INTERNATIONAL BOLOGNA SEMINAR

MISSENDEN ABBEY UK 14-15 MAY 2009

IMPLEMENTING BOLOGNA IN PRACTICE

Participants

Tuning and Bologna Experts from five countries (Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, UK) participated. A list of participants is attached (Annex 1).

Background

Each of the National Agencies prepared a paper outlining current policy in Life Long Learning; Student Mobility; Doctoral programmes. These briefing papers provided valuable background information for the seminar. Copies of the briefing papers are attached (Annex 2).

Objectives

The seminar was designed to explore the perspectives of Bologna and Tuning Experts on Life Long Learning; student study and work mobility; doctoral programmes. It focused on the key issues of recognition, credit and assessment, drawing on the insights and experience of Tuning and Bologna Experts, to develop a shared understanding and to identify key topics on which Bologna and Tuning Experts should focus in the implementation of the Bologna Process.

Format

Opening Plenary

The opening Plenary session introduced the seminar objectives.

Life Long Learning – Graeme Roberts, United Kingdom
Mobility – Robert Wagenaar, The Netherlands
Doctoral degrees – Maria Ziolek, Poland

The three presentations addressed each topic and the challenges which it presented as a basis for discussion in the working groups.
Working Groups

Participants were divided into three small groups, each with a rapporteur and facilitator.

Sessions 1 and 2 were devoted to Life Long Learning; Sessions 3 and 4 to study and work mobility; and Session 5 to doctoral programmes.

For each work group session, broad headings and issues for discussion were circulated (attached – Annex 3) and facilitators gave a brief introduction and helped to structure discussion.

In the final Plenary session, there was a brief report from the work groups – each of the rapporteurs having been asked to identify two or three main points and/or recommendations for further action.

Plenary Presentations

A copy of the PowerPoint slides and supplementary notes from the Plenary presentation can be found on the British Council website at: http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus-events-bologna-conference.htm

Key points:

Life Long Learning

- The Leuven Communiqué has emphasised the need for greater focus on Life Long Learning in order to increase diversity both in the curriculum and the student body and to help build a more socially cohesive and equitable society.

- Currently less than 2% of Higher Education entrants are over twenty-five years old.

- Life Long Learning requires flexible learning pathways and an understanding that the recognition of prior learning must be learner centred and focus on what learners have achieved i.e. the learning outcomes of their experience and prior learning.

- In implementing an effective Life Long Learning policy, National Qualification Frameworks, with clear level descriptors and progression pathways are of critical importance.
Mobility

- The Leuven Communiqué has set an ambitious target of 20% of graduates with a mobility experience (study or work placement) by 2020.

- The role of the academic teacher in promoting mobility needs greater recognition, coupled with an emphasis on the transparency of learning outcomes in curriculum information so that mobile students and the sending institutions have effective information for recognition purposes.

- The incorporation of a mobility experience as the norm requires a more flexible approach to curriculum and curriculum design utilising the understanding generated by the Tuning Project.

Doctoral Degrees

- The Leuven Communiqué has emphasised the need to increase the number of doctoral candidates and encourage more doctoral mobility and joint programmes.

- Any consideration of doctoral work must emphasise the need for ‘excellence’ while, at the same time, recognising that this area of University study is changing in response to the growing need in the wider society for high-level (third cycle) transferrable skills. The quality of doctoral supervision and assessment and the training of academic staff for this purpose should be given greater priority.

- Doctoral programme developments in a number of countries emphasise the need for flexibility and sharing good practice in relation to the Bologna third cycle.

Work Group Discussion

Life Long Learning

While recognising that “Life Long Learning involves obtaining qualifications, extending knowledge and understanding, gaining new skills and competences or enriching personal growth, Life Long Learning implies that qualifications may be obtained through flexible learning paths, including part-time studies as well as work-based routes.” (Leuven Communiqué April 2009).
Within the terms of this broad objective – Higher Education Institutions, Faculties, Departments, individual academics – need to focus on precisely what they understand, in their context, the delivery of the Leuven objectives will mean.

Outreach to the wider community, catering for a more diverse range of learners, with different backgrounds and expectations, may require specialist ‘outreach’ units. At the same time, it needs the engagement of the whole academic community and probably requires that academics (teachers) undertake further professional development to help them work with and teach effectively in more diverse, social, cultural and academic groups, recognising the different needs of students.

A challenge to the development of an effective Life Long Learning strategy in many countries is the basis on which funding is allocated since it is geared to full-time students. Mature students, part-time students and those following flexible learning routes require different and often additional funding mechanisms.

While there are good examples of the recognition of prior learning, they tend to be piecemeal, are not widespread and not part of a coherent integrated strategy.

The recognition of prior learning and experience (formal and non-formal) is vital to encourage a wider, more diverse community to engage in Higher Education. This will require a better understanding of National Qualification Frameworks and their level descriptors and the centrality of learning outcomes (achievements) in the recognition of all learning.

In their dialogue with stakeholders and colleagues Bologna and Tuning Experts will need to promote appreciation of the interrelationship between recognition of prior learning, National Qualification Frameworks, level descriptors and learning outcomes.

A strategic approach to Life Long Learning requires – a more flexible approach to curriculum design; a review and “modernisation” of programmes and their delivery modes for full, part-time and distance learners, making effective use of information and communication technology and the most up-to-date learning and teaching software. Block teaching, two or three days, weekends, Summer Schools, distance learning – all need to be part of the strategy. The scale and diversity of the challenge requires national strategies complemented by institutional strategies reflecting the specific mission of each institution.
Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development is now a requirement in many fields and in most countries. For example in Poland, teachers are obliged to have Continuing Professional Development. However, the nature of such ‘continuing’ development is that with the speed of change, courses tend to have a short “shelf life” which, unless courses can be self-funding, is a serious deterrent. They are also labour intensive and potentially riskier so that staff are consequently often reluctant to participate.

Closer cooperation with employers to develop work-based projects, which can be recognised and which are relevant to the workplace, can be mutually rewarding. At the same time it must be understood that recipients of professional development and those who fund them are likely to be increasingly quality conscious so that relevance, accuracy, quality and focus on outcomes is paramount.

While there is an increasing volume of continuing professional development in the workplace, through professional associations and through Higher Education Institutions, much of it tends not to be awarded credit. In this context, reference to the National Qualification Framework level descriptors can enhance the value of the professional development and its assessment, and provide building blocks for the award of higher level qualifications (second and third cycle). More attention should be given to this aspect of CPD.

It could be that current course regulations for the award of qualifications at national and institutional level are an obstacle to a more dynamic and flexible approach to CPD.

An appreciation of the need for Life Long Learning – Continuing Professional Development should be an aspect of the student experience so that an increasing number return to Higher Education at later stages in their career, both to seek recognition of their experience/learning and to build on this in securing further second and third cycle qualifications.

Mobility

“In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad”. (Leuven Communiqué April 2009).

While the advantages and benefits of study and/or work placement mobility are well documented, it is evident that they are either not sufficiently promoted or that the counter arguments or obstacles are perceived as more powerful for the majority of students.
A variety of reasons for the relatively low rate of mobility can be identified:

- Students perceive the mobility experience as more costly, particularly since many now need part-time employment to help fund their study.

- Widening access means that increasing numbers of students do not have the social or cultural support and encouragement to undertake mobility. For them leaving the support of home, friends and their HEI is perceived to be threatening.

- Many students lack skills in another language and this is presented as a reason for not taking advantage of the opportunities for mobility.

- Concern at the possible impact on their final qualification, if the credits from the host institution are not recognised or if they are awarded low grades, or if they fail is another suggested reason.

Many of these perceived concerns might be overcome through more enthusiastic academic support, the dissemination of the positive experience of mobile students, and effective and repeated dissemination of information about opportunities for mobility.

Students with disabilities and social/family commitments – particularly mature and part-time students – face different obstacles and their needs must be addressed by different measures.

In promoting the benefits of a mobility experience, more attention should be paid to specific/different benefits within each of the Bologna cycles and for each subject area. These include – access to unique facilities, specialist units, internationally renowned teachers and researchers, courses not available in the home institution, a radically different or new perspective on the subject and centres of excellence.

Integrated (compulsory) mobility periods encourage students to prepare for the mobility experience and to ‘take it in their stride’ (i.e. they do not appear to be deterred by the ‘barriers’ identified above). This may suggest that more widespread and effective integration of mobility in the curriculum would encourage more students to be mobile.

If ‘mobility windows’ are to become the norm, then a review of the curriculum in all subjects to increase flexibility will be essential. Such mobility windows should be thought of as the norm not only in first cycle programmes, but also in second and third cycle.

Academic staff need to be ‘engaged’ since they are effective advocates for mobility and are responsible for developing the curriculum. They may need the incentive of a national initiative (such as in Norway) and an institutional, strategic approach, in order
to be able to carry through curriculum reform. They will also need to be recognised as mobility 'champions'.
The European Commission “ranking” project should ensure that mobility is an element in ranking. The Commission/Ministries/Institutions should promote mobility prizes and mobility labels to increase the profile of mobility and encourage all those whose commitment is essential for success.

More use should be made of intensive programmes for students for whom longer periods of mobility are impractical for social or personal reasons.

Flexible mobility arrangements, particularly in the third cycle should be encouraged.

An increase in teacher and administrative staff mobility will be a key element in promoting a ‘mobility culture’ A strategic approach at Institutional, Faculty and Departmental level, is essential so that teachers and administrators appreciate that, for professional purposes, such mobility is essential and will be recognised.

