

BFUG9 7

12-13 October 2006

BOLOGNA PROCESS: LONDON COMMUNIQUÉ AND UPDATE ON CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LONDON MAY 2007

Introduction

1. This paper asks BFUG to agree the composition and timetable for the London Communiqué Drafting Group. It invites BFUG to offer initial views on the priorities for the Communiqué. It also asks BFUG to note the 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. Subject to final agreement by BFUG, the Board is recommending that the Drafting Group should comprise the Troika in place during the drafting period – Finland, Germany and Portugal, as well as the UK as the host country. The Board also recommends 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 and October Board meetings and drawing on the experience of the Bergen Communiqué Drafting Group, the suggested timetable for the Communiqué Drafting Group is attached at Annex A.

Contents of the London Communiqué

5. We would welcome comments from BFUG on areas for inclusion in the Communiqué, bearing in mind that the Communiqué should be both ambitious and realistic. Experience of the previous Stocktaking exercise and our knowledge and understanding of current developments suggests that there is still a considerable amount of work to be done at national and institutional level, before the EHEA will be fully realised.

6. We therefore suggest that the London Communiqué should be short and 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. Based on the comments from BFUG, the Communiqué Drafting Group will develop a first draft for discussion at the January Board, for circulation to the full BFUG thereafter.

9. During the Communiqué Drafting process, we would urge BFUG members to keep their Ministers in touch with developments, to ensure a positive and constructive discussion when they meet in London in May.

Update on preparation for London conference

10. 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)
- a website has been set up and a conference organiser is in place
- Departmental funding has been set aside for the event
- EC funding has also been secured.

Panel sessions

11. We intend to organise panel sessions for all those taking part in the conference, during which delegates will be asked to discuss the key characteristics of a strong, dynamic, diverse, coherent and attractive EHEA. Discussion will be led by a panel drawn from conference delegates comprising: a Minister; a Rector; a student; a business representative; and possibly an academic from outwith the EHEA. A chair and a rapporteur will be appointed to each group of 40-60 conference delegates. We will seek assistance from BFUG members, particularly consultative members, to identify conference delegates to lead the discussion in the panel sessions.

Secretariat report

12. The Secretariat is considering preparing a short report for publication on the Bologna Secretariat website, giving an overview of the work of the BFUG over the period 2005-2007. It might broadly follow the format of the "From Berlin to Bergen - General Report of the Work of BFUG" prepared by the Norwegian Secretariat. The EC and the consultative members would be invited to provide contributions, detailing how they have supported the development of the EHEA between 2005-2007. Country members might also be given the opportunity of contributing to the report, as a means of sharing experience of implementing Bologna reforms.

Conclusion

13. BFUG is invited to:

- agree the composition of, and timetable for, the London Communiqué Drafting Group
- offer views on the possible priorities for the London Communiqué
- note the progress being made for the London event.

Bologna Secretariat
September 2006

**ANNEX A
LONDON COMMUNIQUÉ DRAFTING GROUP**

Drafting Group Meetings	BFUG/Board meetings	Purpose
	12-13 October 2006 BFUG	Open discussion on the contents of the Communiqué: consider and agree possible priorities; agree composition and timetable for Drafting Group
10 November 2006, Berlin		Consider feedback from BFUG and develop draft
		Circulate draft to Drafting Group for comment (w/c 20 November)
8 December 2006, London		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
7 March 2007, Berlin		Discuss feedback from BFUG and prepare revised draft for email circulation to BFUG (allowing all to see comments made)
28 March 2007, Riga		Consider feedback from email circulation to BFUG and prepare revised draft
		Circulate revised draft to BFUG for comments
	3 April 2007 – Board (optional)	
	17-18 April 2007 BFUG	Agree final draft
	17-18 May 2007 Ministerial Conference	Agree London Communiqué

**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
Conf dinner	19 30	
18 May: fifth session	9 30 - 10 00	Plenary session – additional speaker (to be confirmed)
18 May: sixth session	10 00 – 12 00	Final discussion and agreement of the Communiqué
18 May seventh session	12 00 – 12 45	Closing remarks from next host Forward look – from UK
Photocall	12 45 – 13 00	
Informal lunch	13 00	