Joint programmes
The relevance of Bologna

European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

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Bologna process

- Ongoing process
  - Sorbonne 1998 – Bologna 1999 – Yerevan 2015 – Paris 2018
- 47 countries
- + the European Commission

Consultative members

- UNESCO
- EUA (European Universities Association)
- ESU (European Students Union)
- EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education)
- ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)
- Education International (Federation of unions for teachers and education employees)
- Business Europe (Represents 34 national business federations/organisations)

EHEA 'launched' March 2010. Objectives

- **Enhancing quality and relevance of Higher Education** -
    - *Innovation in **student-centred learning***
    - *Exploiting digital technologies for learning and teaching*
    - *Stronger link between teaching, learning and **research** at **all** study levels*
    - *Incentives for activities that develop creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship*
    - ***Transparent descriptions of learning outcomes and workload**, flexible learning paths and appropriate teaching and assessment methods*
    - ***Involve students**, as full members of the academic community, as well as other stakeholders, **in curriculum design and in quality assurance***

Fostering employability

- 'At the end of each study cycle, graduates possess competences suitable for entry into the labour market which also enable them to develop the new competences they may need for their employability throughout their working lives.'

Social inclusion

- *Widen participation*
- *Improve permeability and articulation between different education sectors*
- *Enhance the social dimension*
- *Improve gender balance and widen opportunities for access and completion*
- ***International mobility**, for students from disadvantaged backgrounds*
- *Mobility opportunities for students and staff from conflict areas*
- *Promote the mobility of teacher education students*

Implementing structural reforms

- *Common degree structures*
- *Credit system*
- *Quality Assurance*
- *Mobility*
- *Joint Programmes and degrees*
- *Recognition of qualifications*
- *Recognition of prior learning*

EHEA – Bologna 'tools'

- Qualification Frameworks
- ECTS
- ESG - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- European approach for Quality Assurance of joint programmes
- EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register)
- Diploma Supplement
- *ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education)

Qualification Frameworks:
Compare, understand, recognise

Framework for qualifications of the EHEA. Four levels/cycles:

- **Short** first cycle - within or linked to the First cycle c.120 ECTS credits
- **First** cycle 180 -240 ECTS credits
- **Second** cycle 90-120 ECTS credits, minimum of 60 at 2nd cycle level
- **Third** cycle (*no credits proposed*)
- Uses Dublin descriptors described in terms of:
    - *knowledge and understandin;*
    - *applying knowledge and understanding*
    - *making judgements*
    - *communications skills*
    - *learning skills*

EQF - **European Qualifications Framework**

- **Eight** levels
- Levels 5 -8 correspond to the FQ-EHEA cycles
- Described in terms of*:*
  - *learning outcomes*
  - *knowledge*
  - *skills and competences*

National qualification Frameworks

- 22 countries have implemented qualifications frameworks
- 14 are close to completion
- Most are in the process of implementation

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

New ECTS guide May 2015

- ECTS - credit system in virtually all EHEA countries
- Learning outcomes and associated workload of a full-time academic year or equivalent - **60** ECTS credits
- Supporting documents (*quality framework*):
  - Course catalogue
  - Learning agreement – study and work placement
  - Transcript
  - Recognition
- ECTS grade transfer (statistical profile)
- Egracons - European Grade Conversion System

ESG (revised May 2015)

- Standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance
- All HE (including transnational and cross-border) regardless of mode of study or place of delivery

Sections to note**: 1.2 Design and approval of programmes**
Standard:

- Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes
- The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes
- The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and **refer to the correct level** of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

Guidelines: Programmes

- Are designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes
- Are **designed by involving students and other stakeholders** in the work
- Benefit from **external expertise and reference points**
- Reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe
- Are designed so that they enable smooth student progression
- Define the expected student workload, e.g. in ECTS
- **Include well-structured placement opportunities** where appropriate
- Are subject to a formal institutional approval process.

1.3 **Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**

Standard

- Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that **encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process,** and that the assessment of students reflects this approach

1.4 **Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**

Standard

- Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

1.9 **On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes**

Standard

- Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Quality Assurance of joint programmes – May 2015

Joint programmes are a hallmark of the EHEA. The European Approach:

- Eases external quality assurance
- Removes an obstacle to the development of joint programmes by setting standards based on the agreed tools of the EHEA without applying additional national criteria
- Facilitates integrated approaches to quality assurance that reflect and mirror their joint character
- Cooperating institutions select an agency from the EQAR-register for a single evaluation/ accreditation of the joint programme.
- Result is to be accepted in all EHEA countries
- Dependent on the national legal framework, the external quality assurance decision should come into force or be recognised in **all** countries where the programme is offered

- If cooperating Higher education institutions are subject to **external quality assurance at institutional level** only and have "self-accrediting" status, they may use the European Approach for joint internal approval and monitoring processes for their joint programmes (according to ESG 1.2 & 1.9)
- In these cases no additional external evaluation or accreditation procedures at the programme level are necessary
- The European Approach may be used for joint programmes offered by higher education institutions within and outside the EHEA
- Institutions from non-EHEA countries should check whether their national authorities would recognise the decision of an EQAR-registered agency

Diploma Supplement

- Graduates in all EHEA countries have the right to receive the Diploma Supplement automatically, free and in a major European language
- Designed to help (but not guarantee) recognition.
- UK has incorporated the D S in the HEAR
- Describes the knowledge and skills acquired by holders of higher education degrees
- Provides a standardised description of nature, level, context, content and status of the studies
- Produced by the HEIs according to standards agreed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO

Eight sections:

- The holder of the qualification
- The qualification
- Level and function
- Contents and results gained
- Certification
- Details of the national HE system
- Additional relevant information

Doctoral Education

Extract from 'Structural reforms working group report' to the BFUG 2015

Third cycle qualifications. ***Higher education institutions*** are encouraged to:

- Design and conduct third cycle programs and provision which ensure that they develop **competences that qualify third cycle graduates for a broad range of employment**, within as well as outside of academia and research more broadly

- Describe both subject specific and generic competences doctoral candidates are expected to acquire clearly and understandably and in such a way that the competences specific to third cycle qualifications are clearly demonstrated in the research

- Third cycle programmes and provision should, as appropriate, include the development of entrepreneurial competences and provide good career guidance

Public authorities and higher education institutions should:

- Provide doctoral candidates with the possibility to include a **stay abroad** and/or a **traineeship, work placement** or similar experience by adapting them to the research-based approach of their studies, *inter alia* by providing adequate **mobility opportunities** for doctoral candidates

- Provide transparent and understandable information on the competences and skills achieved by doctoral graduates to a wide academic and non-academic audience

- Public authorities should provide incentives to higher education institutions to establish organizational frameworks (e.g. doctoral schools) aiming at upgrading the generic/transferable skills of doctoral candidates, stimulating inter-disciplinarity, enhancing international cooperation and cooperation with businesses and non-profit and public organizations.

The relevance of Bologna
and the
European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Thank you