



The Bologna Process and Implications for Canada's Universities

Report of the 2009 AUCC Symposium



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1. Background

The growth of higher education around the world after 1950 was accompanied by concerns to ensure fair recognition of qualifications to promote access, foster academic mobility among countries, and uphold and protect the principle of institutional autonomy. From the 1970s on, the development and spread of ever-more powerful information and communications technologies made contact and collaboration among institutions faster and more complex, complementing the mobility of faculty and students. These contacts helped to develop a personal level of understanding and confidence in the standards and quality of institutions and faculty in other countries.

Europe has addressed these issues for longer and more systematically than any other group of countries. Its approach has been described as being based on "...a clearly defined common goal: to create a European space for higher education in order to enhance the employability and mobility of citizens and to increase the international competitiveness of European higher education."¹

In 1999, the Ministers of Education of 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration. This document commits governments "to consolidate the European area of higher education....within the framework of our institutional competencies and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy."² The resulting initiative, known as the Bologna Process, now has ten "lines of action" including the adoption of a Europe-wide system based on three cycles (3-year Bachelor, 2-year Master's and 3-year PhD), the establishment of a system of credits (known as the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)), and the promotion of mobility, European co-operation in quality assurance and the European dimension in higher education.

The Bologna Process, now involving 46 countries, is thus a voluntary intergovernmental initiative, which aims to create a European Higher Education

Area by 2010 where education systems would be compatible, degrees comparable and students' and academics' mobility would be unhindered.

The conception of its goals makes the European initiative distinctive. Recognition of qualifications is conceived not only as a means to open up mobility and access in both the academic world and the European labour market, but also as an important measure for developing a specifically European consciousness and community.

In addition, the Lisbon European Council summit of March 2000 set out a new strategy to modernize Europe, which became known as the "Lisbon Strategy". While the Lisbon Strategy is not part of the Bologna Process, its goals include the substantial modernisation of Europe's education and training systems and the creation of the European Research Area.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) has for some time been monitoring these changes under way in Europe. In June 2008, AUCC released a *Statement on Canadian Universities and the Bologna Process*, reflecting a commitment to addressing the emerging European Higher Education Area by both seizing its related opportunities and facing its challenges. The statement outlined four commitments: to closely watch the implementation of reforms and political direction in Europe; to monitor the engagement of other non-Bologna countries; to continue to raise awareness among its membership of key issues related to the Bologna Process; and to pursue a policy dialogue with European partners as a means to enhancing Canada – Europe cooperation.

It is in this context that the AUCC convened the January 2009 symposium to consider the implications of the Bologna Process for Canadian universities.

¹ cf. The Bologna Declaration on the European space for higher education: an explanation. The Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences and the Association of European Universities, available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf>

² www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/MDC/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf

2. Rationale and goals of the symposium

With the financial support of the Learning Policy Directorate of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Delegation of the European Commission to Canada, this symposium brought together senior Canadian academic leaders and experts from Europe, Australia, Mexico and the United States to discuss Bologna policies, programs and tools; to consider their implications for Canadian universities; and to identify challenges and opportunities that the Bologna process presents.

Participants would also be able to identify and explore key challenges and implications for Canadian public policy in the area of international academic cooperation and related issues in quality assurance, learning outcomes, recognition of qualifications, credit transfer, student and faculty mobility; and international collaboration.

This report intends to capture the main themes and issues raised in the presentations and discussions in the three plenary panel sessions and the four thematic working groups. Copies of the presentations, together with background information on the topics and themes discussed, are available on the AUCC Web site. The meeting agenda and illustrative institutional case studies are annexed, as is a list of further useful resources.

3. European Perspectives on the Bologna Process, Its Global Dimension and Developments beyond 2010: What are the Implications for Canada-EU University Partnerships?

During this first plenary panel, moderated by Dr. Craig Klafter of the University of British Columbia, Odile Quintin, Director General of the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission spoke on the current state of Bologna reforms, future directions beyond 2010 and key drivers and implications for collaboration with Canada and Canadian universities. Michael Gaebel responded to this presentation from the perspective of the European University Association (EUA) and of European higher education institutions, while Chris

Lorenz, Professor of Philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam offered a faculty member viewpoint.

From the perspective of Mme Quintin of the European Commission, the Bologna Process is Europe's response to the challenges of globalization, innovation, the need for excellence, cooperation, and competition – in the context of ensuring individual welfare and well-being. The higher education system must adapt, but to do so requires sustained investment in education and training, including support for lifelong learning. The Bologna reforms aim to ensure the quality of education and training that meet the needs of the labour market for high level competencies. The reforms are also concerned with the accessibility and attractiveness of higher education in Europe. According to Mme. Quintin, the higher education system will not be completely modernized until the right combination of transparency, autonomy, performance and the efficient use of resources are found.

Short term mobility through the Erasmus Program has been the real European success, but can be increased, as can longer-term mobility. The Commission will issue *a green book on the mobility of young Europeans* in 2009 to encourage the development of broader and more diverse forms of mobility in education, employment and culture, including increased mobility and cooperation between the European Union and Canada.

The EU hopes to continue discussions with Canada about the financing and operation of institutions, the creation of lifelong learning opportunities, the global dimension of the European Qualifications Framework, and the development of joint Canadian-EU degrees.

The European University Association which represents and supports higher education institutions in 46 countries has been closely involved in the Bologna Process since its conception, ensuring full university involvement at each step. For example, its *Trends in Higher Education in Europe* report provides each bi-annual European ministerial meeting with essential information and analysis on implementation and policy issues. Its declarations outline the main priorities and positions of higher education institutions which have been essential elements for the ministerial communiqués that define how Europe proceeds with the Bologna reforms.

Because the Bologna process is voluntary, with no mechanism to enforce implementation of reforms, it has become increasingly stakeholder driven. Responsibilities are shared by governments, institutions, faculty members and students (the National Union of Students in Europe – ESIB – like the EUA, is a consultative member of the Bologna Follow-Up Group).

Recognition of the so-called “Bologna degrees” presents an important challenge for European institutions. Until about 2005, this was an internal concern; since then, it has taken on a global dimension. Universities and countries are at different stages of development of measures to ensure the recognition of the new degrees beyond member states. A debate on the pros and cons of accreditation versus evaluation of institutions and programs has given way to a pragmatic focus on “what works”, and to developing joint European standards and guidelines. The annual European Quality Forum reviews and discusses these issues, while urging from institutions, students and the European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (ENQAA) to ensure a European dimension for the quality assurance discussion has resulted in the establishment of the European Quality Assurance Register. The Register will list quality assurance agencies that operate in Europe and have proven their credibility and reliability in a review against the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG).³

As noted above, the EUA’s *Trends V* report⁴ documents the progress made by Europe’s universities in implementing Bologna reforms and outlines the main challenges ahead. These include bringing coherence to the explosion of Master’s programs through transparent measures and clear articulation within the European Qualifications

Framework, and reviewing the impact of ECTS on mobility. The report highlights three key challenges for the future: to increase and broaden access to higher education for lifelong learning⁵; to strengthen the link between teaching and research; and to redefine the public responsibility of universities, finding the appropriate balance between autonomy and accountability. The year 2010 is thus not a deadline according to the EUA, but marks the beginning of a new phase in the modernisation of European higher education. In addition, the Bologna Process is now responding to the external dimension of the global culture, further opening Europe to collaboration beyond its borders to improve European higher education.

Dr. Lorenz noted that not everyone in European universities is as optimistic about the Bologna Process. Citing the *Magna Charta* ideals,⁶ he argued that faculty are concerned about academic freedom, and in particular about the traditional role of the academic profession as a body that sets its own standards and conducts its own evaluations.

From this perspective, it is not evident that the modernisation of universities and the adaptation of curricula and programs called for in the Bologna Process will necessarily make the European economy more competitive internationally. For example, it is not clear how making many courses shorter will contribute to increased competence of graduates. Moreover, creating one educational space in which the structure of education, from course modules to degrees, is uniform can undermine and even destroy academic freedom according to Dr. Lorenz.

