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- **Joint Degrees and the implementation of the Bachelor Master structure: A Case Study Brussels**
- **Ignace Van Dingenen
Director of Education and Research
Erasmushogeschool**

- **A Case Study about the preparation of the association between two institutes
Erasmushogeschool Brussel (EHB) and the Vrije
Universiteit van Brussel (VUB)**

Erasmushogeschool: University of professional education **(EHB)**

- Location : Brussels
- 4500 students
- Programmes: Garden and Landscape Architecture; Laboratory and Food Technology; Nursing; Communication Management; Secretarial Management or Management Assistant; Applied Information Technology; Management, Tourism and Recreation; Hotel Management; Chemistry; Audiovisual Technology; Pre-School Teacher Training; Primary School Teacher Training; Lower Secondary Education Teacher Training; Initial Teacher Training Academic Level: Music; Social Work
- All study areas
- 1 cycle and 2 cycle programmes

Vrije Universiteit Brussel: University (VUB)

- Location : Brussels
- 9000 Students
- Faculties: natural sciences, applied sciences (engineering), medicine, physical education, physiotherapy & rehabilitation, law, psychologie & education, letters & philosophy, economic, social & political sciences
- 2 cycle programmes

Introduction

- Bologna Declaration
- Implementation of the Bachelor and Master degrees within the framework of an association with a university
- association EHB with the VUB

Reasons for an Association with VUB

- **Territorial reasons:** both institutions are based in the Brussels educational region
- **Historical reasons:** in the past the EHB has already co-operated with the VUB
- **Philosophical reasons:** the VUB is a free, non-confessional university and the EHB is a pluralistic polytechnic

Preparation of the association

- 1° phase : co-operation agreement
- 2° phase: formation of associations: implementation of the content of the BAMA structure and the "academisation")

Co-operation agreement between VUB and EHB
(2000)

1° Phase : The EHB and the VUB signed in 2000 a co-operation agreement

Realisations(1)

- Tuning of the curriculum structure
- Co-operation between teachers
- Co-operation on Postgraduate academic educational programmes – Post-polytechnic educational programme - Permanent education and Open University
- Common research projects have been set up

Realisations of the cooperation(2)

- Exchange of experiences and methodologies on Quality assessment, educational professionalisation and innovation:
- mutual innovation projects
- Guidance in the choice of courses and profiling
- Common use of educational infrastructure
- Mutual accessibility of social infrastructure and student facilities

Evaluation of the co-operation

- The co-operation activities are based upon the existing provisions of the Polytechnics Decree
- rather exploring, tentative
- no strings attached
- the proper structure of the institutions is maintained
- no integration of activities

**Phase 2: Formation of associations and
implementation of the bachelor master structure**

Decree stipulations about Associations

An association consists of

- on the one hand a university qualified to offer both bachelor and master programmes
- on the other hand at least one polytechnic

Decree stipulations about:

- the mission
- Mandatory tasks
- Optional tasks

2002 : Structure Decree

The existing co-operation between the EHB and the VUB has been redefined: focus on the joint implementation of the BAMA structure.

- a policy plan.
- organisational structure.
- transparent communication network.

Strategy

bottom up strategy

- teaching staff members will redefine the educational programme profile
- imposing a new educational structure would be impossible

top down strategy

- present working schemes, scenarios and models
- Policy decisions

Communication

Electronic communication platform 'Blackboard' (BB)

Organisation model

Aim : optimal involvement of the teaching staff

administrative boards: signed a declaration
of intent to create an association together

- Steering committee
- vertical working groups
- horizontal working groups
 - the working group Education
 - the working group Scientific Research

Steering committee(EHB-VUB): Tasks

- inform the Administrative Boards.
- the preparation of all necessary policy decisions.
- prepare policy documents.

Steering committee(EHB-VUB): Policy documents

policy documents and general texts

- the mission of the association
- the objectives and the tasks of the association
- international points of view on Bachelors and Masters
- beliefs, points of view and possible scenarios for the implementation of the Bachelor Master structure
- the minimum level criteria and quality criteria for Bachelors and Masters
- beliefs, points of view on Quality assessment and Accreditation

Steering committee(EHB-VUB): Policy decisions

- concerning the reorganisation of the 1 and 2-cycle educational programmes.
- the "academisation" of the 2-cycle educational programmes,
- proposals for new masters,
- study duration in the reorganisation of the educational offer,
- the switch programmes,
- the systematic follow-up of the activities of the vertical and horizontal working groups.

Horizontal working groups

Structured around activities which reach beyond the departments, faculties, sub-departments and educational programmes of both institutions

Horizontal working groups

- Research,
- Education,
 - Sub-group Information and computer technology and educational innovation (ICTO),
 - Sub-group, Quality assessment,
- Infrastructure and Informatics,
- Internal and External Communication,
 - Sub-group 'Website',
 - Sub-group 'Events',
 - Sub-group 'PR',

Horizontal working groups

- Library.
- Internationalisation,
- Social Facilities,
- Human Resources,
- Finance.

