



MANUAL OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS IN VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

conducted within the frame of the project “Renewal of the Basic and Integral Study Programmes at Vytautas Magnus University referring to the Principles of a Common European Higher Education Area” co-financed by the European Union (European Social Fund) and the Republic of Lithuania

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Introduction

This manual has been prepared at the request of the Centre for Quality of Studies of Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania. The aim of this manual is to provide background information and guidance to assist the successful implementation of the Bologna Process in Vytautas Magnus University. Since each university is unique and university structures vary from country to country, the manual should not be seen as being a set of instructions that must be closely followed. Instead, the manual should be seen as a description of procedures and ideas that have worked in other systems and that may need to be adopted to work in the university system of Lithuania. It is recommended that this manual be studied in conjunction with the set of Powerpoint slides prepared by the author for the seminars organised by the staff of the Centre for Quality of Studies of Vytautas Magnus University.

In writing this manual I have drawn heavily on the experience of University College Cork, Ireland (UCC) in implementing the Bologna Process in UCC and also on the experience gained by UCC in assisting other universities in Ireland. This implementation of the Bologna Process in UCC took place in the period 2006 – 2010 and was led by a university team consisting of Prof Aine Hyland, Department of Education and Vice-President, Dr Norma Ryan, Director Quality Promotion Unit, Dr Bettie Higgs and Marian McCarthy, Teaching and Learning Centre (Ionad Bairre), Jennifer Murphy, Manager National Academy for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) and the author of this manual who is a lecturer in the Department of Education UCC. I wish to thank Professor Aine Hyland, Dr Norma Ryan, Dr Bettie Higgs, Marian McCarthy and Jennifer Murphy for all the very helpful information that they supplied to me when writing this manual.

I wish to thank Sebastião Feyo de Azevedo, University of Porto, Portugal who organised a very informative conference on the Bologna Process at the above university and who provided very relevant information to me on the implementation of the Bologna Process in Portugal. In addition, I wish to thank Dr Lorraine Walsh, University of Dundee who provided very useful information on the Scottish Educational system and on the implementation of the Bologna Process in that country.

Finally, I wish to congratulate Professor Kęstutis Pukelis, Dr. Izabela Savickienė, Eilina Dailidienė and the entire team at the Centre for Quality of Studies in Vytautas Magnus University for their initiative and vision in organising Bologna Process training seminars for the staff of Vytautas Magnus University and in commissioning this manual to assist them in their work. I wish them every success in meeting the challenges that lay ahead. I have no doubt that Vytautas Magnus University will be enormously successful in meeting these challenges and in helping other universities in Lithuania to implement the Bologna Process.

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List of Acronyms

CIT	Cork Institute of Technology
DCU	Dublin City University
EUA	European Universities Association
HE	Higher Education
IT	Institute of Technology
NAIRTL	National Academy for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning
NQF	National Qualification Framework
QPU	Quality Promotion Unit
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCC	University College Cork
VDU	Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas
WIT	Waterford Institute of Technology

Executive Summary

This manual provides background information and guidance to assist the successful implementation of the Bologna Process in Vytautas Magnus University. The material included in the manual draws heavily on the experience of University College Cork (UCC) which initiated work in 2005 on the implementation of the Bologna Process in that university. The manual should not be seen as a prescriptive set of instructions but rather as consisting of ideas that were successfully used in other institutions and other countries and which may be adapted for use in Vytautas Magnus University.

The involvement of UCC in the European Quality Cultures Project in 2005 – 2006 helped to focus the spotlight on student-centred learning and laid a firm foundation which pointed the university in the area of Learning Outcomes. The appointment of Dr Norma Ryan, Director of the Quality Promotion Unit in UCC, as a National Bologna Expert helped to initiate the process of implementing the Bologna Process in UCC. The Quality Promotion Unit set up a committee to oversee this successful implementation process.

The Teaching and Learning Centre (Ionad Bairre) in UCC played a key role in working with the Quality Promotion Unit to organise a series of lunchtime seminars to inform staff about the Bologna Process and to upskill them in the area of Learning Outcomes and linking Learning Outcomes to Teaching and Learning activities and to Assessment. In order to provide all the information required by staff members about the Bologna Process and Learning Outcomes, a user friendly handbook entitled *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes - A Practical Guide* was written by Dr Declan Kennedy.

In addition to organising the lunchtime seminars, the Teaching and Learning Centre in UCC set up programmes entitled *Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, *Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* and *Masters Degree in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. These three programmes enabled staff to obtain a formal qualification in teaching and have provided a pool of expertise across all faculties in the university. This pool of expertise played an important role in helping other staff members to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to embrace the learning outcomes approach to teaching and learning.

The setting up of the National Academy for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) in UCC provided further impetus to the implementation of the Bologna Process not only in UCC but in other higher education institutions throughout Ireland.

The hosting of international conferences on the Bologna Process in Scotland and Portugal played a key role in charting the way forward for what was needed in those countries to successfully embrace the various strands of Bologna Process. The University of Edinburgh is singled out as a good example of a case study that has made very explicit how it has complied with the Bologna Process.

Finally, some conclusions and recommendations are made to assist implementation of the Bologna Process in Vytautas Magnus University.

Chapter 1: Implementing the Bologna Process in Ireland

1.1. Introduction

Ireland has been very successful in implementing the action lines of the Bologna Process, evidenced by the country's position at the top of the Bologna Scorecard in 2007, and its second place in 2009. Ireland is also one of the few European countries that has successfully established and implemented a National Qualifications Framework.

This chapter describes the implementation of the Bologna Process in Ireland with particular reference to University College Cork. It describes the background preparation done, the training initiated by the Quality Promotion Unit, the writing of the staff handbook on *Writing and Using Learning Outcome – A Practical Guide* and the roles played by the Teaching and Learning Centre. Finally, it describes the setting up of the National Academy for the Integration of Teaching and Learning which is based in University College Cork.

1.2. The EUA Quality Cultures Project

In 2002, the European Universities Association (EUA) initiated a four year project, known as the Quality Culture Project, funded by the Socrates programme of the EU. The project, which adopted a “bottom-up” approach, involved 134 higher education institutions, grouped in 18 networks. Its major aim was to identify how internal quality culture can be developed and embedded in institutions. During the period 2005 – 2006, University College Cork was one of seven participating institutions in the third round of the project in the Theme 4 Network on *Teaching and Learning: Implementing Learning Outcomes*, which focused on the “*identification and implementation of learning outcomes in curricula and how these can be used to improve the learning experience of students*”. The other participating institutions in that Network were Université de Liege, Belgium; the University of Hradec Králové, Czech Republic; University of Camerino, Italy; Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania; South East European University, FYROM; University College, Winchester, UK.

At its first meeting in the University of the Aegean, the Network adopted the following working definition of learning outcomes as a platform for the discussions on the network's specific thematic area: “*Learning outcomes are descriptions of competences and skills of students achieved during their studies building the broad perspective of well educated people useful for the society*”. At later meetings of the Network, this definition was rejected, largely because different members of the Network interpreted the word “competences” differently, and argued unproductively about the distinction between the words “competencies” and “competences”. Following discussions held within the participating institutions and at meetings of the Network in the University of Liege and University College Cork, the Network decided to adopt the following definition of learning outcomes provided in the Tuning Project Final Report:

“Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to demonstrate after completion of a learning experience. They can refer to a single course, unit or module or else to a period of studies, for

example, a first or second cycle programme. Learning outcomes specify the desired requirements for award of credit. They are formulated by academic staff, taking into account the views of stakeholders”.

The members of the Network emphasized that learning outcomes should be defined in terms of what students are expected to achieve rather than what teachers aim to teach. Within this student-centered teaching process, the learning outcomes should articulate what it is the student is expected to have learned by the end of the module or course.

The Network initially agreed that learning outcomes should comprise:

- Competences and skills;
- Knowledge and understanding;
- Attitudes;
- Concepts.

However in the light of further extended discussion of the definition of competences it was agreed to exclude the word competences.

The Network participants discussed how they would introduce quality culture in the process of designing and implementing learning outcomes and identified the following “strategic” issues that should be considered in a quality culture approach:

- Definition of the appropriate level for defining learning outcomes (single course, unit or module or else to a period of studies, for example, a first or second cycle programme);
- Expected learning outcomes clearly described and well articulated in syllabi and curricula;
- Expected learning outcomes in accordance with the overall study programme and the respective academic field;
- Involvement of students in discussing and determining learning outcomes;
- Duration of studies that will best ensure the achievement of learning outcomes;
- Assessment of the defined learning outcomes;
- Need and extent of external stakeholders involvement in describing learning outcomes.

The importance of involving stakeholders extensively in the process of identifying learning outcomes that should then be used to design and implement curricula, syllabi and other learning activities was identified early in the work of the Network. However, this involvement was perceived with different importance across different academic disciplines. Thus, whereas their involvement was perceived as being indispensable in the case of, for example, engineering, education or medicine, their perceived importance in social sciences or the humanities was comparatively limited. The expectations and involvement of students were seen to constitute a major input to the process of identifying learning outcomes; this was not strongly related to any particular discipline. Alumni and alumni associations were also seen as important stakeholders in contributing to the definition of learning outcomes and translating them into curricula, syllabi and other learning activities. The alumni, through their interaction with the labour market and/or other professional areas, were regarded as an important voice in the process.

Network participants all agreed that a bottom-up approach in defining learning outcomes would be preferable to a top-down one. Specifically, it was felt that the description of learning outcomes would better start at module level and move upwards to the highest level within the institution through a dynamic process where students and external stakeholders (including professionals) have a role to play. Nevertheless, special attention should be given to ensure coherence within each study program. It was felt that this could be done by tabulating the expected learning outcomes of the course against the different course modules and checking whether and how successfully the learning outcomes have been articulated.

The resulting curricula should be based on clearly defined learning outcomes. However, since widespread practice at the time was to base curricula on objectives that reflect the teacher's expectations rather than those of the stakeholders, it was agreed that moving away from this practice should be done gradually. Teaching staff must be motivated and supported to outline courses by setting learning aims on the basis of defined learning outcomes. It was agreed that students should be involved in the process of defining, implementing and monitoring learning outcomes as early as possible. Clearly articulated learning outcomes enable students to know from the beginning of the course what it is they are expected to achieve. A learning outcomes approach would lead to the use of new and innovative teaching and learning methods by motivated staff that would contribute to the development of appropriate skills competencies, while keeping acquisition of knowledge as another key focus of studies.

Teaching staff must be motivated and educated in using different student assessment methods. Written exams, multiple choice questions, assignments, labs, oral exams, etc should be used as appropriate, for better assessment of the actual learning outcomes (knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation etc.). Overall, the Network participants agreed that there should be constructive alignment between the Learning Outcomes of a programme, the methodologies used for teaching and learning and the modes and techniques of assessment.

The involvement of UCC in the EUA Quality Cultures Project was important for two reasons:

1. It helped to focus the spotlight on student-centred learning.
2. It pointed the university in the direction of learning outcomes rather than the "fuzzy" concept of competences and resulted in the organisation of an international symposium in February 2006 entitled *Implementing Learning Outcomes – Implications for re-defining Teaching and Learning*.

Thus, the EUA Quality Culture Projects helped to lay the foundation for the work that was about to be undertaken by the Quality Promotion Unit UCC in ensuring that the Bologna Process was fully implemented in UCC.