The increase in student mobility encouraged by the Bologna reforms has resulted in the widespread use of English and a reduction in learning, and learning in other languages. The ECTS has brought a surface

³ www.eqar.eu/index.php?id=32

⁴ www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/EUA_Trends_V_for_web.pdf

⁵ See the EUA European Universities’ Charter on Lifelong Learning www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/EUA_Charter_Eng_LY.pdf

⁶ In 1988, the Rectors of European universities meeting in Bologna proclaimed the *Magna Charta Universitatum* – now known as the Bologna Charter – “to celebrate the deepest values of University traditions and to encourage strong bonds among European Universities”. In doing so, they were anticipating European political integration and drawing attention to the part that universities would be called upon to play. The *Magna Charta* ideals state that: a university’s research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economically independent of all political authority and economic power; teaching and research in universities must be inseparable; freedom in research and training is the fundamental principle of university life; and a university is the trustee of the European humanist tradition. The full text is available at: www.magna_charta.org/magna.html

transparency to degrees, but this masks the actual contents of courses. Dr. Lorenz argued that the development of quality assessment and quantitative output measures by third parties can undermine academic peer review which has a proven record of supporting quality. He gave the example of the Tuning Process⁷, suggesting that it has reduced the importance of disciplines in favour of competencies, undermining the professional character of the academy.

4. Global Perspectives on the Bologna Process: Responses by the Higher Education Community in Key non-Bologna Countries

This session provided an overview of responses to the Bologna Process from other key non-Bologna countries. The panel members included Debra Stewart, President of the US Council of Graduate Studies, Kerri-Lee Harris, Senior Lecturer at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Australia, Britta Baron, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President International, University of Alberta and Jocelyne Gacel-Avila, Director of International Cooperation, University of Guadalajara, Mexico. Sheila Embleton, Vice-President Academic, York University, moderated the discussion to bring out both governmental and institutional responses, key policy issues, emerging trends and suggestions of considerations for Canada and Canadian institutions.

Australia has taken a very pro-active approach to respond to the Bologna Process. The development of higher education as one of Australia's largest exports has been supported by government-driven national regulation of the sector in funding, quality assurance, and accreditation. As the three degree cycle in Australia is generally structured as 3+2+3 within a National Qualifications Framework (which is currently under review in response to the Bologna Process), its system can be considered "Bologna compatible".

Australia is also involved in Southeast Asia regional discussions on academic mobility and collaboration, and is reviewing the standards, measurement and reporting of student outcomes. Australia has been actively collaborating in the Asia-Pacific Education Forum on international graduate student mobility and research collaboration as a follow-up to the Brisbane Communiqué⁸. A common education space is evolving in Southeast Asia, with a common theme among member countries around understanding and comparing National Qualifications Frameworks.

In addition, as Australia has no clear system of inter-institutional recognition, the Bologna Process has inspired a focus on thinking about the relation between qualifications and recognition, and about what information and documents to give to graduates. Additionally, having ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 2002, Australia is now promoting the widespread use of a national diploma supplement or similar document. A proposal has therefore been developed for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS), which will be piloted in 2009-2010.

According to Dr. Gacel-Avila, the countries of Latin America are also very interested in the Bologna Process. Its model of integration of different education systems could be viable for the region, which shares a certain cultural affinity with the European approach. There is considerable interest in the internationalisation of education, including reforms to curricula, strengthening student learning, the development of research networks and encouraging academic mobility. In particular, the Bologna Process has stimulated many countries and institutions to re-think the academic model to develop a student-centred system, which promises to be more innovative and responsive to the market than the current faculty-centred one. The EU's approval of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project has helped a number of institutions in Mexico and Chile to improve institutional co-operation with European institutions and between higher education institutions, and to develop excellence, effectiveness,

⁷ Tuning Educational Structures in Europe started in 2000 as a project to link the political objectives of the Bologna Process, and at a later stage the Lisbon Strategy to the higher education sector. Over time Tuning has developed into a process, an approach to (re-)designing, develop, implement, evaluate and enhance quality first, second and third cycle degree programmes. www.tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/

⁸ cf. The Brisbane Communiqué Initiative website: www.brisbanecommunique.deewr.gov.au/

and transparency. Because the curricula in many Latin American institutions are very traditional, the project is a useful exercise to identify outcomes and competencies. But the tradition of strong institutional autonomy means that coordination is difficult. In Mexico, while some special funds have been designated for special projects, they form only a small part of the state budget.

In the United States, according to Dr. Stewart, the details of Bologna are not as important as the example of political will to address, in a relatively short period of ten years, fundamental matters of access and quality in higher education across the member states. Such a multi-government coordinated effort is only just being considered in the United States in the desire to use education to advance individuals' opportunities.

For universities in the United States, the lead higher education policy issues are quality and access; accountability; attrition and completion rates; and better preparation of students for future employment. The federal government and higher education agendas are coming together on the need to ensure stable funding, and on the importance of international research collaboration. The Council of Graduate Studies (CGS) is developing a model of best practices for international joint degrees and collaboration. While international student enrolments in the United States have regained their pre-9/11 levels, Bologna's move to attract more students from outside the region has made international student recruitment more competitive.

The CGS has a large role to play in the highly decentralized higher education systems of the United States to create a platform for dialogue both nationally and transnationally. In 2007 it convened the European University Association, the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies, the Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies (Australia) and the Association of Chinese Graduate Schools in Banff for a dialogue on joint graduate degrees. The *Banff Principles on Graduate Education*⁹ are a key example of the value of deep respect for and understanding of other systems, and that meaningful dialogue implies meaningful collaboration in both research and curriculum development.

⁹ www.cgsnet.org/portals/0/pdf/mtg_BanffPrinciples.pdf

From a Canadian perspective, Dr. Baron pointed out that while the reaction in Canada has at times been whether we need to worry about the Bologna Process, most importantly it has seized our imagination as an intellectual challenge. Bologna has brought stakeholders in Europe together, nationally and internationally, in a collaborative debate to improve access and quality of diverse institutions. Canada's higher education system has been a leading model for access and quality, but cannot rest on its laurels.

She noted that the global higher education and research world is becoming flatter; Bologna is just one piece of a larger picture. For example, interest in and experience of joint degrees between European and North American institutions is growing; a compendium of good practice needs to be developed from the lessons learned. It is important for Canada to keep participating in international dialogue on best practices for quality assurance and access, to think carefully about the relation between qualifications and recognition, and to ensure that information and documents given to graduates support their international mobility. Public policy and funding are needed for us to join the discussion about the Bologna initiatives and networks, to share experiences, and to see how we could learn and benefit from them.

5. Thematic Working Groups on Bologna Transparency Tools and Related European Programs/ Initiatives

The thematic working groups gave participants the opportunity to learn about the experiences of other countries with Bologna transparency tools and to share their own experiences with them. The discussions aimed at learning what benefits these tools could have for Canadian institutions.

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Antoinette Charon Wauters of the Université de Lausanne described the Swiss experience of implementing the ECTS and Pierre L'Heureux explained how the international collaborations of the Université de technologie supérieure in

Montréal have been affected by the system. The two sessions of this workgroup considered the benefits of using ECTS for exchanges and admissions services, the challenges of using ECTS, and how ECTS could be more widely used.

ECTS is an evolving tool originally designed for the ERASMUS program to facilitate student mobility. It uses student workload (defined as the number of hours it 'typically' takes for a student to complete learning activities) as the basis for credits. The definition of workload is flexible to reflect the variations identified in research on workload. The workload for one academic year generally varies between 1500-2000 hours, and equals 60 ECTS credits.

Currently, ECTS has been defined for the first and second cycle levels. ECTS does not convey information about course content. While the system is being adopted by the vast majority of European institutions, it is not being applied at the same rate or in the same way; there are variations among programs, institutions and countries. The next steps in its evolution (aside from fine tuning by individual institutions) are to define it for the PhD level, and translate it into the National Qualifications Frameworks, and eventually into the European Qualifications Framework. Like the Euro, ECTS is becoming a common currency among higher education institutions.

