECTS must have been achieved during the first year at the college.
- All prerequisites for the desired second year course, as defined in the syllabus, must be fulfilled.
- Desired second year course must not substitute or endanger the attendance of core modules of the first year programme.
Detailed guidelines for the parents programme are put down in a separate policy statement for the parents programme at Cornerstone which can be provided by the Academic Dean.
3. Minimum study load:
 - EU students. Cornerstone does not normally permit parents to study for less than 50% of the possible credits for one school year. Parents who are in danger of falling short of this goal must contact the Academic Dean as soon as possible so that a workable solution can be found.
 - Non-EU students. To comply with Dutch visa regulations, parents from non-European countries are not allowed to do less than half the required study programme (i.e. attain 30 ECTS in one school-year).

6.3. DIPLOMA IN INTERCULTURAL STUDIES
In order to obtain a Cornerstone diploma students are required to have **at least 120 ECTS**. 60 of these must be done in the 2nd year.

6.4. POSSIBILITIES TO GET EXTRA-CREDITS

For extracurricular learning experiences Cornerstone is willing to validate
o a maximum of 2 ECTS for pre-Cornerstone learning experiences,
o a maximum of 1 ECTS per year for learning experiences that occur during the Cornerstone training (holiday times, etc)
This depends on the permission of the Dean of Studies and faculty. Details for the validation are given in the Manual for the Recognition of Extracurricular Learning.

6.5. CERTIFICATE / DIPLOMA WITH MERIT

1. The students' marks are averaged at the end of the study period - those with an average of above 80% get a **certificate / diploma with merit**.
2. The Cornerstone merit-award is not accredited by the EEAA.

6.6. ATTESTATION OF STUDIES COMPLETED

Students who do not complete the full requirements for the above courses will receive a **transcript**, listing the courses taken and grades achieved.

NB: Diplomas, certificates and transcripts will not be given to students if fees are not paid and if there are any debts owing to the college. This does not apply to Cornerstone study loans.

7. MARKING GUIDELINES

7.1. Guidelines for grading formal learning experiences

These grading guidelines apply to classroom-based courses and modules with formal character (with assignments like essays, reading reports, tests, etc.). They do not apply to the valuation of non-formal and informal learning experiences (see 7.2.).

Grading is different in different countries. In some countries it is normal to get 90% or even 100%. In our marking system this is different. This is the table that we apply.

Table of grades

90 +	*Excellent*	- original - creative - shows ability to analyse and synthesise different points of view
80 – 89	*Very good*	shows depth of analysis, reflection and understanding
70 – 79	*Good*	still not enough support for arguments and a lack of ability to dialogue with authors
60 – 69	*Satisfactory*	- lacks clarity, understanding and logical development - skills used satisfactorily but content lacking - too brief - not enough support for arguments
50 – 59	*Pass*	- all work done but only in a passable way - some work missing - lack of content - poor methodology
0 – 49	*Poor*	- does not meet requirements - not done in a satisfactory way

Grading a Reading Report

If a Reading Report is based on the Cornerstone suggested format (see example on page 24), lecturers usually assign grades as follows:

Bibliographical details -5% Summary – 50% Significant quotations – 5%
Personal response – 40%

7.2. Guidelines for the valuation of non-formal and informal learning experiences

Different marking guidelines apply to the following two kinds of learning experiences:
- **Non-formal learning**: Learning which is embedded in planned activities not always explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.
- **Informal learning**: Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective.

Non-formal and informal learning experiences at Cornerstone::
1. Courses which purely consist of non-formal or informal learning experiences:
   Personal & group mentoring, Missionary speaker log & interviews, Weekly evangelistic ministry, Spring mission.
2. Mixed courses which contain non-formal or informal learning alongside with formal learning:
   Intercultural preaching, Cultural awareness, Reflection on spiritual practice, Interpersonal relationships, Intercultural teamwork, Discipleship, Leadership & training, Emotional health issues, Internship.

Categories for valuation:
Both for particular non-formal and informal learning experiences and for the final marks in courses that just consist of non-formal and informal learning experiences we apply the following categories:
Outstanding (pass +); Full compliance (pass); Compliance with some concerns (pass -);
Partial compliance (fail, unless completed); Far from being in compliance (fail).

Learning experiences that receive the valuation "partial compliance" are considered as a "fail" as long as the student does not complete the work according to the module/course- requirements. In the latter case the lecturer may change the valuation into "pass – ".

Numerical equivalents and credit values:
Valuations for non-formal and informal learning do count for the final marks of courses and for the final average grade in the transcript. The **numerical equivalents and the credit value** of the five categories mentioned above are the following:

Valuation		Credit award	Numerical equivalent
Outstanding	**pass +**	credits can be granted, the mark can be considered as a recommendation for a final award on merit level.	**85%**
Full compliance	**pass**	credits can be granted.	**75%**
Compliance with some concerns	**pass -**	credits can be granted.	**55%**
Partial compliance	**fail, unless completed**	credits can only be granted if additional work is completed.	**35%**
Far from being in compliance	**fail**	credits cannot be granted.	**0 %**