If mobility is to be large-scale and successful, students must be guaranteed full academic recognition. This implies that ECTS will be effectively and correctly used for transfer of credits and that programmes of study, course units and modules, provide transparent information on intended learning outcomes, assessment and assessment criteria.

While there is ongoing debate on whether an adequate mobility period can be achieved in a three-year first cycle degree or a one calendar year Masters programme, it is recognised that with more flexible curriculum; with integrated mobility; credit transparency; learning outcomes and associated assessment and assessment criteria; these concerns can be allayed. Even in professional and vocational areas such as nursing, mobility can be an effective and valuable experience, fully integrated into the final qualification.

The challenge of large-scale mobility requires institutional commitment, flexible curriculum and professional and administrative support to manage the logistics and ensure recognition of the needs of students as individuals.

**Work Placement Mobility**

Many of the issues relating to study mobility apply with equal force to work placement mobility. The main challenge with work placements is finding sufficient suitable, quality placements. This may be an increasing challenge in the current economic situation. This might be addressed by a flexible approach, utilising voluntary and charitable organisations, placements in schools for students other than language students.
placements in Higher Education Institutions as well as conventional commercial and industrial placements.
The interest of students in work placements is growing in all subject areas and the experience of institutions and departments with a tradition of integrated work placements should be widely disseminated. This would help to address perceived difficulties in the allocation of credits; assessment and whether this should be graded; and the need for monitoring visits. If the scale of work placements is to increase substantially, new ways of tackling these issues will need to be found. A novel approach to assessment and grading is to involve the student, either in self-assessment or assessment of others. This will be facilitated if there are transparent, agreed, intended outcomes and assessment criteria.

Academic recognition of the work placement and the award of credits is essential and require effective partnership with the placement provider.

Partner Higher Education Institutions may be helpful in finding placements and helping with monitoring visits. Networks and consortia can also be valuable in facilitating and supporting work placements. Erasmus Thematic Networks should be encouraged to be more proactive in negotiating/promoting/supporting work placements.

Employers tend to prefer longer placements. Work placements which straddle the Long Vacation may be a way of securing longer placements, but it is essential that Long Vacation placements should be given academic recognition and awarded credits and require the same rigorous arrangements as placements which take place during the academic year.

**Doctoral Programmes**

“… the number of people with research competences should increase. Doctoral Programmes should provide high quality disciplinary research and increasingly be complemented by interdisciplinary and intersectoral programmes”. (Leuven Communiqué, April 2009)

The traditional understanding of the Doctorate involving independent, original research resulting in a lengthy thesis, which is judged by examiners to be worthy of publication, is still the major route to a Doctorate in many countries.

At the same time there is a growing diversity of routes to the award of a Doctorate. The requirement to undertake high-level coursework is increasing and in some countries (e.g. Norway) is now a requirement. First year coursework followed by two years of research. Professional work-based Doctorates, Doctorates of Business Administration
– all suggest new approaches designed to encourage a substantial increase in third cycle studies.

There is an increasing interest in joint doctoral programmes which has been stimulated by the Erasmus Mundus 2 programme.

The specialist resources required for the development of high-level doctoral courses means that increasing collaboration between Higher Education Institutions, either on a regional or international basis, could be mutually beneficial.

The need to increase the number of people with research competences suggests that the process of diversification of routes towards a doctorate needs to be accelerated. As with other areas of Higher Education, a key word is ‘flexibility’ recognising that while the doctorate will remain a requirement for an academic career, a dynamic, knowledge-based economy needs substantially more people with third cycle skills and competences in all walks of life.

Many academic colleagues may be unaware that mobility programmes such as Erasmus are available for doctoral students. On the other hand, although the number of doctoral students involved in Erasmus mobility is low, there is probably more mobility among doctoral students than is recorded. More use of Erasmus for doctoral students should be encouraged and all doctoral student mobility should be recorded.

While it would be difficult to make an international mobility experience an integral and required part of all doctoral awards, it should be regarded as an expectation and the norm. Such mobility could be for coursework, work placement or research, in each case the learning outcomes need to be specified.

The award of credits for doctorates is an area of debate. There appears to be a consensus that the award of credits for coursework is appropriate, but there is no consensus in relation to the award of credits for research.

With more diversity in the form of doctoral awards, the value of credits and possibly intermediary third cycle qualifications may be increasingly appreciated by institutions and employers. Students who embark on third cycle study on a part-time, continuing professional development basis, are likely to appreciate the award of credits as a recognition of their ongoing achievement which will be portable if they change jobs or countries.

At doctoral level, the relationship with the employment world – industry, commerce and the public sector – should be reinforced both because this could identify additional funding (industry already funds a significant number of doctoral students) and because
it would help to ensure the relevance of doctoral study and learning outcomes (skills and competences) to the employment world.

Since the term “doctoral study” tends to have a fixed connotation, it might be better to refer to ‘third cycle’ studies to emphasise the need for flexibility and new routes towards the award of third cycle qualifications.

In developing more flexible routes to a doctorate, the level descriptors in National Qualification Frameworks are of critical importance.

The process of supervising, assessing and examining third cycle students needs to respond to the changing, diverse and flexible routes for the award of the third cycle qualification. This probably entails staff development and training and a more open and transparent articulation of assessment criteria.

Conclusions

General

The limited number of participants and the opportunity which this provided to work in small groups was generally appreciated. The range and high level of expertise and background which they brought generated high quality discussion and debate. It contributed to the training and understanding of the participants and a commitment to implement the ideas and good practice in the various settings in which they find themselves – institutional, regional, national, European.

Life Long Learning

Although the statements on Life Long Learning in European documents provide important aspirational goals, at national and institutional level they require a more focused definition so that they can be accommodated within national and institutional strategies.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is an integral instrument in encouraging and providing opportunities (new or continuing) for all ages and backgrounds of learners. It is thus essential that a rigorous and transparent approach to the use of RPL should be implemented. It requires an emphasis on flexibility in curriculum planning and development; in teaching and the modes of delivery. Flexibility should not however imply any lack of emphasis on quality. If there is a continuing insistence on the transparency of learning outcomes and achievements it will be possible to be confident in the application of RPL.
There are RPL mechanisms in most countries and Higher Education Institutions with a range of activity and good practice. However, the practice of RPL tends to be manifested in “pockets” and is not integrated in a coherent and strategic approach. Hence, there is an urgent need to focus on a coherent, strategic approach at European, national and particularly institutional level.

While limited resource and funding can be presented as an excuse for inaction, it is perhaps particularly true in the field of Life Long Learning that funding is geared in most countries towards the traditional full-time student. Consequently there is a need for targeted resource and a more flexible approach to the allocation of funding to achieve the ambitious goals.

Flexibility in the application of RPL, the planning and delivery of curricula, and new modes of teaching, are frequently impeded by existing national or institutional regulations. An urgent review of regulations to remove any impediments should be undertaken.

In order to give new impetus to the goals of Life Long Learning and achieve real progress, examples of best practice at European, national and institutional level, particularly in the field of RPL, should be collected. Bologna Experts can be instrumental in promoting this work.

A network of European Higher Education Institutions committed to an effective and imaginative implementation of RPL should be established as a matter of urgency in order to lead the way for the sector throughout the European Higher Education Area.

**Mobility, Study and Work**

While a number of ostensible barriers to mobility can be identified and are no doubt genuine, the overwhelming obstacle is motivational. Students in general do not have a strong sense of the value and benefits of mobility and are not encouraged at institutional level or by academic staff to appreciate that mobility should be regarded as a *sine qua non* of their academic experience.

In order to increase mobility substantially, more programmes of study at first, second and third cycle, should consider integrating mobility in the curriculum – either as planned and structured study and/or work placement – or in the form of a mobility ‘window’.

At institutional, faculty and departmental level, as well as nationally, academic and student champions of mobility should be identified and recognised by their institutions.
These should form ‘mobility’ teams within institutions and between institutions to promote best practice and help to provide the motivational culture which is essential.

At European and national level, incentives for institutions should be provided, in the form of recognition through labels, ‘ranking’, weighting and funding.

Institutions should establish a strategic approach to develop a mobility culture as part of their commitment to internationalisation.

Key to the success of mobility is a commitment to recognition, a transparent approach to the award of credits and a statement of learning outcomes. Flexible curriculum development is also a pre-requisite.

A mobility culture will be embedded if academic and administrative staff participate in mobility, appreciate its importance for students and are actively involved in encouraging and supporting large scale mobility.

In the context of the need to promote doctoral study generally, more emphasis should be placed on mobility for third cycle candidates.

Although it has been a recurring plea since the outset of European mobility programmes, it remains true that some standardisation of semester dates would facilitate mobility.

There is a growing interest among students in work placements, which are generally seen in more positive terms than study mobility, as contributing towards skills for employability. Integrating work placements within the curriculum has been standard practice in a range of disciplines but extending this to all subject areas may require a more flexible curriculum and the use of mobility ‘windows’.

An understanding of the role of placement providers and finding placement providers is a key challenge if the number and quality of placements is to increase.

Establishing intended learning outcomes, awarding credits and assessing work placements requires active collaboration between the provider, the academic and the student. While the bulk of work placements currently take place in first cycle programmes, there are examples of integrated work placements in second and third cycle and these too should be encouraged and developed.

There is a general need to raise awareness among students, academic colleagues and institutions, of the benefits of work placements. To this end National Agencies and HEIs should actively disseminate a diversity of examples of good practice in all subject
areas. Thematic Networks and consortia have an important and valuable role to play in helping to encourage and facilitate work placements.

It must be acknowledged that economic recession and the threat of large scale redundancy pose serious challenges to the extension of work placements. All the stakeholders and particularly the social partners will need to work together to ensure that equitable solutions can be found to sustain work placements and so help to prepare the next generation of graduates with the requisite skills.

