

Suggested distribution

Vice Chancellors,
Principals, European
Officers

Action

For information

Executive Summary

This E note reports on the main outcomes of the first four seminars in the official Bologna Process work programme for 2003-2005.

Enquiries

Jessica Olley

Tel

020 7419 5423

Fax

020 7383 5766

Email Jessica.Olley

@UniversitiesUK.ac.uk

Keywords

Europe, Bologna
Process, Bologna
seminars.

27 September 2004

Bologna Seminar Outcomes

Introduction

1. This Europe Note reports on the main outcomes of the following four Bologna Process seminars:
 - 6-7 May on 'Joint Degrees - Further Development' in Stockholm;
 - 4-5 June on 'Bologna and the Challenges of e-Learning and distance education' in Ghent;
 - 1-2 July on 'Using Learning Outcomes' in Edinburgh; and
 - 28-30 July on 'Assessment and Accreditation in the European Framework' in Santander.
2. Bologna Process seminars are the main vehicle for the follow-up of Bologna ministerial agreements. There are fourteen seminars scheduled in the work programme following the September 2003 Berlin summit. The next ministerial summit will take place in Bergen, Norway, in May 2004. The seminars are attended by high level representatives from across the Bologna signatory countries. They are important decision-making fora and seminar recommendations contribute to ministerial Communiqués.
3. The Europe Unit and a range of UK stakeholders with relevant expertise participate in Bologna seminars to ensure that the UK HE sector's views are fully voiced. The Europe Unit provides background briefing for UK participants. Stakeholders interested in attending forthcoming seminars should contact the Europe Unit. The full list of seminars is attached as an annex.
4. The main outcomes of the seminars are listed below. More detailed reports on the seminars can be found on the following website: www.bologna-bergen2005.no.

Seminar on 'Joint Degrees - Further Development' in Stockholm, 6-7 May

5. The Stockholm seminar arose from the 2003 Berlin ministerial Communiqué's support for joint degrees and Ministers' agreement to, "*engage at the national level to remove legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of such*

Chief Executive
Baroness Warwick

Europe Unit
Universities UK
Woburn House
20 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9HQ

Tel +44 (0)20 7419 4111
Fax +44 (0)20 7388 8649
Email info@UniversitiesUK.ac.uk

Company limited by guarantee, registered
in England and Wales No. 2517018
Registered charity No. 1001127

degrees and to actively support the development and adequate quality assurance of integrated curricula leading to joint degrees”.

6. Carolyn Campbell, International Director at the Quality Assurance Agency, and David Young, Policy Advisor at Universities UK, attend the seminar.
7. Seminar participants discussed the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees which aims to improve the recognition of joint degrees among signatory countries. The Recommendation was amended to the Lisbon Recognition Convention in July 2004¹.
8. The main conclusions of the seminar were the following:
 - Bologna national governments to report on progress in meeting the commitment to remove legal obstacles to joint programmes promoted in the 2003 Berlin Communiqué.
 - Ministers to develop incentives for higher education institutions (HEIs) to participate in joint study programmes.
 - National legislation to make clear reference to the possibility of awarding joint degrees with a single, jointly awarded, certificate.
 - Quality assurance to be provided within joint programmes in accordance with national systems.
 - The Bologna Follow-Up Group should map higher education institution (HEI) and student experience of joint degrees across Europe and report conclusions and recommendations to the next Bologna ministerial summit in May 2005.

Seminar on ‘Bologna and the Challenges of e-Learning and distance education’ in Ghent, 4-5 June

9. The Ghent seminar took forward the 2003 Berlin summit agreement on “*the important contribution of higher education in making lifelong learning a reality*”. Ministers called on “*those working on qualifications frameworks for the European Higher Education Area to encompass the wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and techniques*”. This seminar provided an opportunity to discuss the role of e-learning and distance education in the Bologna Process.
10. Dr Anne Wright from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) E-Learning Strategy Unit gave a keynote speech at the seminar on the DfES vision for lifelong e-learning in higher education. Bill Harvey, Deputy Director for Learning and Teaching at the Scottish Funding Councils for Further and Higher Education, ran a workshop on the Scottish Credit and

¹ The full text of the Recommendation can be found on the Council of Europe website:
<http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural%5FCo%2Doperation/education/Higher%5Feducation>.

Qualifications Framework. Tony Bruce, Director of Policy at Universities UK, also participated in the seminar.

11. The seminar made the following recommendations for the further development of the Bologna Process:

- Flexible learning paths (supported by e-learning and non-classical learning and teaching) to be fully integrated into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
- Quality assurance, accreditation and qualifications frameworks to extend to e-learning and non-traditional learning.
- Exploration of how the Lisbon Recognition Convention could be used to validate prior learning in formal and informal contexts.
- Need for Bologna 'tools' (for example, the Diploma Supplement & European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)) to include e-learning and non-classical teaching and learning.

Seminar on 'Using Learning Outcomes' in Edinburgh, 1-2 July

12. The official UK Bologna seminar held at Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh was organised by the Scottish Executive, assisted by Universities Scotland and the Europe Unit. Representatives from twenty-six Bologna signatory countries were among some 150 delegates who attended the seminar. Jim Wallace, Deputy First Minister and Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, and the Rt Honourable Alan Johnson MP, then Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, spoke at the event. Stephen Adam from the University of Westminster prepared a background report on learning outcomes for the seminar.

13. The seminar had a partly educational function in exploring what learning outcomes are and their relevance for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Learning outcomes have a role to play in realising key Bologna Process action lines identified at the 2003 Berlin ministerial summit, in particular on quality assurance, credit and qualifications frameworks. The UK has stressed that learning outcomes are a useful way of reflecting students' competences for the labour market in an era of lifelong learning and flexible learning paths and that a learning outcomes approach reveals the depth and strengths of one-year Masters programmes².