Within key features such as the definition of student workload versus contact hours, there is considerable room for interpretation and application. It can thus be a helpful transparency tool, but understanding and using it, or modifying or adapting its elements, takes some time. Many Canadian university participants indicated that they are using ECTS in exchanges with European partners, using as a rule of thumb that 2 ECTS credits are the equivalent of 1 Canadian university credit. Some universities, UBC for example, have taken it a step further and list their courses in ECTS credits as well as in their own credit system.

Because ECTS does not indicate course content, faculty must have contact with European partners to understand their curriculum, and how it relates to ECTS credits. This process can take several years where no previous contact has existed. Such discussions can however help faculty to work together on curriculum comparisons and program

revision and development, though this can be labour intensive. Dr. L'Heureux pointed out, however, that ECTS credits are of only limited use in programs where accreditation of the final qualification is governed by third parties (e.g., as in many professional programs such as nursing, architecture, etc.).

ECTS as a tool for facilitating mobility can offer ideas for developing or revising our own tools within Canada. The experiences described by the two presenters illustrated how discussing and implementing the system helped to develop a framework for intra- and inter-institutional dialogue, as faculty members from different departments, faculties and institutions had in-depth discussions about curricula.

Approaches by Canadian universities regarding graduate admissions for 3-year Bachelor's degrees from abroad

Sheila Embleton of York University and Laurens Verkade of McGill University explained their respective institutions' approaches to graduate admissions for applicants with 3-year Bachelor's degrees from foreign institutions. Following a review of admission requirements for students applying to Master's degree programs, York's policy states that three-year first cycle undergraduate degrees from institutions that meet the criteria set forth in the Bologna Declaration may be acceptable as the equivalent of an undergraduate honours degree. McGill treats 3-year Bologna credentials as equivalent to the North American undergraduate degree for admission to Master's programs. Further details of their approaches, as well as those of UBC and the ÉTS, appear in Annex B.

The discussions among participants underscored a range of existing approaches and examples, considered the advantages and disadvantages of having a formal policy or an informal approach to admissions for such applicants, and whether a more collective (provincial, regional or national) institutional approach would be possible or desirable.

Canadian universities appear to prefer using informal admissions processes, rather than adopting formal ones. Final admissions decisions are mostly made case-by-case by individual faculty who assess a student's capacity for graduate work and not solely by applying fixed criteria concerning previous academic achievements, however documented.

“Flexible rigour” seems to capture an approach that marries adherence to academic quality and exercise of informed judgment. Although institutional practices vary in the degree to which formal criteria are applied, a certain degree of formality is required to ensure consistency, clarity and fairness.

There is no collective, coherent “Canadian” approach or policy, and a combination of comfort with existing procedures and institutional autonomy makes it unlikely that one could be developed or agreed upon. For example, some Canadian universities admit European students with 3-year “Bologna” degrees directly into graduate studies, but others apply conditions, and some explicitly require four years of previous study.

Canada’s pending ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention may help encourage clear and transparent communication of admission policies and decisions, for example in general marketing and recruitment materials, and in advising individual candidates. Many participants felt that there is a need to make a cultural shift to welcoming students by focusing on the content of their program, rather than restricting their access with criteria based on years of study. There may be a risk to Canada’s image internationally in having varied admissions policies and practices, unless a clear message is sent that we are “open for business” in the spirit and terms of the Lisbon Convention.

Participants debated the merits of developing “common principles” among Canadian universities on admissions of 3-year Bachelor’s applicants to communicate this open approach for marketing purposes. They agreed that at a minimum it is important to post admissions information in an easily-accessible and transparent way on university Web sites.

The Lisbon Recognition Convention: Implications of Canada’s Ratification for Canadian Universities

The Lisbon Recognition Convention is the only legal document to which the Bologna Process refers. In the Canadian context, it will ultimately serve to provide guidance in how to communicate clearly and in good faith the principles and practices of the admissions systems of Canadian institutions. This working group examined the Lisbon Convention to identify key concerns that Canadian institutions might have with the potential

consequences of Canada’s forthcoming ratification of the Convention, to consider its implications for the work of Canadian university registrars and/or deans of graduate studies, and to assess to what degree Canadian universities already conduct their admissions processes in the spirit of the Convention. Yves Beaudin, National Coordinator of the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) and past-president of the international network of national information centres described institutions’ main obligations under the Convention. Robert White, Senior Policy Analyst, International Relations Division, AUCC, explained that AUCC will be providing input to DFAIT’s consultations on Canada’s coming ratification of the Convention.

At its most basic level, as a fully ratified signatory to the Convention, it can be expected that Canada has three basic obligations to carry out:

- 1) to transmit the text of the convention;
- 2) to collect and make available official information; and
- 3) to establish an information centre to perform these tasks and to assist in applying the principles of the convention.

CICIC, established in 1991 as a result of signing the convention, can fulfill these three obligations for Canada. CICIC meets the requirements of the convention within its existing structures.

In terms of universities and colleges, it is important to note that the principle of institutional autonomy is recognized in the text of the convention. Moreover, the autonomy of institutions is noted in Canada’s ratification declaration that was approved by all provincial governments. This declaration, which will be included in the deposition of the ratification instrument to UNESCO, states:

“Canada’s constitution provides for a federal system in which legislative powers are allocated between the federal Parliament and the provincial legislatures.

In compliance with the exclusive legislative powers in the field of education granted to the provinces by the Canadian Constitution and with the similar responsibilities given to the territories by delegation from the federal government, the implementation of the Convention in Canada will be ensured

by the provinces and territories. In accordance with article IX.2, provincial and territorial governments have jointly determined that the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) will serve as the national information centre.

Each postsecondary institution in Canada determines what qualifications it will accept for admission to various levels of study. Legislation also confers some autonomy on professional governing bodies in setting the content of regulations under which credentials and training are recognized. Professions therefore enjoy broad autonomy in recognizing credentials, whether obtained in Canada or abroad, for the purposes of registration or permission to practise a profession in Canada.

This declaration is not a reservation.”

There are thus no legal obligations for postsecondary institutions. Good faith implies they will apply the principles and provide adequate and clear information on assessment requirements; use transparent, coherent, reliable procedures and criteria in assessment; give mutual recognition of qualifications unless *substantial difference* in requirements can be demonstrated; and justify refusal of recognition.

Advice and tools on the assessment of foreign qualifications and credentials of students seeking admission are available from the members of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada (ACESC), and in the December 2008 report jointly published by ACESC, CICIC and the CMEC, *Pan-Canadian Quality Standards in International Credential Evaluation*¹⁰. The CICIC website provides complete information on credential and qualifications assessment, and a comprehensive set of links to organizations in Canada and abroad concerned with these issues.¹¹

New Initiatives to Develop a Diploma Supplement in non-Bologna Countries

The Diploma Supplement (DS), originally linked to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, is a document

gaining widespread use in Europe. It is designed to help institutions provide information about their diplomas to improve international ‘transparency’ and to facilitate the academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc.). The DS describes the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by the individual named on the original qualification. It is produced by national institutions according to a template. Kerri-Lee Harris, Senior Lecturer at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Australia, described the current Australian experiment with a similar document. The working group discussed the DS and the Australian document with a view to consider whether, and for what purpose, a similar model would be desirable and replicable in the Canadian institutional context.

The development in Australia of the Higher Education Graduation Statement (HEGS) is instructive. Australia’s higher education institutions are autonomous; while they fall under the jurisdiction of state governments, they receive funding from the national government. When the national government ratified the Lisbon Convention in 2002, it felt that developing some form of Diploma Supplement would help fulfill its obligations for providing students with information they could use to inform overseas employers and institutions. A team of university registrars and directors of the curricular programs of fourteen institutions have developed a model called Higher Education Graduation Statement¹² with core Australian features and standardization. This model does not simply emulate the European approach, but differs in several respects from the “e” portfolio, (which is an electronic repository of what the student has done) and the transcript.