1.3. The Quality Promotion Unit

The Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) of University College Cork was established in 1999 with the remit to facilitate the implementation of the policies of the Governing Body and the University with respect to quality assurance and quality improvement. Full details about the structure and work of the QPU are given in Appendix 1.

As a result of the emphasis on quality assurance and quality enhancement in the implementation of the Bologna Framework, Ireland's National Agency decided on the need to include an expert on quality assurance as one of the early Bologna Promoters in Ireland. Following the institutional review of UCC in 2004/05, Dr. Norma Ryan was invited to be one of the National Bologna Promoters. Subsequently the title was changed to National Bologna Expert by the European Commission. Thus, as Head of the Quality Promotion Unit and also as a National Bologna Expert, Dr Norma Ryan played a key role in the successful implementation of the Bologna Process in UCC.

In her position as Director of the QPU, Dr Norma Ryan has the opportunity to engage with staff and students across the institution. Arising from quality reviews, inter alia, issues relating to governance, management, academic workloads, development of a quality culture, curriculum design, assessment methodologies, etc. were all identified. The Quality Promotion Unit was given responsibility for implementing the Bologna Process in UCC. In 2006 the Quality Promotion Unit initiated a series of meeting to inform staff and students about the implications of the Bologna Process for the university. At the initial meeting in 2006 called by Dr Norma Ryan, Director of the QPU, and Professor Aine Hyland, Professor of Education and Vice-President of UCC, it was agreed that it would be important to organise a series of information seminars on the Bologna Process and also training seminars to upskill staff members in the area of writing Learning Outcomes.

To assist the QPU in this task, Dr Norma Ryan set up a committee in 2006 consisting of Prof Aine Hyland and Dr Declan Kennedy (Department of Education), Marian McCarthy and Dr Bettie Higgs (the Teaching and Learning Centre) and Jennifer Murphy (Manager of the National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning). This committee immediately set about the task of organising staff seminars on the Bologna Process and on the writing of learning outcomes. In addition, in 2007 the Quality Promotions Unit set up a committee to monitor the standard of learning outcomes written by staff members.

1.4. Ionad Bairre - The Teaching and Learning Centre UCC

Ionad Bairre, The Teaching and Learning Centre at UCC, was set up in 2006. The inspiration for setting up Ionad Bairre came from the work of Professor Emeritus of Education, Prof. Aine Hyland, and it was co- founded by Dr. Bettie Higgs, and Marian McCarthy. The Irish name of the centre is a translation of the first part of the college motto "Where Finbarr Taught let Munster Learn". The full Irish version reads "Ionad Bairre, Sgoil na Mumhan"; literally: "The Place of Finbarr, the School of Munster" and is the first representation of the college crest that staff and students encounter as they pass through the main gates of UCC. The choice of Ionad Bairre –'the place of Finbarr'- is intended to capture the dynamic relationship and synergy between teaching and learning. As is clear in the English version of the motto, which predates its Irish version, teaching and learning are symbiotically linked, one begetting the other.

There are three staff members in the Centre: Dr Bettie Higgs, Academic Coordinator of Support for Teaching and Learning (half-time); Marian McCarthy, Coordinator of the Certificate, Diploma, Masters Programmes (full-time); Nuala Griffin, Senior administrative office (half-time).

Dr Bettie Higgs oversees and coordinates the various supports for teaching and learning activities, so that the Centre appears to have a coherent structure offering a varied programme, rather than a series of disconnected activities. Professional development for staff comes in the form of lunchtime seminars and workshops, both informal one-off sessions, and formal programmes for credit.

Marian McCarthy is on secondment from the Department of Education UCC and is a former teacher at second level and has a strong track record in teacher training. She is involved in teaching on the *Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, the *Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* and the *MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*.

The overall aim of the Ionad Bairre is to formalise support for teaching and learning activities in UCC. The specific objectives of Ionad Bairre are:

- To create and encourage staff development opportunities, excellence awards and recognition in teaching and learning in higher education.
- To engage in ongoing review of teaching, learning and assessment methods and develop, support, and encourage initiatives and innovative approaches including strategies for the use of technology.
- To identify and develop appropriate structures within the University to support teaching and learning.

Since Ionad Bairre was set up the Support for Teaching and Learning activities have continued and expanded. There are professional development programmes for all who are involved in teaching, including in some cases technicians, library staff, and senior administrative staff. These include a course for postgraduate students who teach. Ionad Bairre is also represented on a number of University Committees, offering advice, raising awareness, and creating linkages with other areas of the University (eg. Graduate Studies, College Teaching and Learning Committees, Student needs).

Ionad Bairre covers all aspects of teaching and learning and assessment, particularly in relation to staff development. The open seminars for example vary in their focus from the theoretical to the highly practical, from lecture-mode, to practical laboratory learning, from field-based learning to the use of technology in teaching and learning. The seminars cover all aspects of curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment. They may be discipline specific or generic.

Teaching and learning are given considerable emphasis in the UCC Strategic Plan. The appointment of a Vice-President for Teaching and Learning is evidence of the university's commitment to excellence in this aspect of its mission.

The credibility of the Co-ordinator of Ionad Bairre is increased as a result of the fact that she has acquiring a recognised postgraduate qualification in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and continues to engage in relevant continuous professional development in teaching and learning and also continues to be engaged in teaching.

Since it was founded in 2006, Ionad Bairre has established a strong track record and a high reputation among the staff of UCC. Among the reasons for its success are:

- Support for teaching and learning activities are relevant to the needs of the staff of the institution (e.g. seminars for staff). Staff members are consulted on their needs in the areas of teaching and learning.
- A comfortable and appropriate venue for staff to discuss their teaching and student learning is provided in the 'high status' Council Room where light refreshments are provided at lunchtime sessions.
- Staff themselves are encouraged to get involved, for example by presenting initiatives in their own teaching' to stimulate discussion amongst peers. This establishes a culture of informal peer review.
- A bottom-up approach is commonly used in order to allow time to talk to staff and build informal networks.
- Gauge staff interest in teaching and learning support using for example informal feedback and more formal questionnaires.
- Create/identify ambassadors within the disciplines across the University.
- Offer small grants to incentivise staff to take initiatives to improve student learning.
- Administrative assistance becomes crucial as activities grow.

In addition, a number of strategies are adopted to make progress visible to senior management of the university:

- Keep attendance records of staff involvement.
- Set up a website advertising events and building resources.
- Apply for small grants from the government.
- Show that support for teaching and learning initiatives are helping the institution to implement government policy as identified by international reviews and reports. (UCC engaged with 'Targeted Initiatives' and 'Training of Trainers' schemes which brought in funding for various projects).
- Write articles about activities; disseminate progress.
- Demonstrate the relevance of teaching and learning support.
- Get senior management on board. Keep teaching and learning on the agenda at meetings of senior management using supportive political visionaries.
- Learn from other institutions; create or join national networks.
- Set-up international collaborations. This increases respect and status within the institution, as well as stimulating new ideas.

Once Ionad Bairre was established, it set up a mechanism to award credit to staff members for their involvement in professional development activities by establish a system of awarding ECTS to staff who engage formally in continuous professional development in teaching and learning, or who have previously done so. In addition, Ionad Bairre continues to offer a variety of routes for continuous professional development.

Ionad Bairre, the Teaching and Learning Centre, plays an important role in supporting staff, students and others as they implement the university's teaching and learning strategy. Ionad Bairre is helping UCC to become a leading national and international centre of excellence in teaching and learning. In doing this, UCC will realise the vision stated in its Strategic Plan.

Ionad Bairre played an important role in introducing the Bologna Process and the concept of Learning Outcome to UCC staff as it worked in partnership with the Quality Promotions Unit to organise a variety of lunchtime seminars for staff. Approximately 12 two-hour seminars and workshops were held, promoting the use of learning outcomes, and the alignment of learning outcomes with Teaching and Learning Activities and assessment. Approximately 20 staff members attended each seminar. In this way significant numbers of staff were introduced to learning outcomes. It was crucial to the implementation across the University that a critical mass of staff has some experience and had been introduced to the benefits of an outcomes-based approach, had discussed challenges, had seen that these could be overcome, and were advocates of the Bologna Process and the Learning Outcomes approach.

In addition to running the above seminars, Ionad Bairre also introduced programmes to give the teaching staff in UCC a formal qualification in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Three courses are currently offered:

1. Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.
2. Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.
3. MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

The first Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education was introduced in the academic year of 2004-2005 and led by Marian McCarthy of Ionad Bairre.

Further details about these courses are given in Appendix 2 of this manual and full details about all courses are given at:

<http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/postgraduate/PGDiplomas/arts/page28.html>

The above courses are open to all full and part time teachers in higher education and are taken on a voluntary basis. It is significant that the courses are not mandatory and, indeed, part of the success of the programme is that lecturers come on their own terms to research teaching and learning issues relevant to them. Though the courses are technically open to staff from other institutions, most participants come from UCC, for whom a fee waiver also exists. To facilitate the teaching schedules of staff, many of whom teach in the evening, as well as during the day at UCC, the courses run at lunch times during the week and on Saturdays throughout the two teaching terms. Application for the Certificate course is through the centralised PAC (www.pac.ie) system. The pre-requisite for entry is a degree or its equivalent (the latter is defined by other qualifications in the area of expertise of the candidate which are acceptable under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy). A key supplementary document in each application is the submission of the candidate's teaching timetable, for it is important that the participant has a substantial input into at least one course or module, so that assignments can be undertaken with a view to successful completion. We encourage participants to immerse themselves in the programme over the three year period. However, each stage of the programme is independent and has to be passed before the next stage is undertaken. Admission to the Master's degree is by research proposal.

The **Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education** programme consists of two 15 credit modules, TL 6003 *Theories of Teaching, Learning and Assessment* and TL 6004, *Practice Approaches to Teaching, Learning and Assessment*,

which are offered to staff, full time or part time, who are teaching in UCC or another higher education context, for example, the Cork Institute of Technology. Full details of this course are provided below. The rationale for TL 6003, the theoretical module, relates to providing participants with a conceptual framework through which they can begin to identify, explore and critique models of teaching and learning. Various models of curriculum design are explored, with a particular focus on the theory of Multiple Intelligences and the pedagogical framework of Teaching for Understanding, as new ways of opening up curriculum, engaging students and assessing their learning. The rationale for TL 6004, with its focus on practice, is ultimately to provide participants with the tools whereby they can critique and reflect on a course they are currently teaching. Along the way, as is evident in the Programme Learning Outcomes for the Certificate, participants begin to develop a language of practice and, through discussion with colleagues across a range of disciplines in all four colleges of the university, they begin to develop trust, rapport and security in the group and, ultimately, to build a community of practice.

Candidates who successfully complete the Certificate course can normally proceed to the **Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education** provided they have passed the assignments, met the learning outcomes of the course and have enough teaching to sustain a research focus. The programme consists of two 15 credit modules: TL 6005 *Disciplinary Approaches to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* and TL 6006 *Diversity in Student Learning*. The rationale behind TL 6005 is to enable participants to benefit from a critique of a ‘signature pedagogy’ in their discipline (Shulman, 2005) and a peer review of their teaching through an analysis of a video of their teaching practice, which they critique with their peers on the course and with a chosen ‘critical friend’ from their discipline. TL 6006 reinforces the symbiotic relationship between teaching and student learning, reminding colleagues that students learn in different ways and that this has implications for how we teach. This module ultimately challenges participants to find a research question that will define and elicit the nature of that learning. The Programme Learning Outcomes remind participants that the focus in the Diploma year is to investigate their teaching as part of their research and ultimately to validate their students’ learning and their colleagues’ part in critiquing and advancing that process.