Vertical working groups

Active in the field of education and research. They represent the different faculties, sub-departments and/or educational programmes

Vertical working groups: Faculties

- Communication Science
- Health care
- Environmental care
- Landscape and Garden Architecture
- Tourism
- Arts
 - the Subgroup Audiovisual Art
 - the subgroup Drama
 - the subgroup Music

Vertical working groups: Faculties

- Social and Community Work
- Applied Linguistics
- (Positive) Sciences: Civil and Industrial Engineering
- Informatics
- Teacher Educational programme

Vertical working groups 'study areas'

- health care,
- media,
- art,
- language,
- technology,
- education,
- society.

Blackboard website: <http://www.blackboard.ehb.be>.

Results: Policy guidelines for a joint implementation of the Bachelor Master structure (1)

ultimate goal

- offering a **wide range educational programmes**
- **restructuring and redefining the existing educational offer**
- **implementation of the Bachelor-Master structure** at the basic (undergraduate) postgraduate, post-polytechnic and post-academic level
- **new educational programmes; new masters**
- **flexible and transparent ‘transition’ and ‘cross-over’ possibilities between bachelors and masters:**

Results: Policy guidelines for a joint implementation of the Bachelor Master structure(2)

- value for both institutions by combining.
- maintain the profession of academic oriented character educational programmes.
- developing optimal combination, possibilities, association has to result in a clear added.

Results: Reorganization of the Basis educational programmes

Policy : maintain the present study duration.

- **1-cycle educational programmes** are converted to **Profession-oriented Bachelor Educational programmes.**
- **2-cycle educational programmes** are converted in several ways.
 - 3 years + 1 year or 180 + 60 study points (EU credits).
 - 3 + 1 + 1 year or 180 + 60 + 60 study points (ECTS credits).
 - 3 + 2 year or 180 + 120 study points (ECTS credits).
 - 4 + 1 year or 260 + 60 study points (ECTS credits).

REFERENCE

- **the general descriptors of Dublin (Joint quality initiative)**
- **the general descriptors of the new decree**
 - the **generic, minimal quality and level requirements** for a specific programme degree
 - **description of the specific quality and level requirements** for every programme or group of related programmes, which the programme in question has to meet

Results: Checklist (1)

1. Enumeration and description of educational paths for which co-operation is sought and initial motivation
2. What is the nature of the co-operation
 - existing educational programme(s)
 - Educational programme: basic : after basic programmes: permanent education
 - introduction of (a) new educational programme(s)
 - situation of the programmes on the continuum of scientific-research-oriented versus practice-oriented/profession-oriented
 - (a) switch programme(s)
 - recognition/accreditation of specific professional experience

Results: Checklist (2)

1. What are the **prerequisites** (requirements for admission) for every programme and/or switch programme ?
2. In what way will the contents of the “**academisation**” of the 2-cycle educational programmes be developed, and what timing will be provided?
3. In what way is the programme combined with **research**?
4. Is there already a **co-operation with a third partner** (polytechnic or university).
5. Indicate the elements with regard to educational reform (flexible work forms, home study, use of ICT).

Switch programmes, requirements for admission and competences

Goal.

- develop highly **flexible programmes** by means of switch programmes (= flexibility).
- clear image of all transition possibilities during programme and after having obtained a degree (= transparency).
- all possible transitions with the corresponding study points (ECTS credits) and study load, are determined and announced (= mobility).

Transition bachelor to master (possibilities)

- No additional requirements for admission for the transition from an academic bachelor to a master linked to it
- Preparation programme
- Switch programme
- Accreditation of acquired professional experience

"Academisation" of the two-cycle programmes

This "academisation" is proven by:

- Guaranteeing that **all academic programmes** (including those of the Polytechnics or Universities of professional education after the reorganisation) offered within the associations **are based on scientific research**
- The **involvement of teaching staff members** of the Polytechnics or Universities of professional education **in the scientific research;**

Realizations/possibilities (1)

Curriculum development.

- two little institutions.
- Territory : Brussels.
- optional courses have been determined within the same study areas in view of switch programmes,
- detailed analysis of the content of the courses:
- lecturers teach at both institutions in exchange for the use of the accommodation,
- ICT,
- joint organization of continuous education,
- “semestrialisation” and “modularisation”.

Realizations/possibilities (2)

Bachelor Master structure.

- comparison of the content and reorganization of 2-cycle educational programmes into 3 + 1, 3 + 2 or 4 + 1;
- parallel switch programmes are being developed,
- analysis of the content of the educational programmes in view of the accreditation of the educational programmes, or parts of the educational programmes,
- further development of the professional or academic orientation, exchange of teaching staff,
- “academisation” of 2-cycle educational programmes by involving staff in research teams of the VUB,
- new master educational programmes (profession-oriented) are set up.

Limitations/bottlenecks (1)

- lack of financial possibilities
 - for the implementation of the BAMA structure
 - for the academisation of the 2 cycle programmes
- government: no clear vision on BAMA structure
- Internationalization: no international consideration
- Statute of the personnel and job load are different,
- university sometimes looks down on polytechnics,

Limitations/bottlenecks (2)

- fear of evening out the level through co-operation with polytechnics,
- strong distinction between academic and professional motives,
- specific problems between educational programmes (professional oriented programmes) ,
- unclear position of the art educational programmes, no "research" into/on the arts,
- different vision on external interference in the quality assessment system between universities (aimed at accreditation) and polytechnics