The HEGS, once compiled, only contains certifiable information about what the student has done in relation to the particular award, and includes a “fail” category. Its sections identify the graduate, the award, the awarding institution, and describe the graduate’s academic achievements, and the

¹⁰ Available at: www.cicic.ca/docs/2009_report_standards_evaluations.en.pdf

¹¹ www.cicic.ca

¹² The team’s report is available from the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Higher Education website at www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education and from the Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy project website at www.une.edu.au/chemp/projects/dipsup

Australian higher education system. It also has a set of guiding principles, and allows for optional elements. Both the style and adoption of the Statement remain at the discretion of individual institutions. The Australian government has now announced grants of AU\$100,000 to universities implementing AHEGS in 2009-10.

Working group participants debated the merits of such a tool in the Canadian context. Some suggested that a DS/HEGS type of document would be useful for international students to explain their Canadian award. It could also hold value for smaller universities as it would allow them to articulate how their degrees are distinct. Some participants noted, however, that there is a danger that the content of such a document could be driven only by employer needs or be diluted because of an impetus to use it as an institutional marketing tool.

It was suggested that the diploma supplement is of little use for admissions to Canadian programs, as it is issued after students have graduated, hence well after most applications for graduate admission are received and processed in Canadian institutions. Therefore, it does point to the need for developing common data standards to better track and explain learning outcomes in ways that are useful for both graduate schools and employers by focusing on what was learned, as opposed to activities (what was done). Documents such as the diploma supplement, the Australian HEGS or the co-curricular transcript¹³ which provide consistent information demonstrate and acknowledge skills and experiences not found on a transcript, clearly explain grades and courses across provinces and even between institutions within the same province. However, generally, participants felt there was no need for a new document to explain Canadian credentials internationally, as they are already well recognized, and being clearly documented in existing tools such as academic calendars and transcripts.

6. Internationalizing the Curriculum through New Forms of Collaboration: Opportunities through the Erasmus Mundus Program and Initiatives in Joint Graduate Degree Development¹⁴

Three speakers made presentations during this session. Bodo Richter, from the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture, gave an overview of the key European academic partnership programs and of future trends in supporting joint Master's and PhD degree programs. Gilles Breton, Associate Vice-President Academic (International) and Director of the International Office, University of Ottawa, Canada, and Martha Crago, Vice-President Research, Dalhousie University, Canada, spoke about the opportunities, benefits, challenges and imperatives of joint graduate (MA and PhD co-tutelles) degree development among Canadian and European university partners, and on what is needed to support them. The session chair, Barbara Evans, Dean of Graduate Studies, University of British Columbia, Canada, reflected on these issues from the UBC perspective before opening the floor for questions and further discussion.

Under the first European Union-Canada Agreement in 1995 on Higher Education and Training, bilateral consortia projects have been jointly designed and funded by the European Commission and HRSDC. These have largely consisted of structured exchanges of students and faculty members, and focussed on curriculum development and innovation. They provided language training and the recognition of a minimum of one semester of study abroad. Since 1995, about 550 European and Canadian institutions have worked together in 89 EU-HRSDC funded joint projects mobilising some 4000 students. Since 2006, these activities have expanded under the EU-Canada Transatlantic Exchange Partnerships (TEP) Program¹⁵ to include

¹³ Several Canadian institutions have developed a "co-curricular transcript" which provides information about awards, service learning or volunteerism and, for example, international activities of the graduate.

¹⁴ This session focused primarily on joint degree programs. Joint degrees are understood as single degrees bearing two shields/logos that are recorded and recognized by both institutions; double or dual degrees result in two separate awards from two institutions.

¹⁵ For a full description of the EU-Canada Cooperation Programme in Higher Education, Training and Youth, see http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/eu-canada/index_en.html

activities in training and youth, exchanges of experience and good practices, pooling resources and e-based materials, and mobility of professionals.

The program is now seeking to move beyond exchanges to support joint degree programs. This reflects a trend in internationalization from students studying and researching abroad and receiving a degree from their home institutions, to the development of new degrees made possible by the realization of benefits for both faculty and students in international research collaboration. Competition in research is giving way to complete partnerships based upon international research networks, which in turn have cultivated the necessary understanding to give full recognition to students for their prior academic work.

The Erasmus Mundus program is a flagship graduate mobility and joint academic program in Europe which exemplifies this model. Its first phase (2004-2008) promoted the EU as a centre of excellence in higher education. It supported 103 joint or double Master's degrees, 47 partnerships with non-EU institutions which included close to 10,000 scholarships for third country students and scholars, and some support to EU nationals studying in third countries. Since 2004, 122 students, 65 academics and 12 institutions from Canada have taken part in Erasmus Mundus. The next phase of Erasmus Mundus which was launched in February 2009 will extend support to joint doctoral programs.¹⁶

In general, the EU has expressed strong interest in attracting more Canadian institutions to participate in its programs. Dr. Breton expressed hope that the collaborative dimension of Erasmus Mundus II will facilitate full partnerships with non-European institutions, given that in his experience, the first phase favoured European institutions which used the program scholarships to attract non-European students without necessarily resulting in an exchange.

The development of joint Canadian-European PhD programs does face some challenges. Dr. Evans pointed out that North American PhD programs comprise two years of coursework, followed by comprehensive examinations, as well as thesis research and defence. This can present a challenge to creating joint PhD programs with European universities within the Bologna Process model of 3-year doctorates. But it is possible to jointly design and supervise joint PhD programs within the research collaboration activities of two institutions. Universitas 21 institutions have developed a Memorandum of Understanding for collaborative joint PhD programs, and recently UBC and the Chinese Ministry of Education have established principles for joint degrees and co-tutelles at the doctoral level.

Dr. Crago also noted that joint degrees have existed among Canadian universities for many years, and that such collaborations do not jeopardize institutions' autonomy. Rather, they strengthen programs by developing enduring links with partners abroad. The francophone universities in Canada have much to teach their anglophone counterparts from their experience of PhD co-tutelles. The Université de Montréal, for example, has had 12 years of experience with PhD co-tutelles with French institutions, and other Québec francophone universities have similar experience. In addition to the value-added for research, joint programs expose students to the structures, operations and funding mechanisms of other research systems. But while joint programs are best built up from the trust developed through international research networks, the EU experience shows that funds and political will to support such programs must come from the top.

¹⁶ For more information on Erasmus Mundus II see: http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/doc72_en.htm. Other EU programs and activities that can engage Canadian universities include the Jean Monnet Programme, Youth in Action Programme, International Youth Programme, EU Centres of Excellence, Canadian Studies Programme, EU-Canada Study Tour, EU Visitors Programme, and the Joint Study on closer economic relationships. All are described more fully in the presentation by Bodo Richter which can be found on the AUCC website.

7. Strategies for Moving Ahead: Taking Canadian and European University Partnerships to the Next Level

This closing round table began with a summary by the moderator, Karen McBride, Vice-President, International Affairs, AUCC of some key points from AUCC's perspective. Panel members – federal and provincial government and institutional representatives from both Canada and Europe – then discussed the three key points they would take away from the symposium, main public policy and institutional implications of the Bologna Process for Canada, and future strategies for action.

The panel comprised Mark Hopkins, Director General, HRSDC, Chris Greenshields, Director, International Education and Youth Division, DFAIT, Darcy Rollins, Director, Manitoba International Education Branch, Morton Mendelson, Deputy Provost, Student Life and Learning, McGill University, Canada, and Volker Gehmlich, Professor of Economics and Social Sciences, University of Applied Sciences, Osnabrueck, Germany.

Mr. Rollins observed that the symposium presentations and discussions revealed the complexity of the Bologna Process and the consequent need to understand and explain it carefully. The promotion and marketing of higher education by the EU should make Canadian educators examine equally carefully the image they are projecting of Canada's systems.

