



Written update on Advisory Group 2 “Learning and Teaching”

Name of AG/WG: AG 2 on Learning and Teaching

Co-chairs: Eurashé, France and Netherlands

Date: September 2019

1. Update on the work

The AG2 group has now met 3 times.

The **first meeting in Brussels on 28 February** at EURASHE's headquarters allowed members to get to know each other, to identify some areas of work, and to develop a working method. In particular, it was decided for the next meeting to select a series of interventions on various topics to identify good practices and to collect suggestions for recommendations.

A **two-day seminar in Paris on 9 and 10 April** at the Ministry of Higher Education and Research was the opportunity to listen to 8 contributions that inspired the group on the themes we want to work on. During this meeting a drafting group was also formed, consisting of 8 group members who would continuously work on the document AG2 will prepare. We include a brief summary of the 'hearings' we had in Paris here:

<p>Gro Beate Vige – Ministry of Education & Research of Norway</p> <p>Topic: Norwegian approaches to improve the quality of higher education.</p> <p>Main take-aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of organizing teaching more like research ; - not to oppose the two activities but to consider them as two sides of the same coin; - to set up a "student barometer" to hear their voices; - fostering collaborations between higher education and industry;
<p>Florian Rampelt (Stifterverband, Germany)</p> <p>Topic: Strategies for L&T in the digital age.</p> <p>Main take-aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it is important to think curricula according to future skills ; - digital age requires new but also traditional skills and competencies ; - content and pedagogies are equally important (digital and informational literacies are key competencies) so there is a strong need for skills frameworks ; - blended learning is probably the best online learning. - Florian advocated for setting up a peer-reviewed national / regional platform for connecting teachers and informally valuing their innovative efforts ; - allow enough time for those who want to innovate in teaching and learning
<p>Terry Maguire, Director of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in HE, Ireland</p> <p>Topic: ways to support L&T at national level</p> <p>Main take-aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any approach should be student-centered ; - it is necessary to build up a national support system for innovative teaching and learning, (in which students are involved), but grant the different disciplines as much freedom as possible to give them the opportunity to align their strategies and concepts to their respective discipline ;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acknowledge that teacher qualification is not “a box to tick off”, but requires continuous, ongoing development and that it is necessary to establish support structures for this
<p>Melanie Rosebaum (Holy See) & Adam Gayek (ESU)</p> <p>Topic: how can Bologna inspire flexible learning based on student centred curriculum design</p> <p>Main take-aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - students should be consulted and involved in the design of curricula and learning objectives ; - constant feedback loops need to be established to assure students are in fact involved in these processes ; - students should be given greater flexibility in the choice of options for structuring their own study pathways (suggesting that there is probably a need to change assessment methods and to consider them at the program level instead of modular evaluations) - Finally, they drew our attention to a point that should not be overlooked, but that we would have considered as acquired for years in the Bologna area: ECTS is a tool for estimating student workload and should be equivalent in all institutions (comparability issues).
<p>Michael Gaebel (EUA)</p> <p>Topic: EFFECT project (main conclusions)</p> <p>Main take-aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning and teaching, as an integral part of higher education institutions, should be included in the strategies of higher education institutions; - institutional leaders must actively promote and enable progress in learning and teaching; - recognition of teaching as the other important part of academic work (so far recognition is mainly based on research achievements): cultural change is required; - there is a need to promote exchanges and collaboration within higher education institutions (between different disciplines and faculties, involving all stakeholders: teachers, managers, students, etc.), between higher education institutions, but also between higher education institutions and industry.
<p>Sophie Touzé (president of the Open Education Consortium)</p> <p>Topic: open education , Open by Default principles in policy making and culture</p> <p>Main take-aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating an open educational environment helps support and enable a culture change. Conversely, the development of education can be hampered by a lack of training, support, peer counseling, opportunities for exchange, recognition and visibility among peers and within the community. Institution ; - The opening and sharing of teaching materials could contribute to the formation of communities of practice among teachers
<p>Jonna Korhonen , Ministry of Education and Culture Finland</p> <p>Topic: conditions for development of quality education; teacher support</p> <p>Main take aways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers support students in the acquisition of future skills ; in order to do so teachers need lifelong professional development, peer collaboration, excellent working conditions - Teachers should be given greater autonomy (freedom to choose learning materials and pedagogy, freedom to decide on the assessment, participation in the definition of the local curriculum) ; - It is essential to support the in-service training of teachers and to free them from administrative tasks.
<p>Philippe Lalle, ministry of higher education and research, France</p>