Entry to the **Master’s Degree in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education** programme is through a research proposal and the Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education or its equivalent from another institution. There are two modules in this course, which are fully outlined in Appendix 2, a 15 credit module entitled TL 6001 *Research Methodologies Relating to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* and a 45 credit module called TL 6002 *Teaching and Learning Dissertation*. The focus in TL 6001 is on providing participants with the opportunity to present and refine their research proposal within a community of practice, opening it up to critique. In turn, TL 6002 maximises their time to work alone and with a supervisor to refine and write the thesis. The Programme Learning Outcomes reinforce the construct of teaching as research, as that which has the same rigour as research in any other discipline, with its SoTL focus on going public, being open to critical review and capable of being built on by others (Shulman, 1998). Ultimately, a Master’s degree in teaching and learning in higher education should equip a participant to enter into a community of practice that validates teaching and student learning as core elements of university life and as a cornerstone of research in the discipline and the classroom.

The above three programmes have made a very positive contribution to the implementation of the Bologna Process in UCC as the graduates of these courses have helped to train their colleagues in key areas of the Bologna Process. These graduates have come from all faculties in the universities and have established communities of learners within their own subject specialism to discuss items such as the Bologna Process, Learning Outcomes, Assessment, Teaching and Learning, etc.

1.5. Staff Handbook on Writing and Using Learning Outcomes

As mentioned previously, a series of seminars in the area of Learning Outcomes was organised in UCC. It was clear from the feedback that the staff found these seminars of great interest and assistance. As most of the staff did not have a background in pedagogy, requests were received for some “user friendly” material for staff who did not have the time to study papers published in peer-reviewed journals. At the request of Dr Norma Ryan, Director Quality Promotion Unit, the writing of a handbook entitled *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes – A Practical Guide* for UCC staff was undertaken by Dr Declan Kennedy who had considerable experience in this area in his work in the Department of Education. This handbook was published in 2007 by the Quality Promotions Unit and copies were distributed to all UCC staff. In addition, requests were received from other universities in Ireland and abroad and a total of 6000 copies have been distributed to date. In addition, by July 2010 the handbook has been published in seven different languages.

One of the great strengths of the handbook was that it contains many examples of module learning outcomes which were constructed by members of staff who were enrolled in the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

The handbook was published in hard copy to facilitate staff members to have an easy reference source when writing Learning Outcomes in their own offices. Feedback on the handbook was received from staff in UCC and other universities and was found to be very positive. Staff members liked the user-friendly nature and the many examples of learning outcomes included in the handbook were found to be very beneficial to staff.

The contents of the handbook are listed in Table 1.1.

A summary of the key points contained in the Handbook are given in the Powerpoint Presentations in Appendix 4.

Table 1.1. Table of Contents of UCC Handbook Writing and Using Learning Outcomes – A Practical Guide

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1.6. The role of NAIRTL in implementing Bologna in UCC

The National Academy for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) was established in UCC in 2006 as a result of funding received from the Irish government. NAIRTL is a collaborative organisation involving the National University of Ireland, Galway, Trinity College Dublin, Cork Institute of Technology and Waterford Institute of Technology.

The main objectives of NAIRTL include:

- Establish a centre of excellence for professional academic development in higher education institutions, targeted at the integration of research and teaching and learning, to support the enhancement of the student experience at third and fourth level.
- Play a key role in establishing best practice and in developing a cohort of academic staff with the requisite skills to deliver "Fourth Level Ireland".
- Provide an authoritative and independent voice on policies that influence student learning experiences.
- Support the development of capacities of colleges, faculties, schools and departments to align research and teaching.
- Act as a conduit for disseminating best practice throughout higher education institutions in Ireland.
- Hold international conferences workshops and seminars on the integration of research and teaching and learning, multiple approaches to teaching and learning and learner diversity.

The objectives are achieved through dynamic working groups that were established with the active involvement of all partner institutions.

NAIRTL has played a key role in the implementation of the Bologna Process in UCC and in many other third level institutions throughout Ireland. NAIRTL has supported all Bologna initiatives in UCC and has widely disseminated the handbook *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes* mentioned above. To date NAIRTL has disseminated more than six thousand copies of this publication to universities all over Europe, South Africa and South America. In addition, requests have been received (and granted) to translate the book into: Albanian, German, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish. Chapter three of the book has been translated into the Irish language and copies have been disseminated nationwide. The spirit of collaboration and sharing throughout the world is enhanced by the fact that the handbook is being sold at cost price so that no profit is being made on its dissemination

NAIRTL has promoted the implementation of a Learning Outcomes Approach to Teaching and Learning through support of a series of national and international workshops to accompany the associated handbook. Sixteen workshops on implementing a Learning Outcomes Approach to accompany the handbook have taken place in Ireland (GMIT, NUIG, UCC, IT Carlow, IT Tallaght, DCU) and abroad (Philippines, Kosovo, Portugal, Chile).

With the 2010 deadline for alignment with the Bologna Process, NAIRTL took a decision to organise a Bologna Summer School. Ireland has much experience and expertise in implementing the Bologna action lines and this national expertise was harnessed and

shared with the participants who attended the summer school. The International summer School was designed to offer participants the opportunity to acquire the strategies and tools required to enable the implementation of Bologna in their own institutions. The summer school took place in University College Cork from 5th – 9th July 2010 and featured an experienced range of presenters addressing topics focused on the Bologna action lines. Almost 100 people from 28 countries attended the summer school.

The Summer School was targeted at national and international educational policy makers, senior managers, lecturers and educational developers. The key areas covered included:

- Quality improvement;
- Quality assurance;
- University and higher education structures;
- Strategic planning;
- National qualification frameworks;
- Curriculum design;
- Implementing ECTS;
- Integrating research, teaching and learning;
- Writing and using learning outcomes and competences;
- Linking learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment;
- Life long learning;
- Access and widening participation;
- Graduate Education.

The knowledge and expertise of some of the key players in the successful implementation of Bologna in Ireland were shared through case studies, practical guidelines and frameworks. Summer school delegates will receive comprehensive course materials prepared by the experienced line-up of presenters.

There is no doubt that NAIRTL is leading the way in assisting not only UCC but also higher education institutions nationally and internationally in the field of learning outcomes and the Bologna Process.

Further information about NAIRTL is given in Appendix 3.

Chapter 2: Implementing the Bologna Process in Scotland

2.1. Introduction

There is a different education system in Scotland compared to the rest of the UK. The main qualification at university level is a 4 year Bachelor degree with Honours and a significant minority study for 3 year degree. Scottish system is in contrast to the English, Welsh and N. Ireland system of awarding degrees after 3 years in the majority of cases. Scotland has scored very high in the Bologna Process Stocktaking Report (2009) – see URL1.

A summary of the Scottish Educational System is given in Powerpoint Presentation 7 (Appendix 4).

2.2. The Bologna Process in Scotland

One of the key initiatives that helped the successful implementation of the Bologna Process in Scotland was the conference **Learning outcomes based higher education: the Scottish experience which was held in February 2008**, at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh. Among the main objectives of the conference were:

- To support the Bologna signatory countries by sharing the experience of higher education sector in Scotland in the development of policy and practice in the use of learning outcomes at national, institutional and programme level.
- To focus on the “how” to apply learning outcomes in a national context and highlighting the linkages between learning outcomes and curriculum design, assessment of student achievement, quality assurance, standards of programme and awards, and national qualifications frameworks.
- To discuss quality at assurance national, institutional and programme level: the design and implementation of outcome based programmes.
- To study Learning outcomes and the assessment of learner achievement.
- To consider learning outcomes and information for stakeholders – public in general employers.
- To discuss the recognition of learning: informal learning; learning from work and the transfer of learning outcomes (credit).

The conference studied four key areas in the area of the implementation of the Bologna Process in Scotland.

1. Higher education institutions

Judith Vincent (University of West of Scotland) recalled how, before the development of learning outcomes, it was hard to know what graduates could do and to ensure compatibility of standards between degrees. The impact of learning outcomes could now be seen in three ways:

- Standards and benchmarks, exemplified in such external reference points as the SCQF (described as a “road map” or “climbing framework” for learners), the Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statements and the Higher Education Academy’s Student Employability Profiles.

- New approaches to learning design in respect of awards, levels and modules, which encouraged team design and the creation of a horizontally and vertically integrated student learning experience.
- Flexibility, which promoted variety and distinctiveness of provision and lifelong learning, enabled accreditation of prior and experiential learning, and created the possibility of different routes to the achievement of outcomes.

Learning outcomes, she concluded, had fundamentally changed the Scottish sector's approach to learning since the 1990s and had resulted in enhanced coherence of the learning experience, greater transparency, increased dialogue with stakeholders, more opportunity for students to manage their own learning and better support for transitions into and out of learning programmes at points that suited the needs of the student.

2. Staff

Alastair Hunter (University and College Union) addressed a recent critique of learning outcomes in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* as “a futile bureaucratic burden...favoured more by managers than by teachers and academics“. While acknowledging that this was a not uncommon view and that, when crudely used, learning outcomes could be counter-productive, he defended their value for staff, since the requirement to consider learning outcomes was a useful discipline at the design stage of modules and programmes, prompting staff to ask questions about need, intellectual coherence, linkages and likely take-up. Reflection on learning outcomes also encouraged consideration of the most appropriate methods of delivery and assessment. Their usefulness in student course evaluation, however, depended on staff being more explicit about learning outcomes at the start.

3. Students

Jill Little (National Union of Students Scotland) argued that learning outcomes were an important aspect of student centred learning which focused on student needs. They provided students with a clear idea of what was expected, helped them to identify their own personal and professional development, increased their sense of ownership of their educational experience and encouraged them to engage more actively in their learning. From the users' perspective, learning outcomes gave a more accurate and meaningful picture of student achievement than workload. This made the learner's educational journey easier to understand and rendered courses and awards more transparent to institutions in Europe and beyond, thereby easing the administrative burden of recognition and facilitating the process of recognition and mobility between study programmes and institutions, as well as between further and higher education. They also promoted lifelong learning by enabling students to map their knowledge and skills, decide where they wanted to go next and dip in and out of learning as their careers developed. In addition, learning outcomes enhanced employability by providing clearer information to potential employers about what an applicant had learned, particularly about the benefits of study abroad.

Learning outcomes should not be used, however, in a tokenistic way (for example, by being written retrospectively or only referred to in course handbooks) but communicated to students so that they can articulate the knowledge and skills they have acquired. They should be neither so prescriptive as to impede freedom of learning nor so broad as to become meaningless.

The use of learning outcomes with ECTS, she concluded, would result in a broader, fairer and more accurate recognition of students' knowledge and skills; a more transparent learning environment, easier to engage with and to choose from; easier mobility within academic fields, education systems and countries; enhanced employability in Europe and beyond; and more student centred learning.

