

2014-5

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Recommended Citation

McMahon, F. A Technological University: Student Role in Delivering Quality. DITSU Conference, Dublin, May 2014.

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A Technological University: Student Role in Delivering Quality

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Bologna Process

- Bologna Declaration signed in June 1999 by Ministers for Education of 29 countries
- Included all EU countries (then 15)
- Overall aim was a coherent European Higher Education Area by 2010
- Although noting the autonomy of universities, this was a reform process led by Ministers

Objectives

- A system of easily readable and comparable degrees
- Adoption of system based on two cycles, undergraduate and graduate
- A system of credits such as ECTS
- Promotion of mobility
- European co-operation in QA
- Promotion of European Dimension in HE

Prague Communiqué, 2001

- Now 32 countries in process
- Three new points added:
 - Need for Lifelong Learning Policies
 - Role of students and student representative bodies
 - Importance of enhancing attractiveness of European HE to students from Europe and other parts of world

Berlin Communiqué, 2003

- Membership now 40 countries including Russia
- Set objectives for next 2 years for:
 - Quality Assurance
 - Degree Structure: all countries to have 2-cycle system by 2005
 - Diploma Supplement to be issued to all
- Recognised Doctoral level as 3rd Cycle

Bergen Communique, 2005

- Five new members, total now 45
- Commitment to adoption of national frameworks of qualifications by 2010
- Adoption of standards and guidelines for QA
- Urged action on recognition of degrees and study periods
- Emphasised importance of research and structured doctoral programmes

Features of Quality Assurance

- Policy to involve students in QA
- Students should be assessed using public criteria, regulations and procedures applied consistently
- Institutions to ensure resources for support of student learning are adequate
- External QA to include assessment by a group of experts including student(s)

Bucharest 2012

Ministers agreed to focus on 3 main goals:

- To provide quality higher education to more students
- To better equip students with employable skills
- To increase student mobility (at least 20% of European graduates in 2020 should have been on a study or training period abroad)

National Qualification Frameworks

- All countries were supposed to publish NFQ by 2010 but some slippage
- NFQ must be compatible with Bologna Framework; Ireland was first to demonstrate this (in 2006)
- NFQ must also be compatible with EQF
- NFQ benefits students by making explicit where qualifications stand