**Doctoral Studies**

Debate about the value of allocating credits to third cycle studies will continue but with increasing diversity in third cycle routes to doctorates and more emphasis on high-level coursework and work/practice-based routes, the award of credits, which recognise appropriate blocks of work and which are portable, may become more the norm and valued by students/employers and institutions.

The international nature of research competences reinforces the need to encourage more mobility among third cycle students. Mobility at third cycle should be regarded as the norm rather than the exception. To this end it should be acknowledged that there is a significant amount of unrecorded third cycle mobility and HEIs, appropriate national authorities and the European Commission should seek to record all third cycle mobility.

The status of third cycle candidates – student or employee – varies from country to country for practical and legal reasons. The diversity of routes to a PhD with a growth in modular work-based approaches continues to blur this distinction, but it remains the case that third cycle studies are part of the continuum of University education and training.

The growth in high-level third cycle courses reinforces the potential for regional and international networks offering specialist third cycle courses.

It is evident that there is a need for more people with third cycle qualifications but discussion of the third cycle has largely been contained within the Higher Education community. A wider debate on the third cycle needs to be developed with social partners and with Doctoral candidates.

**Recommendations**

A number of recommendations are incorporated in the Summary above, but in the context of the role of Bologna Experts, the workshop identified the following:
1. That the successful implementation of the recognition of prior learning; effective
continuing professional development; a substantial increase in study and work
mobility; an increasing diversity of third cycle programmes and routes to
doctorates all require a coherent strategic approach and professional structures
within institutions together with a commitment to staff training and development.

2. That Bologna and Tuning Experts in collaboration can make a valuable
contribution to training trainers to accommodate the changes in method and
approach which such a strategic approach will require.

3. That Bologna Experts should draw on the experience and understanding arising
from the Tuning Project in emphasising the centrality of qualifications
frameworks, level descriptors and learning outcomes for the process of the
recognition of prior learning, credit recognition and transfer and the transferrable
skills acquired by third cycle studies.

4. That Bologna Experts should support the development of national and
institutional strategies to develop Life Long Learning, embed a mobility culture
and support the diversification of third cycle studies.

5. That Bologna Experts should help institutions to identify study and work
placement mobility opportunities for the widest range of students, which may
involve a more flexible approach to the form and duration of mobility in all three
cycles.

6. That the European Commission, National Authorities and Bologna Experts,
should seek to identify examples of best practice in the recognition of prior
learning, continuing professional development, study mobility work placement
mobility and doctoral programmes with a view to disseminating this and
contributing towards a more effective implementation of the Bologna goals.

7. That, as a matter of urgency, a European Network of Higher Education
Institutions committed to the implementation of the recognition of prior learning
in a coherent and innovative way, should be established with a commitment to
disseminate best practice.

8. That the European Commission and National Agencies should support further,
targeted workshops on aspects of the Bologna Process involving Bologna and
other relevant experts.

JOHN REILLY
05 June 2009

This project was financially supported by the European Community
ANNEX 1 – DELEGATE LIST

INTERNATIONAL BOLOGNA SEMINAR ‘IMPLEMENTING BOLOGNA IN PRACTICE’

Missenden Abbey Conference Centre, 14 – 15 May 2009

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ANNEX 2 – COUNTRY BRIEFINGS
1. UNITED KINGDOM

Preamble

It must be understood that while there are UK initiatives in each of the areas described below – Life Long Learning, Mobility, Doctoral Programmes – the four countries in the UK and their Devolved Administrations have each adopted policies which, while similar to one another, at the same time reflect the different social, cultural, political and economic environment of each of the countries – England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland.

The comments below are therefore of a general nature but, for the specific approach adopted in each of the countries, it will be necessary to consult sources of information pertaining to each of the countries.

Life Long Learning

The UK Government is committed to a comprehensive view of Life Long Learning and a number of bodies cater for aspects of Life Long Learning. Among them are the Learning and Skills Improvement Service related to the provision of education and training in Further Education, Life Long Learning UK which is an employer-led sector skills Council, and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

Recent government pronouncements on Life Long Learning have been closely associated with the ‘skills’ agenda and with a closer working relationship between education providers and employers.

In Higher Education there is a strong commitment to Life Long Learning reinforced by funding mechanisms and sanctions to widen social participation and encourage mature students into Higher Education.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England has established a number of Life Long Learning networks bringing together Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges. They have been active in curriculum development to facilitate progression and development involving employers and including work-based learning, e-learning and collaborative modules. The Funding Council has also published a study to help these networks develop good practice in personalised learning plans.
The UK Quality Assurance Agency has published guidelines on the accreditation of prior learning – formal and informal – which are used by Higher Education Institutions. Many HEIs have Life Long Learning units and publish on their websites policy in relation to Life Long Learning.

As well as encouraging a wider range of people into Higher Education and supporting the upgrading of skills, Higher Education is active in Continuing Professional Development, training and short courses which are increasingly awarded credit at the appropriate level.

There is a long tradition of part-time study in all three cycles which is a way of helping mature students and those with family commitments to engage in Higher Education programmes leading to appropriate awards.

The largest University in the UK is the Open University which is a distance learning institution but with arrangements with local education providers to host study centres. This is an open-entry, credit-based University which excels in providing Higher Education opportunities for adults and has a student enrolment of 180,000.

**Mobility – Study and Work Placements**

There is no reliable data on the extent of full degree mobility, i.e. students taking first, second, third cycle degrees, outside the UK although there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that in recent years there has been increased interest in applying to study first degrees in USA Ivy League Universities. However, in practice this is not likely to be statistically significant.

Mobility between Higher Education Institutions within the UK is also relatively limited and tends to be for personal or social reasons. In general, UK Higher Education Institutions are helpful and supportive in such cases.

**Credit Mobility**

The UK Government and the Devolved Administrations have been keen to encourage UK credit mobility, i.e. students studying for part of their qualification in another country. In particular, there have been recent initiatives to encourage study in China.

The main destinations for UK credit mobility are the USA and the EU – in the latter case through the Erasmus Programme – although it should be noted that all students of European Languages are expected to spend a year in the country of their language
and many do so on a placement basis, either as Language Assistants or in some other form of work. Outgoing study mobility in 2006/07 was 7,124 and in 2007/08 - 7,525.

In discussing mobility in the context of the UK, it is important to reflect also on inward mobility. The UK Higher Education Institutions welcome large numbers of full degree students from outside the UK and a substantial number of these come from the EU.

The presence of large numbers of international students in UK Higher Education has a significant impact on the social, cultural and academic life of students.

Work Placements

In Science and Engineering and Medicine, work placements have been an integral part of degrees for many years. In general these have tended to be UK based. The Government is encouraging work placements for all students as a means of further fostering skills for employability. Higher Education Institutions are also actively promoting work placement opportunities and are increasingly exploring the possibility of placements for students in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

As part of the commitment to quality, the Quality Assurance Agency has published a Code of Practice on work-based and placement learning setting out precepts for all aspects of such placements.

With the opening up of the Erasmus Programme to work placements, there has been a significant increase in the number of UK students undertaking work placements in the Erasmus partner countries, though it has to be recognised that, in the first wave, a significant proportion of these were Language Assistants.

In 2007/08 there were 2,727 work placement mobile students on the Erasmus programme.

In discussing work placements it is important to recognise that as well as work placements of what might be called a traditional type, there is an increasing development of work-based learning both in first and second cycle. This entails close collaboration with employers and is a further way of raising the skills base of the UK workforce.

Doctoral Programmes

Over the past ten years there has been a range of developments in relation to doctoral study. The Quality Assurance Agency has issued a Code of Practice for Postgraduate
Research Programmes and undertook a survey of the sector in 2006 because of the increasing diversity of doctoral degrees in the UK.

In general, the introduction of high level coursework as the initial part of a doctoral programme has become widespread and a number of Universities agreed to participate in the “New Route PhD” initiative. Practice-based or professional doctorates have become more prevalent. The QAA has defined “professional” doctorates as those “that focus on embedding research in a reflective manner into another professional practice”.

The formal period of study for doctoral degrees is three years and the Research Councils normally make awards of scholarships for three years only. In the case of the New Route PhD the expectation is that students will be registered for four years.

The debate on doctorates has tended to focus on the extent to which a doctorate is a high-level training programme or one which should lead to dissertations/theses “of publishable quality”. There has also been discussion on what is understood by a joint doctoral degree with two basic models – the Co-tutelle (where students are registered simultaneously at two institutions and awarded a degree by each institution) and an integrated joint degree (where the award is made in the name of more than one institution).

Those registered for doctorates in the UK are normally regarded as students, which exempts them from various tax requirements – national and local. However, while the majority of those studying for a doctorate have student status, it is possible to be employed and certainly this would be the case for students who are registered for a part-time doctorate.

JOHN REILLY
18 March 2009
ANNEX 2 – COUNTRY BRIEFINGS

2. IRELAND

Lifelong Learning: Stage of Development

The functions set out in the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 define a key, pivotal role for the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) in the process of the promotion of lifelong learning, and particularly in the promotion and facilitation of access, transfer and progression. The development and establishment of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is set in the context of a vision for the recognition of learning and is in line with the broad national and European policy of promoting a lifelong learning society.

The NFQ, based on standards of knowledge, skill and competence, was launched in 2003. It is an Integrated and Inclusive Framework, defined as:

"The single, nationally and internationally accepted entity, through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards."

