

REPORT on ELLS Meeting Vienna Oct. 20-22, 2004
QA-Group

Participants:

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Schedule:

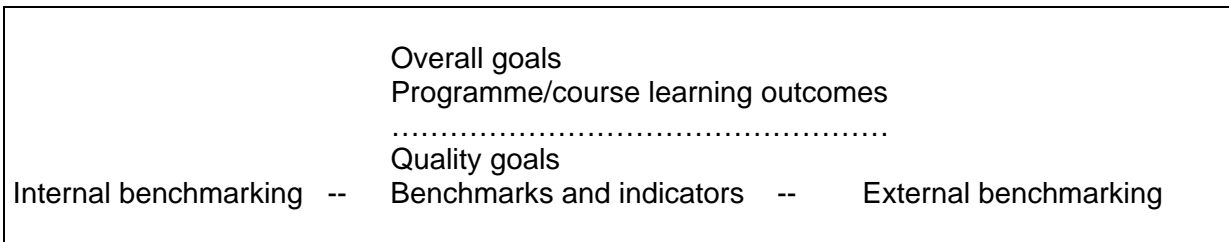
Thursday, Oct. 21st, 2004
9.00 – 12.00 Introduction, presentation of participants Quality definition Define general objectives, working programme, coordination and communication Course evaluation
12.00-13.00 Lunch break
13.00 – 17.00 Benchmarking Definition of goals and project proposals Preparation of the Presentation to the Board
17.00 – 18.00 Presentation of Working Programme to Board, Task Force, IROs and SA coordinators.

Friday, Oct. 22nd, 2004
9.00 – 12.00 Benchmarking Discussion and incorporation of recommendations from the Board and other participants. Presentation of Erasmus Mundus Programme of ICA – quality aspects/ explore ways of cooperation between ELLS and ICA. Further elaboration of working programme Planning and preparation of the next steps

Workshop description:

As it can be seen from the list of participants above, all ELLS members sent experts to this first meeting of a QA group during the Vienna ELLS conference. The challenge for this group during this meeting was to constitute the group and to elaborate goals and operational suggestions which had to be presented to the Board in the late afternoon of the first day.

After an introductory round the participants made an exchange on different definitions and concepts of quality. Then the group worked on a definition of its role. They agreed that the function of the QA Group within ELLS would be to develop recommendations for the Board and the Task Force on quality issues. Its role can also be made more explicit through the following structure. The working group suggest that they would primarily focus on quality goals, benchmarks and indicators.



On the basis of this concept the group elaborated quality goals. In the following list they are subdivided in reference to different perspectives:

Quality Goals

Student and lecturer perspective:

- The quality of a course is of comparative value to courses of the home institution. This implies that it should be guaranteed to the student that the course at a partner university has at least the same level as the course at the home university.
- More single (& summer) courses, semester programmes, degree programmes are offered in English language (BSc, MSc).
In order to foster an exchange of students it is vital to raise the number of lectures which are offered in English language.
- Students should move without barriers within ELLS (no administrative barriers, e.g. housing, acceptance of grading)
The ELSA representatives reported on various difficulties in the administrative area when a student goes to another university. In reference to these problems ELSA have elaborated a checklist. (see attachment).
- To give the students an international perspective.
This is a primary goal of ELLS and also a quality goal.
- All ELLS lecturers have excellent pedagogic skills
These skills are vital for improving and assuring quality in teaching.

Institution's perspective:

- Optimise the transformation of research into education.
University education should always be based on research, This characteristic distinguishes universities from Polytechnics and probably also from other universities.
- Enhance attractiveness of ELLS to external students.
Major efforts shall be made to attract students from outside ELLS.
- Enhance attractiveness of ELLS to excellent scientists from outside ELLS
Excellent scientists and teachers would help to raise the quality of the educational level.

On basis of these central goals the following projects were formulated. These projects intend to set benchmarks first, then to make comparisons and in the end to develop recommendations. The sequence of presentation of these projects also reflects the priorities which were set by the group:

Projects:

- Course and thesis evaluation and their follow up procedures
- Staff development in teaching and learning
- Comparison of existing national systems/indicators for benchmarking of ELLS degree programmes
- Develop methodology for the comparative evaluation of Master degree programmes (Erasmus Mundus)
- Develop an external examiner system for ELLS joint courses

- Develop benchmarks for measuring the transformation of research into teaching and learning

In accordance with the IRO group also the following project was defined as important:

- Quality assurance of the student experience in real and virtual mobility (admin, grading etc., see: ELSA proposal)

On Friday Mr Mayr from the BOKU Research Support Office presented the BOKU proposal how an internal benchmarking exercise could be carried out, which was regarded as very interesting by the members of the group. Then the group elaborated the follow up activities to this meeting (see task list below).

The following group representatives were elected:

ELSA coordinator: Merel Luichies, Wageningen
 Deputy: Leon Brimer; KVL
 Coordinator: Thomas Guggenberger, BOKU

The Board acknowledged the work carried out by the QA group and suggested to focus on the first two projects, course evaluation and thesis evaluation as well as staff development in teaching and learning. The Board also recommended also to carry out this work in the area of environmental sciences which had been approved as a subject area. As a result, the following task list was elaborated by the group:

TO DO List:

Task	Resp.	Deadline
1. Send out all documents, set up a workspace for the QA group	Thomas	1.11.
2. Report on Vienna meeting	Thomas	1.11.
3. Provide information for Homepage to Ms Klumpp	Thomas	10.11.
4. Check out funding possibilities within ELLS	Thomas	10.11.
3. Preparation of a document on course evaluation and thesis eval	Merel	26.11.
4. Preparation of a document on staff development in teaching and learning	Laine elaborates draft, Leon + Jan enrich text	26.11.
5. Preparation of a document on external examination	Leon	26.11.
6. Sending document on survey on last summer course	Merel	next meeting

Meetings:

Next ELSA Meeting: 11.-13.11.2004 in Wageningen

Next Meeting of QA group: 13.-15.1.2005 in Copenhagen

Finally it can be said that this workshop became successful through the very active participation of all its members and that all participants expressed their great willingness to continue working for this group and for ELLS.

Attachments:

Presentation of QA group to the Board

Presentation on Intellectual Capital Reporting and Benchmarking, Horst Mayr

ELSA checklist

Thomas Guggenberger, Nov. 1st, 2004