In the question and answer session that followed, the presenters were asked about how change had been managed in Scotland. In reply, they commented that the size of the Scottish sector encouraged collegiality and dialogue between agencies and institutions; that the drive to increase participation rates had triggered a need to articulate the benefits of higher education for a range of students; that their early involvement in course evaluation had resulted in students being treated as partners; that review teams were led and constituted by practitioners; and that the sector had moved gradually from audit via quality assurance to quality enhancement. In reply to a query about whether courses covered enough content, it was pointed out that the first cycle degree was now a starting point for subject specific knowledge in a diverse, mass system. It was also suggested that teachers could measure whether their courses were doing what they said by canvassing the views of students and employers.

4. Employers

Presenting an employer's perspective at the start of the second day, Konica Stones (PricewaterhouseCoopers) defined a learning outcome as "what people have learned as a result of an experience" and acknowledged their value as a means of assessing the learning that has taken place. It was not enough, however, for students to say that they had learned or could do something; employers needed to know how they had gone about acquiring the new knowledge or skills and whether they could display the competencies being sought. Employers were interested in how as well as what people had learnt.

In the recruitment, development and progress of their staff PricewaterhouseCoopers looked for evidence of the following set of global core competencies: enhancing value through quality; putting ourselves in each other's shoes; sharing and collaborating; and investing in relationships.

To get through competency-based recruitment processes graduates must be able to provide examples or evidence of the skills employers were looking for. Many failed by being unable to articulate how their learning and its outcomes mapped on to these competencies. Evidence could be provided to support a learning outcome by citing an example and then describing the situation, how they learned, what were the challenges, what was the outcome, and what knowledge and skills were gained from the experience. Employers looked for this evidence because, while they could teach the technical knowledge (provided graduates had the necessary academic capability), they needed graduates to be able to demonstrate the kind of softer skills exemplified above.

In the ensuing discussion it was suggested that academics and employers might have different views about the balance between generic and subject specific competences that make up a "good student" and that academics were likely to put a very much higher value on attributes such as individualism and command of the subject.

The conference made some key recommendations and conclusions and that main ones may be summarised as follows:

1. Learning outcomes

The seminar endorsed the proposition that “learning outcomes are the basic building blocks of the Bologna package of educational reforms” and that this methodological approach is at the heart of the paradigm shift from teacher to student-centred learning.

2. Implementation

The seminar drew attention to the danger of learning outcomes being implemented in a false or superficial way in response to external pressures and the need to recognise that such a complex and multidimensional reform cannot be easily or rapidly achieved. If it is to be more than a merely cosmetic or bureaucratic exercise and if it is to result in a better learning experience for Europe’s students, the learning outcomes based approach needs time to develop, embed itself and mature in a way that respects and reflects the local priorities, diverse needs and national traditions of the Bologna countries. Training in the writing and implementation of learning outcomes should be given a high priority.

3. Stakeholder engagement

The seminar recognised the need to find effective ways of engaging and supporting staff, students and other stakeholders (such as employers) in the development and implementation of a learning outcomes based approach.

It recommends that the Bologna Follow-Up Group consider what national or international action is needed to bring about the willing and informed cooperation of staff and students in the systematic implementation of learning outcomes (properly understood) at institutional, programme and module level and to support the constructive alignment of learning outcomes with learning, teaching and assessment.

One suggestion is the creation of a special programme to promote trans-national staff and student mobility to share good practice in the development and implementation of learning outcomes – thereby re-engaging with one of the original Bologna concepts.

4. European Qualifications Frameworks

The seminar believed that there was a need to clarify further the relationship between the overarching *European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning* and the Framework for *Qualifications of the EHEA*, so as to ensure that Europe has a widely understood and accepted approach to lifelong learning that facilitates recognition of all forms of learning and the transition between VET and HE, and that promotes mobility, encourages individual educational ambition and motivates learner achievement. In particular, there is a need to promote dialogue between ECTS and ECVETS to ensure interoperability.

5. Terminology

The seminar noted that there is a perceived lack of clarity and shared understanding about some of the key terms associated with the introduction of learning outcomes in different countries (for example, “competences”, “workload”, “notional learning effort”), which was likely to impede effective implementation. It recommends that consideration be given to

developing an agreed terminology based on a shared understanding amongst staff, students and other stakeholders about what the key concepts mean.

6. Levels

The seminar noted that there is uncertainty about whether learning outcomes should be written at “threshold” or “average” or “modal” level. It recommends that outcomes should normally be written at “threshold” level to facilitate recognition and mobility

7. Learning outcomes and workload

The seminar agreed that it was unhelpful to counterpoise learning outcomes and workload, since both elements were important in the use of ECTS.

8. Learning outcomes, assessment and grading

The seminar agreed that there was value in mutual discussion and exchange of good practice in relation to the use of learning outcomes applied to assessment and their role in assessment and grade criteria.

9. Monitoring progress

The seminar noted that it is difficult to obtain accurate information about the progress of implementation of this fundamental Bologna reform across the EHEA. It therefore recommends that consideration be given to finding an effective way of assessing progress in the 2009 Stocktaking Exercise, as well as in the next EUA *Trends* exercise and the ESU *Bologna With Student Eyes* report.

10. Evaluation

The seminar noted that there remains a degree of scepticism about the value and appropriateness of the learning outcomes approach in the context of higher education. It recommends that consideration be given to commissioning a longitudinal study which would collect evidence from graduates and employers about its impact and effectiveness.

The above key areas are, of course, not only relevant to Scotland but to every country that is working to successfully implement the Bologna Process.

2.3. University of Edinburgh

Whilst many universities have the information on compliance with the Bologna Process “buried” in documentation, the University of Edinburgh makes it very clear to all stakeholders how it has complied with the full implementation of the Bologna Process. This may be summarised as follows:

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees

The Diploma Supplement is a standard supplementary document designed to make degrees transparent and thus improve flexibility and comparability of qualifications across Europe. Further information is available from the University of Edinburgh Registry at <http://www.registry.ed.ac.uk/graduations/Transcripts/EDSGuide.htm>

Universities UK has published a reference document on the European Diploma Supplement available at

<http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/resources/Guide%20to%20the%20Diploma%20Supplement.pdf>

2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles (undergraduate and postgraduate)

At the signing of the Bologna Declaration the University of Edinburgh (like all UK HEIs) already operated a two-cycle system. Whilst it is true that across Europe the increasing tendency is for taught Masters to be two years in duration this is not a Bologna Declaration requirement. Further information on the length of the Masters is available at http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europeunit/bologna_process/uk_position_on_qualification_length.cfm

3. Establishment of a system of credits

The University of Edinburgh operates within the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework (SCQF) (see www.scqf.org.uk) and has credits attached to all courses.

4. Promotion of mobility

At the University of Edinburgh the International Office is responsible for the promotion of mobility (see <http://www.international.ed.ac.uk/>). For more general information on the promotion of mobility please see http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/Bol_sem/Seminars/041010-12Noordwijk-Nederlands.HTM

5. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance

Primary responsibility for quality assurance lies with each HEI. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has an active role in the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQAE).

6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education

This feature of the Bologna Process relates to a call for curriculum development, training and research etc... to include a European dimension.

7. Lifelong learning

At the University of Edinburgh the Office of Lifelong Learning is responsible for the provision of open studies provision with information available at <http://www.lifelong.ed.ac.uk/>

8. Higher Education Institutions and Students

This feature of the Bologna Process relates to the need for those in higher education to engage in the process. The progress of the University of Edinburgh in meeting key features of the Bologna Process illustrates active involvement in this feature of the process. In addition to raising awareness of European issues the UK Europe Unit coordinates UK involvement in Bologna debates.

9. Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

At the University of Edinburgh the International Office is responsible for the Erasmus Mundus programme (see <http://www.international.ed.ac.uk/>). For more general information on the Erasmus Mundus programme is available at www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and European Research Area (ERA)

In 2003 higher education Ministers included the third cycle in the Bologna Process. Professor G. Boulton as Vice Principal for International Relations and the Public Understanding of Science undertakes work in this area.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that Scotland has been very successful in dealing with the challenge of implementing the Bologna Process and that the University of Edinburgh is a good model for making this compliance very explicit.

Chapter 3: Implementing the Bologna Process in Portugal

3.1. Introduction

In Portugal third level education is divided into two main subsystems: university and polytechnic education. Third level education is provided in autonomous public universities, private universities, public or private university institutes, polytechnic institutions and higher education institutions of other types. The university system has a strong theoretical basis and is highly research-oriented. The polytechnical system provides a more practical training and is profession-oriented. Degrees in fields such as medicine and law are taught only in university institutions. Vocationally orientated degrees such as nursing health care technician, accounting technician, preschool and primary teaching, are only offered by the polytechnic institutions.

3.2. The Bologna Process in Portugal

In March 2006 the Portuguese Government passed a law establishing the legal framework thus making possible the implementation of the Bologna process. ECTS and the Diploma Supplement were introduced as well as Learning outcomes. Work is still in progress in the area of using Learning Outcomes throughout the third level education system. Impetus was given to the implementation of the Bologna Process in Portugal when an international conference on the Bologna Process was organised in Porto in June 2008. This conference discussed all the main aspects of the Bologna Process and drew up some main conclusions and made key recommendations.

The main recommendations and conclusions may be summarised as follows:

Conference Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the presentations, the plenary discussions and the discussions in the workshops and form the basis of the 'priorities and recommendations' which will be presented to the Bologna Follow-Up Group for its consideration.

1. The shift to ECTS and learning outcomes requires a great deal of work and resource. For some it will represent a paradigm shift towards a more learner-centred approach to education, for others a development of what they already do. Support and training for staff in developing, writing and assessing Learning Outcomes is essential and this needs commitment at the highest level, including from heads of institutions and from ministers. Sharing of good practice should be a priority.
2. If change is to be effective, academic staff, students and other players need to be convinced about the purpose and benefits of such change, therefore there is a need to engage with academics and students in terms to which they relate.
3. There should be input from all stakeholders, including learners and employers, in the design of programme outcomes – this should help to generate a shared understanding of the terminology describing the key concepts and to demonstrate the benefits to

stakeholders as well as linking programmes to the real needs and roles of graduates. It should also ensure that learning outcomes are clear to stakeholders, understood by them and benefit all stakeholders. We should remember that this is a two-way process – universities do not simply provide graduates for the labour market - their graduates also shape the labour market.

4. In the context of ECTS, learning outcomes and workload are effective tools for curriculum planning and development, and for helping students to plan their workload, and to know what is expected of them. However, workload measurement is not an exact science, nor is it a definitive measure – there is no ‘average student’.

5. Workload is an important local tool for students and academics to work within common and agreed parameters and provides a ‘feasibility check’. However, it is not easy, for staff nor for students, to estimate workload, particularly without contact hours. There is currently a huge variety of practice in estimating workload hours – it would be good to share practice, although transparency should not be used as a stick to beat people with!

6. Differences between the number of learning hours, whether declared or measured, whether between individuals or systems, are not a major issue, given the other relevant and related parts of the Bologna ‘architecture’.

7. Learning outcomes cannot capture all learning which occurs in Higher Education and they must not be used in a restrictive or reductive way, but in a holistic manner. Learning outcomes should and can capture the highest level skills. It is possible for learning outcomes to capture non employment-focussed outcomes, but there will be some unintended/unplanned learning outcomes which although not assessed, can be of real value to students and in helping to shape ongoing programme development.

