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Action

For information

Executive Summary

Report on the EUA's 2004-05 Action Plan which includes the key themes for the Glasgow 2005 Convention of European HEIs; early warning of proposed increase in EUA membership fees.

Attachment(s)

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European University Association: Budapest Council 2004 – 2005 Action Plan

1. This note reports on the EUA's 9th Council meeting which took place in Budapest in January and focused on the organisation's Action Plan for 2004/2005 including the Bologna Process activities in the lead up to the next ministerial summit taking place in Bergen, Norway in 2005. It alerts institutions to the Glasgow 2005 Convention, and gives early warning of the proposed increase in EUA membership fees.

Action Plan 2004/2005

2. The Plan sets out the areas in which the EUA proposes to concentrate its resources over the next two years. Proposals, both to continue activities already part of the 2002/2003 Action Plan and to strengthen other actions already underway, are planned in three main areas:
 - Policy development on key issues of importance for universities in the ongoing debate on the reform of higher education and research systems in Europe targeted at influencing policy actors at different levels;
 - Institutional development actions in support of individual member universities through a mix of programmes, pilot projects, seminars, conferences and workshops targeted at promoting mutual learning, the exchange of experience and the transfer of expertise; and
 - Internal and external communication actions in order to improve the dissemination and thus the impact of the association's activities as well to enhance the visibility of EUA activities more generally.
3. It is through action in these three areas that EUA believes that it can best respond to the growing expectations of its members and fulfill its mission of representing both national rectors' conferences and individual universities across Europe as the main voice of the higher education community.

The Action Plan - Bologna Process

4. In particular the EUA has clearly indicated in the Action Plan the activities it

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believes are essential to ensure European HEIs continue to play a major part in and direct the future directions of the Bologna Process. Key projects are set out below;

- influencing the work of the Governmental Bologna Follow Up Group;
- organisation of seminars on Bologna action points;
- pilot projects and provision of information and training materials on the Bologna Process for universities;
- Production of the 'Fourth Trends Report';

The EUA will produce a fourth Trends report reviewing progress in the implementation of Bologna reforms. As the European Commission is unlikely to provide funding for a survey of all European HEIs – as in the third Trends report¹ - the EUA will instead look closely at what is happening inside a representative's sample of European universities. Rectors' conferences will be asked to nominate four institutions as each signatory country's representative sample. (For further information on this please contact tish.bourke@universitiesuk.ac.uk)

- Continued role in European quality assurance discussions.

The Berlin ministerial Communiqué referred to the need for further action on quality assurance issues at institutional, national and European level. At European level the European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA) has been requested to:

“develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance, to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Follow-up Group to Ministers in 2005.

5. The EUA has indicated its intention to:

- play a full part in the ENQA Berlin mandate;
- continue with proposals to create a European HE Quality Committee (HEQC)², which will ensure that institutions are at the heart of European QA arrangements;
- continue to offer its (internal) institutional review³

¹ For the Third Trends Report (Towards Progress in the European HE Area) please see: http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/pdf/Trends_III_neu.pdf

² The HE Quality Committee will provide a forum for discussion and – through the appointment of a small board – monitor the application of a proposed code of principles developing a European dimension in quality assurance. Professor Roderick Floud is chairing a small working group on this issue.

³ The EUA's involvement in institutional QA dates from 1993. The programme is offered as a service; each member university may invite the EUA to carry out an institutional review of their university. The idea is not to control administration or to compile a university ranking list, but to support university leaders in their efforts to improve institutional management and, in particular, processes to face change. The emphasis is laid on self-evaluation and allows the institution to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Two years after receiving the review report of the review team, the university may request a follow-up visit in order to take stock of recent changes and determine future strategies. In the long term, the EUA hopes to encourage the promotion of

- launch a second stage of its (internal) Quality Culture Project. (UK institutions involved in this project include the University of Bristol and Napier University⁴.)

Convention of European HEIs: April 2005, Glasgow

6. The General Secretary of the EUA, Lesley Wilson, announced in Budapest that the three Glasgow universities (Glasgow, Strathclyde and Glasgow Caledonian) had been successful in their offer to host the third EUA Convention of European HEIs taking place 31st March – 2nd April 2005. This important event will feed directly into the next ministerial summit on the Bologna Process scheduled for Bergen in 2005. The EUA Council agreed to the following five key themes for the event:

- i. The *research university* – the role of universities in the training of researchers and ensuring the “research pipeline”. To be prepared through:
 - the Maastricht Conference on 28-30 October 2004, ‘Mapping out the future: research training in Europe’s universities’ (building upon the interim results of the Pilot project on doctoral programmes);
 - the Doctoral Programme - EUA has launched a new project to examine the development of doctoral programmes in view of the increasing demands and challenges in Europe. The primary objective of this project, funded by the Directorate General Education and Culture, and supported by Directorate General Research of the European Commission, is to help European universities to improve the quality of doctoral programmes. (For further information on this please see Europe note 04 - 01); and
 - the January 2005 Bologna seminar on doctoral education.
- ii. The *universities and the transmission of values* - to be prepared through the Torino Conference on 3-6 June 2004 ‘Charting the course between public service and commercialisation: Prices, Values and Quality’⁵ organised together with the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU).
- iii. The *responsive university* - building on the results of the Marseille Conference on 1-3 April 2004 on ‘Universities and Society: Engaging Stakeholders’ and concentrating on the role of the university in relation to different groups of stakeholders.
- iv. The *quality university* - building on the EUA’s Institutional Evaluation Programme⁶ celebrating its 10 years’ jubilee, the 2nd round of the Quality Culture project and the work of the HEQC.

a quality culture among its members, and to disseminate examples of effective strategic management among European universities.