Professor Gehmlich pointed out that a major focus of Bologna is on recognition, which requires trust. The process can be understood as a trust-building exercise through developing transparency in higher education systems and procedures, and fulfilling the responsibility for enabling students to develop the knowledge, skills and aptitudes to survive in the labour market and participate in their societies.

Dr. Mendelson reminded participants that there are inconsistencies across and within European institutions and countries beyond even the varied implementation of the Bologna degree structures. ECTS, for example, is a common tool with a specific structure, but it does not report or depict common content. Developing trust in others is a challenge to cooperation. The commitment

and engagement of Europeans to participate in a dialogue with Canada represents an opportunity for Canadian institutions to enrich our collaboration, although expectations do need to be managed realistically.

At the same time, Canadian institutions must be aware that the Bologna Process is not the only European exercise in internationalization of higher education. Professor Gehmlich explained that there is much to be gained from bilateral relations with individual countries, which have their own particular higher education and research strategies. Bilateral programs involving multiple languages complement EU-funded programs that have increased the provision of English-language courses and programs, as the example of Québec's successful programs with France demonstrates. Mr. Greenshields also suggested the need for reflection and dialogue on such issues within the North American higher education space especially given the current government's foreign policy focus on the U.S. and the Americas.

With respect to key public policy and institutional implications, panellists raised a number of key points. Mr. Hopkins observed that the massification of higher education presents a challenge to the role and relevance of higher education and research. In this context, a question arises as to whether Canada can sustain its relative success in broadening access and strengthening quality without engaging in a Bologna-type process. The European metaphor of a common educational space may not apply to Canada, where "inter-operability" may be a more appropriate description. Governments need to pay attention to internationalization as a driver of higher education. Canada also needs to develop more comprehensive data systems in and about higher education.

Dr. Mendelson noted that the Bologna Process is not a panacea, but it does represent a sea-change in thinking about access, equity, mobility, etc. It has demonstrated that some top-down management of change by champions in institutions is necessary, especially to identify and maintain focus on the long-term benefits that can come from short-term hard work to reform processes and systems. Its shift away from traditional teaching to a focus on learning outcomes represents a fundamental change in how institutions think about their students. Dr. Mendelson pointed out that this shift from

traditional teaching (“sage on the stage”) to student-centred learning (“the guide on the side”) means that our faculty need to learn new techniques. The teaching and learning services on campuses are equipped to help them.

Volker Gehmlich reported that the response to this cultural change in Germany prompted universities to create new platforms for communication and exchange. Learning from other sectors such as the auto industry, banking, and aviation about the ideas of centres of excellence, and of hub and spoke systems allowed for the development of benchmarking for the designs of new curricula and measurement tools.

Mr. Rollins suggested that a key to the Bologna Process approach to quality has been to start small and grow only as stakeholders buy into the process. Defining the goal of quality assurance as reducing unfairness in assessment and recognition - not in reducing inconsistencies among systems, institutions and programs - has helped ensure participation by a broad range of stakeholders. It is important for Canadian institutions to work at defining what we mean by quality, and how to prove in the new international context that Canadian institutions are of high quality.

Both Messrs. Rollins and Greenshields pointed out that if we are going to participate in global higher education, we must work to understand the Bologna Process and make it work for us. The Bologna Process presents an opportunity and a challenge that cannot be ignored. On one hand, European institutions are keenly interested in engaging with their Canadian colleagues to form partnerships. On the other hand, the Bologna strategy makes European higher education more attractive to students at an international level and puts pressure on Canada’s marketing efforts for higher education. As students and their parents are becoming increasingly inquisitive about the reputation and offerings of institutions, Canada needs to work up its higher education brand.

8. Conclusions

As a continuing activity, the Bologna Process is not the single answer to all the challenges to higher education and it is not without controversy. It has provoked lively debates throughout the world about its relationship with the academic endeavour. Nevertheless, the increasing focus in Europe, as part of the Bologna Process, on learning outcomes and student-centred education presents a challenge to Canadian higher education institutions and systems to closely examine policies and procedures on admissions, curriculum and program design, as well as the measurement of student accomplishments.

Bologna demonstrates that any successful continuing reform process requires both political will and resources from leaders in government and institutions, and engagement from students, faculty and staff. There is a necessary tension between the formal approach of top-down policy, and the informal process of evolving discussion and reflection within programs and institutions. While a general framework and tools to implement a reform strategy are necessary, the process ultimately depends on institutional dialogue and judgement.

The move to make the EHEA more attractive beyond Europe highlights the marketing component of the Bologna Process. The ECTS and Diploma Supplement are essential elements of this strategy, as they focus clearly on learning outcomes and offer assurance of transnational recognition of qualifications. The development of national and European qualifications frameworks, and of national quality assurance bodies, provides a further framework for the guarantee required of any marketed service.

The Bologna Process poses a challenge to other higher education systems such as Canada’s “to put their own houses in order”, and simultaneously offers an opportunity to develop international partnerships and collaboration in learning and research.

Still, there was a consensus among participants that Canadian higher education is well positioned to answer the challenge and take up the opportunity. Although Canadian institutions could enhance their tools for credit transfer and student mobility within Canada, the nature and results of their admissions policies and procedures compare

favourably with the Bologna tools. The flexibility and transparency of our degree programs reflect the goals that European institutions wish to reach. The quality of our degrees is recognized worldwide. Canadian institutions have long-standing experience in international collaboration with institutions and countries at all levels of economic, social and academic development. The Bologna Process is part of global trends that are pushing them to further reflection.

To move ahead, participants were of the view that further political will and additional resources are needed. In addition some new initiatives might be considered such as some type of mechanism for “international credit” that could take inspiration from the Diploma Supplement, ECTS, the Australian HEGS, and Canadian co-curricular transcripts, which might enhance student mobility opportunities. Compendia of good practices of successful joint and double-degree programs which would assist their development in more jurisdictions were another example of a new mechanism to be considered.

Overall, participants agreed that Canadian higher education institutions would benefit from on-going monitoring and analysis in order to gain further detailed understanding of the core elements of the Bologna Process, as well as the framework the Lisbon Convention provides for assessing non-Canadian qualifications and describing Canadian degrees. The lessons to be learned about transparency and equity, combined with the flexibility and responsiveness of Canadian programs and institutions, will allow our institutions to take full advantage of the opportunities in programs such as Erasmus Mundus II, and to develop and strengthen bilateral collaborations.

The Bologna Process presents a challenge and opportunity to our higher education community to develop and enhance the educational experience of their students and the research achievements of their faculty.

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Appendix 1: Agenda

THE BOLOGNA PROCESS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA'S UNIVERSITIES: THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR CANADIAN AND EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

January 26 and 27, 2009

Grand Salon, Convention Level
Crowne Plaza Ottawa, 101 Lyon Street, Ottawa ON

This symposium is supported in part by HRSDC (Learning Policy Directorate), DFAIT and the Delegation of the European Commission to Canada.

In June 2008, after having carried out a thorough examination of the Bologna Process and its implications for Canadian universities, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) released a formal statement designed to reflect our commitment to addressing the emerging European Higher Education Area by both seizing its related opportunities and facing its challenges. (please see statement on AUCC's website at www.aucc.ca/_pdf/english/statements/2008/bologna_process_06_20_e.pdf).

Overall Objective of the Symposium

One of the key objectives outlined in the AUCC statement was to pursue a policy dialogue with European partners as a means to enhancing Canada – Europe cooperation. To that end, this symposium for senior Canadian academic leaders and European counterparts will highlight implications of Bologna policies, programs and tools for Canadian universities and engage university participants in identifying strategies for how best to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities. Financial support for this event has been provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Delegation of the European Commission to Canada.