8. It is essential to stress the link between ECTS/workload/Learning Outcomes and other parts of Bologna Architecture – e.g. the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, the European Quality Assurance Register, national qualifications frameworks and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and through this, to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (QF-LLL). Bologna Action Lines are a package of reforms which complement and support each other. For example, in countries with National Qualification Frameworks for HE – Ireland, Scotland, Germany, England Wales Northern Ireland – quality assurance mechanisms check for use of learning outcomes consistent with the NQF and likewise self-certification processes and reviews check their NQFs and quality assurance processes against the QF-EHEA and the European Standards and Guidelines.

9. It is important to make clear the synergy of the different Bologna Action Lines – this is not a list of separate, additional, unrelated things to do, but a coherent framework for positive change which will bring benefits to learners, institutions and society more widely.

10. Subject and discipline LO developed in international cooperation such as Tuning can be most useful in translating the generic LO on European and national/regional level into LO on the level of programmes and modules.

Conference Recommendations

(a) Priorities for Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG), for national authorities and for universities for action in relation to proper use of ECTS using learning outcomes and workload.

1. High-level commitment from BFUG, ministries, rectors' conferences and quality agencies to supporting the proper use of ECTS using learning outcomes and workload. This will require appropriate commitment to and investment in staff training and development, in conjunction with support and sharing of good practice within institutions and agencies.

2. The development and implementation of national qualifications frameworks in each of the Bologna countries and within institutions, the development and delivery of learning, teaching and assessment which is consistent with their NQF and the Bologna framework.

3. The need to explain and demonstrate both the benefits and the synergies of the EHEA and its components to all stakeholders. Therefore it should be most useful to make clear the underlying principles, reasons and values of the Bologna process and 'architecture' and those thereafter to all stakeholders.

4. Support for sharing of practice between countries to support the development, synergies and use of learning outcomes, qualifications frameworks and ECTS.

(b) It is recommended that the Bologna Follow Up Group should:

1. Agree collectively and individually to ensure that appropriate support, training and development is provided for universities and their staff to allow them to implement learning outcomes in programmes of study and to support the proper use of ECTS using both learning outcomes and workload.

2. Promote and support further exchanges and cooperation to share good practice between countries, drawing on experience from countries which have operational NQFs in place, or which are putting NQFs in place.

3. Address the widespread concerns about the timescales for implementation, including allowing a period of phased implementation, allowing for example, implementation to take place during the normal cycle for curriculum review taking into consideration the national, regional and sectoral/subject diversity in Europe.

4. Clarify that the declared number of student workload hours provides local guidance for learners and academics and that ECTS credits transfer between countries on an equal basis.

(c) It is recommended that **higher education institutions** and their **representative bodies** should:

1. Develop and disseminate user-friendly documentation to explain to all stakeholders the benefits of learning outcomes and credits and to clarify the concepts and links between learning outcomes and credits and other parts of the EHEA infrastructure, in particular, NQFs and quality assurance.

2. Implement a holistic approach, developing learning outcomes as an integral part of teaching, learning and assessment methods within an aligned curriculum.
3. Link ECTS to learning outcomes through quality-assured assessment, and through institutional arrangements to link curricula and programmes of learning to the NQF.
4. Involve staff, students and, as appropriate, employers in programme design, thereby ensuring 'ownership'.
5. Start at local level, with programme design, working backwards to identify progression.
6. Offer incentives to encourage staff to engage in new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.
7. Support and encourage staff exchanges to promote interaction between academics and employers.
8. Create a forum for discussion and the sharing of good practice.
9. Work with students' unions to implement, stimulate knowledge about and promote the benefits of LOs and ECTS.

(c) It is recommended that the **relevant national authorities/ministries**:

1. Ensure that NQFs appropriate for the national context and consistent with the Qualifications Framework for the EHEA are designed and implemented in a collaborative and transparent way with all the stakeholders.
2. Provide funds or resources for staff development and training within institutions and other agencies, to ensure proper implementation of ECTS using learning outcomes and ECTS within the context of complementary EHEA developments, including NQFs and quality assurance.
3. Ensure that assessors for national quality assurance bodies are properly trained.

The conclusions and recommendations from Portugal are both wide ranging and comprehensive and give clear indications of the areas to be addressed if countries and institutions are to implement the Bologna Process successfully.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Introduction

The initiatives already undertaken by the Centre for Quality of Studies in Vytautas Magnus University have shown that it has a clear vision for the implementation of the Bologna Process in its university. It is hoped that the conclusions and recommendations made in this chapter may assist in sharpening the focus on this vision. It is important to remember that it is not possible to have a “one size fits all” approach to implementing the Bologna Process since each university and each country have unique characteristics and work in unique environments. However, it can be helpful to utilise an evidence-based practice approach and adopt and modify ideas from other countries to suit the circumstances of Vytautas Magnus University.

4.2. Conclusions

It is clear from the discussions in this manual that there are certain key ingredients in University College Cork and in universities in other countries that placed them in a strong position to ensure full implementation of the Bologna Process.

- The involvement of UCC in the European Universities Association Quality Cultures Project and the organisation of an international symposium in 2006 on the theme *Implementing Learning Outcomes* laid the foundation for subsequent work to be undertaken by the Quality Promotion Unit.
- One reason for the success of UCC in its endeavours in implementing the Bologna Process was the recognition of the importance of the development of a quality culture in which the Quality Promotion Unit played a central role. The Director of the QPU was assigned a broad mandate and with permission to comment on any issue relevant to quality (in other words all issues!). The Director is also a member (ex officio) of the senior management team in the University and of the Academic Council. Thus the Director is in a position to comment and suggest improvements and processes at all levels in the university.
- Allied to the culture of Quality Assurance, there is also the culture of Teaching and Learning in UCC which led to the setting up of Ionad BAire – The Teaching and Learning Centre. In co-operation with the Quality Promotion Unit, this led to the organisation of a series of lunch time seminars on the Bologna Process and Teaching and Learning. In addition, the setting up of programmes that led to formal teaching qualifications for academic staff helped to ensure a supply of qualified people in the area of Teaching and Learning with particular reference to the Bologna Process, Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning, Assessment, etc.
- The publication by the Quality Promotion Unit of a user-friendly staff handbook entitled *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes – A Practical Guide* helped to initiate the process of engaging staff in writing learning outcomes for their own modules and programmes.

- The setting up of the National Academy for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning helped to disseminate to other institutions in Ireland and abroad the good practices established in UCC and gave UCC a leading role in helping other third level institutions to implement Bologna.
- In Scotland and Portugal the organisation of international conferences on the Bologna Process helped to chart the way forward on the steps required for full implementation of the Bologna Process in those countries. The use of international speakers with proven track records in key aspects of the Bologna Process gave added value to these conferences.

4.3. Recommendations

Vytautas Magnus University is a similar university to University College Cork in that both universities are based in the second largest city of a relatively small country. UCC has established a reputation both in Ireland and abroad as a centre of expertise in the Bologna Process and also as a centre of excellence for Teaching and Learning. There is no reason why Vytautas Magnus University cannot achieve a similar reputation. In order to do this, it would be helpful for the Centre for Quality of Studies to consider the following:

- Based on the experiences of UCC and taking account of its own circumstances, draw up a strategy for the implementation of the Bologna Process in Vytautas Magnus University.
- Consider the possibility of the Centre for Quality of Studies publishing a translation in Lithuania of the handbook *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes – A Practical Guide*.
- Organise an international seminar on the Bologna Process at Vytautas Magnus University.
- Organise follow-up training seminars on the Bologna Process and Teaching and Learning for staff at Vytautas Magnus University and other universities in Lithuania.
- Consider the establishment of programmes of study in Vytautas Magnus University to enable staff to obtain formal qualifications in teaching at higher education.

The author congratulates the Centre for Quality of Studies for its initiative and vision in establishing this project to enable it to successfully implement the Bologna Process in Vytautas Magnus University. I wish you all every success in embracing the challenges that lay ahead. Having experience of working with the excellent team in the Centre for Quality of Studies, I have no doubt that you will be enormously successful in all aspects of your work on the Bologna Process.

Quality Promotion Unit in University College Cork

Mission Statement for the University

To create, preserve, and communicate knowledge and to enhance cultural, social and economic life locally, regionally and globally.

The Vision

To be a research-led university of international standing with impact in Munster, Ireland, Europe and the world.

In order to assist in the achievement of its mission and vision for the future the University has established procedures for quality improvement and quality assurance. Underlying these is a set of principles that inform its approach. Clear understanding and acceptance of these principles by all staff is essential if the quality improvement/quality assurance system is to work effectively.

1. Principles

1.1. We aim to assure the quality of the total student experience.

The focus of the quality improvement/quality assurance procedures is not just on maintaining the academic output standard of our courses (although this is a vital element if we are to meet the needs of our students). We aim to assure the quality of the students' experience while they are studying at the University. We recognise that all areas of the University's operation affect (directly or indirectly) the quality of that experience and ultimately may have an impact on student achievement.

1.2. All members of staff are responsible for quality.

Quality is deemed the responsibility of every member of staff of UCC. Everybody has a contribution to make. In order for this approach to be successful, there must be clear lines of responsibility and accountability for each area of operation and adequate support to enable the staff to achieve their quality objectives.

1.3. We aim to improve quality whenever possible.

Within the constraints of resources available, we aim to provide the best possible student experience and to foster quality improvement at all levels.

1.4. We are committed to the principle of external peer involvement in assuring quality.

We recognise that one important factor in assuring quality involves constant re-examination of our own approach against those of our peers. In this way we can assure ourselves that we are maintaining appropriate standards and also demonstrate accountability to external bodies for the use of public funds.

We are committed to the involvement of external peers in our quality improvement/quality

assurance procedures (In this context ‘peer’ is broadly defined to incorporate academic staff, practitioners and future employers).

1.5. We take into account the views of our students.

We recognise that students can make a valuable contribution to the assurance and assessment of quality within the university. We are therefore committed to seeking the views of our students and using the feedback that we gain to improve the quality of their experience.

2. Strategy for Implementation of Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance Procedures in UCC

2.1. Introduction

In common with many universities world-wide, Irish universities have engaged in a process of formalisation of quality improvement and quality assurance (QI/QA) procedures.

Benefiting from experience gained in conduct of a Pilot Programme on implementation of a QI/QA system, all the Irish Universities put in place QI/QA systems that are in accord with international best practice. In each institution the emphasis is on ownership of the process by the people involved and on efforts to ensure that the process is an effective catalyst for quality improvement.

Section 35 of the *Universities Act 1997* assigned responsibility for procedures to improve the quality of education and related services provided by the universities to the governing authority of each institution, and established the legislative framework under which the universities’ QI/QA processes now operate. The procedures must include a periodic evaluation of each department, unit, faculty and of any service provided by the university. The evaluation must be made by employees of the university and by persons, other than employees, who are competent to make national and international comparisons on the quality of teaching and research and the provision of other services at university level. The evaluation process must include assessment by students and all others availing of the teaching, research and other services provided by the university.

