



Lifelong Learning

The Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training for 2020 considers lifelong learning as one of four long term strategic objectives. In addition, the benchmarks to be achieved by 2020 define an objective of an average of at least 15% of adults (age group 25-64) should participate in lifelong learning.

All the tools described previously support the development of this lifelong learning axis, especially the qualification framework, the quality, and the recognition tools.

Key Competences for lifelong learning

Competence are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. The reference framework sets out eight key competences:

- Communication in mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competences
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression



Lifelong learning Programme

The European Commission has integrated all its previous education and training initiatives under the single lifelong learning Programme. 2007-2013, life-long learning Programme has four sub-programmes:

- Comenius for school
- Erasmus for higher education
 - A target of 3 millions participants to students mobility actions
- Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training
- Gruntvig for adult education
 - 7,000 individuals involved in adult education per year by 2013

References:

- http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/educ-training_en.html
- http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc42_en.htm
- http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm

Should lifelong learning be a driving pillar in the Lebanese Higher Education Strategy?
What are the lifelong learning tools to be used?

Bologna Process and Higher Education Reform in Europe

- Inspiring Concepts -

Bologna Process

Bologna process is the process of creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Ministries, Higher Education institutions, students from 46 countries cooperate in this process and international organizations participate in this endeavor. The Ministers responsible for Higher Education in the countries participating in the Bologna process have stated in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, in April 2009:

"In the decade up to 2020 European higher education has a vital contribution to make in realising a Europe of knowledge that is highly creative and innovative."

"Europe can only succeed in this endeavour if it maximises the talents and capacities of all its citizens and fully engages in lifelong learning as well as in widening participation in higher education."

The overarching aim is therefore to create a EHEA based on international cooperation and academic exchange. The EHEA will:

- Facilitate the mobility
- Prepare students for their future career and for life as active citizens in democratic societies
- Offer broad access to high-quality higher education based on democratic principles and academic freedom

History and Structure

Bologna process started after the Bologna Ministerial conference in June 1999. Since then Ministerial conferences followed every two years: Prague (2001), Berlin (2003), Bergen (2005), London (2007) and Leuven (2009).

Bologna Policy Forums is to be organized in parallel to the Ministerial meetings to allow non European countries to join the Bologna process and cooperate with their European counterparts.

The Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) oversees the process between the Ministerial conferences.

The latest Ministerial conference highlighted the importance of lifelong learning, mobility and widening access to higher education.

The international vector has also been put forward with a target by 2020 of 20% of graduating from EHEA to have a study or training period abroad.





Bologna Reform aims

- Readable and comparable degrees organised in a **three-cycle structure** (Bachelor-Master-Doctorate BMD). A **European Qualifications Framework** defines the learning outcomes for each of the three cycles.
 - **Quality assurance** in accordance with the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area"
 - Fair **recognition** of foreign degrees and higher education qualifications in accordance with the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention.
 - Strengthen the social relevance and the links between higher education, research and innovation
 - Improve the **lifelong learning** process
- These reforms are in accordance with a global strategy aiming to relate the EHEA to higher education in other parts of the world.

Bologna Action Lines

- Qualification frameworks and Three-Cycle System
- Joint degrees
- Mobility
- Recognition (ECTS, DS)
- Quality Assurance
- Social Dimension
- Employability
- Lifelong Learning
- EHEA in a global context



References:

- <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/>
- <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/actionlines/recognition.htm>
- <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/WGR2007/Strategy-for-EHEA-in-global-setting.pdf>

Important similarity exists between diversity in the European Higher Education and diversity in the Lebanese Higher Education. Although there is a major difference in the scale, the European reform model would inspire any reform to be conducted in Lebanon.

Standards and Guidelines (ESG)

External Quality Assurance

- Use of internal Quality Assurance procedures
- Development of external Quality Assurance

Processes

- Reporting
- Follow up
- Periodic reviews
- System-wide analyses



External Quality Assurance Agencies

- Use of external Quality Assurance procedures
- Official status
- Activities
- Resources
- Mission statement
- Independence
- External Quality Assurance criteria and processes
- Accountability procedures

References:

- <http://www.enqa.eu/index.lasso>
- <http://www.eqar.eu/>
- <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/Standards-and-Guidelines-for-QA.pdf>

Is a Lebanese Quality Assurance Agency needed?
Should the principles and guidelines defined in the ESG adopted?



Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance means the procedures, processes and systems used by the higher education institutions and organizations to safeguard and improve the quality of its education and other activities. Within the European Higher Education Area, Quality Assurance takes place at two levels:

- Internal within the institutions
- External for accreditation, audit and, assessment

Quality Assurance within Bologna Process

- 1999: Bologna process: Developing comparable criteria and methodologies in Quality Assurance
- 2000: European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- 2001: Prague: Collaboration of higher education institutions and Quality Assurance Agencies in establishing a common framework of reference
- 2003: Berlin: agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines
- 2004: European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education Transformed into the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education ENQA
- 2005: Bergen: adoption of "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" or the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)
- 2007: London: the E4 Group was able to present a model for a European register of Quality Assurance agencies
- 2008: European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) was established
- 2009: Leuven: Progress report on Quality Assurance and EQAR encouraged to further its activities to increase transparency and trust in Quality Assurance

Standards and Guidelines (ESG)

Developed by ENQA, ESU, EUA, and EURASHE it was adopted by Bologna Ministers in 2005.

Internal Quality Assurance

- Policy and procedures
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review
- Assessment of students
- Quality assurance of teaching staff
- Learning resources and student support
- Information systems
- Public information



European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

Qualifications frameworks describe the qualifications of an educational system and how they interlink. National qualifications frameworks describe what learners should know, understand and be able to do on the basis of a given qualification as well as how learners can move from one qualification to another within a system.

Objectives

- "An overarching framework that makes transparent the relationship between European national higher education frameworks of qualifications and the qualifications that contain. It is an articulation mechanism between national frameworks." (Dec 3-4, 2004) ⇒ International transparency
- Make sense of Europe diversity ⇒ Recognition
- Provide tools that make easier for people to earn qualifications in a variety of ways, at different ages, and often in alternation between work and study ⇒ Mobility
- Accommodate different learning paths ⇒ Life learning
- Bridge the world of higher education and the world of work
- Promote social cohesion

EQF Process

- 2 Helsinki seminars 2001-2003
- Seminar on recognition Lisboa 2002
- Seminar on ECTS Zurich 2002
- Seminar on recognition and credit systems Praha 2003
- Seminar on integrated programs Mantova 2003
- Kobenhaven Conference 2003
- Seminar on learning outcomes Edinburgh 2004
- Seminar on Public Responsibility for HE Strasbourg 2004
- Bologna Conference of QF 2005
- Consultation during second half of 2005
- Stakeholders
- Recommendation January 29, 2008



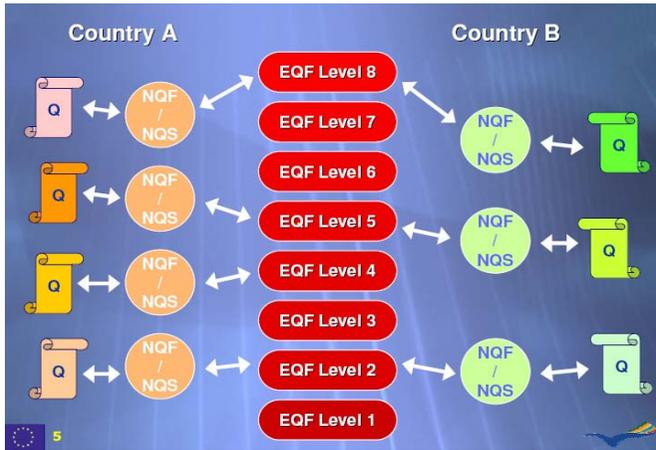
Opportunity	Challenge
Facilitate European cooperation and national reform	Active participation and strong commitment from ALL stakeholders



What is EQF?

- Translation device for comparing qualifications
- Neutral reference point based on learning outcomes
- 8 reference levels
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Competences

Figel 2007



EQF Levels	KNOWLEDGE (Theoretical or Factual)	SKILLS (Cognitive and Practical)	COMPETENCE (attitude, responsibility and autonomy)
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems



Diploma Supplement (DS)

The Diploma Supplement is a document attached to a diploma to facilitate the recognition of qualifications. It is formed of 8 sections that provide information on:

- Holder
- Qualification
- Level of qualification
- Contents and results
- Function of qualification
- Additional information
- Certification
- National higher education system



The DS has been largely promoted and this is due to what it offers:

- DS promotes transparency in higher education
- DS accommodates rapid changes in qualifications
- DS aids mobility, access to higher education and lifelong learning
- DS promotes fair and informed judgments about qualifications

Europass other Documents

Europass brings together several tools for transparency of diplomas, certificates and competences:



- Europass CV
- Europass Language
- Europass Mobility
- Europass Certificate Supplement
- Europass Diploma Supplement

References: ECTS, DS, Europass

- http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm
- http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc1239_en.htm
- http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc46_en.htm
- <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Introduction.csp>
- http://www.crui.it/crui/ECTS/english/english_label.htm

Is a Lebanese accreditation system using the Code of Good Practice from ECA needed?
Should Lebanese Higher Education system adopt tools such as ECTS, DS, and Europass?