The overarching objectives of the Framework are to
- support lifelong learning;
- promote a culture in which the learner is at the centre of the qualifications system;
- maintain and promote quality;
- respond to the needs of the economy, society and the individual; and
- to facilitate the recognition of national and international qualifications/awards.

The Framework consists of 10 levels, defined by a range of standards of knowledge, skill and competence, which are set out in level indicators. It incorporates awards made for all kinds of learning, wherever gained. Four classes of award-type have been developed: major, minor, supplemental, special purpose to capture all types and sizes of learning (for further information, please see: http://www.nqai.ie; http://www.nfq.ie).

The NQAI was also charged with the development of policies to promote access, transfer and progression, to and through, the education and training system (please see: http://www.nqai.ie/docs/publications/10.pdf), including arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer (please see: http://www.nqai.ie/documents/principlesandoperguidelinesgreen.pdf). It is for awarding bodies and providers to implement these, while providers must inform learners pursuing programmes of longer than three months duration whether such programme
are accommodated through the Authority’s policies and procedures for access, transfer or progression.

The Framework is also vital to the delivery of a number of goals set out in *Towards 2016*, the 10-year Framework Social Partnership Agreement, 2006-2015:

- to increasing participation in lifelong learning, in particular amongst disadvantaged groups and those with low-skills in the workforce;
- to widening participation in, and increasing progression to, higher education and the acquisition of recognised qualifications;
- to developing flexible pathways through the education system; and
- to ensuring quality standards in education and training.

The *National Skills Strategy*, March 2007, has the broad aim of upskilling the workforce and creating a well-educated and highly-skilled population to meet future economic and societal needs. The strategy uses the Framework to set targets for upskilling and achievement in education and training. Its key proposals are that by 2020:

Following consultation with stakeholders, the NQAI also established principles and operational guidelines for the recognition of prior learning in further and higher education and training (please see: [http://64.233.183.104/search?q=cache:iqAHg03D03gJ:www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/documents/NFQ-principles06brown.pdf+RPL+national+principles&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=ie](http://64.233.183.104/search?q=cache:iqAHg03D03gJ:www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/documents/NFQ-principles06brown.pdf+RPL+national+principles&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=ie)). The principles are addressed to education and training providers, awarding bodies, and those in the workplace. All providers are required to develop a statement of arrangements available in respect of each of their programmes for the recognition of prior learning including access routes and entitlements. Where the recognition of prior learning is used to enable entry to a programme, the statement of arrangements available should indicate to learners the competences needed to succeed on the programme. These statements should define the purposes for which recognition of prior learning processes can be used, i.e., to grant access to a programme of study.

**Involvement of HEIs**

The NQAI has defined specific policies, actions and procedures through which it will meet its objectives in relation to access, transfer and progression. They are set out under four themes:

- credit
- transfer and progression routes
- entry arrangements
Higher education institutions are implementing these. An example of developments in this area is the enhanced opportunity for holders of further education and training awards to enter undergraduate programmes, particularly in the institutes of technology.

The Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), which is awarded for innovative, collaborative projects between institutions, has provided support for numerous staff training and development initiatives. This also includes funding in support of restructuring initiatives, modularisation and the credit award system, in order to develop the key support framework for greater flexibility in learning paths. For example, supported by the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), Institutes of Technology Ireland (IOTI) has been awarded funding to develop flexible learning mechanisms - aiming to develop, pilot and expand programmes and modules which assist in supporting life-long learning, increase opportunities for lifelong learning in the workforce, and increase the overall participation rates of the lifelong learning cohort.

**Extent of CPD, its recognition and credit allocation**

A number of award types e.g. supplemental awards and special purpose awards have been developed to accommodate smaller / specific pieces of learning, such as CPD (for information, please see: [http://www.nqai.ie/docs/publications/13.pdf](http://www.nqai.ie/docs/publications/13.pdf); [http://www.nqai.ie/docs/publications/11.pdf](http://www.nqai.ie/docs/publications/11.pdf)). Credit should be allocated to such programmes.

**Doctoral Programmes**

Developments in Ireland

**PhD Outputs and National Strategy**

The Government’s *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013 (SSTI)* is the official national document\(^1\) guiding research strategy since 2006. It has set the target of doubling PhD output by 2013. This target reflects a recommendation in the 2004 OECD *Review of Higher Education in Ireland*\(^2\). The establishment and on-going funding for PRTLI has put in place the platform which enabled this dramatic increase in PhD output.

The *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation* acknowledges the emerging consensus within the Irish university system that a graduate school type mechanism is

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\(^1\) [http://www.entemp.ie/science/technology/sciencestrategy.htm](http://www.entemp.ie/science/technology/sciencestrategy.htm)

needed to ensure the most effective professional development of researchers. A more structured approach to postgraduate formation has the potential to reduce the time taken to complete a PhD and to increase the completion rate of doctoral students. The SSTI recommended structured PhD training within a graduate school type framework. The development of flexible career paths for those with doctorates was identified as another important requirement for attracting good students into PhD courses. The SSTI also established an implementation structure under the Interdepartmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation; this includes the Higher Education Research Group, whose responsibilities include insuring that investments in both infrastructure and post graduate education programmes in higher education institutions are in harmony.

Fourth Level Ireland
As early as 2005 there was a concerted effort by the universities to formulate a collective, long-term strategy with a strong and effective PhD structure at its core. This strategy was expounded in a framework proposal from the Irish Universities Association (IUA) in October 2005 – Reform of Third Level and Creation of Fourth Level Ireland. It aimed to move Irish universities from the relative backwaters of previous decades to the foreground internationally. A radical increase in the number of graduates educated to PhD level, as well as a flexible high quality teaching and learning environment at all stages of higher education, was called for. The proposal consisted of a comprehensive programme to transform third and fourth (PhD) level education.

Strategic Innovation Fund
The establishment of a Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) was announced in the budget in December 2005 and the first cycle was launched in 2006. This fund was established to allocate an additional €525 million over the period 2006 – 2013.

There was an overall budget of €42 million for SIF Cycle 1, there were several key thematic areas under which the institutions competed in this cycle. Approximately €10 million (€9,995,000) was awarded to projects under the theme of Enabling Fourth Level.

Cycle 2 of SIF was launched in February 2008 with a budget of €97 million, of which €20 million was allocated to projects to extend research capacity. Among the projects funded under SIF were:

- €15.3 million for the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA) to develop graduate education to the highest international standards through
  - Collaborative delivery of courses
  - Improved structures and advanced taught courses

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- Developing inter-institutional graduate programmes
  - University College Cork (UCC), in collaboration with NUIG, have been allocated €2,125,000 in funding for its Developing Infrastructure (Enabling 4th level Ireland: Development of Graduate Studies) project. This project involves 3 steps: 1) a further inter-institutional expansion of PhD supervisory capacity; 2) support for programmes for new academic staff to enhance research activity and postgraduate supervisory skills; 3) devolution of academic functions relating to graduate education through establishment of an administrative Graduate School infrastructure.

- Institutes of Technology Ireland (IoTI) has been awarded funding for an Institute of Technology sectoral proposal entitled Addressing the Needs of the Knowledge Economy - Research Coordination & Support Office: Research Capacity under SIF Cycle 2 (€1,438,000). The collaborating institutions are developing a strategic framework for planned growth of research in the sector, and a roadmap for the development of the knowledge triangle of education, research and innovation. There are major challenges facing the IOTs and DIT in embedding a research culture and in growing their capacity for research, in line with their own strengths, and institutional and national strategies. A Research Coordination and Support Office for the IOTs and DIT will be established to enable issues to be addressed and targets met.

- Waterford IT, in collaboration with CIT and UCC, has been successfully funded an amount of €1,328,000 to create a common structure for doctoral programmes in engineering

Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLI)

Launched in 1998, the Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions (PRTLI) has invested €865 million (includes exchequer and private matching funds) to date into strengthening national research capabilities via investment in human and physical infrastructure. Based to date, over four cycles, the ultimate aim of the programme is to propel Ireland toward establishing an international profile as a premier location for carrying out world class research and development.

PRTLI provides integrated financial support for institutional strategies, programmes and infrastructure in key areas of research spread across all disciplines. The programme supports research in humanities, science, technology and the social sciences, including business and law.
The objectives of the programme are:

1. To enable a strategic and planned approach by third-level institutions to the long-term development of their research capabilities, consistent with their existing and developing research strengths and capabilities and national goals.

2. To promote the development of high quality research capabilities in third-level institutions, so as to enhance the quality and relevance of graduate output and skills.

3. Within the framework of these objectives, to provide support for outstandingly talented individual researchers and teams within institutions and the encouragement of co-operation between researchers both within the institutions and between institutions having particular regard to the desirability of encouraging inter-institutional co-operation within the two parts of the binary system and within Ireland, the EU and internationally.

The PRTLI awards are evaluated by an international panel of distinguished researchers and scholars on the basis of excellence in:

- Strategic planning and focus
- Inter-institutional collaboration
- Research quality
- Impact of research on teaching and learning

Under Cycle 4 of PRTLI, funding was awarded for graduate schools and structured PhD initiatives in a number of areas:

- € 2million for the GradCAM (graduate school of creative arts and media) proposal from NCAD and DIT;
- € 11.5m for Graduate Schools/Environment Programmes in six HEIs;
- € 11.2m for graduate training programmes in biomedical science in five HEIs.

**IUA Fourth Level Network**

The Strategic Innovation Fund supported an initiative by Irish Universities Association to develop a *Fourth Level Network of Deans of Graduate Studies.* The Network is working on sectoral policies and agreements to ensure the coherent development of structured PhD programmes.

