

BFUGB12 4
13 June 2006

BOLOGNA PROCESS: CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LONDON MAY 2007

Introduction

1. This paper invites the Board to comment on the suggested composition and outline timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group. It also invites the Board to offer initial views on possible priorities for the London Communiqué.

Membership of the Communiqué Drafting Group

2. We agreed at the Manchester BFUG that membership of the Communiqué Drafting Group would broadly follow the principles underpinning membership of the previous drafting group and would be relatively small.

3. On this basis, the group would comprise the Troika in place during the drafting period – Finland, Germany and Portugal, as well as the UK as the host country. Since this results in a rather north western bias, we could consider including Latvia, as Chair of the Stocktaking Working Group, and possibly Georgia, as a new non EU Board member. This would result in a manageably sized group.

Outline timetable for Communiqué Drafting Group

4. Following the last BFUG, the Secretariat had an initial meeting with Germany to discuss the outline timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group. An outline timetable, based on that discussion, is attached for comment at Annex A.

Possible priorities for the London Communiqué

5. Based on the priorities set in previous Communiqués, and the Bergen Communiqué in particular, there are a number of possible topics areas for inclusion in the London Communiqué. They are listed below.

6. There is, obviously, a need for prioritisation of the possible topics. This will be discussed at the Board meeting in September and then with the full BFUG at the October meeting. However, initial comments from the Board would be helpful in influencing preparations for the London conference over the summer.

Possible priorities for inclusion in the London Communiqué include:

- Partnership
- Higher education and research
- Social dimension (inc widening access and improving graduation rates)
- Mobility
- External dimension (including attractiveness)
- Quality assurance
- Implementation of national frameworks for qualifications

- Recognition degrees and study periods
- Three cycle degree system
- Employability of Bachelor graduates
- Lifelong learning
- Creating opportunities for flexible learning paths
- Recognition of prior learning
- Preparing for 2010

Update on preparation for London conference

7. Project planning for the London event is progressing well:
 - a local steering group has been set up
 - an outline programme has been prepared (attached at Annex B)
 - an initial list of guest speakers has been identified
 - a conference organiser has been appointed
 - options for the social programme have been identified
 - some Departmental funding has been set aside for the event
 - a bid for EC funding has been submitted (currently on the reserve list).

Conclusion

8. The Board is invited to:
 - comment on the suggested composition and outline timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group
 - offer initial views on possible priorities for the London Communiqué
 - note the progress being made for the London event.

Bologna Secretariat
2 June 2006

LONDON COMMUNIQUÉ DRAFTING GROUP

Outline timetable

Drafting Meetings	Group	BFUG/Board meetings	Purpose
		13 June 2006 Board	Discuss composition of Drafting Group and outline timetable Initial discussion of possible priorities
		1 September 2006 Board	Discussion of possible priorities
		12-13 October 2006 BFUG	Discussion of possible priorities
w/c 6 November 2006			Consider feedback from BFUG and develop draft
			Circulate draft to Drafting Group for comment (w/c 20 November)
w/c 27 November/early December 2006			Consider and agree draft for circulation to Board
		23 January 2007 Board	Discuss draft in preparation for circulation to BFUG
		1-2 March 2006 BFUG (to be brought forward by one day if possible)	Discuss draft
Early March 2007			Discuss feedback from BFUG and prepare revised draft for email circulation to BFUG
Early April 2007			Consider feedback from email circulation to BFUG and prepare revised draft
			Circulate revised draft to BFUG for comments
		17-18 April 2007 BFUG	Agree final draft
		16 May 2007 BFUG (if required)	
		17-18 May 2007 Ministerial Conference	Agree London Communiqué

Annex B

Bologna Process – Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education London May 2007

Timetable	
16 May	Arrival/informal reception
17 May: first session	Welcome speeches – from UK, Germany, and European Commissioner etc. Possible keynote speech: Bologna in a global context
17 May : second session	A session on progress made since Bergen including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktaking • Trends V • Bologna through Student Eyes <p>A summary report from the Secretariat covering outcomes from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification Framework Working Group • Social Dimension and Data on Staff and Student Mobility Working Group • External Dimension Working Group • EUA project on doctoral studies • ENQA project on European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies
Lunch	
17 May: third session	Panel discussions:
17 May: fourth session	Initial discussion of Communiqué
Formal conference dinner for all delegates	
18 May: fifth session	Feedback from the panel discussions.
18 May: sixth session	Final discussion and agreement of the Communiqué
18 May seventh session	Closing remarks from UK, Germany, EC and next host
Photocall	
Informal lunch	