

BFUGB13 5

1 September 2006

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

Introduction

1. This paper invites the Board to offer any further comments on the suggested timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group. It also invites the Board to offer views on the content of the London Communiqué and to note progress being made for the London event.

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. It was agreed at the June Board that, subject to final agreement at BFUG, 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 resulted in a rather north western bias, we agreed that Latvia, as Chair of the Stocktaking Working Group, and Georgia, as a new non EU Board member should also be invited to take part. This would result in a manageably sized group.

Outline timetable for Communiqué Drafting Group

4. Following comments made at the June Board meeting, we have revised the suggested timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group. The outline timetable is attached for any further comments at Annex A.

Contents of 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.

- 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; Creating opportunities for flexible learning paths; Recognition of prior learning
- Three cycle degree system
 - Employability of Bachelor graduates
- Lifelong learning

6. We suggest that the London Communiqué should focus on the progress made against the priorities set out in the Bergen Communiqué, closely following the agreed Work Programme for 2005-2007. This would result in the Communiqué including short sections on: the External Dimension; the Social Dimension and staff and student mobility (including portable grants and loans); the further development of doctoral programmes; the proposed European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies; the implementation of the overarching qualifications framework; and Stocktaking.

7. In addition, the Communiqué will set priorities for 2007-2009. We suggest that these priorities should be largely determined by the outcome of the current stocktaking exercise, as the main focus of effort over the coming period will be to implement Bologna reforms at national and institutional level.

8. We would welcome any comments the Board might have, in order to inform the background paper we will prepare for the BFUG discussion about the contents of the London Communiqué.

Update on preparation for London conference

9. Project planning for the London event is progressing well:

- An initial invitation letter has been sent to all 45 Ministers, copied to BFUG for information
- the local steering group is overseeing preparations for the event
- an outline programme has been prepared (attached at Annex B)
- plans are in hand for the UK and German Ministers to meet in the autumn
- an approach has been made to a guest speaker
- a website has been set up and a conference organiser is in place
- options for the social programme have been identified
- some Departmental funding has been set aside for the event
- negotiations over funding are continuing with the EC.

Conclusion

10. The Board is invited to:

- offer any further comments on the suggested timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group
- offer views on the possible contents of the London Communiqué
- note the progress being made for the London event.

Bologna Secretariat
16 August 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	Open discussion on the contents of the Communiqué: consider and agree 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 (allowing all to see comments made)
		23 January 2007 Board	Discuss draft in preparation for circulation to BFUG
		5-6 March 2006 BFUG	Discuss draft
Early March 2007			Discuss feedback from BFUG and prepare revised draft for email circulation to BFUG (allowing all to see comments made)
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 Communiqué	London
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Annex B

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

Timetable	Timings	
16 May		Arrival/informal reception
17 May: first session	9 00 – 10 30	Welcome speeches – from UK, Germany, European Commissioner (10 minutes each) Keynote speech: Bologna in a global context: future challenges and opportunities for the EHEA. (30 minutes) Short Q&A if time permits
Coffee	10 30 - 11 00	
17 May : second session	11 00 – 12 30	A session on progress made since Bergen including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktaking (15 minutes each) • Trends V • Bologna through Student Eyes • General progress report (from the Secretariat covering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions from all consultative members • 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) Open discussion (30 minutes)
Lunch	12 30 – 14 00	
17 May: third session	14 00 – 15 30	Panel discussions: 6 groups of 50: panels to comprise: a Minister; a Rector; a student; a business representative; and an academic from out with the EHEA; a chair (from the consultative member organisations) and a rapporteur.
Coffee	15 30 - 16 00	
17 May: fourth session	16 00 - 18 00	Feedback from the panel discussions and initial discussion of Communiqué
Conference dinner	19 30	
18 May: fifth session	10 00 – 12 00	Final discussion and agreement of the Communiqué – Note option to start at 9 am if initial discussion suggests more time may be required
18 May seventh session	12 00 – 12 45	Closing remarks from UK, Germany, EC and next host (10 minutes each)
Photocall	12 45 – 13 00	
Informal lunch	13 00	