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Advisory Group 2 on Learning and Teaching
Second Meeting
9 - 10 April 2019, Paris

Minutes

List of participants

Delegation	First name	Surname
Armenia	Ani	Hovhannisyan
Austria	Alexander	Kohler
Belgium Flemish Community	Linda	De Kock
Belgium French Community	Marc	Vanholsbeeck
Estonia	Janne	Pukk
European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE)	Ulf-Daniel	Ehlers
European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE)	Sarah	Kellermann
European Commission	Tine	Delva
European Students' Union (ESU)	Adam	Gajek
European University Association (EUA)	Michael	Gaebel
European University Association (EUA)	Thérèse	Zhang
Finland	Jonna	Korhonen
France	Philippe	Lalle
Germany	Seel	Bon
Holy See	Melanie	Rosenbaum
Holy See	Dominique	Vermersch
Netherlands	Tessa	Bijvank
Slovenia	Tomaz	Dezelan

Delegation	First name	Surname
Switzerland	Antoine	Maret
BFUG Secretariat	Filippo	Benedetti
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni	Finocchietti

Apologies from Italy.

9 April 2019

1. Welcome by Co-chairs

The France Co-chair welcomed the participants, and opened the meeting presenting the history of the Ecole Polytechniques, now a seat of the Ministry of Education. The Netherlands Co-chair introduced the agenda, informing that the study cases to be discussed during the hearings were selected on the basis of a consultation among members. A short tour de table followed, to allow new members to introduce themselves.

The French Deputy Director General for Higher Education and Employability, Brice Lannaud, gave a welcome speech on behalf of the Director General, who apologised for being unable to join the meeting. He explained the core actions developed in France on L&T and Innovation, including the facilitation of recognition of extracurricular-based learning outcomes, the new competence-based regulations for the Licence and the Doctorate, the requirement of a mandatory teacher training for senior lecturers, a national award for innovative L&T approaches in Higher Education, a competence-based framework for teacher-researchers.

2. Report on status and completed activities

The Netherlands Co-chair gave a report from the BFUG Meeting in Bucharest where the document "[Written update on Advisory Group 2 Learning and Teaching](#)" was presented: the BFUG gave positive feedback regarding the state of works of the AG2, elaborated on how the Group's outcomes could best feed into the overall BFUG workplan, and recommended to secure a good balance between learning and teaching issues, to avoid overlaps with others groups and to provide an adequate students' representation in the Group.

The [minutes](#) of the AG2 first meeting in Bruxelles were approved.

3. Discussion and agreement on the agenda

The Agenda of the meeting was discussed and approved. Small shifts in the order of discussion were decided during the meeting, for a more effective time management.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Agenda.pdf

4. Hearing 1 & Discussion

Gro Beate Vige, Ministry of Education and Research - Norway, held the presentation "Norwegian White Paper 'Quality culture in Higher Education'". The White Paper was intended to define a long-term strategic approach to the HE sector. Quality measures were

adopted, including: centres of excellence in Education; Student Barometer; revised regulations concerning quality of studies; NOKUT's supplementary regulations concerning requirements for (re)accreditation of revised study programmes. “Good approaches” were underlined to improve quality in HE, including: a reward for teaching excellence; a peer review of education; a competitive funding scheme; an indicator portal merging and centralizing different sources. Information was given on the newly established Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (DIKU) and on the overall aims of the new White Paper (2019-2028) including: enhanced competitiveness and innovation capacity in Norwegian business and industry; tackling major societal challenges; developing research communities of outstanding quality.

The discussion underlined the importance of a working method based on cooperation and consultation with the HE sector and a strategic approach at governmental level, the relevance of the Student Barometer in order to take the learners' satisfaction in the right consideration, the scope of fostering a positive competition among HE institutions for innovative methods for student active learning as well as for teaching enhancement.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Hearing_1.pdf

5. Hearing 2 & Discussion

Florian Rampelt, Deputy Managing Director of Hochschulforum Digitalisierung (German Forum for Higher Education in the Digital Age) held the presentation “Shaping the Digital Turn in Higher Education - Bologna Digital and Hochschulforum Digitalisierung”. He introduced the “Bologna Digital” 2020 White paper, based on current challenges and possible digital solutions in the context of the main action lines of the Bologna Process. The presenter gave also an overview of the Digitalisierung Platform, underlining the following key issues: the digital age requires new but also traditional skills & competencies; teaching innovation does often already exist, but needs more appreciation and visibility; blended learning is the better online learning; lifelong learning will shape the changing provision of study programmes, courses and modules – and HEIs need to be ready for this; digital transformation means new opportunities to share and collaborate; an open and shared approach will guide teaching and learning; there is no universal “future university” model, but HEIs need a strategic approach to find out in which direction they want to go.

The discussion underlined the possible disbalance of ownership of the digital fluency skills as an issue for the Social Dimension of Digitalisation, and the need for strategies to overcome such a risk. The opportunity to promote a network of platforms (or a single platform at European level) in order to connect the existing experiences was also discussed. The need to involve both members and stakeholders in the process, as well as the recommendation for the students to become aware of what future learning environments will be, were underlined.