14. The seminar made the following points for consideration by the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG):

- BFUG to lead on ensuring coherence across the different strands affected by learning outcomes notably ECTS and qualifications frameworks, the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe project³, the Diploma Supplement, quality assurance, and between the Bologna and Copenhagen processes.

² Please see E note number E-04-17 for more information on the Masters and the Bologna Process.

³ The Tuning project is funded by the European Commission and led by around 130 European higher education institutions. The project is identifying agreement on generic and subject specific competences across Europe. For further information please see: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/tuning/tuning_en.html.

- Learning outcomes have an important role to play in the Bologna Process.
- The pace and nature of change in the Bologna Process will not be uniform across all countries or all disciplines.
- Need for continuing dialogue to achieve a common language, and a shared understanding of that language, on learning outcomes.

15. The UK will take over the Presidency of the European Union for six months in June 2005. This will provide a valuable opportunity to influence European debates. The UK is planning a higher education conference to showcase UK good practice and to reiterate the value of a learning outcomes approach.

Seminar on 'Assessment and Accreditation in the European Framework' in Santander, 28-30 July

16. The Santander seminar discussed the Berlin summit mandate to the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) *"through its members, in co-operation with the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB, 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."* Quality assurance arrangements in many other European countries are based on accreditation at subject level and (legal) license to practice is often conferred through the award of the degree. Representatives from the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)⁴, an association of national agencies, played an active role in seminar discussions. There is a need to exchange information on quality assurance, and in particular professional accreditation, arrangements across Europe to avoid recognition difficulties in the future.
17. The European Commission is due to publish a Recommendation on quality assurance in Europe shortly. The recommendation is expected to include proposals for a European register of quality assurance agencies and the possibility for HEIs to choose an agency from another country.
18. Ailsa Crum from the Quality Assurance Agency spoke about the enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR) approach developed by the Scottish sector. David Young, Policy Advisor at Universities UK, also participated in the seminar.
19. The seminar concluded that:
- Networks of agencies will have an important role to play in the establishment of common accreditation criteria and methodologies.
 - The diversity of quality assurance arrangements in place throughout Europe should be taken into account when defining common criteria and methodologies.
 - Government, HEI, quality agency, teacher and student participation is important in the implantation of an effective culture of quality.

⁴ For more information on ECA please see: www.eaconsortium.net.



- There is a need for mutual trust among institutions and agencies and a key role for peer review.
- Accreditation is an essential tool for the promotion of quality assurance in HEIs.
- A concrete accreditation scheme should be set up within the Bologna Process.

The next steps

20. Crucial debates will take place at further seminars over the coming months in the lead-up to the May 2005 Bologna summit. UK stakeholders are encouraged to participate in forthcoming European events to ensure that the UK's interests are fully voiced in these important decision-making fora. In addition to the Bologna seminars, the European University Association will hold its Convention of European Higher Education Institutions on 30 March - 2 April 2005. The Convention will take place in Glasgow and will be hosted by Glasgow's three universities. This event will prepare the HEI recommendations to the Bergen summit which takes place the following month in May 2005.

27 September 2004

Copyright in this paper, and any or all of its attachments unless stated otherwise, is vested in the Universities UK. This information may be freely used and copied for non-commercial purposes, provided that the source is acknowledged (© Universities UK)



E/04/21(a)

Official Bologna Follow Up Group Working Programme 2003-2005

If you are interested in attending any of the following events please contact the Europe Unit and we will do our best to secure a place for you. Attendance at the official Bologna Seminars is by invitation from the seminar organisers and the Bologna Follow-Up Group only. The Europe Unit is unable to guarantee places for all UK representatives. For further information on the content of these seminars please visit the following site: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>.

DATE	HOST/ COUNTRY	EVENT/LOCATION	ISSUE/TITLE
6–7 May 2004	Sweden	Bologna Seminar, Stockholm	Joint Degrees–Further Development'
4–5 June 2004	Flemish Community/ Belgium	Bologna Seminar, Ghent	'Bologna and the Challenges of eLearning and Distance Education'
1-2 July 2004	Scottish Executive and Heriot Watt Univ./ United Kingdom	Bologna Seminar, Edinburgh	'Learning outcomes'
28–30 July 2004	ANECA, (QA agency)/ Spain	Bologna Seminar, Santander	'Methodological Common Instruments for Assessment and Accreditation in the European Framework'
23-24 September 2004	Council of Europe (CoE)	Bologna Seminar, Strasbourg	'Public Responsibility for Higher Education and Research'
11–12 October 2004	The Netherlands	Bologna Seminar, Noordwijk aan Zee	'Designing policies for mobile students' (Dutch EU Presidency Conference)
22-23 October 2004	Ministry of Education, /Slovenia	Bologna Seminar, Ljubljana	'Employability and its link to the objectives of the Bologna Process'
4-6 November 2004	UNESCO-CEPES, EUA, CoE/Poland	Bologna Seminar, Warsaw	'Next Generations of Policy Documents and Laws for HE'
25-26 November 2004	Russia	Bologna Seminar, St Petersburg	'Bachelors Degree – What is it?'
3-4 December 2005	Latvia & Council of Europe	Bologna Seminar, Riga	'Improving the Recognition System of Degrees and Periods of Study'
13-14 January 2005	Denmark, Ministry for Education	Bologna Seminar	European Qualifications Framework
27-29 January 2005	France	Bologna Seminar	'The social dimension of HE facing world-wide competition'
3-5 February 2005	EUA/Austria/ Germany	Bologna Seminar, Salzburg	'Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society'
14-15 February 2005	Poland	Bologna Seminar	'Co-operation between accreditation agencies'