There is a requirement that the findings arising out of the application of the procedures evaluating the quality must be published in such form as the Governing Authority in each institution thinks fit. Commencing in 2002, the Governing Body in UCC has approved the publication of the Peer Review Reports, following their approval by the Governing Body. Since then Governing Body has delegated authority to the Quality Promotion Committee for approval of publication of the review reports.

In 1998 the Governing Body in UCC approved the establishment of a Quality Promotion Committee of the Governing Body. The President of UCC chairs this committee and members are drawn from the academic, administrative and support service communities (for membership details and Terms of Reference for the Committee see the Quality Promotion Unit web site at <http://www.ucc.ie/quality>). Described below is a summary of the procedures for implementation of QI/QA procedures in UCC that have been approved by the Quality Promotion Committee and the Governing Body.

In 1999 the Quality Promotion Unit¹ was established with the remit to facilitate the implementation of the policies of the Governing Body and the University with respect to quality assurance and quality improvement.

In 2003 the Irish Universities published *A Framework for Quality in Irish Universities*. This publication sets out the principles and guidelines under which the QI/QA system in Irish Universities operates to date. It is a publication which all the Universities agreed to and signed up and which set out to describe the background and aspirations of the Irish Universities in relation to quality assurance and quality improvement.

In 2003 the Irish Universities established the Irish Universities Quality Board² (IUQB). Membership of the IUQB includes representatives of internal and external stakeholders of the university as well as experts in quality in third level university education. The Board has been established as an independent company with a majority of members of the Board from outside the university sector.

2.2. Methodology for Quality Reviews

The components of the methodology are:

- Self-assessment;
- Peer Review;
- Report by the Peer Review Group incorporating recommendations for quality improvement;
- Follow-up and on-going quality improvement.

Departments/units/directors of academic programmes together with a small group of colleagues from UCC and other Universities and/or other external bodies as appropriate carry out the review. The review is of departments/units/academic programmes and not of individuals. When a review has been completed a report emerges which does not identify individuals by name, and is confidential to the department/unit/academic programme course team, the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit, the Quality Promotion Committee, Head of College, Dean(s) if appropriate, and the members of the University Management Team of the University, until the formal approval of the report for publication by the Quality Promotion Committee of the University. As required under the *Universities Act 1997* the Governing Body also publishes a report on the Quality Reviews and the findings. This report is made publicly available. The reports are published on the web site of the Quality Promotion Unit.

2.3. Self-Assessment

A co-ordinating committee of the department/unit/academic programme course team³ prepares a Self-Assessment Report. The purpose of this report is to provide a succinct, but comprehensive statement of the unit's activities and, in the case of an academic department, will include an analysis of its teaching, learning and research. The department/unit is asked to focus on identification of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTs) and to suggest appropriate remedies where necessary.

¹ <http://www.ucc.ie/quality>

² <http://www.iuqb.ie>

³ Here after referred to as 'unit'

Benchmarking of the department's/unit's activities is an essential component of the Self-Assessment Report. Some of the data for the Self-Assessment Report is collected in the form of questionnaires completed by staff, students, graduates and employers. The Quality Promotion Unit, if requested by the department/unit, provides assistance in the conduct of the survey.

As the primary goal is Quality Improvement the formulation of strategies and recommendations for improving the work of the department/unit must be highlighted in the Self-Assessment.

The Quality Promotion Unit provides detailed guidelines for the format and content of the Self-Assessment Report. The guidelines have been approved by the Quality Promotion Committee and the Governing Body of UCC. The guidelines emphasise the goal of quality improvement and the necessity to bring forward strategies and recommendations for how improvement can be effected. The guidelines indicate the information that should be supplied in addition to the recommendations for improvement. This information includes an analysis of the students' assessment of the services provided, of the teaching of academic departments, a summary of the staff profile of the unit, the workloads of staff, and, in particular for the academic staff of a unit, a breakdown of the distribution of effort between teaching responsibilities and research. All academic staff, including all research staff, are required to submit a brief summary of their research activity, including publications for the previous five/six years, number of postgraduate students supervised, number of postgraduate students supervised with degrees conferred, research income, etc.

2.4. Timescale

The Governing Body of UCC decided that all academic departments and administration and support services units would be reviewed over a six year period for the first cycle, commencing in 2000/01. The schedule of reviews is published on the Quality Promotion Unit web site. The second cycle of reviews has commenced, following on the external review of the effectiveness of the procedures conducted by the European University Association in 2005, and an internal review of the effectiveness of the procedures which took place in UCC.

Detailed timetables for quality reviews are prepared by the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit and approved by the Quality Promotion Committee. All elements have detailed guidelines intended to assist units preparing for review, prepared by the Quality Promotion Unit. The Director of the QP Unit provides briefings and training to staff of units preparing for review aimed at encouraging and facilitating staff in the preparation and ensuring engagement of staff in the exercise. Thus the unit gains as much benefit as possible from the quality review – both the preparation and the review visit.

2.5. Questionnaires

It is important to get views of staff, students, graduates and employers. A collection of questionnaires were compiled by the Quality Promotion Unit and are available to all academic departments and administration and support services units. The collection is not definitive and is intended as help only. Individual units may have special requirements and these are discussed with the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit as early as possible. Software for the conduct of electronic surveys of staff and students has been acquired by

the Quality Promotion Unit and access to the software may be gained by application to the Quality Promotion Unit.

2.6. Peer Review

The Quality Promotion Committee appoints the Peer Review Group who will conduct a peer review of the unit. The Quality Promotion Committee appoints the members according to procedures approved by the Governing Body. Liaison with external advisors and reviewers and the Quality Promotion Committee is all conducted through the office of the Quality Promotion Unit. The Quality Unit is responsible for ensuring that all arrangements are made appropriately and according to the decisions of the Governing Body of the University and the Quality Promotion Committee.

The Peer Review Group studies the Self-Assessment Report and then visits the unit undergoing review. The aims of the two- to three-day site visit are to clarify and verify details of the Self-Assessment Report, to view the facilities and to allow members of the unit and students/users of the service to meet with the Peer Review Group. Before leaving the campus the Peer Review Group completes the first draft of the report and makes an exit presentation to all members of the unit. The Peer Review Report is prepared by the peer reviewers in accordance with the guidelines for preparation of the report provided by the Quality Promotion Unit and the Unit supports the activities of the Group throughout the site visit, as necessary. Reviewers are asked to comment on all the recommendations for improvement that a unit may make and, in addition, the report may include recommendations for quality improvement from the peer reviewers. The reviewers are requested to submit the report within one month of the site visit to the Quality Promotion Unit. Following verification of the factual content a copy of the report is sent to the chair of the unit co-ordinating committee, the Head of Unit, the UCC Quality Promotion Committee, and Head of College/Vice-President/budgetary head, as appropriate. The final Report is published on the University web site following its consideration by the Quality Promotion Committee. The Quality Promotion Committee prepares a report on the review that is submitted to the Governing Body for approval. The Governing Body, in accordance with the provisions of section 35 of the *Universities Act 1997*, publishes a report on the findings of the review. The Quality Promotion Unit ensures that all communications between the Quality Promotion Committee and the unit undergoing review occur and are fully comprehensive and understood.

The site visit is central to the review process and is carefully planned. Close liaison is required between the unit co-ordinating committee and the Quality Promotion Unit in planning the visit.

The detailed structure and timetabling of the site visit is organised by the Chair of the unit co-ordinating committee in consultation with the Quality Promotion Unit. The Quality Promotion Unit arranges the logistics of the site visit, in consultation with the unit and the members of the peer review group.

2.7. Follow Up

In UCC the follow-up to a review and implementation of actions arising from the recommendations for improvement made in the review report is deemed a critical phase of the review. The Director of the Quality Promotion Unit leads and facilitates the discussions that take place between the unit and the Head of College/University Officer, as

appropriate, with a view to:

- Implementing the recommendations contained in the peer review report.
- Ensuring continual quality improvement.
- Reviewing the self-assessment procedures.

A Quality Improvement Plan is agreed between the Head of Unit and the Head of College/Vice-President to whom the unit reports. The plan details the actions to be taken by the unit within specified times and lists those actions that should be taken by the University and is constructed according to guidelines developed by the Quality Promotion Unit.

Approximately one year to eighteen months following on the completion of the review the unit is asked to report to the Quality Promotion Committee on the implementation and actions taken on the recommendations for improvement that were both endorsed and made by the Peer Review Group and endorsed by the Quality Promotion Committee. A report on this Follow-Up Review is made to the Governing Body as a part of the Annual Report of the Quality Promotion Committee.

2010/2011

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

NFQ Level 9, Minor (Certificate)/Major (Diploma) Award

This part-time programme is offered on a modular, credit accumulation basis. Participants will normally accumulate credits over a maximum of 24 months.

Entry Requirements

The programme is intended for teachers or intending teachers in higher education institutions. The minimum entry requirement is an undergraduate degree or equivalent.

Programme Requirements

Postgraduate Certificate

Students take 30 credits as follows:

[TL6003](#) Theories of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (15 credits);

[TL6004](#) Practice Approaches to Teaching, Learning and Assessment (15 credits).

Postgraduate Diploma

The Postgraduate Diploma consists of 30 credits from the Postgraduate Certificate and 30 credits as follows:

[TL6005](#) Disciplinary Approaches to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (15 credits);

[TL6006](#) Diversity in Student Learning (15 credits).

Module descriptions are contained in the [Book of Modules 2010/2011](#).

Examinations

Full details and regulations governing Examinations for each programme will be contained in the *Marks and Standards 2011 Book* and for each module in the [Book of Modules 2010/2011](#).

Learning Outcomes (Postgraduate Certificate)

On successful completion of this programme, students should be able to:

- Recognise teaching as a valid form of research and scholarship;

- Participate in discussions on teaching, learning and assessment as a community of scholars;
- Design modules based on principles of student-centred learning;
- Critique planning and teaching practice in the light of student learning/feedback;
- Engage with a diverse, multi-cultural student population;
- Hold a professional commitment to teaching and student learning.

Learning Outcomes (Postgraduate Diploma)

On successful completion of this programme, students should be able to:

- Investigate their teaching as an integral, ongoing part of their research;
- Appraise what is distinctive and integrative about their disciplines in promoting student learning;
- Generate new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment to maximise student learning;
- Evaluate module design to harness diversity and integrative learning;
- Value the contribution of students in developing research, teaching and learning.

Details of modules studied in the above courses are listed in subsequent pages.

TL 6003 Theories of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Credit Weighting: 15.

Teaching Period: Teaching Periods 1 and 2.

No of Students: min 6.

Pre-requisites: A degree or equivalent as necessary for third-level appointment.

Co-requisites: Teaching hours in a third-level setting.

Teaching Methods: Directed Study (24 hours directed learning, field work and research in the context of professional practice); Associated Reading Assignments; 24 contact hours composed of lectures and workshops.

Module Co-ordinator: Marian McCarthy, Ionad Bairre, The Teaching and Learning Centre.

Lecturer/s: Marian McCarthy and Course Team of Ionad Bairre.

Module Objective: To introduce third-level teachers to a range of theoretical perspectives on teaching, learning and assessment in higher education.