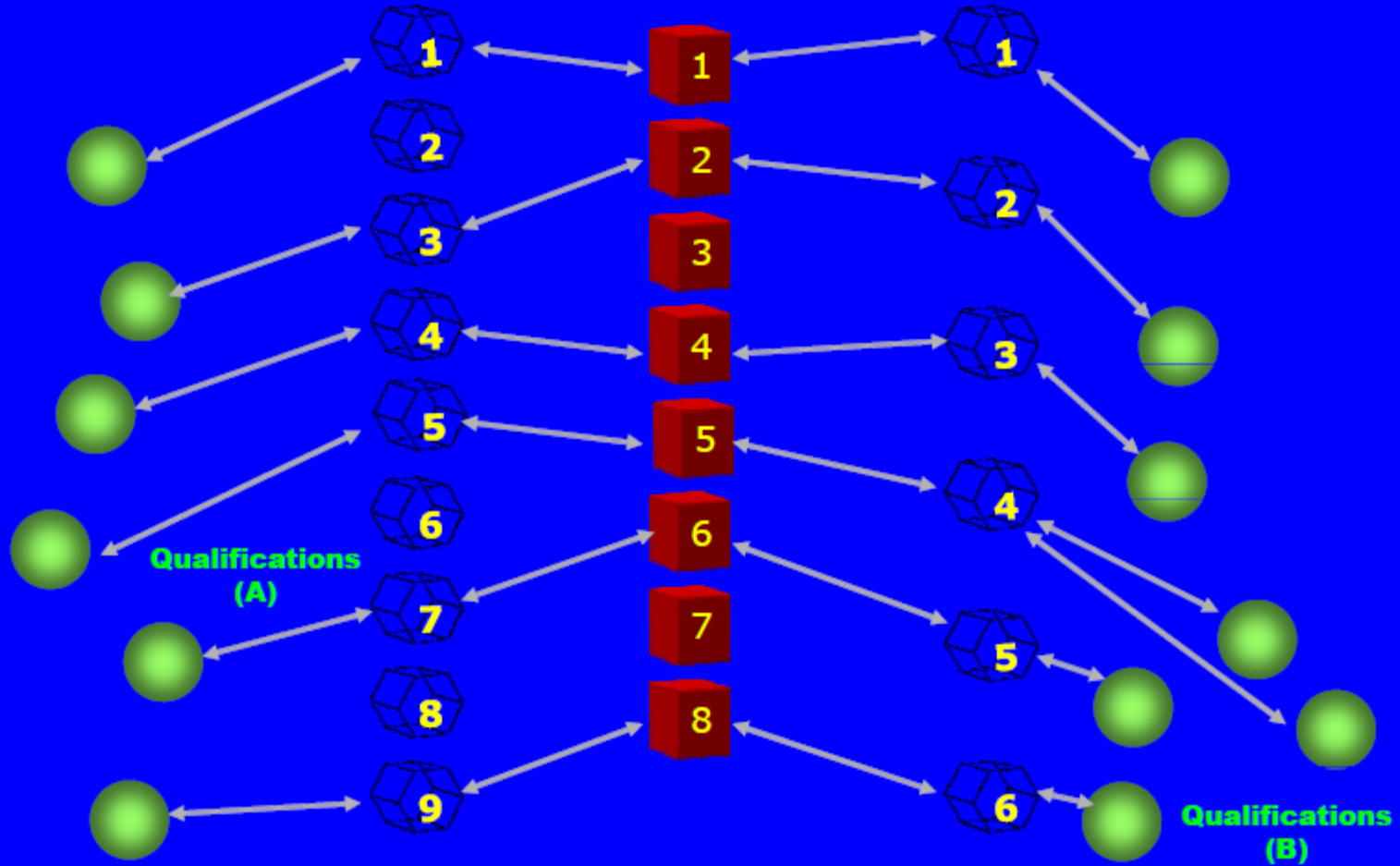
Frameworks of Qualifications

EQF and Bologna Framework

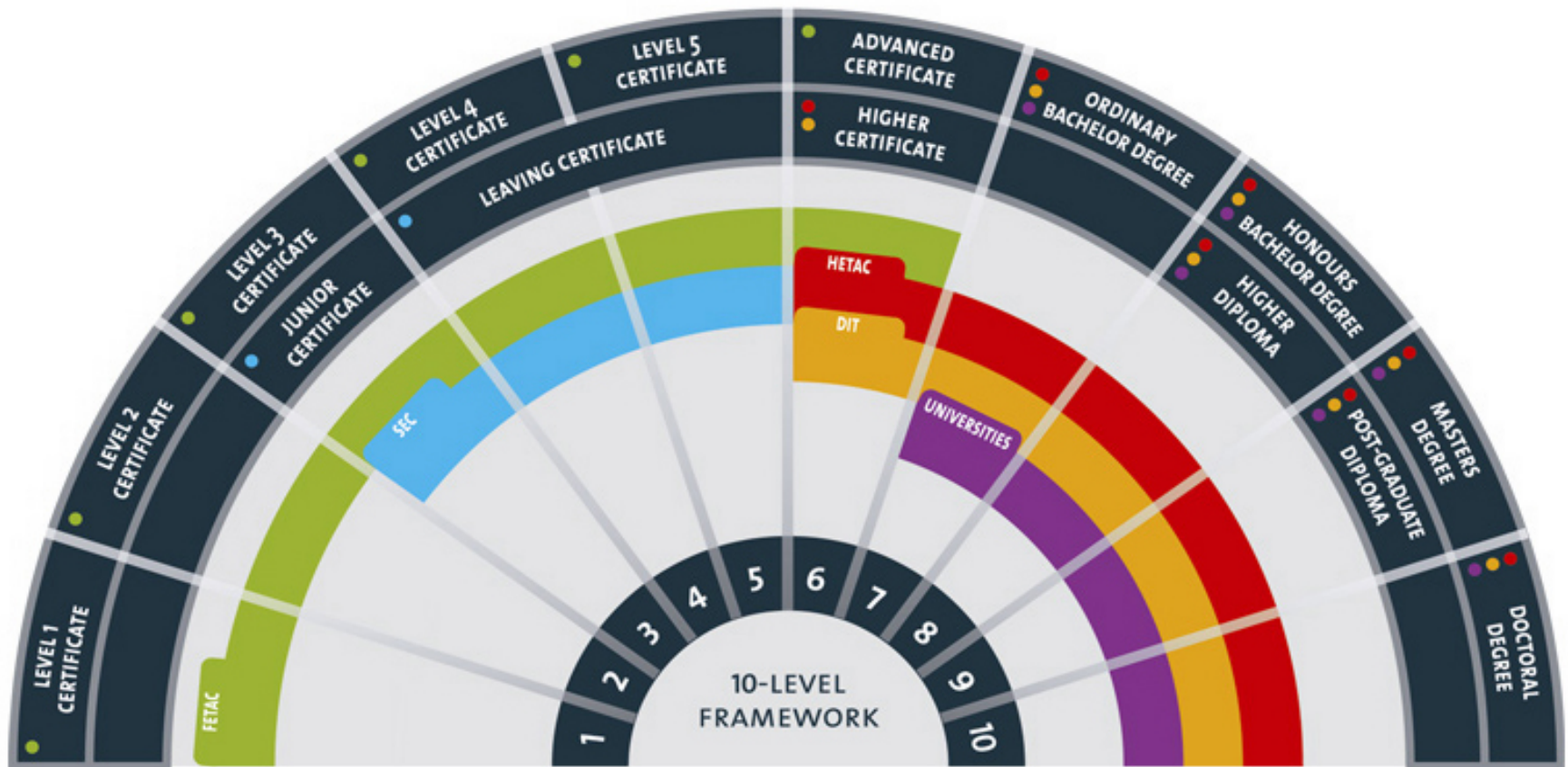
EQF Levels	Bologna Framework
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	Short cycle within the first cycle
6	First Cycle
7	Second Cycle
8	Third Cycle