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The Network is developing mechanisms to ensure the effective operation of inter-institutional graduate education programmes. This includes an agreement on the transferability of modules that attract credit under the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). The Fourth Level Ireland project has also led the IUA to develop a Graduate Student Skills Statement, which describes the desired learning outcomes and skills that PhD students should acquire during their studies. This skills statement aims to:

- Communicate to students, supervisors and employers the skills and attributes of a PhD graduate;
- Aid students, graduate schools, graduate programmes and advisory committees in establishing students’ skills development needs; and
- Inform the further development of skills opportunities for all PhD students.

To assist the development of structured PhD programmes many countries have developed Skills Statements detailing categories of skills that students and supervisors may consider appropriate to students’ skills development needs. The IUA statement draws on skills statements used elsewhere.

The skills identified as relevant to PhD student education include the following, which is not an exhaustive list, and their relevance to students will depend upon experiential learning as well as disciplinary and professional development needs:

- Research skills and awareness;
- Ethics and social understanding;
- Communications;
- Personal effectiveness/development;
- Team-working and leadership;
- Career management; and
- Entrepreneurship and innovation.

Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB)

In response to developments in the Bologna Process, the IUQB began work in 2004 on a project to improve the organisation and efficiency of PhD programmes in Irish universities. The objectives were to establish current practice nationally and internationally, to establish good practice, and to prepare a national code of good practice in the organisation of PhD programmes. The result of an extensive consultation process was the publication in 2005 of National Guidelines on Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes.

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7 http://ec.europa.eu./education/programmes/socrates/ects/index_en.html
9 http://www.iuqb.ie/info/good_practice_guides.aspx?article=59507a1a-0ffd-4090-a124-bb1df04bc566
The intention behind the Guidelines is that each university will see them as containing agreed statements of good practice relating to policies, regulations, procedures and documentation governing the organisation of PhD programmes and will take them into consideration in improving their own systems.

The Guidelines cover the following areas:

- Institutional Organisation and Structures;
- Preliminary Arrangements;
- Supervisors;
- The Student;
- Project Selection;
- Induction and Professional Development;
- Monitoring Progress;
- The Dissertation;
- The Examination; and
- Graduation.

The Guidelines also advise the universities about definitions and data which need to be recorded regularly and consistently. These mainly concern detailed data on registration and completion, so that indicators such as average duration times and completion rates can be readily computed.

The Guidelines have now been in place for four years and the IUQB has commenced a comprehensive review of the guidelines - the extent to which they have been implemented by the institutions and any areas that require addition or revision bearing in mind the developments outlined above. The guidelines are currently being updated, with an expected publication date of May 2009.

The Higher Education and Training Awards Council is also working on producing guidelines for practice based PhD Programmes. These will be produced shortly and developments in this area are taking account of the review of the IUQB guidelines.

**Structured PhD Programmes**

Structured PhD programmes are currently being introduced via a number of funding instruments as outlined above. The HEA and the IUA / IOTI are currently in discussions over securing a nationally agreed definition of what constitutes a structured PhD programme, what the student can expect from embarking on such a programme etc. A review of structured PhD programmes carried out for the HEA in 2008 indicated that approximately 20 per cent of students in the university sector (including RCSI) are on structured programmes.
Award/ Credit

Doctoral studies are included at Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications, and all awards included at this level conform to the level indicators and award-type descriptors set out in the Framework (please see the award-type descriptor for the doctoral degree on p. 41 of the following document: http://www.nqai.ie/docs/publications/12.pdf). ECTS are not currently allocated to doctoral programmes, with the exception of some professional doctorates.

Universities are moving towards an agreement on a credit transfer agreement on the non-research elements of structured doctoral programmes. This will form the basis for recognising and giving value to whatever training elements are involved in doctoral programmes and provide the flexibility to participate actively in inter-institutional postgraduate research programmes. Accumulation of ECTS credits will not form the basis of assessment of the doctoral thesis, which remains the thesis and its contribution to new knowledge.

The supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies

Postgraduate research supervisors should be active scholars and researchers with good records of achievement and publication. Existing regulations defining suitability insist that PhD supervisors themselves have a PhD in a suitable academic area or an equivalent record of achievement. In most academic disciplines recruitment procedures and competition ensure that such minimum standards are exceeded for all permanent academic staff. However, a universal practice or a general regulation that ensures that students are supervised only by researchers who are active and successful in the appropriate areas is advisable. In some cases eg practice based disciplines, this is not possible but in all cases there are well-defined processes for the recognition of prior learning and research achievement in respect of non-award-bearers who are proposed for inclusion on a supervisory team.

Of fundamental importance: every student must have one supervisor (the principal supervisor) who is a member of staff of the university, who takes full responsibility for the overall management and supervision of the student’s work and progress. The roles of associate or co-supervisors will depend on their expertise, location etc.

In defined areas or circumstances (or normally), the overall supervision of a research student’s progress involves, in addition to the student’s primary supervisor (and co-supervisor(s) if required), an associate supervisor who is officially assigned this duty for the whole of the student’s project.
Additionally, a Faculty and/or university graduate studies committee monitors the student’s progress to ensure accountability of the supervision process and the resolution of any difficulties in the candidate-supervisor relationship. Typically, doctoral candidates must successfully complete an assessment including an oral and/or written presentation on their research’s progress before transferring to full doctoral track. This transfer assessment takes place between twelve and twenty-four months following commencement.

In most institutions, a doctoral candidate cannot submit their work for examination without their principal supervisor’s support. (The revision of the current IUQB guidelines in respect of this matter suggests that there should be also understood procedures where a student can appeal any decision made by the supervisor). Upon receiving the supervisor’s agreement that the thesis is worthy of submission the university/faculty convenes an examination committee. This consists of at least one internal and at one external examiner. The external examiner must be a recognised expert in the thesis area. The doctoral candidate then undergoes a viva voce, which is an oral defence of the thesis before the internal and external examiners.

**Doctoral student mobility:**

The current IUQB Guidelines state the following in relation to mobility:

The facilitation of conference and seminar attendance and researcher mobility is an essential part of PhD training and development.
ANNEX 2 – COUNTRY BRIEFINGS

3. NORWAY

LIFELONG LEARNING
The concept of Lifelong Learning is well established in Norwegian higher education. The legal basis for this is found in the Universities Act (2005) in which the right to be assessed for entry into higher education on the basis of non-/informal learning as well as the possibility of exemptions from parts of an education on similar basis is stated. The relevant paragraphs are:
Act concerning Universities and colleges: Section 37: *Educational qualifications for entrance to higher education*
…The Ministry may stipulate that other suitable education or combinations of education and work experience shall constitute a general basis for admission. The institution shall consider whether applicants hold qualifications corresponding to the stipulated entrance requirements.
Section 49: *Exemption from examinations or tests*
…Documentation of prior learning (formal and non-formal) may also provide a basis for exemption…

The process leading up to these amendments started in the late 1990s, to a large extent driven by a growing demand from the trade unions for continuing education. This led to a governmental white paper and a fairly large project called “Realkompetanseprosjektet” which financed a large number of projects dealing with the recognition of non-formal learning. So in the main, this was a work place reform, and the introduction of the concept into higher education more of a spinoff of the project.

The general criterion for admission into higher education in Norway has always been the successful completion of secondary education, leading to the so called General Admission Certificate (“GSK”). However, for decades it was possible to enter into higher education based on a combination of age (25) and some subjects from secondary school. This was called “Vei 3” (“The third entrance”). So the concept as such was not all new.

With regard to recognition of formal education from other institutions, be it Norwegian or foreign ones, the general regulation is that this is fully recognized on what used to be called a “time for time” basis. This means that credits are fully portable between all accredited institutions in Norway, but with some obvious limitations with regard to their implementation into particular study programs. The same general rule applies with regard to foreign institutions, but with well known problems arising with regard to student workload etc etc.

In some institutions, particularly within fine arts, music etc, experiential learning has always been a relevant criterion with regard to access, and partly also exemptions. But
on a general basis Realkompetanse has been practiced for admissions since 2002, with good results. When the reform was introduced there was huge scepticism among faculty staff, fearing a tidal wave of early school leavers flooding into the institutions and challenging the academic level. In practice this wave never came, and the reform was accepted and is now well known and working. The number of applicants, which was expected to rise as this became better known, has instead decreased steadily, from about 6000 per year to about 3000, indicating that there existed a latent demand which has now been filled.

There exist a number of studies concerning the fate of the realkompetanse students, but little in English.

To sum up: Admissions are accepted and the system works well. With regard to exemptions the picture is somewhat different. This option came into the Act later (2005) and there have not been any strong proponents for this new option. The Ministry is reluctant to push it, referring to the autonomy of the institutions. At the same time the institutions are asking for guidelines, so at this point not too much has happened. This situation is confirmed in two different studies, (NIFU-STEP & Refine). So with regard to exemptions we are very much at point zero still, but with the legal background to start moving.

**Continuing professional development.**

In Norway the term normally used is “etter- og videreutdanning” comprising courses of both non-formal character and the formally accredited courses. Literally translated the term “etterutdanning” means “after-education” and will normally be taken to mean courses that do not carry formal accreditation. “Videreutdanning” means “further education” and is used for courses which give accreditation with regard to the education system. The distinction is not all clear, though, but years of trying have not been able to produce a better term.

The continuing education sector comprises all kinds of offers, from the hobby type to professional development courses. With regard to the latter, the generally recognized idea is that the employers should be responsible for providing their employees with “etterutdanning”, as this is considered to be the necessary development of their job skills. “Videreutdanning” on the other hand, is considered to develop the employee’s skills to a new level or in new directions, and thus should be the responsibility of the employees themselves to pay for. Again, the picture is mixed and many employers pay accredited courses for their employers, particularly at higher levels, and the trend seems to be that employers want accredited courses, as these are considered more solid and trustworthy.