- Through plenary panel sessions with key experts from Canada and abroad and focused thematic working groups, participants will:
 - o obtain an up-to-date and in-depth understanding of key issues and current and future developments in Europe related to implementation of Bologna higher education reforms and related program initiatives
 - o engage in peer exchange related to good practice to strengthen capacity in implementing Bologna transparency tools and accessing key programs
 - o stimulate dialogue with European institutional partners and signal that Canadian universities are key partners in order to enhance and deepen Canada-Europe university partnerships
- Such a dialogue on Bologna-related initiatives and how these shape Canadian-European university partnerships will also serve as a useful forum to surface key issues, challenges and implications for Canadian public policy in the area of international academic cooperation and related quality assurance, credit transfer and domestic student mobility issues in the Canadian context.

A final report will be produced. Please note that the University of Alberta is hosting a conference on the Bologna Process for Canadian university representatives in March 2009 that will be a useful follow-up to the discussions and dialogue at the AUCC symposium.

AGENDA

THE BOLOGNA PROCESS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA'S UNIVERSITIES: THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR CANADIAN AND EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

January 26 and 27, 2009

**Grand Salon, Convention Level
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Monday, January 26, 2009

8 a.m.

Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m.

**Opening Remarks and Introduction of
Keynote Speaker**

Claire Morris, President and CEO, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

8:45 a.m.

**European Perspectives on the Bologna
Process, Its Global Dimension and
Developments beyond 2010: What are
the Implications for Canada-EU University
Partnerships?**

- Opening presentation: **Odile Quintin**, Director General, Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission
- Respondents: **Michael Gaebel**, Senior Program Manager, European University Association, Belgium and **Chris Lorenz**, Professor of Philosophy, Free University of Amsterdam/Leiden, Holland
- Moderator: **Craig Evan Klafter**, Associate Vice-President, International, University of British Columbia, Canada

10:15 a.m. Health Break

10:45 a.m.

**Global Perspectives on the Bologna
Process: Responses by the Higher Education
Community in Key non-Bologna Countries**

Interview format to engage experts from Canada and abroad on a range of key questions in light of developments in Europe related to the Bologna Process.

Interviewer: **Sheila Embleton**, Vice-President Academic, York University, Canada

- **Debra Stewart**, President, Council of Graduate Studies, Washington, DC, USA
- **Kerri-Lee Harris**, Senior Lecturer in Higher Education, Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE), University of Melbourne, Australia
- **Britta Baron**, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President International, University of Alberta, Canada
- **Jocelyne Gacel-Avila**, Director of International Cooperation, University of Guadalajara, Mexico

12:15 p.m. Lunch

Pinnacle Room – Penthouse Level

1:30 p.m.

**Thematic Working Groups on “Bologna
Transparency Tools” and Related European
Programs/Initiatives**

Sessions will be offered twice to allow participants to take in two of the four working groups. The objective is to provide current information of the nature of these tools/programs/ initiatives and share experience and good practice to enhance Canadian institutional policies and procedures to facilitate credit transfer, student mobility and graduate admissions. Working groups will be led by expert resource person(s) and facilitated by a series of key questions and background documents shared in advance.

- The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS): Opportunities for Canadian universities: **Antoinette Charon Wauters**, Director of International Relations and Student Affairs, University of Lausanne, Switzerland and **Pierre L'Heureux**, Director, Office for International Relations and Student Recruitment, École de technologie supérieure, Canada (Grand Salon)
- New initiatives to develop a diploma supplement in non-Bologna countries: **Kerri-Lee Harris**, Senior Lecturer in Higher Education, Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE), University of Melbourne, Australia (Bytowne)
- Approaches by Canadian universities regarding graduate admissions for 3-year Bachelor's degrees from abroad: **Sheila Embleton**, Vice-President Academic, York University and **Laurens Verkade**, Manager, Graduate Admissions, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office, McGill University, Canada (Capitale)
- The Lisbon Recognition Convention: Implications of Canada's ratification for Canadian universities: **Yves Beaudin**, National Coordinator, Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC) and **Robert White**, Senior Policy Analyst, International Relations Division, AUCC (Ballroom)

3 p.m. Health Break

3:15 p.m.

Thematic Working Groups Repeated

4:30 p.m.

Working Groups Report Back to Plenary Session / Wrap Up

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

8 a.m. Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m.

Opening Remarks and Summary of Key Points from Day 1

- **Karen McBride**, Vice-President, International Affairs, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

8:45 a.m.

Internationalizing the Curriculum through New Forms of Collaboration: Opportunities through the Erasmus Mundus Program and Initiatives in Joint Graduate Degree Development

Chair: **Barbara Evans**, Dean of Graduate Studies, University of British Columbia, Canada

- Presentation by **Bodo Richter**, Coordinator International Organisations, Programme Manager - Cooperation with Industrialised Countries (Canada, Australia and New Zealand), Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission
- **Gilles Breton**, Associate Vice-President Academic (International) and Director of the International Office, University of Ottawa, Canada
- **Martha Crago**, Vice-President Research, Dalhousie University, Canada

10 a.m. Health Break

10:30 a.m.

Strategies for Moving Ahead: Taking Canadian and European University Partnerships to the Next Level

A closing round table dialogue with university and government participants to: 1) capture key takeaways from the symposium; 2) surface implications for Canadian institutional and public policy; and 3) identify strategies and action items for moving ahead. Audience members will also be asked to share reflections.

Moderator: **Karen McBride**, Vice-President, International Affairs, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

- **Mark Hopkins**, Director General, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- **Chris Greenshields**, Director, International Education and Youth Division, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
- **Darcy Rollins**, Director, Manitoba International Education Branch
- **Morton Mendelson**, Deputy Provost, Student Life and Learning, McGill University, Canada
- **Volker Gehmlich**, Professor of Economics and Social Sciences, University of Applied Sciences, Osnabrueck, Germany

Appendix 2: Case Studies

The Bologna Process and Canada

Some Examples of Canadian University Responses to the Bologna Process

Through its analysis, AUCC has observed that there is a wide range of the levels of engagement with the Bologna Process on the part of Canadian universities. For some institutions, the Bologna Process, has garnered little in the way of attention and has been mostly regarded as a “European matter” to be monitored only intermittently. For other universities, the level of engagement has included more active efforts to understand the evolving European Higher Education Area and account for these developments in their institutional planning and international strategies.

To gain a sense of some of these efforts, and for the purposes of background information for the January Bologna Symposium, AUCC developed four brief institutional profiles to highlight the different types

of approaches amongst Canadian universities to address the implications of the Bologna Process.

AUCC hopes to gather additional examples among member institutions as part of the symposium to be included in its ongoing research on the Bologna Process and its impact in Canada.

The following brief profiles summarize interviews with representatives of four Canadian universities and analysis of key background documents related to their institutions’ response to the Bologna Process. While each institution has its own particular structure and process for analyzing specific elements of the Bologna Process, all have conducted their analysis and arrived at decisions within their established framework for dealing with international matters, rather than establishing Bologna-specific mechanisms.

Case Study #1

University of British Columbia

General Approach:

Internationalization is expressed in the University’s mission, core values, and responsibilities towards a world in which communities are increasingly interdependent. All UBC students receive an international education, even if they spend all four years on campus. Each year the University welcomes over 5,300 international students from more than 135 countries, along with a highly diverse population of Canadian students. Students who wish to study abroad can take advantage of student exchange and mobility programs with 150 partner universities in 35 countries for up to two consecutive terms while remaining registered at UBC.

There is no specific strategy focussing on Bologna. It is part of UBC’s overall strategy for dealing with international exchanges and collaboration. That said, responding to the Bologna Process has not presented any significant challenge.

Specific policies and practices:

- ECTS: UBC is exploring listing courses using both North American and ECTS systems/formats.
- Diploma Supplement: The Diploma Supplement is useful to the assessment of European credentials, because graduates receive diplomas, not transcripts. While there is no interest in copying the practice, the requirements of the Supplement have stimulated an inquiry into how UBC transcripts might be modified.
- Erasmus Mundus/Joint Graduate Degrees: UBC has an established policy for joint degree programs which result in graduates receiving one diploma with two crests. So far, several masters programs have been approved by the UBC Senate. UBC is currently seeking approval for a policy specifically concerning joint PhD programs.