Topic: competence framework for higher education teachers written in September 2018 by the French ministry with the aim of upgrading the teaching mission.

Main take-aways:

- curricula should be flexibilized and adapted to the shifting need for future skills ;
- digitalization should not be part of a separate strategy, but should be included in the overall strategies to enhance teaching and learning ;
- learning assessment should be adapted to changing teaching pedagogies et pedagogical alignment with learning outcomes must be reinforced.

A third meeting of AG2 was held in Bologna, back to back with the Bologna anniversary conference. During this meeting, the group attempted to group all the ideas under three themes, and distinguish between what are principles and guidelines (what to we as a group find important regarding this theme) and government recommendations (what can/should national governments do?).

During this meeting the co-chair of AG1 on the social dimension was present and presented the state of their work. It was decided that AG1 and AG2 co-chairs will keep stay in close contact, but the groups will not work on a joint introduction or something similar.

2. Current State of recommendations – summary

In the **current state of our work**, we have recommendations articulated around 3 themes . Please find the themes and the ideas for the recommendations below (note that these are preliminary ideas):

1. Make student-centered learning a reality

We recommend governments to support HEI's in reinforcing their approach to student centred learning, future skill development and to create the necessary enabling regulatory and funding environment

Some concrete ideas:

- Governments should foster a structured dialogue with all stakeholders
- Governments should allow enough space (in rules and regulations) for HEI's to be flexible and adapt programmes/ education provision to support future skill development in an inclusive way for different types of learners
- Access to educational data
- Encourage open education/foster implementation of open educational resources

2. Fostering Learning through improved teaching practices, that are adaptive to the challenges ahead

We recommend governments to support HEI's in promoting improved and innovative teaching practices, responsive to future challenges like enforced competence development for the future and skills to digitally transform teaching and learning, and to create the necessary enabling regulatory and funding environment

Some concrete ideas :

- Governments should take structural measures to ensure the unity and parity of teaching and research (both should be valued in the same way). This requires development of sustainable career paths for teachers.
- Governments should explore the possibility of building a national support system or take other measures to create a supportive environment for innovative teaching.
- Governments could foster the establishment of inter-institutional staff development or the exchange of good practices.

3. Strengthening HEI's organisational development in support of learning and teaching

We recommend governments to support higher education institutions in their strategic development in support of innovating learning and teaching, the transformation of higher

education institutions to make them fit for the digital age, and in general *in their strategic development in support of learning and teaching*

Some concrete ideas :

- Governments should foster the development of national platforms/ fora for exchange of institutions for innovation in higher education and digital transformation
- encourage the dialogue between teachers, students and staff and other stakeholders, foster a culture of structured dialogue (possibly by having national structures in place)
- Governments should include learning and teaching as integral parts of their higher education strategies (including digitalization and open learning)

3. Next steps

The group will have to continue work on the recommendations, including (re-) structuring and prioritizing, taking into account the feedback received during the board meeting in Istanbul. The group will keep also collect best practices relating to the different recommendations that are drafted.

The next meeting of the group will be an online meeting on October 9. The writing group within AG2 might have an (online) meeting before this date.

Calendar:

- October 9 – online meeting of AG2
- November 12-13 – BFUG meeting Helsinki
- January 2020 – meeting of AG2 (to be planned)
- The rest is to be confirmed