To give accredited courses is the privilege of accredited institutions. All Norwegian HEIs deliver continuing professional development courses in varying degrees. Many have special units dealing with this, some even formally outside of the institutional structure. Many of the courses are of a general type, offered to the public at large, while there are also quite a few institutions that offer tailor made courses for particular
customers. This is especially true for the institutions with professional studies (nursing, engineering etc)
Any accredited continuing education course given by a Norwegian HEI has full recognition in the whole system, equal to credits given in the ordinary study programs. All education in Norway is free, although it is possible to set up private institutions that are based on tuition fees. Once accredited by the national quality assurance agency, their credits are treated on equal terms with all other institutions. But the public institutions are allowed to charge fees for their courses delivered as continuing education, keeping a clear distinction between what is being financed as part of their public mission and what is financed otherwise, the general premise being that all non-basic activities should be fully self financed.

References:
NIFU-STEP: Skriftserie 5/2005 “Avkorting av studier på grunnlag av realkompetanse” - Ellen Brandt (Only in Norwegian)

MOBILITY

Measures taken in Norway at governmental and institutional level to enhance student and staff mobility
Through the Quality Reform for Higher Education, which is Norway's 'Bologna Reform', two main measures were taken to promote internationalisation, including staff and student mobility:

- One was the establishment of the Norwegian Centre for Internationalisation of Higher Education (SIU) in 2004, which runs a wide range of international education programmes, promotes Norway as a country of higher education and research and provides advice on internationalisation both to the Ministry and to the higher education institutions.
- The other was the introduction of an international mobility premium in the budget model used to distribute grants to the higher education institutions (in 2009, it is NOK 6300 per incoming and outgoing student, i.e. Eur. 800)

Visas, residence and work permits
International education and research programmes Norway participates in are given specific mention in a regulation to the immigration act, thus facilitating mobility for participating students. There are, however, remaining challenges in relation to
immigration procedures and the opening of bank accounts etc. for certain groups of students. For staff, tax and pension schemes are still a challenge.

Financial support for national and foreign mobile students and staff
There is full portability of loans and grants from the State Educational Loan Fund for Norwegian students at all levels and in all parts of the world. Grants from international exchange programmes like the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme or the Nordic Nordplus Programme come in addition to national loans and grants.
Through the 'Quota Scheme', there is annual support available for studies in Norway through the State Educational Loan fund for 1100 international students from developing countries and from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia. There are special support schemes for students from the Arctic Area and for students and staff from developing countries.

During short and medium term mobility, outgoing staff keep their salary from the higher education institution where they work, and additional financing is often available from project funds, international or national programmes and projects.
There is no system of support for international mobile staff outside of international research and/or education programmes, whether Nordic, EU, bilateral or development programmes.
Please note that ph.d. students in Norway are not considered as students but as staff in temporary posts. None, whether national or international, is hence admitted to a ph.d. programme without secured financing.

Since January 2007, the Research Council of Norway offers top-up financing to outgoing and incoming Marie Curie fellows to make the Marie Curie programme more attractive. The top-up financing scheme aims at giving Norwegian outgoing Marie Curie fellows equal financial terms with fellows going abroad on a personal research grant from the Research Council, and at giving incoming Marie Curie fellows (inexperienced level) on equal financial terms with doctoral research fellows funded by the Research Council.

Recognition of study periods abroad
For exchange periods abroad, student loans and grants from the State Educational Loan Fund are only available to students who present a statement of pre-recognition of the study period abroad from their home university. Even if changes often have to be made in the original programme foreseen, this greatly facilitates recognition when students return to their home institution. However, some students still experience problems with recognition, particularly when unforeseen changes such as cancelling of courses occur at the host institution.
For degree programmes abroad, support through the State Educational Loan fund is only awarded for studies for which general recognition can be given by NOKUT.
Accommodation for mobile students and staff
Most higher education institutions earmark a good, and sufficient, share of the rooms at the local campus(es) for international students. (In certain cases so much so that there have been complaints from national students who have been left with housing difficulties.) Concerning the housing of incoming academic staff, there are more variations between institutions, and the ministry has less structured knowledge.

In addition to the measures mentioned above, international cooperation, including mobility, is systematically monitored by the Ministry and followed up at governance meetings with the higher education institutions. In February this year the Ministry presented a white paper on internationalisation of education.

Doctoral Programmes in Norway

Doctoral level studies of three to four years duration were first introduced in the mid-seventies, primarily at the Technical University of Norway in Trondheim (NTH, now NTNU). These included a certain amount of loosely defined course work, an educational component of about half year duration, in addition to a supervised research component. This shorter doctorate co-existed, and to some extent still does, with the long-term traditional doctorate although the latter has been gradually phased out. The next change to occur involved a clearer formalisation of the short doctorate to a Ph.D. degree with a one year taught component and a two year research requirement. The first Ph.D. was awarded in 2002. The system has evolved rather than been modified in clearly defined steps: transitional arrangements have been extensive and all of the above forms of doctoral studies are still to be found.

The current picture with respect to doctoral studies in Norway is that of rapid change towards a situation where a large number of students undertake such studies as compared with the past. The increase in numbers has followed the changes in the
system with increased numbers following the introduction of the short doctorate (dr.ing. and dr.scient.), and again after the formalisation of the Ph.D. The number of doctorates awarded annually increased from 187 (1980), to 393 (1990), to 647 (2000) and reached 1244 in the last year (2008). During this same period the number of traditional doctoral awards has remained static representing some 60 % of the total in 1980, as against less than 10 % in 2008.

The introduction of the Ph.D. has worked in synergy with other factors to bring about a number of remarkable changes in the population actually completing doctoral studies. Firstly, the number of women completing doctorates of all types has increased from 10 % in 1980 to 45 % in 2008, total equality should be reached within 2-3 years. While this is partly a result of social change, the introduction of the well ordered Ph.D. is indubitably an important factor. Another interesting change is that an increasing number of institutions have been able to offer doctoral studies after the introduction of the shorter doctorates and this opens increased opportunities to students based outside the main population centres to undertake studies at doctoral level. It should, however be noted that the University sector is still responsible for over 90 % of all doctoral awards: 80 % of all doctorates are awarded by the Universities of Oslo, Trondheim and Bergen. The increased number of awards is seen in all disciplinary areas, but is most marked in social science and in mathematics and science. The number of candidates who completed doctoral studies in social science was 9 in 1980, 147 in 2005 and 274 in 2008, a doubling in numbers since introduction of the Ph.D. The increase in number of doctorates in science, from 27 in 1980 to 284 in 2008, has been much steadier in nature. The only disciplinary area showing a much smaller increase than average is technology, where numbers increased from 58 in 1980 to 141 in 2008.

It was expected that introduction of the shorter doctorates would lead to a reduction in the age at which candidates completed their doctorates. The average age on completion of doctoral studies was 32.8 in 1980, while it was in fact 35.2 in 2008, although no particular significance should be attached to small difference which is not much more than the year on year variations during the last 30 years (minimum 32.5 to 35.9). Science and technology doctorates have been awarded to candidates with an average of approximately 30 years throughout the period, while doctoral awards in humaniora, social sciences and medicine have been to candidates in their upper thirties. Doctorates in agriculture and veterinary science have varied from 30-35 with an upward tendency throughout the period.

A further change that should be pointed out is that the proportion of doctorates awarded to students having foreign passports at the time of the doctoral defence has increased from some 10 % until 2000 to 25 % in 2008. Here the trend is very clear and seems to follow the introduction of the more rigid Ph.D. degree. The increases are most marked in the numbers of candidates coming from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.
The organisation and administration of the Ph.D. degree is still to some extent being modified, but part of the success has certainly been due to the fact that the main rules and regulations and national and only small variations occur locally. The ability to transfer credits and the near expectation that at least some of the time be spent abroad have also made the system easier to understand and navigate for the candidates. The general outline of the current procedure for the Ph.D. is given below.

The rules for the Ph.D. stipulate that any candidate should have a master’s degree or the equivalent in a relevant discipline prior to registration. Other requirements are that a plan for the entire study, both the educational part and the research project, already approved by the main supervisor must be presented in connection with application for admission – additional requirements are that funding is available and that all equipment and potential requirements for services are secured in advance. The procedure is that the candidate and the main supervisor must present the research plan the educational plan for the candidate to the faculty in written form: in many cases this follows a formal meeting with a departmental committee who must recommend acceptance of the plans. Having been accepted the candidate is expected to follow the time plan specified during admission, and is required to provide regular reports showing satisfactory progress.

The completed work is presented as a thesis written up either as a single monograph, or as a series of published papers together with an introductory chapter. The thesis is then submitted to a committee (two external and one internal member) who judge whether it may be defended or not. When the judgement of the committee is positive, the candidate is informed of the date for the oral defence and required to give a lecture on a topic related to the disciplinary area in which he has worked although not directly connected to his thesis: ten working days are available for preparation of this lecture at which at least the local committee member will normally be present. If the lecture is satisfactory, the candidate is allowed to defend the thesis publically. The session starts with the candidate introducing his own work and continues with the two opponents commenting on the thesis and discussing with the candidate questions raised in the presented work. This final session normally lasts between two and three hours. The result of the defence is then communicated to the candidate and to the granting authorities.

Reference data:

http://english.nifustep.no/english/content/statistics/doctoral_degree_statistics/tables_and_figures
4. POLAND

Life Long Learning

The national lifelong learning strategy is currently under development. HEIs offer a range of courses and programmes which form a part of LLL. For example a well developed type of LLL are post-diploma studies (in Polish studia podyplomowe). Tailor-made continuing education courses become more and more popular.