Country A

Country B



The National Framework of Qualifications – award-types and awarding bodies



Impact of Major Initiatives

- The Bologna Process has had major impact in the areas of:
- Degree Structures
- A System of Credits (ECTS)
- Quality Assurance
- Student Mobility
- National Qualifications Frameworks
- Recognition of Qualifications

Quality Assurance

- Bologna Process has led to the agreement of Standards & Guidelines for QA in Europe
- ESG now being revised
- There is now a European QA Register for Higher Education
- Irish Higher Education Quality Network established to share best practice [HEA, IUQB, DIT, HETAC, USI, DES]

Student Mobility

- BP facilitated greater mobility by students
- Easier to transfer credits when all HEIs use the same system (ECTS)
- Mutual recognition of awards makes it easier for students to move
- New target for mobility is 20% of all graduates to have studied abroad for at least part of programme by 2020 (very challenging for many countries)

Recognition

- Within countries, NFQ is an important tool of recognition of learning
- Between countries, compatibility of frameworks with EQF and Bologna framework is an aid to recognition
- Diploma Supplements for all graduates are meant to aid recognition of awards throughout Bologna region (47 countries)
- Lisbon Recognition Convention sought to allow professionals to practise in other countries. New unit in many countries to assist those seeking recognition.

Student Role at International Level

- Critical role of the four Es:
 - ENQA (European Association of QA)
 - EUA (European Universities Association)
 - Eurashe (European Association for Institutions in Higher Education)
 - ESU (European Students Union)
 - Liaise with four Es to ensure full student participation in all Bologna initiatives

Ireland's NFQ: Titles of Awards

Level

- 10 – Doctoral Degree
- 9 – Master's Degree & Post-graduate Diploma
- 8 – Honours Bachelor Degree & Higher Diploma
- 7 – Ordinary Bachelor Degree
- 6 – Advanced Certificate & Higher Certificate
- 5 – Level 5 Certificate
- 4/5 – Leaving Certificate
- 4 – Level 4 Certificate
- 3 – Level 3 Certificate & Junior Certificate
- 2 – Level 2 Certificate
- 1 – Level 1 Certificate

Student Role at National Level

- Membership of higher education funding/policy body (HEA)
- Membership of National Bologna Committee
- Membership of national QA agency (QQI)
- Membership of higher education quality network (see www.iheqn.ie)
- Ensure students' union fully involved

Student Role at Institutional Level

- Membership of Governing Body of HEI
- Membership of Academic Council/Senate
- Membership of QA Committee
- Membership of College Boards
- Membership of programme review panels and institutional review panels
- Good liaison with employers
- Student Bologna Experts to work with students' union to ensure participation

Student Role at Programme and School Level

- Appointment of class representatives
- Training of class representatives
- Liaison with lecturers to facilitate appointment of class representatives
- Membership of programme committees for speedy resolution of problems
- Production of an annual report by each programme committee with a view to programme improvement

Student Feedback

- There must be a system of anonymous student feedback on modules and programmes
- Protection for lecturers from malicious criticism
- Clear evidence for students that feedback is being taken seriously by lecturers and programme management

Role of Student Bologna Experts

- Ensure student interests are represented at international, national, institutional and programme/school level
- Ensure that student issues are considered by national teams of Bologna Experts and national agencies
- Ensure student representatives are trained for their roles
- Establish good contacts with employer bodies and other stakeholders

Possible Future Developments

- New objectives in regard to access, employability and student-centred learning
- Access Targets; a National Access Office to set targets and monitor
- Employability improved by work placements: relations with employer bodies
- Student-centred learning to be reflected in programme design and assessment

Useful websites

- Bologna Communiques: www.ehea.info/
- NFAQ: www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/
- HEA website: www.eurireland.ie
- EUA Charter on LLL(2008): www.eua.be
- ESU: Bologna With Student Eyes 2007, 2009 and 2012 on www.esu-online.org/
- Irish Higher Education Quality Network
www.iheqn.ie/publications/

Questions



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