Admissions policies and practices:

- Three-year degree graduates from the UK are accepted for graduate admission, but European bachelor's degrees of three years' duration are considered on a case by case basis.

Policies and practices for collaboration with European partner institutions:

- UBC's approach is to focus on joint professional programs that permit graduates to practice the profession in multiple jurisdictions or joint academic programs that add significant value to students beyond what can be obtained in study at UBC.

Other comments:

- Student exchange is a challenge with universities that have adopted the 3+2+3 structure, but which have maintained the traditional exam structure, as some German institutions are doing. This restricts the terms when European students can take advantage of student exchange.

Case Study #2

École de technologie supérieure

General Approach:

The mission of the ÉTS (which is a member of the Université du Québec network) as a partner to research and industry has resulted in a strategy of strengthening links with research groups and laboratories working within international research networks and consortiums.

Young researchers are actively being trained on the basis of bilateral agreements with institutions with a definitely industry-oriented approach. Since the Government of Quebec does not fund a greater number of foreign students in Quebec than of Quebec students abroad, the ÉTS maintains student-exchange parity.

Specific policies and practices:

- **ECTS:**
 - The ECTS has a lot to offer an institution such as the ÉTS, but not enough, because the system says nothing about the skills or abilities of the engineers it produces, but only about what they have learned. In its departments and program management, the ÉTS has professionals charged with examining the contents of courses offered by its bilateral partners and keeping them apprised of the programs incoming and outgoing students wish to follow in their academic engineering or research training. This bilateral approach has recently allowed for the development of networks in which each academic partner participates in the education and training of young engineers and researchers who are highly adapted to the world of industrial research and engineering without borders.
 - The ECTS facilitates the job of those responsible for evaluating exchange programs and of the Registrar's Office, which is responsible for admission requests from overseas partner institutions. There is a 2:1 equivalence between the ECTS and the ÉTS academic credit (2 ECTS to 1 ÉTS credit), which takes into account the student's number of courses, preparation and lab hours. It should be noted that all ÉTS undergraduate courses entail three or four course hours a week and three hours of compulsory labs, which is not the case for its international partners.
 - Diploma Supplement: None as of now, but exchange program experience is mentioned on the academic record and statement of marks. The ÉTS is considering issuing a "diploma" of international training in engineering to all international students admitted to incoming exchange programs. The restrictions requiring student parity could be lifted.

- **Erasmus Mundus/Joint Master's Degrees:**

- Every year, the ÉTS admits 20 to 30 new students in the joint Master's program (final year of the engineering degree in France and three full-time course sessions of the ÉTS Master's in engineering degree, with thesis or applied project). The ÉTS has an agreement of this type with 14 French partners, all major public or private engineering schools. At the end of their France-Quebec studies, French students obtain a French engineering degree (eligible to apply in Quebec for the title of engineer and right to practise according to the terms of the Quebec-France inter-professional agreements recently signed by their premier and prime minister), the European Master degree (M2) and a 45-credit Master of Engineering degree recognized in Canada.

Admissions policies and practices:

- Admission to an engineering degree program is solely on the basis of a technical, technology or technician's diploma: this is the case for 25% of graduates of Quebec's technical CEGEP programs who decide to pursue university studies in engineering. On an experimental basis, the ÉTS has admitted graduates with equivalent diplomas from foreign technical institutes since the autumn of 2008.
- There is no formal admissions policy based on the Bologna Process; rather, admissions are on the basis of skills and learning acquired in programs that are recognized as equivalent to the CEGEP technical diploma (or those of other Canadian community colleges).
- Foreign students are admitted to exchange programs under reciprocal and parity bilateral agreements; the CREPUQ multilateral exchange agreement between Quebec universities and more than 400 universities throughout the world applies on a pro rata basis to ÉTS students graduating under this system, until all places are filled.
- The overall strategy for admission to joint courses or dual diplomas is to base it on the minimum mark admitting the candidate to a European or American PhD program. Thus, applicants with Bac+5 in engineering or applied sciences would not go directly into an ÉTS doctoral program. At the least, they would first have to complete one session of Master's course work, and possibly a second or third, according to their results. This means that for admission to a doctoral program, applicants are assessed on the basis of their Bac+5 and the courses passed in the first Master's session at ÉTS (or at another Canadian university) on a case-by-case basis. The directors of graduate programs recommend candidates qualifying for doctoral programs to the admissions assessment committee.
- Generally for all graduate programs (short programs, the Diplôme d'Études Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS), Master's) an engineering diploma is required; for software or other IT engineers, two years' relevant post-degree work experience is also required. An exception is the M.Eng. with concentration in environmental engineering, which admits students with a three-year BSc from a Canadian university (in life sciences, environment, chemistry or physics). This means that students with French or European Master degrees who do not have an engineering diploma from an accredited French institution (such as the France's Commission des titres d'ingénieurs (CTI)) have access to only two Master's programs out of the 12 given. This approach is being re-evaluated to expand the potential student pool to include other types of scientific training that provide a background adequate to allow international students to team successfully with their Canadian and Quebec counterparts who already have engineering diplomas.

Policies and practices for collaboration with European partner institutions:

- The strategy is to strengthen links with institutions (the Grandes écoles or advanced technical institutes, accredited national universities), research centres and university laboratories, which take complementary approaches to research and training at the graduate and post-graduate levels according to a philosophy similar to that of the ÉTS.

Other comments:

- Undergraduate programs at the ÉTS are very much oriented to the practical; they are intended to be an extension of the technician training acquired at the college level. All ÉTS undergraduate courses include applied laboratories. Following the graduate-level reforms in 2006, Master's programs include courses and applied projects in research labs or industry; at the doctoral level there are only two courses of three credits each (research methodology and directed readings), with the rest of the credits focused on the doctoral thesis. In line with the ÉTS's mission of industrial and research partnerships with the high-tech community, all doctoral candidates work closely on issues important to the industry, through either partnerships, sponsored or jointly funded projects, or internships.
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Case Study #3

McGill University

General Approach:

At McGill, the University Admissions Committee, a standing committee of Senate, has authority to recommend changes in admission policy to Senate. The committee membership includes representatives from Senate, some associate deans, senior administration, student associations, and admission offices. It is chaired by the Deputy Provost.

The Senate committee struck a working group to coordinate the interpretation and evaluation of Bologna credentials. The membership includes some Faculty admissions representatives, the University Registrar and Executive Director Enrolment Services, the Director of Admissions and Recruitment, and the Manager of Graduate Admissions. The committee has existed in its current format since 2005, but there has been awareness of the Bologna Accord for the better part of a decade.

Specific policies and practices:

- **ECTS:**
 - Because ECTS grades are proportional and not absolute (i.e. a ranking), it is unclear whether the student is actually proficient in the course material or simply as good or better than others in the class. As a result, McGill uses local grades instead of ECTS grades. It does use ECTS credits to determine the level and intensity of study. It understands 60 ECTS credits represents one full time annual course load and therefore recognizes degrees comprising 180 to 240 ECTS credits as equivalent to a McGill Bachelor's degree.
 - Transfer credit is generally granted on the basis of the local grade and credits. Some McGill exchange students studying at Bologna schools are however given transfer credit based on the ECTS credits.
 - Academic faculty decide on the value of transfer credits for the program to which a student is admitted.
- **Diploma Supplement**
 - As students typically apply to McGill before graduating, the supplement arrives too late to be useful to the admission process in most cases. It would be helpful to receive at least extracts of the supplement with every official transcript.
- **Erasmus Mundus/Joint Graduate Degrees**
 - McGill does not have a tradition of joint degree programs with other institutions outside of Quebec.

Admissions policies and practices:

Undergraduate: McGill advertises that “applicants from Bologna signatory schools and universities will be admitted (subject to the policies of McGill Faculties) into McGill degree programs of similar duration and stature as those of comparable, research intensive universities in Europe.” At the undergraduate level interpretation of Bologna credentials is more concerned with questions of applicants’ qualifications and articulation and of transfer credits.