The recognition of prior learning is based on the internal regulations of the HE institutions according to their autonomy. It is advised by Bologna Experts to follow such internal procedures and to allocate credits to the recognized ECTS credits. The situation differs very much from institution to institution. NQF will include procedures of recognition RPL.

HEIs are entitled to design personalized curricula, adjusted to individual needs. Such programmes may last shorter or longer than a regular course. This is seen as the flexible learning path. The need for such courses is relatively small. There is, however, no possibility to skip any level of education.

Study Mobility

Internationalization of higher education is one of the priorities in the national authorities strategy developed for the forthcoming years. Thus mobility, as one of the basic tools of the internationalization process, was taken into account and was given a significant importance in the discussions with the academic community, aimed at changes in the legislative framework for the higher education in Poland.

It needs to be stressed that the adjustment of the main state regulation (‘Act on the Higher Education’) has introduced a sufficient legal framework to implement mobility within a given cycle of studies.

Since the 1st January 2007, the ordinance of the Minister responsible for the higher education on the credit system requires a real implementation of ECTS as a credit and accumulation system, which stimulates the introduction of more flexible study programmes, based on the ECTS principles and facilitating students’ mobility.

Poland has many bilateral agreements where commitments about different types of mobility, financial or other conditions for the scholarships, etc. have been stipulated. National funds devoted to support mobility are quite limited so starting from the year 2007 a mobility indicator, representing the level of international student exchange, has been included into the algorithm for calculating the state funding for HEIs (educational part). Additional funds obtained by HEIs, thanks to their extended scope of
international mobility, can be spent according to the internal decisions taken within the institution. Most probably, some of the funds will be devoted to enhance university units’ intensification of mobility, and to improve the quality of mobility schemes and thus, in general, the mobility culture within the institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007/2008</th>
<th>Erasmus</th>
<th>other bilateral agreements</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing students</td>
<td>about 12.900</td>
<td>1.798</td>
<td>14.698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incoming students</td>
<td>about 4.000</td>
<td>10.870</td>
<td>14.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>about 16.900</td>
<td>12.668</td>
<td>29.568</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the Polish HEIs have a high degree of autonomy, concrete measures for removing obstacles to student and staff mobility are taken at the institutional level. The willingness to enhance the scope and the quality of mobility has led to:
1) strengthening of units dealing with the international mobility schemes at many HEIs (for example international relations offices, units for European programmes);
2) improvement of legal institutional basis by including more stable and transparent rules for:
   a) participation in the international mobility programmes
   b) recognition of study periods implemented at partner universities abroad.
3) more efficient cooperation with student organisations (especially with Erasmus Students Network) leading to the promotion of ideas linked to mobility, and to the support for foreign students doing part of their studies in Poland (such as Buddy, Mentor, Tandem support systems).

Growing interest and extended scope of international mobility observed in many Polish HEIs has led to the further development of their institutional strategies for internationalisation. Although usually there are no quantitative indicators for mobility in these strategic documents, development of internationalisation has positive influence on the internal regulations related to recognition, on the introduction of more flexible study programmes, on the development of special services for the Polish students willing to go abroad and foreign students willing to take up a course in Poland.
Developments in mobility (meant here as a short term mobility) in quantitative terms (see diagrams below) have contributed to the development in the number of courses and full study programmes offered in a foreign language as a language of instruction.
The number of mobility flows implemented in the Erasmus programme continues to show that:
  - the number of people outgoing and incoming is growing;
- the unbalance between the number of outgoing and incoming individuals is decreasing (although Poland has theoretically a great potential to receive much more incoming students and teachers than it is observed today).

Dynamic of increase in student mobility flows in Erasmus in Poland

![Bar chart showing the dynamic of increase in student mobility flows in Erasmus in Poland.]

Dynamic of increase in teacher mobility flows in Erasmus in Poland

![Bar chart showing the dynamic of increase in teacher mobility flows in Erasmus in Poland.]

Poland recognises the importance of providing instruments aimed at enhancing student and staff mobility from the third countries. Thus, there are plans to introduce the so
called student visa facilitating the process. Since visa regulations are dependent on many factors, consultations with various stakeholders regarding the feasibility and impact of issuing student visas to foreign students coming from the third countries (non-EU Member) are in preparation.

There is no central support system. If any financial support to national and/or foreign mobile student is provided, it depends on the university or even a university department which can use part of their funding (coming from the state or other sources) for such support. Taking into account the situation related to the financial support for mobility under the Erasmus Programme, in the academic year 2006/07, 62% HEIs which had implemented the outgoing student mobility, provided some financial support to their outgoing students. This financial support had various forms (for example: co-funding or funding of travel costs, waivers of fees, top-up grants for each month spent abroad). The average level of funding within institutions varies from less than 1% to more than 60% of the total funding received from the Erasmus programme budget, with the average of 6% for the whole country.

The recognition of the study period is well-embedded into the legal framework at both the governmental and the institutional level. However, there are still incidental problems related to this issue resulting from the attitude taken by individual academic staff members. If such a problem is announced by a student to the Ministry or to the National Agency of the Erasmus programme, it is discussed and answered individually in order to take an appropriate decision on recognition.

As far as the outward student and staff mobility are concerned, the situation in Poland is relatively good. The demand is still quite high and the society in general is convinced about a good impact which a mobility period has on the personal and professional development of the mobile person. Basing on the survey of the Erasmus students who filled in the questionnaire after completing the Erasmus study period in the academic year 2006/07:
- judgment of the academic outcome of the majority of them (73%) was positive or very positive;
- judgment of the personal outcome of the overwhelming majority (85%) was positive or very positive
- judgment of the positive influence on future career of overwhelming majority (84%) was positive or very positive.

At present in order to increase the outward mobility more funds are needed (in order to meet the demand) and a better quality (in order to overcome obstacles mentioned in the former sections of this report). A good contribution to the enhancement of the quality are seminars and information meetings provided by institutions specialising in exchange programmes (such as the National Agency for the LLP-Erasmus), during
which different parts involved in mobility schemes can exchange information, look for innovative solutions and disseminate examples of good and bad practice. Obviously, various actions take place. Their purpose is to increase inward mobility (fairs, publications, conferences) under the common initiative of the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP) and the foundation Perspektywy – Study in Poland, regional initiatives ‘Study in xxx’, covering major Polish cities and regions, common initiative of the FRSE, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and a group of Polish HEIs - both at the annual EAIE conferences ‘Poland – higher education’, publications prepared by various bodies addressed to potential candidates for a study period in Poland. They contribute likewise to the growing awareness of internationalization.

Work Placement Mobility

No special arrangements and/or developments relate to Work Placement Mobility. In case that a placement forms an integral part of a study programme, it was up to a institution to offer students placement period abroad on the basis of bilateral arrangements between an HEI and a placement provider. Inclusion or practical placements into Erasmus student mobility will probably influence faster development of such type of international student mobility.

Doctoral Programme

The third cycle of studies was formally implemented in 2005 by the Act, a law for the higher education, although the doctorate studies had been running before. The normal length of full-time doctoral studies is 3-4 years. Apart from the independent research, the doctoral study programmes comprise the realization of individual education programmes. The supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies are carried out at the level of the institution organizing a tertiary education. Doctoral studies will be included in our country’s qualifications framework and linked to the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are being currently defined. Development towards the implementation of the transferable skills as the learning outcomes of doctoral studies is progressing. Interdisciplinary training is included in many doctoral programmes. ECTS is used by many institutions as a measure of workload in doctoral studies (but is nor legally binding). Doctoral students are students and early stage researchers.

Higher education institutions are part of the domestic research system in Poland. There are four sectors in Poland in which research and development works are carried out (as Polish Central Statistical Office distinguishes): higher education institutions (147), state research and development institutions (190), institutes of the Polish Academy of Science (78) and enterprises (573).
ANNEX 2 – COUNTRY BRIEFINGS

5. THE NETHERLANDS

Life Long Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an essential element of lifelong learning policy of the Netherlands. The Dutch government is stimulating and subsidizing the development of a national infrastructure for RPL. The APL Knowledge Centre, established by the government, supports this process.

RPL procedures are used to formally recognize and accredit competences developed through formal, informal and non-formal leaning. The government also started a national campaign (TV, radio, internet) promoting RPL. RPL procedures in the Netherlands are not nationally established, but are developed “bottom up” by providers of RPL procedures. These providers are educational institutions (both government funded and private) and specialized RPL organisations. In the Netherlands there is an open market for the provision of RPL procedures.

In November 2006 a national quality code for RPL was established and agreed on by all stakeholders. The providers of RPL procedures are assessed according to the national quality code for RPL and can be accredited for their RPL procedures. Accreditation (by the national Knowledge Centre on RPL) is required to be registered in the national RPL register. Registration is also needed in order to allow the clients of RPL organisations to benefit from the tax measures the government provides for RPL. Only RPL procedures based on national learning outcomes (secondary vocational education and higher education) can receive accreditation and registration.

Exam committees of the educational institutions have the authority to determine how many credits are allocated to the qualifications in the nationally established learning outcomes.

There are no nationally established programmes in higher education nor are there nationally established rules for the allocation of credits towards qualifications. Within the context of accreditation of programmes exam committees need to justify their decisions on the allocation of credits. This is required by national legislation. Furthermore, national legislation entitles the exam committees to allocate credits for
exemption from programme requirements and holds them responsible and accountable for this.