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6. Hearing 3 & Discussion

Terry Maguire, Director of the Irish Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, held the presentation “Supporting Teaching and Learning Enhancement at a National Level: an Irish Perspective”. The aim of a continuous development of Higher Education and L&T in Ireland had been pursued with a work method based on valorisation of existing good practices and consultation among stakeholders. The strategic priorities identified by DELTA (Development and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching and Assessment) include, among others: the professional development of all

professional identities involved in the teaching process (teachers, lecturers, librarians, educational developers); teaching and learning enhancement within and across disciplines; student success; L&T in a digital world. The main results achieved were: an established frameworks for the enhancement of L&T; a developed structures for consultation, collaboration, funding and recognition; a student centred approach; and the building of a comprehensive approach for both students and staff in order to develop a joint strategy and reach together the expected achievements.

The discussion dealt with the disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary approach to the topics of L&T. Appreciation was given to the emphasis placed on the need for collaboration among actors involved, the importance of a student-centred approach to L&T, the professional recognition for all those involved in the teaching process.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Hearing_3.pdf

7. Hearing 4 & Discussion

Melanie Rosebaum (Holy See) and Adam Gajek (ESU) held the presentation “Curricula design by students: how can Bologna empower flexible learning?” The presenters developed the idea that, in order to ensure a student centred L&T process, it is important to engage directly students in the design of programmes and learning methods, including issues such as workloads, credit systems, formulation of the learning outcomes, modularisation of the programmes. Emphasis should be on the L&T process and the competence frameworks, rather than just on subject contents. The importance was stressed of: consulting with the students and involving them from an early stage in the curriculum design; enabling a degree of flexibility within the curricula (e.g. students’ personal choices in elective courses); focusing the learning outcomes on the need of the learners (with a Quality Assurance logic); allowing the recognition of extra-curricular activities and credits, and the transferability of credits.

The discussion showed that very different situations exist across countries, and that reducing existing differences should be a political target within the EHEA. The importance for clearly defining the actors and the steps of the co-design process was emphasised, as well as the importance of creating a supporting environment, of making resources available, and of developing mechanisms for QA and assessment. The implementation of a real student-centred learning, an adequate degree of flexibility in the curricula, and an enlarged space for students’ choices were finally recommended.

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8. Hearing 5 & Discussion

Michael Gaebel (EUA), gave the presentation “Promoting a European Dimension to Teaching Enhancement”, introducing the EUA “EFFECT - Feasibility Study for a European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching” Project. Different strategies and principles were developed including, among others: structured peer learning activities; networks to support national approaches to L&T; networks of institutional centres for L&T; collaborative programmes for staff development; a European Forum for teaching enhancement; evaluation and benchmarking of institutional approaches. It was underlined that the growing pressure to provide meaningful academic staff development needs coordinated responses at multiple levels (institutional, national and European) based on a participatory approach. It was recommended that in the post-2020 years the BFUG should reflect on if and how address the issues perceived as major obstacles to the development of L&T, i.e. the need for adequate resources, and the lack of recognition.

The discussion underlined that governments should invite HEIs to participate and cooperate and share experiences and good practices for the enhancement of L&T. Incentives should be offered to institutions, in terms of funds and recognition of academic prestige, as well as to individuals, in terms of recognition for professional career and pay. Finally, the opportunity was underlined to enlarge present opportunities within the EHEA, and to foresee support for the enhancement of L&T also to the non-EU countries.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Hearing_5.pdf

9. Discussion on messages from the hearings to be included into recommendations

10. Summary & Closing of day 1

A wrap-up was made by the Netherlands Co-chair, clustering the inputs from the hearings and discussions into the following: recommendations to governments to address the issue of L&T; the development of networks for cooperation on L&T; strategies and tools to make L&T attractive and profitable for both institutions and individuals.

10 April 2019

1. Summary of Day 1

The EURASHE Co-chair opened the morning session by recalling the presentations and discussions of Day 1 and summarising their core outcomes. As a final point, he stressed the idea that the culture of L&T needs to grow and spread out in HEIs, and that a task for the Group is to address recommendations to the ministers on how to build a supportive environment and develop effective tools to make this culture grow.

Participants agreed to bring forward the discussion on the topics foreseen as final points in the Agenda, so the Netherlands Co-chair introduced the “AG2 Roadmap towards the Rome Communiqué”. The Co-chairs proposed to create a drafting committee according to some criteria: a group of maximum 6-7 actors; a final document of 4-5 pages with annexes, offering clear principles, recommendations, and suggestions for issues to deal with in the post-2020 period. It was proposed to discuss with the AG1 on Social Dimension and the TPG C on Quality Assurance the option to create a link among the respective documents (e.g. via a common preamble) and avoid overlappings. A first Draft should be ready in early May.