European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

"ECTS makes teaching and learning more transparent and facilitates the recognition of studies (formal, non-formal and informal). The system is used across Europe for credit transfer (student mobility) and credit accumulation (learning paths towards a degree). It also informs curriculum design and quality assurance."

- Introduced in 1989
- Student centered system based on the student workload to achieve the objectives of a programme, i.e. learning outcomes and competences to be acquired
- 60 ECTS credits correspond to the workload of a full time student during an academic year
 - ⇒ 1 ECTS @ 25 to 30 working hours
- Credits allocation based on estimation of the student workload that must be estimated, checked and adjusted
 - ⇒ Types of courses, types of learning activities, types of assessment
 - ⇒ Questionnaires
 - ⇒ Update of course content
- Grading in ECTS
 - A: best 10%
 - B: next 25%
 - C: next 30%
 - D: next 25%
 - E: next 10%
- Use of ECTS
 - ECTS can be accumulated to obtain qualifications
 - ECTS awarded can be transferred to another Programme
 - ECTS can facilitate mobility. Supporting documents:
 - Student Application Form
 - Learning Agreement
- ECTS label
 - Awarded to institutions applying ECTS correctly
 - Two level selection: first by national agencies, then at European level
 - Valid for 3 years
 - Criteria to get the label
 - Information package online
 - Correct use of ECTS credits
 - Samples of learning agreements
 - Transcripts of records
 - Proof of academic recognition



	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	COMPETENCE
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	<p>Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change</p> <p>Supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities</p>
Level 5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	<p>Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change</p> <p>Review and develop performance of self and others</p>
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	<p>Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts</p> <p>Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups</p>



	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	COMPETENCE
Level 7	Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
Level 8	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

- The 8 Levels need to be defined specifically per sector and per context
- These definitions should involve ALL the stakeholders

References:

- http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44_en.htm
- http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/eqf/leaflet_en.pdf

Is a National Qualifications Framework or an overarching Qualifications Framework like EQF more appropriate to Lebanon?
Should we start with Joint Degrees?



Recognition

Recognition is the act of acknowledging that an institution of higher education, a programme, a diploma or a number of credits delivered conforms to specific standards. This happens at different levels: the accreditation of a higher education institution or programme or the recognition of a diploma, a course or a module.

Accreditation

The European Consortium of Accreditation (ECA) defines accreditation as "a formal and independent decision, indicating that an institution of higher education and/or programmes meet certain predefined standards." At a national level, accreditation is a formalised decision by a recognized authority as to whether a higher education institution or a programme conforms to specific standards. It is usually a multi-phase process with 3 major steps:

- Submission of self-evaluation documentation by the unit undergoing accreditation
- External assessment by independent experts
- Accreditation decision: (Acceptance, Conditional acceptance, rejection)



ECA

With the emergence of the Bologna Process and the increasing autonomy of higher education institutions, national quality assurance and accreditation systems have been developed throughout Europe. Building the EHEA requests the comparability of the quality of the study programmes and the mutual recognition of accreditation decisions. Therefore ECA has been established in 2003 by 15 European accreditation organizations from 10 countries. ECA launched a trust-building process. A roadmap of 4 phases has been defined:

- Mutual understanding of organizations
- Mutual recognition of accreditation procedures
- Mutual acceptance of assessment results
- Mutual recognition of accreditation decisions

References:

- <http://www.eacaconsortium.net/>
- <http://www.enic-naric.net/>
- <http://www.qrossroads.eu/>

ECA achievements

- "Code of good practice" (2004)
- Principles of selection of experts (2005)
- Cooperative projects to facilitate mutual recognition
- Principles for accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes (2006)
- Agreement towards mutual recognition
- Agreement ECA-CEEN "Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education" (2006)
- Agreement ECA-INQAHE "International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education" (2008)