It is up to the institutions to apply RPL. Most institutions have procedures in place and implement RPL when approached by students. Universities of applied sciences are currently developing and implementing flexible learning paths, to offer tailor-made programmes to RPL participants who wish to obtain a formal degree. In 2007 over 4,200 participants were involved in RPL procedures in universities of applied sciences. In research universities the Colloquium Doctum procedure is in place, which involves RPL. The Open Universiteit (Open University) has free entrance. In The Netherlands participants (or their employers) pay for the RPL procedures. Participants can benefit from tax measures which have been put in place to stimulate RPL.

There are still challenges, such as the recognition and acceptance of RPL assessments by other institutions.

**Mobility: study and work placement**

**Study mobility**

*Diploma mobility*

A system of portable student grants was introduced in 2007. Dutch student grants can be awarded to pursue (higher) education anywhere in the world, provided it is, in terms of level and quality comparable to, education offered in the Netherlands.

In order to increase the volume of incoming foreign students in Dutch HE, the government has taken a number of measures at national level in order to remove obstacles and facilitate the recruitment and registration of an increasing number of foreign students in Dutch HE institutions: the establishment of NESOs (Netherlands Education Support Offices) for the promotion of and for providing information on Dutch HE in a number of targeted countries; scholarship programmes aimed at high-quality foreign students; the development of a ‘Code of Conduct’; measures to speed up the visa, residence and work permit process for students and staff who want to study/work in the Netherlands.

A code of conduct signed by all HE institutes guarantees the quality of education and services offered to international students. All HE institutions generally have well equipped and highly experienced international offices to facilitate both incoming and outgoing student mobility, including the accommodation of foreign students and staff and their families.
Credit mobility

In order to enhance student mobility as part of the curriculum, higher education institutions use the following instruments: scholarships, joint/dual degree constructions, information providing on existing opportunities; recognition of ECTS obtained in other countries, a “mobility window” in the curriculum. In some courses, especially those with a clear international (professional) profile, a period abroad is obligatory.

Dutch HE institutions offer a (still increasing) number of degree programmes or semester programmes in English, in order to accommodate incoming exchange students. Almost all Dutch HE institutions participate in the Erasmus programme and have exchange agreements with non-EU HE institutions. There is a sufficiently healthy balance between the total number of incoming and outgoing students.

Despite the various measures taken both at national and institutional level to promote credit mobility, the number of students involved has remained stable over the past few years. National and institutional targets are not met.

Vertical mobility

As a result of the introduction of the Bachelor-Master degree structure, it was expected that an increasing number of Bachelor students of research universities would choose to do a Master programme at a foreign university. However, this appears not to be the case (yet). Research universities tend to give their Bachelor students the possibility to start a Master programme before they have obtained the Bachelor’s degree, thus keeping the student ‘on board.’

Use of ECTS and DS

According to the Dutch law, all HE institutions are required to issue a Diploma Supplement. The Diploma Supplement is issued automatically and free of charge to all students graduating from both first and second cycle programmes. However the EU/Unesco format is not (yet) mandatory and is not used by all institutions.

ECTS credits are used in Dutch HE to indicate the student workload required to complete a degree programme and individual course units. The recognition of credits obtained during a study period abroad is a fully accepted practice in Dutch HE. Although there may be occasional problems at an individual level, recognition procedures are in place in all HE institutions.
Work placements

Work placements (generally of at least one semester or 30 ECTS credits) form a mandatory part of all Bachelor degree programmes offered by universities of applied sciences. Whereas outgoing mobility for study purposes has remained stable over the past few years, the number of students that do their work placement in a foreign country is still increasing. In universities of applied sciences, the number of students going abroad on work placement is higher than the number of students studying abroad.

Master programmes offered by universities of applied sciences generally also include a mandatory work placement or a research project in industry or an external organisation. Depending on the nature of the programme, these work placements or projects may be done abroad.

Increasingly, research universities also offer students the option of doing a work placement as part of the Bachelor and/or Master programme.

The supervision of a student on work placement is generally the joint responsibility of the HE institution and the company/organisation offering the placement.

Doctoral programmes

In The Netherlands, roughly 60% of the doctorates are awarded to doctoral candidates who have followed their doctoral programmes in a graduate or research school, usually as an employee of the research university. The other 40% are awarded to so-called 'external PhD candidates, who have been working on their PhD-thesis at home and/or while employed by an organization outside the university.

The normal length of a PhD programme is 4 years and candidates, on average, take 5 years and 3 months to complete a PhD programme. Doctoral candidates are for the greater part employees of the university. The programmes comprise a few taught courses (6-12 months). The major part of the programme is devoted to independent, but supervised research. While the PhD-programmes contain some taught courses, credits points are not used, nor is a Diploma Supplement issued for the third cycle. It is not expected that this will change in the nearby future.

The doctoral candidate is supervised by a professor (the promoter) and other experts within the field of research. The programme and the mutual agreements are laid down in the Training and Guidance Plan (Opleidings- en begeleidingsplan). A serious assessment of the PhD's progress and ability to complete the programme is carried out.
by the supervisor after the first year of the programme. The final assessment of the
doctorate programme is carried out by the supervisor, a team of external examiners
and finally concluded by the approval of the Doctorate Board of the institution.

In 2004, the universities have established a number of desirable competencies for the
doctoral candidate in Hora Est, Renewal of Doctoral Education in The Netherlands
(www.vsnu.nl).

The quality of the programmes within research schools has so far been part of a
voluntary accreditation of research schools (a specific kind of research organization,
which is mostly a cooperation of several universities). From 2008 onwards, the doctoral
programmes are a mandatory element in the assessment of research programmes of
universities.

As part of the discussion about differentiation of the 3rd cycle, a further introduction of
transferable skills has been argumented. Also, the majority of universities have
introduced graduate schools for doctoral candidates and research master students.
Through the graduate schools, interdisciplinary training, transferable skills and the
cohesion of master- and PhD training will be stimulated and strengthened. A small
number of universities have created these ‘graduate programmes’ of Master + PhD and
other universities are discussing this option.

In 2009, the discussion on the differentiation of the 3rd cycle will be continued. Points
of discussion will be: the relation with the second cycle (master) and the diversity in
doctoral programmes as a means to meet the societal demand for researchers trained
for the broader labour market (and less focused on academic careers). An initiative has
been taken by the universities to further explore the possibilities for ‘dual PhDs’, which
are employed by both the university and another organization/company.

The Universities of Technology in the Netherlands also offer post-graduate
programmes within the third cycle which are based on a very different philosophy.
These programmes focus on solving complex real-life industrial tasks, taking into
account the necessary integration of knowledge and modern computer skills for such
purposes. These 2-year full-time programmes result in a Professional Doctorate in
Engineering (PDEng) degree.

On a small scale, the government would like to experiment with research training tracks
via "graduate schools that are in line with the American model". This means: a fixed
time of entry, a strong focus on training in the curriculum and an orientation year within
the research school, followed by the choice of a doctorate subject and a supervising
professor.
ANNEX 3 – WORK GROUP SESSIONS

Session 2 – Work Groups

*Workshop 1: Life Long Learning*

The first session will explore a shared understanding of the concept of Life Long Learning.
Is it appropriate to think in two broad categories - one which might be entitled “Second Chance Learning” and the other which relates to ongoing formal learning which might include inter alia flexible learning, work-based learning, continuing Professional Development, recognising that these categories overlap in a variety of ways?

Issues for ‘Second Chance’ students are:
- Recognition of prior learning (formal and informal) and prior experience.
- Generic and subject-specific requirements in relation to the allocation of credits, the level of the credits, the number of credits;
- The way in which the learning or experience is assessed and whether it is graded?
- Parity of esteem;
- The paramount importance of learning outcomes.

*Workshop 2: Life Long Learning*

Continues the discussion including broader issues:

- Re-training, continuing professional development, the extent to which credits can be allocated for CPD and whether these can be recognised for a second or third cycle qualification.

Should levels be specified for CPD or Retraining short courses?

Life Long Learning and second and third cycle qualifications?

At the end of the session the Rapporteur will identify three key issues one of which should be an action point for Bologna and Tuning Experts in relation to Life Long Learning.
Session 3

Workshop 3: Study Mobility

While this is a familiar area, it is suggested that the Bologna Process three cycle structure presents new challenges:

How to structure curriculum in each cycle to incorporate and encourage mobility

Does the Tuning experience of core curriculum and generic and subject-specific skills and competences facilitate mobility and provide answers to the recognition issues which arise?

Is ECTS correctly applied the solution or is the wider Tuning curriculum debate the way forward?

Do different challenges present themselves at second cycle and third cycle in terms of Recognition, Credits and Assessment?

Can mass student mobility be achieved without more shared understanding of core curricula, generic and subject-specific competences?

Workshop 4: Work Placement Mobility

This session will draw on the experience of Tuning and other reflections on core curriculum and curriculum benchmarking.

How to integrate effectively work placement – compulsory and optional – in the curriculum at all three cycles

What role does the work placement provider play?

How will the learning outcomes be defined?

How can it be ensured that the second and third cycle work placements are at the appropriate level?

How will credits be allocated?

How will the assessment be carried out?

How will the whole process of recognition of credits/assessment be quality assured?
How can Work Placements be incorporated in the curriculum in all subject areas and not simply in scientific, technological or vocational subjects?

**Workshop 5: Doctoral Programmes**

This session will review the challenge of securing a quantum increase in Doctoral student mobility and explore the extent to which the approach to Doctoral programmes identifying generic and subject-specific skills and competences might encourage this. It will also consider the potential and utility of allocating credits for doctoral coursework components and issues relating to Recognition and Assessment.

**Session 4 - Review and Feedback – Next Steps**