The ESU representative proposed to submit to the XX Bologna Process Anniversary (Bologna, 24-25 June 2019) the abstract of a paper on the results of the work of the AG2. The paper should focus on principles, guidelines and recommendations on the topic of L&T, presenting the preliminary results of the work of the Group. Since the next AG2 meeting is scheduled after the Bologna event, it was proposed to organise a meeting in Bologna just after the Celebration event; subject to a positive feedback from the Secretariat on the logistical feasibility, the 26th of June was proposed as the date for the meeting. It was recommended to meet in Bologna the Co-chairs of AG1 to develop connections between the two Groups’ workplans and documents.

The EC representative informed that on November 7th 2019 the Commission will hold a presentation of the European Universities Initiative that would represent a further occasion to meet, and suggested also to launch a written consultation. It was suggested to involve the Teachers’ Unions in the future consultations.

The Co-chairs informed that the roadmap will be retraced and updated; a draft document will be prepared by them and uploaded on the Group's Google Docs area, for discussion and agreement. The revised roadmap will be distributed before the next meeting.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Roadmap.pdf

2. Hearing 6 & Discussion

Sophie Touzé, President of Open Education Consortium, gave the presentation “Openness the skill to succeed”. Open Education was introduced as a community of people collaborating to open contents, pedagogy, technologies and rules to take care of educational resources (including OER, data, softwares). Resistances to go digital (fixed mindset), and how to overcome them (growth mindset) were discussed, and benefits and value propositions of Open Education were introduced. The presentation offered some final recommendations, including Open Education as a principle, open access as an approach by default, HE as a common goods, open curriculum for students, and openness as a human skill (against artificial intelligence and robots) to be protected.

The discussion underlined the fact that Open Education is relevant for teaching enhancement, (e.g. collaboration, evidence-based teaching, etc.), continuous training and for personalised learning. It was also noted that educational resources as such are not enough without a process and the actors of Open Education.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Hearing_6

3. Hearing 7 & Discussion

Sanna Vahtivuori-Hänninen (in videoconference connection) and the Jonna Korhonen (Finland) gave the presentation “Teacher Education Policy and Teacher Education Forum-Reforming the Teacher Education Together”.

The main goals of the reform were: to create a system encouraging continuous learning; to implement a new pedagogy and a new learning environment. The principles of the Reform are: encouraging students to build individual and personalised learning paths; support to the teachers' lifelong professional development; developing a favourable environment for teachers' mutual support and tutoring; establishing an Innovation Centre in the National Agency for Education, to promote international projects and to share best practices; improvement of the teaching profession based on autonomy, respect, trust and good working conditions. The Finnish National Teacher Education Development Programme was introduced, including the implementation of a strategy for teacher education, and support to pilot projects and inter-institutional collaboration. Finally the Finnish Roadmap for Higher Education and Research until the 2030s was introduced, based on five interconnected development programmes aimed at driving a systemic change.

The discussion underlined the importance of a student-centred process and the need to find instruments to ensure their active role. The strategic relevance of the teaching enhancement was stressed once again, and ways of enhancing autonomous thinking and development in the (initial and continuous) teacher training process were discussed.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Hearing_7

4. Hearing 8 & Discussion

The France Co-chair Philippe Lalle gave the presentation “Competency Framework for Teacher-Researchers”, based on the French Government project, started in 2014. The

rationale behind the project was to make available for teaching the same tools already existing for research, including financial bonus for the teacher-researchers most involved in pedagogical training, and sabbatical leave for facilitating the development of innovations in Learning and Teaching. The aims were: to develop a Competency framework for both teachers and researchers in order to ease their academic career progression after recruitment; to create pedagogical programmes for the training of (new) teacher researchers; to develop a tool for HEIs to recognise the value of investment in teaching. The context in which the project was developed and the working method were explained; the activities foreseen, and the sets of competences expected were also detailed.

The discussion focused on the difficulties arisen in France, as well as in other countries (e.g. Slovenia) that developed similar frameworks. The conclusion was that it might be useful to develop similar projects in other countries, since competence frameworks can be very useful, but it is essential to involve all stakeholders in the decision and in the process, as well as to be very careful in using a to-down approach, and to create legal constraints.

AG2_Learning_Teaching_2_Hearing_8

5. Discussion on messages from the hearings to be included into recommendations

The Co-chairs invited the participants to a *tour de table* to discuss the hearings' feedback, and to collect relevant inputs to define guidelines and recommendations to be included in the final document of the Group. All participants gave their feedback, and the Co-chairs proposed to collect and list in a coherent and systematic way the inputs coming from this exercise. This contribution will be a basis for the work of the Drafting Committee.

6. Agreements and decisions

Part of the discussions on these topics was anticipated at the beginning of Day 2 (see paragraph 1). After collecting the manifestations of interest of the members to be part of the Drafting Committee, its composition was finally agreed: Austria, Finland, Germany, Holy See, European Commission, ESU, EUA and the Co-chairs. It was agreed that a small group will take the lead to write drafts, with the rest of the group reacting for consultation and contribution, and most of the drafting process should be online.

7. Meeting conclusions

The Co-chairs thanked the French Ministry of Education for hosting the meeting and for an excellent organization. They also thanked participants, expressing satisfaction with their proactive attitude, allowing very positive outcomes.