Recognition of prior learning in HET in Finland

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Why is a holistic approach important and on the agenda?

- LLL
- Bologna
- EQF / NQF
- Lisbon strategy / new version
- Copenhagen declaration
- ECVET
- TUNING
- Government strategies / LLL
The Exploring Worker - how do you understand and solve problems

Culture at work

Line manager

Target group

Means, habits in the Organisation

Working skills/competences

Employees/colleagues

Friends

Partners in cooperation

Personal Experience

Family

Educational background

Other leaders

Market forces

Organisation structure

University

Learning groups

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TUNING METHODOLOGY: learning outcomes and competences

General tendencies in higher education:

- Shift of paradigm: moving from a staff oriented approach to a student centred approach
- Less specialised academic education in the first cycle
- More flexibility in first and second cycle programmes

What should a student know, understand and be able to do to be employable?

Management Committee
The Tuning Methodology

- **Line 1: Generic competences**
  Consultation with graduates, employers and academics on the importance of 30 generic competences and an evaluation of how well HE institutions develop them.

- **Line 2: Subject specific competences (knowledge, understanding and skills)**
  Mapping of subject areas and development of common reference points and subject specific competences of each of the pilot disciplines.

- **Line 3: ECTS as a European credit accumulation system: new perspectives**
  Development of ECTS as a tool for programme design: basis is student workload measured in time.

- **Line 4: Mapping of approaches to teaching / learning and assessment in different countries**

- **Line 5: Quality enhancement**

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Why Focus on competences?

1. Further transparency of professional profiles in study programmes and emphasis on learning outcomes
2. Shift to a more learner oriented approach to education
3. Growing demands of a lifelong learning society which requires more flexibility
4. Need for higher levels of employability and citizenship
5. Enhancement of the European dimension of Higher Education
6. Need for a shared language for consultation with all stakeholders
FOCUS ON GENERIC COMPETENCES
(GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS)

TARGET GROUPS:

- GRADUATES
- EMPLOYERS
- ACADEMICS

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPETENCES TO BE EMPLOYABLE INDEPENDENT OF ONE’S SUBJECT AREA?

ARE THESE ACTUALLY TAUGHT AND TO WHAT EXTENT?

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**THE TUNING QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TYPES OF COMPETENCES MEASURED:**

**Instrumental competences:**
- Capacity for analyses and synthesis
- Capacity for organisation and planning
- Basic general knowledge
- Grounding in basic knowledge of the profession
- Oral and written communication in your native language
- Knowledge of a second language
- Elementary computing skills
- Information management skills (ability to retrieve and analyse information from different sources)
- Problem solving
- Decision-making

Management Committee
THE TUNING QUESTIONNAIRE

TYPES OF COMPETENCES MEASURED:

Interpersonal competences:

- Critical and self-critical abilities
- Teamwork
- Interpersonal skills
- Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team
- Ability to communicate with experts in other fields
- Appreciation of diversity and multiculturality
- Ability to work in an international context
- Ethical commitment
THE TUNING QUESTIONNAIRE

TYPES OF COMPETENCES MEASURED:

Systemic competences:
- Capacity for applying knowledge in practice
- Research skills
- Capacity to learn
- Capacity to adapt to new situations
- Capacity for generating new ideas (creativity)
- Leadership
- Understanding of cultures and customs of other countries
- Ability to work autonomously
- Project design and management
- Initiative and entrepreneur spirit
- Concern for quality
- Will to succeed

Management Committee
### Data

#### 7 Areas & 101 university depart. & 16 Countries

- Business
- Geology
- History
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Education
- Chemistry

#### Total number of respondents:

- 5183 Graduates
- 944 Employers
- 998 Academics

#### Countries:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Portugal
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
Results
Comparing Graduates and Employers

1. Capacity for analysis and synthesis
2. Capacity for applying knowledge in practice
3. Concern for quality
4. Information management skills
5. Ability to work autonomously
6. Capacity for organisation and planning
7. Teamwork
8. Capacity to adapt to new situations
9. Problem solving
10. Capacity to learn

Instrumental
Interpersonal
Systemic
**Fundamental Importance: Weighted Ranking of the Most Importance Competences. All Subjects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Capacity for analysis and synthesis</td>
<td>▪ Capacity to learn</td>
<td>▪ Basic knowledge of the field of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Capacity to learn</td>
<td>▪ Capacity for applying knowledge in practice</td>
<td>▪ Capacity for analysis and synthesis</td>
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How are competences and learning outcomes related?

- Learning outcomes according to Tuning methodology should be formulated in terms of competences.
- Learning outcomes are minimum requirements of a unit or a programmes and are expressed in terms what the learner knows and is able to do at the end of the learning experience.
- Competences may be developed to a greater degree than the level required by the learning outcome.
Websites

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/

TuningProject

http://www.relint.deusto.es/TuningProject/index.htm

http://www.let.rug.nl/TuningProject/index.htm

Management Committee
The 25 Finnish recommendations

A) Recommendations for a recognition system
B) Recommendations for common principles of the recognition system
C) Recommendation for higher education institutions
D) Recommendations for the Ministry of Education
A) Recognition system

- Each university devises a transparent system
- System applied to HE degree
- Only obliged to assess and recognise own students and applicants
- 2 stages – when assessing for entering university and assessing competences for studies
- Has to be done with stakeholders (work life)
Common principles

- Based on students rights – process always initiated by the student
- Competence based approach – demands that institutions have clear learning outcomes
- Facilitate national and international mobility
- Recognition based on certificates
- Degrees may not be completed in full through non-formal and informal learning
- Prior learning may be graded
- Based on documentation
- HE institution responsible for quality assurance
Recommendations for HE inst.

- Have to make clear system as part of quality assurance system
- List of what should be included
  - Where to apply, documents relevant, time required, the procedure, documentation etc.
- Easy accessible to students
- Plan for counselling and guidance
- Should develop methods – portfolios etc
- Develop knowledge on credit transfer system and prior learning
Recommendations to the Ministry

- To support activities aiming to develop methods to recognise prior and informal/non-formal learning
- To appoint joint working groups of universities and polytechs to implement field specific polices
- To be included as part of universities steering by targets and results
What is good

- Total exchange of culture
- Recognition possible and demanded
- Open up for a total new approach
- Open up for national mobility
- Accept a LLL model
- Interest in experience
- Student oriented – also adult students
- Working with social partners / stake holders
What is not so good

- There is a danger to stop at APEL at the entrance door
- Easy to make it difficult
- Not incentives to push – not legislation, not money (Note! – part of results!)
- Luck of tradition
- Tiredness in reforms can be a barrier
Future perspectives

- No real limits – if you want you are allowed to
- Outer demands – society, economical
- Requiting
- Wise use of recourses
- Allocating new recourses
- Getting trust in HE
- Real connection to the world
Thank you for your patience

- Let´s keep in touch

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