⁴ For more information on this project please see:

http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Press_quality_culture1.1071839498013.pdf

⁵ Professor Ivor Crewe has agreed to speak at this event.

⁶ Please see footnote 3.

- v. The *sustainable (autonomous) university* – looking at financing issues and ensuring sustainability and autonomy while bearing in mind society's growing demands and the need to balance multiple functions and respond to different pressures.
7. UUK and SCOP members and UK HE stakeholders are invited to consider attending the Glasgow Convention⁷ which will ensure greater UK influence in the Bologna Process.

Action Plan 2004/2005 – EU Research Policy

8. The Action Plan contains a significant section on the research activities of the EUA. Objectives in this sphere include ensuring that the integral link between teaching and research is strengthened in universities across Europe. The full potential of the universities in the production of knowledge, its transmission, dissemination and utilisation in technological innovation should be realised, thus maximising the contribution of the universities to innovation and sustainable economic development.
9. The EUA has indicated its intention to:
 - promote the links between the European Higher Education and Research Areas in particular through focusing on the role of the university in training researchers and on the future of doctoral programmes in the developing knowledge society and in the light of the Lisbon and Barcelona goals;
 - lobby for a better understanding and inclusion of the universities as a partner in all aspects of the European Research Area;
 - represent universities in discussions at European level on the specific role of the universities in the development of the European Research Area, e.g. through: the preparation of responses to EC policy and consultation documents; targeted provision and dissemination of information; contribution to the preparation and subsequent follow-up of the EC Conference entitled "A Vision for University based Research and Innovation" (Liège, April 2004⁸);
 - contribute to the debate on the establishment of a European Research Council;
 - contribute to the debate on the financing of university research through a study to be prepared for the Liège Conference;
 - create a research policy group⁹ reporting to the Board to prepare the contribution of Europe's universities to the development of FP7; and
 - maintain and further consolidate the special focus on research in the social sciences and the humanities established in 2003 through the launch of Mapping Research in the Social Science and Humanities (MORESS)¹⁰.

⁷ The Glasgow Convention will also include the election of a new board and president of the EUA.

⁸ For further information on this event please see Europe note 04-02.

⁹ The EUA has invited Professor John Archer (Chair of UUK's Research Strategy Group) to serve on this board.

Proposed increase in membership fees

10. Council Members agreed to a future discussion on a proposal to increase membership fees at the next meeting. To allow the EUA to develop activities for its members as set out in the Action Plan, while taking account of a possible decrease in EC contract activity, the secretariat is suggesting an increase in the membership fees for fiscal year 2005 by an amount of Euro 550,000 to be shared among:

- individual members (€500,000), taking into account the size of individual member universities and their capacity to pay the fees by including a GNI weighting factor (Gross National Income per capita); and
- an amount of €50,000 to be borne by collective members.

11. While the decision to increase will not be officially made until the next EUA Council it is likely that individual fees for UK members could rise from between 11- 33 % *depending on the size of the institution*. The following table sets out in UK currency the proposed annual increases. (The number in brackets is the number of UK universities affected by the proposed increase.)

Fee percentage increase	Increase in Euros/pounds	Full 2005 fee Euros/Pounds
15.94 (11)	330 / 224	2,400 / 1,626
32.47 (15)	706 / 479	2,880 / 1,951
39.13 (43)	810 / 550	2,880 / 1,951
65.59 (9)	1,425 / 968	3,600 / 2,439

12. The EUA has stressed that a future increase in fees is necessary in order to ensure that the organisation is successful in implementing its Action Plan and in particular offering the following services to Members:

- provision of support to members in developing and strengthening their European
- transfer and dissemination of experience and examples of good practice;
- promotion of effective institutional leadership, management and governance through seminars; and
- publication of a Handbook of Good Practice

13. UUK proposes to support the increase in Membership fees because:

¹⁰ The MORESS project has the primary objective of improving access to information on research in social sciences and humanities. Through bringing together multiple sources of information in Europe into an integrated structure, MORESS aims to provide useful tools for interested researchers, and to enhance the future quality of European research. For further information please see: http://www.eua.be/eua/en/projects_moress.jsp



- there has been a decrease in European Commission funding by 10%. This is, of course, a short-term drawback but it is a longer term advantage in ensuring the organisation is not seen as a 'quasi administrative arm' of the European Commission Education Directorate General.
 - The office has already sought to save costs by closing the second EUA office in Geneva;
 - It is vital that the EUA (the only HE umbrella body in operation at European level) is funded sufficiently to continue to voice the views and concerns of institutions on key issues such as European research funding (for example on the proposed creation of a European Research Council) and in debates on European level quality assurance procedures.
 - The EUA has improved its communications and services to Members over the last six months, as is evident from the launch of a new website, increase in projects and dissemination of newsletters.
14. The final decision on actual increase amounts will be taken at the April EUA Council in Marseille, as the EUA is still in the process of considering final calculations. UUK Chief Executive, Diana Warwick, has stressed that UUK members are only likely to accept the increase if they see a continued improvement in EUA services to Members. UUK will report back on the final decision

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