Module Content: This module will provide an overview of key theories of teaching, learning and assessment. Various models of curriculum design and development will be explored, as well as a range of modes and techniques of assessment. The module will be grounded in particular in the work of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, relating to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and that of the Project Zero Classroom at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this module participants should be able to:

- Examine some key theories of teaching, learning and assessment in higher education;
- Discuss these theories in the light of their own practice;
- Demonstrate how a chosen aspect of theory works in practice;
- Appreciate the complexities of teaching, learning and assessment;
- Participate in discussions (real and virtual) re teaching and learning;
- Support each other in their learning through listening and peer review;
- Recognise teaching as a valid form of research and scholarship;
- Hold a professional commitment to teaching and student learning.

Assessment: Three short assignments: A reflective essay on teaching and learning, an analysis of a classroom assessment technique to gauge student learning and an article review. This module is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis.

Compulsory elements: Continuous Assessment and participation in the course.

Penalties: Candidates must submit within three weeks of the deadline. Late submissions not accepted afterwards.

Pass Standard: A Pass/Fail judgement.

End of year written exam profile: No end of year written exam.

Requirements for supplemental examination: Marks in passed element(s) of Continuous Assessment are carried forward, Failed element(s) of Continuous Assessment must be repeated (revise and resubmit project/portfolio, as prescribed by Ionad Bairre course team by 31st July).

TL 6004: *Practice Approaches to Teaching, Learning and Assessment*

Credit Weighting: 15 credits.

Teaching Period: Teaching Period 2.

No of Students: min 6.

Pre-requisites: A degree or equivalent as necessary for third-level appointment.

Co-requisites: Teaching hours in a third-level setting.

Teaching Methods: 24 contact hours composed of lectures, seminars and workshops; 24 hours research and field work in the context of professional, reflective practice; associated reading assignments.

Module Co-ordinator: Marian McCarthy, Ionad Bairre, The Teaching and Learning Centre, The West Lodge, UCC (Seconded from the Department of Education).

Module Objective: Through researching their practice, teachers begin to focus on student learning and ways to facilitate it.

Module Content: Participants will be introduced to student-centred approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. They will learn to research their teaching with a view to improving pedagogy. They will be introduced to ways of analysing and critiquing course design, of documenting and reviewing teaching and assessing student learning. Through reflecting on their teaching, participants will come to name and understand its elements and to recognise the signs of student engagement and understanding.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this module participants will be able to:

- Analyse how a chosen aspect of pedagogical theory impacts on student learning;
- Design a module based on principles of active learning, student understanding and ongoing assessment;
- Critique practice in the light of a chosen theoretical framework;
- Relate well to students of all abilities in the classroom;
- Value the contribution of their students in developing their learning.

Assessment: Participants will create a Course Portfolio in which they will review the design, teaching and student learning of a course they are teaching. This module is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis.

Compulsory elements: Continuous Assessment.

Penalties: Candidates must submit within three weeks of the deadline. Late submissions not accepted.

Pass Standard: A Pass/Fail judgement.

End of Year written examinations profile: Marks in passed element(s) of Continuous Assessment are carried forward, Failed element(s) of Continuous Assessment must be repeated (revise and resubmit project/portfolio, as prescribed by Ionad Bairre course team by 31st July).

Requirements for supplemental examination: Marks in passed element(s) of Continuous Assessment are carried forward, Failed element(s) of Continuous Assessment must be repeated (revise and resubmit project/portfolio, as prescribed by Ionad Bairre course team by 31st July).

TL 6005: Disciplinary Approaches to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Credit Weighting: 15.

Teaching Period: Teaching Period 1 or 2.

No of Students: min 6.

Pre- requisites: A degree or equivalent as necessary for third-level appointment.

Co- requisites: Teaching hours in a third-level setting.

Teaching Methods: 24 contact hours composed of lectures, seminars and workshops; 24 hours research and field work in the context of professional, reflective practice; associated reading assignments.

Module Co-ordinator: Marian McCarthy, Ionad Bairre, The Teaching and Learning Centre, The West Lodge, UCC (Seconded from the Department of Education).

Module Objective: To develop a scholarship of teaching and learning approach in the disciplines, enabling participants to peer review their practice.

Module Content: Participants will be introduced to ways of observing and critiquing their teaching and will make and decode a video/audio of their practice. Participants will then share and critique this work in a peer review process. Teachers will also be introduced to the concept of a 'signature pedagogy' in their discipline and will review their practice in the light of this. Ultimately, the module focuses on facilitating disciplinary understanding and on the ways we can support and hinder student learning.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Identify the key features of their disciplines in the context of pedagogy;
- Explain the key features of a signature pedagogy in the discipline chosen;
- Show how their pedagogy works by creating a video/audio of practice;

- Investigate how effective or otherwise this pedagogy is for disciplinary understanding and student learning;
- Revise planning and practice to maximise the pedagogies central to the discipline and to introduce other pedagogies from other disciplines;
- Appraise what is distinctive and integrative about the discipline in its promotion of student learning.

Assessment: Participants will peer review their practice through video/audio analysis. Participants will write an essay exploring the concept of a ‘signature pedagogy’.

Compulsory elements: Continuous Assessment.

Penalties (for late submission): Participants must submit all assignments within three weeks of the deadline.

Pass Standard and any Special Requirements for Passing Module: A Pass/Fail judgement.

End of year written examination profile: No end of year written examination.

Requirements for Supplemental Examination: Marks in passed element(s) of Continuous Assessment are carried forward, Failed element(s) of Continuous Assessment must be repeated (revise and resubmit project/portfolio, as prescribed by Ionad Bairre course team by 31st July).

TL 6006: Diversity in Student Learning

Credit weighting: 15.

Teaching Period: Teaching Period 1 or 2.

No of students: min. 6.

Pre-requisites: a degree or its equivalent as necessary for third-level appointment.

Co-requisites: teaching hours in a third-level setting.

Teaching methods: 24 contact hours composed of lectures, seminars and workshops; 24 hours research and field work in the context of professional, reflective practice; associated reading assignments.

Module Co-ordinator: Marian McCarthy, Ionad Bairre, The Teaching and Learning Centre, The West Lodge, UCC (Seconded from the Department of Education).

Lecturers: Marian McCarthy and course team of Ionad Bairre, The Teaching and Learning Centre.

Module Objective: To introduce participants to diverse approaches to student learning, enabling them to critique their teaching in the light of these.

Module Content: The course will draw on Multiple Intelligences theory and its relevance to diversity. It will also provide an overview of the literature on learning styles. The module will focus on the implications for practice of such diversity and how it impacts on curriculum planning and student engagement. It will draw on the work of Gardner, Perkins, Bain, Brookfield and others.

Strategies from the Arts in Education will be introduced to help teachers develop diverse and integrative approaches to student learning.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this module participants will be able to:

- Identify the various intelligences and learning styles indicative of diversity ;
- Construct differentiated learning approaches while promoting integrative learning;
- Experiment in the classroom to maximise student diversity and engagement;
- Critique a recorded teaching session in terms of student access and involvement;
- Generate new approaches to teaching and assessment to maximise student learning;
- Evaluate module design to harness diversity and integrative learning.

Assessment: Participants will construct an inquiry portfolio around a key research question concerning student learning.

Compulsory Elements: Continuous Assessment.

Penalties (for late submission): Candidates must submit within three weeks of the deadline. Late submissions not accepted.

Pass Standard: A Pass/Fail judgement.

End of Year written examinations profile: Marks in passed element(s) of Continuous Assessment are carried forward, Failed element(s) of Continuous Assessment must be repeated (revise and resubmit project/portfolio, as prescribed by Ionad Bairre course team by 31st July).

National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning Background and context

Since 1996 an increasing number of higher education institutions have made significant developments in teaching and learning through the provision of Higher Education Authority (HEA) funding from the Targeted Initiatives scheme. This scheme was a major impetus to teaching and learning as it allowed individuals to apply for funding outside of their core budget. The HEA attached great importance to this funding scheme as it provided them an opportunity to influence areas of strategic importance in higher education. In 2004, the targeted initiatives scheme was redefined and renamed Strategic Initiatives. This redefinition meant that proposals for funding in teaching and learning would have to tie into the university's overall strategy for improvement. Strategic Initiatives funded a number of proposals for teaching development centres and awards schemes for teaching excellence.

In 2006, Strategic Initiatives was further expanded and renamed the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF). This would fund collaborative and innovative proposals of up to five million euro through top-slicing the overall budget for higher education. SIF was established as a multi-annual fund, amounting to €510 million over the period 2006 – 2013, and directed towards support for innovation in higher education institutions. It invited proposals that would implement new approaches to enhancing quality and effectiveness within higher education and research, incorporating the use of existing and new funding and resources more effectively. The SIF initiative aimed at enhancing collaboration between higher education institutions, improving teaching and learning, supporting institutional reform, promoting access and lifelong learning and supporting the development of fourth level education.

Within Ireland, a number of inter-university collaborative initiatives in the area of teaching and learning had developed in recent years. Some of these had benefited from funding from the HEA's Strategic Initiatives Fund which had laid the groundwork for networking between universities. When the HEA issued a call for submissions in summer 2006 under the Strategic Innovation Fund for collaborative institutional proposals relating to teaching and learning, the five institutions that are now part of NAIRTL were happy to formalise what had been an informal collaborative network.

NAIRTL Proposal

It was clear from an analysis of quality reviews in UCC that there had been an increasing focus on discipline-based research in recent years, supported by grants from the Programme for Research in Third Level in Ireland (PRTL), Science Foundation of Ireland (SFI), the Health Research Board (HRB), the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET) and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) as well as from various private funds such as the Wellcome Trust, Atlantic Philanthropies and others. Many of these grant agencies emphasised the

importance of linking research with teaching and learning but there was no institutional or national body at that time to encourage and support this link. Through UCC's involvement in international collaborations relating to teaching and learning, there was an awareness of an increasing formalisation of the link between research and teaching and learning in other countries – in England, with support from the Higher Education Academy; in Scotland through the QAA; and in the U.S. through various agencies including the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning.

University College Cork, in collaboration with NUI Galway, Trinity College Dublin, Cork Institute of Technology and Waterford Institute of Technology submitted a proposal for SIF funding for a National Academy that would support academic staff researchers and graduate students, to implement and advance effective research-informed teaching and learning practices for diverse audiences. In October 2006 this proposal secured three million euro over three years to establish a National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL). This initiative would be led by UCC and would support and enhance innovation in teaching and learning in publicly funded higher education institutes in the Republic of Ireland. The participating institutions would need to match the HEA's outlay, investing a further three million euro in the project over three years.

Management Structures

The success of the National Academy has been enabled through the effective management and governance structures that were established from the outset. There are three elements in the operating structure for NAIRTL. The *Management Board* includes a representative of each partner institution and it meets once every six weeks approximately. It is responsible for policy, financial planning and decision-making. The *International Advisory Board* includes members with extensive experience and expertise in the field of research-informed teaching and learning. Frequent electronic communication is kept with the Board who provide expert advice to the Management Board. An annual meeting of the Board takes place to coincide with the conference of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The *NAIRTL Directorate* is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Management Board and supporting the participating institutions in achieving the National Academy's objectives. The Directorate co-ordinates project activities in the various strands and supports the dissemination of the work through conferences, publications and the website.

Overview of Progress to date

Since its establishment in 2007, the National Academy has made significant progress on a number of its objectives. National collaborative working groups have advanced many of the objectives including, development of a national framework for the professional development of supervisors of postgraduate students; development of principles that will guide the process of establishing and developing accredited programmes in teaching and learning and implementation of the Bologna action lines.