Graduate: McGill evaluated the new Bologna credentials in consultation with a variety of off campus resources (e.g. CREPUQ) and with internal partners. The University recognizes the 3 year Bologna credentials as equivalent to the North American undergraduate degree for admission to Master’s programs. It has a sense of comfort with European adherence to standards and to quality assurance.

- A series of fact sheets was updated to reflect the old and new systems and credentials, and to provide transparent information to prospective students and to the McGill community about the evaluation process. (See www.mcgill.ca/gradapplicants/apply/prepare/requirements/internationaldegree/)
- At the graduate level, interpretation of Bologna credentials is more concerned with the basis of recognition of applicants’ qualifications.
- Professional Accreditation – While McGill may accept the credentials, third party accrediting associations may not (e.g. Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec).

Policies and practices for collaboration with European partner institutions:

- **Admissions to graduate degree programs:**
 - McGill has not modified its policies per se, so much as it has adapted its admissions practices. In determining qualifications, the admissions office consults with the many faculty who have direct experience at European institutions as both graduates and faculty members which has made this transition in admissions procedures more manageable. The Quebec CEGEP system, which leads to a 3 year baccalaureate degree at Quebec universities, perhaps renders McGill more open to a 3 year degree.

Other comments:

- Some Bologna signatory countries have transition periods or grand parenting, some have black and white transformations, and others have a mix. The transition is difficult to manage. Some countries seem challenged to meet the 2010 deadline.
 - The French Grandes écoles are concerned about how McGill will deal with the graduates of their Diplôme (which continues as a 5 year program rather than changing to the 3 year Bachelor’s of the Bologna model.)
-

Cast Study #4

York University

General Approach:

York's responses to the Bologna Process have been developed within the framework of the university's policies and practices on international matters. A 2008 review of Three Year Degrees and Graduate Admissions commissioned by the Office of the Vice-President Academic considered the Bologna Process as one of four significant aspects of globalization that affect higher education (the other three being the massive increase in international student mobility; the emergence of China and India as major economic powers and sites of world class university education; and the intense competition for talented students). The review's recommendations formed the basis of a Senate decision on revisions to admission requirements for students applying to Master's degree programs.

The Vice President Academic has full operational authority over international strategy and agreements, and a budget to manage them. Both are handled by the Associate Vice President International, who reports to the VP Academic. There is no committee for considering policy changes. Rather, the Vice President Academic office conducts studies when a need is identified, and presents recommendations for changes to the Senate for approval.

Specific policies and practices:

- European Credit Transfer System (ECTS): York uses the formula of dividing ECTS credits by 2 for equivalence to York credits (i.e., 60 ECTS credits = 30 York credits) This procedure is easier to explain to students than the former situation of explaining the difference between York's credit system and that of any other given university.
- Some European universities have been slow in implementing ECTS; in those cases, York must go back to former procedures.
- The Diploma Supplement is not used for admissions decision by York. Moreover, it is mostly viewed as irrelevant given that there is very little awareness of it among faculty members.
- Erasmus Mundus/Joint Graduate Degrees
- York has no joint Master's programs under the Erasmus Mundus program

Admissions policies and practices:

- Three-year first cycle undergraduate degrees from institutions that meet the criteria set forth in the Bologna Declaration may be acceptable as the equivalent of an undergraduate honours degree.

Policies and practices for collaboration with European partner institutions:

- Joint graduate degree programs
- Proposals for new programs must be approved by the Ontario Council on Graduate studies. These must include the c.v.'s of all faculty members involved, in a detailed format that differs from the one European faculty normally use. The extra work this would require in a proposal has so far discouraged York from considering joint degrees with European partners.

Other comments:

- The uneven implementation of ECTS by some European universities, and occasional idiosyncrasies in their internal policies create some difficulties for York's graduate admissions. As a result, graduate admission decisions are taken by following former procedures on a case-by-case basis.

Appendix 3: Related Reading

Resources appear in the language in which they were published.

AUCC Statement on Canadian Universities and the Bologna Process:

www.aucc.ca/_pdf/english/statements/2008/bologna_process_06_20_e.pdf

and

AUCC Background Document:

www.aucc.ca/_pdf/english/statements/2008/bologna_process_background_06_20_e.pdf

University of Alberta Conference: Canadian Perspectives on the Bologna Process:

www.international.ualberta.ca/bologna.cfm

Official Bologna Secretariat:

www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/

Report on the Bologna Process in a Global Setting:

www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/WGR2007/Bologna_Process_in_global_setting_finalreport.pdf

and

Related Strategy for the EHEA in a Global Setting:

www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/WGR2007/Strategy-for-EHEA-in-global-setting.pdf

Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA

www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

European Quality Assurance Register:

www.eqar.eu/

European University Association's *Trends V* Report:

www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/Trends_V_universities_shaping_the_european_higher_education_area.pdf

The EUA Bologna Handbook:

www.bologna-handbook.com/

The European Commission's Contribution to the Bologna Process: *From Bergen to London*:

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/report06.pdf>

The European Commission's *Erasmus Mundus* Program:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

The Tuning project:

<http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu>

The Coimbra Group:

www.coimbra-group.eu/index.html

NAFSA Special Focus Network on Bologna Process:

www.nafsa.org/knowledge_community_network.sec/recruitment_admissions/bologna_process_network

Banff Principles on Graduate Education:

www.cgsnet.org/portals/0/pdf/mtg_BanffPrinciples.pdf

Joint and Double Degree Programs in the Transatlantic Context: A Survey Report

www.iienetwork.org/file_depot/0-10000000/0-10000/1710/folder/80205/TDP+Report_2009_Final21.pdf

Government of Australia and the Bologna Process:

<http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/GovernmentActivities/BolognaProcess/default.htm>

Proposal for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement:

www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/documents/ahegsfinalreport.pdf.htm

The Government of New Zealand and the Bologna Process:

www.minedu.govt.nz/educationSectors/InternationalEducation/ForProvidersOfInternationalEducation/IntlEdNewsFromAroundWorld/Europe/Bologna.aspx

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region 1997 (The Lisbon Recognition Convention)

www.cicic.ca/661/lisbon-convention.canada

Towards 2020 - A Student-Centred Bologna Process

www.esib.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/462-towards-2020-a-student-centred-bologna-process

Adelman, C. (2008.) *The Bologna Club: What U.S. Higher Education Can Learn from a Decade of European Reconstruction*. Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy.

www.ihep.org/Research/thebolognaprocess.cfm

Gacel, Jocelyne (2009) "Is a Bologna process feasible for Latin America." *Beyond 2010, Priorities and challenges for higher education in the next decade*, ed. Academic Cooperation Association (ACA). Brussels, Belgium pp. 141-149.

Hartmann, Eva (2008) "Bologna goes global: a new imperialism in the making?", *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 6:3, pp 207 – 220

Lorenz, C.F.G.(2007). «L'économie de la connaissance», le nouveau management public et les politiques de l'enseignement supérieur dans l'Union européenne. In: Christophe Charles en Charles Soulié (red.), *Les ravages de la "modernisation" universitaire en Europe*, Paris, Syllepse, 2007, 33-53 :

Available online at: <http://dare.ubvu.vu.nl/bitstream/1871/11720/1/Economie%20de%20la%20Connaissance%20-%20paris.pdf>

Lorenz, C.F.G (2006.) "Will the universities survive the European integration? : higher education policies in the EU and in the Netherlands before and after the Bologna Declaration." *Sociologia internationalis*, 2006 - Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 123-151

Available online at: <http://dare.ubvu.vu.nl/bitstream/1871/11005/1/Sociologia%20Internationalis.pdf>

Morgan, Bob and Julie Lydon (2009) "Bologna: Some thoughts on its Effect on the Internationalization of Higher Education" *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, Vol 1 No. 1, pp 63-72, January 2009.

Available online: http://gjarhe.research.glam.ac.uk/media/files/documents/2008-12-22/JARHE_V1.1_Jan_09_Web_pp63-72.pdf