More than 50 events including conferences, seminars and workshops have been organised in HEI's nationally that have served to develop good practice in integrating research, teaching and learning. More than 130 grants have been disbursed to individuals and groups for projects that will enhance the third and fourth level experience. The outputs of these projects include course materials, interactive software, education programmes, workshop

resource materials, websites, handbooks, e-learning courses, public lectures, conference papers, training programmes, seminars, journal papers, etc. all of which enhance teaching and learning through integration with research. The National Academy has already designed, produced and widely disseminated eight publications. Undergraduate and post graduate students nationally are now benefiting from more engaged staff. In addition the Academy has developed a programme of National Awards for Excellence in Teaching, which recognises and rewards teachers who have been successful in uniting their dual roles as teacher and researcher.

The strategic framework that guides the work of the National Academy has three main strands: *investigation*, *developing practice*, and *dissemination*. The National Academy has planned and carried out a substantial range of actions in each strand, to make progress towards achievement of its goals and intended outcomes (see below).

NAIRTL actions for each project strand		
Investigation	Developing Practice	Dissemination
Goal: Investigate and evaluate models of good practice in research enhanced teaching and learning in higher education.	Goal: Enable the partner institutions to develop and implement good practice in research enhanced teaching and learning in higher education.	Goal: Disseminate good practice among higher education practitioners in Ireland and abroad.

The National Academy is now affiliated with all 38 higher education institutions in Ireland and its outcomes are significantly enhancing the overall performance of the entire higher education sector, serving to elevate the status of teaching on parity with research. All activities of the Academy promote excellence in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching through a wide range of initiatives that encourage and support integration of research, teaching and learning. A successful collaboration model has been built across the higher education sector and links with senior management, research, and teaching and learning departments have been unanimously welcomed.

Bottom-up together with top-down approaches have been employed in the achievement of the National Academy objectives. The bottom up approach takes into account what students and teachers are looking for, the top down approach works at the level of senior management strategic plans and institutional mission statements; ongoing strides are being made towards harmonizing the two. Through effective harnessing of the expertise in Irish institutions together with availing of the benefits of links with numerous international colleagues, the National Academy continues to build on the progress made to date.

Efforts towards Bologna Implementation

The aim of the Bologna Agreement of 1999 is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education in Europe. An important facet of the work of NAIRTL is to support higher education institutions in Ireland to successfully implement the Bologna action lines. In 2007 the Management Board of the National Academy established working groups to focus on some of the Academy's key objectives. The Working Groups include representation from each of the NAIRTL partner institutes. One of the Working Groups was established to develop principles that will guide the process of establishing active links with the Bologna Process. The group has focused on advancing work on implementing the Bologna action lines and its aims include:

- developing principles that will guide the process of establishing active links with the Bologna Process to advance progress on implementing the action lines by 2009;
- providing advice on issues relating to the Bologna process;
- developing and disseminating documents, guidelines, workshops etc. as appropriate.

The main outcomes of the National Academy with regard to Bologna Implementation are listed below.

NAIRTL actions for each project strand		
Investigation	Developing Practice	Dissemination
Graduate Competences Survey	Workshops Seminars Conferences	Dissemination of Learning Outcomes Publication Conference Proceedings screen casts Conference Proceedings publication Survey Report

Qualification Recognition

The working group organised a symposium, provocatively entitled *Will your qualification be recognised? Spotlight on Engineering* (Appendix A below). This event took place on 12th May 2008 in the Cork School of Music, Cork Institute of Technology.

In Ireland until recently, engineering qualifications have traditionally been focused on the 4-year B.Eng. Degree with international recognition for this 4 year programme as qualifying engineers. In many other European countries however the tradition has been focused on the 5 year Masters programme as the qualification to be recognized.

A consequence of the discussions at European level on the appropriate qualification for recognition of engineering has been the decision of Engineers Ireland to accredit the 5 year Masters programme as the education standard required for the Chartered Engineer title from programmes completed in 2013. The evolving introduction of the new standard will require a reconsideration of the definition and competences of a Chartered Engineer.

This one-day symposium looked at the strategic implications of the Bologna Agreement for professional qualifications. The symposium was set in the context of lifelong learning and examined the approach of the engineering institutions, Engineers Ireland and the Institution of Chemical Engineers to the recognition and transferability of professional engineering qualifications. The Symposium considered the issues around changes in programme design and its implementation for engineering education in Ireland.

The symposium was opened by then Minister for Education and Science, Mr. Batt O’Keeffe and six keynote presentations followed focusing on:

- Engineering Education in this new model of European Development.
- Bologna and Lifelong Learning: the state of play and future directions.
- Academic formation post-Bologna – complexity or opportunity for a global profession?
- A postgraduate perspective on the Engineering curriculum.
- Engineering education implementation issues in Ireland.

- Bologna and engineering education – a policy perspective.

Many wonderful ideas and case studies were put forward and the presentations provoked lively discussion and debate. The event was recorded and is available to download from the resources section of the National Academy's website.

Staff Development

The second symposium organised by the working group focused on *Bologna and Staff Development* (Appendix B below). This event was held in Trinity College Dublin on December 5th 2008. As discussions and implementation of the Bologna action lines have progressed, one issue that has exercised institutions here in Ireland has been the development of academic and support staff.

The promotion of mobility of students and staff is at the core of the Bologna Process. Encouraging staff mobility is seen as a positive way to improve career opportunities for staff, to enhance the learning experience of students and to enable internationalisation. This symposium considered the staff development needs in Higher Education in Ireland and specific measures were proposed to remove obstacles to staff mobility and to promote the full use of mobility programmes.

The event particularly highlighted issues and case studies pertaining to the Discipline of Nursing and Midwifery. Five keynote presentations focused on the following issues:

- Strategic underpinning for organisational change;
- Development of research agendas;
- A student perspective on staff development;
- National Framework for Qualifications;
- Learning Outcomes.

The following poster presentations added to the colour and creativity of this event:

- Developing research capacity in Nursing and Midwifery;
- Blogs: supporting staff development.

Participants were enthusiastic about the opportunities the Bologna Process could provide. It was collectively agreed that understanding how students learn, how to write learning outcomes and to modernise course material, together with effective use of ICT in course delivery were all part of the skill set that every lecturer should have. The symposium engaged the delegates to reflect on the continuous cycle of change in higher education. There was consensus that the Bologna Process would give us the opportunity to become more sophisticated in our thinking about higher education practices and processes. It provides a welcome catalyst for change at all levels of higher education development.

This event was also recorded and presentations are available to download from the National Academy's website. Also a publication including the proceedings of both the Qualification Recognition and Staff Development symposia was prepared and widely disseminated. This publication was made available free of charge and can be ordered from the Academy's website.

Summary

The Academy has contributed strongly in many of the priority areas for higher education highlighted by the Ministers in the Leuven Communiqué, including:

- Lifelong learning;
- Employability;
- Student-centered learning and the teaching mission of higher education;
- Education, research and innovation;
- International openness;
- Mobility;
- Data collection;
- Equitable access and improved retention.

The National Academy has and will continue to align our objectives and activities with the Government's national strategic goals for education and will consequently contribute to the delivery of the vision for education set out in the Bologna Framework.

Since its establishment in 2007, the National Academy has actively engaged with the Bologna process, investigating graduate competences, developing practice through organization of relevant events, and dissemination of the learning outcomes publication and subsequently the proceedings of our symposia. Our aim is to ensure the expertise developed through NAIRTL is widely shared and where relevant is integrated into policy areas. The National Academy has more to do in supporting higher education institutions to successfully implement the Bologna action lines. The feedback from the Bologna Summer School in UCC showed that participants left the event better equipped to successfully implement Bologna on returning to their institutions.


Acknowledgements

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- Paul Barry, WIT;
- Biswajit Basu, TCD;
- Stephen Cassidy, CIT;
- Jim Gosling, NUI Galway;
- Jennifer Murphy, NAIRTL;
- Barry O'Connor, CIT;
- Catherine O'Mahony, NAIRTL;
- Mícheál O'Riordán, WIT;
- Norma Ryan, UCC;
- Paul Ryan, NUI Galway.

Particular thanks must also go to the many paper presenters and poster exhibitors who have shared their expertise and experience so generously. Finally a big thank you to all that attended the events organised. The vibrant, dynamic discussions and debates were stimulating and have contributed to the progression of our work in implementing the Bologna action lines.

Programme for First Symposium



NAIRTL
National Academy for Integration of
Research & Teaching & Learning
Academy of Learning and Development
Teaching & Research & Learning

WILL YOUR QUALIFICATION BE RECOGNISED?
The Impact of the Bologna Process on Professional Qualifications:
SPOTLIGHT ON ENGINEERING

PROGRAMME
Monday 12th May, 2008
Stack Theatre, CIT Cork School of Music, Cork Institute of Technology

9h 00 – 9h 30	Registration, Tea and Coffee
9h 30 – 9h 45	Opening Address Chair: Katherine Keane, Head, Architecture Department, CIT
9h 45 – 10h 15	Dermot Coughlan, Director, Department of Lifelong Learning & Outreach, University of Limerick
10h 15 – 11h 00	Professor Sebastião Feyo de Azevedo, National Vice-President Ordem dos Engenheiros, Portugal; European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education
11h 00 – 11h 30 BREAK	
	Chair: Shane Kelly, Incoming USI President
11h 30 – 12h 15	Neil Atkinson, Director of Qualifications, Institute of Chemical Engineers
12h 15 – 13h 00	Eimear Ruane, Post graduate engineering student, NUIG
13h 00 – 14h 30 LUNCH	
	Chair: Liam Hodnett, Head of Engineering Faculty, CIT
14h 30 – 15h 15	Professor Bairbre Redmond, Vice-Principal/Dean of Social Science College of Human Sciences Newman Building, UCD
15h 15 – 16h 00	Denis McGrath, Registrar, Engineers Ireland
16h 00 – 16h 30	Open Discussion Session

NAIRTL Bologna Working Group Members:
 Dr Barry O'Connor (Chair)
 Professor Biswajit Basu
 Professor Jim Gosling
 Jennifer Murphy
 Dr Mícheál O'Riordán
 Dr Norma Ryan

Programme for Second Symposium



The National Academy SYMPOSIUM



BOLOGNA AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

December 5th 2008
Science Gallery, Trinity College Dublin
IRELAND

SPEAKERS



Professor Mary Daly, Principal, UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies – Opening Address



Professor Joyce Fitzpatrick, Elizabeth Brooks Ford Professor of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio – Development of Research Agendas



Dr Declan Kennedy, Department of Education, University College Cork – Bologna and Learning Outcomes



Dr Mary Gobbi, Senior Lecturer in Nursing, University of Southampton School of Health Sciences – Strategic underpinning for organisational change



Mr Shane Kelly, President, Union of Students in Ireland – The Student Perspective



Professor Patrick J. Prendergast, Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Trinity College Dublin – Closing Address

The symposium will include a dedicated session for poster presentations. Posters are invited on any topic related to the broad theme of Bologna and staff development. Please submit a 300-word abstract as well as an electronic version of your poster to nairtl@ucc.ie by 28th November 2008.

Attendance at this event is free of charge but places are limited. Register now at www.nairtl.ie














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