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DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNING BOARD

Group of National Experts on the AHELO Feasibility Study

FEASIBILITY FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES (AHELO): PROGRESS REPORT

IMHE GB, Paris 12 April 2010 AHELO GNE, Paris 15-16 March 2010 EDPC, Paris 13-14 April 2010

The AHELO GNE discussed this progress report at its March 2010 meeting and agreed to declassify it in this version.

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FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES (AHELO): PROGRESS REPORT

(ABRIGED VERSION)

- 1. The AHELO GNE met for the third time on 18-19 November 2009 to review bids received in response to the AHELO Call for Tenders from two Consortia and to review the budget and fundraising situation of the AHELO feasibility study
- 2. The Education Policy Committee then:
 - Took note and welcomed the work and progress of the AHELO GNE;
 - Noted the importance of the project and agreed to maintain its design, scope and objectives as initially planned;
 - Endorsed the conclusions of the AHELO GNE with respect to the selection of contractor, the phasing of the work and the deferring of the value-added measurement strand of work;
 - Welcomed the extension of participation to all non-OECD economies on condition that such participation contributes to the project revenues;
 - Noted with regret the serious challenges that the project is confronted with, and agreed to take the
 necessary action to strengthen funding streams from countries participants and non-participants
 to secure broad support for the AHELO feasibility study;
 - Heard and appreciated the willingness and efforts of some countries to increase support through voluntary contributions and assistance to obtain external funding for the project;
 - Discussed the relationship between the AHELO feasibility study and the European multidimensional transparency project, noted that they are complementary, and requested that the close association between the two projects should be maintained and extended, including through financial support from the European Commission; and
 - Noted that decisions on the phasing for the continuation of the project would need to be taken on the basis of the revised roadmap to be prepared by the Secretariat in co-operation with the chosen contractor.

Country participation

3. As of 5 March 2010, 14 countries have already formally signed up to participate in the AHELO feasibility study. Colombia, Kuwait, the Russian Federation and the United States (through the involvement of institutions in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Missouri and Pennsylvania – have since

November joined Australia, Belgium (Fl.), Finland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. In addition, England and Ireland are providing financial support to the study.

Progress on substantive work

Generic Skills Strand

- 4. The contract with the Council for Aid to Education to adapt and translate the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) instrument for the Generic Skills Strand was signed by the OECD Secretary General on 27 January, 2010.
- 5. This has allowed substantive work to start on the Generic Skills Strand, and the first meeting of experts took place on 15-18 February 2010 in New York City. The objectives of the meeting were to:
 - Inform and train country teams about the nature of the CLA (its tasks, response format, and scoring rubric);
 - Inform and train country teams about the process of adapting and translating CLA Performance Tasks;
 - Select two Performance Tasks considered suitable and valid in an international context; and
 - Practice in adapting the Performance Tasks and to learn about how variation among countries might affect translation (e.g., name of river and lake; use of metric system).
- 6. The two selected Performance Tasks will be revised by CAE staff who will take recommendations under advisement from participating countries and create a revised version of each task. In the coming months, participating countries will form an Assessment Adaptation Group (AAG) with the guidance from CAE for the recruitment of a test translation team. CAE will provide countries with training in task translation/adaptation and review process.
- 7. CAE has also been working in collaboration with the Consortium to ensure that there are no redundancies in activities for the implementation of Modules A (preparation of the CLA instrument for international adaptation) and E (its implementation and analysis of results).

Economics and Engineering Strands and Contextual Dimension: ACER Consortium work progress

8. The Secretariat has been working with the Consortium to develop a revised roadmap for the study based on developments in participation, funding, and negotiations with the chosen international contractor.

Value-added measurement strand

9. Following the GNE decision to defer the Value-Added Measurement Strand to a later stage – subject to funding becoming available – and the subsequent endorsement of this decision by the Education Policy Committee, the Secretariat has put this part of the work on hold and removed associated costs from the AHELO feasibility study budget.

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Tuning-AHELO reports

10. During its 3rd meeting, the AHELO GNE agreed on the publication of the Tuning-AHELO reports on expected/desired learning outcomes in Economics and Engineering as preliminary outputs of the feasibility study

Stakeholders Consultative Group

11. Following the GNE's decision to open the Stakeholders Consultative Group (SCG) to national organisations and other types of associations under certain conditions, the Secretariat consulted the GNE Bureau which accepted the participation of HECFE, the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC). In addition, AHELO sponsors have been invited to the SCG (Lumina Foundation, Spencer Foundation, Higher Education Authority of Ireland and Riksbankens Jubileumsfond). The second meeting with the SCG will be held on 17 March 2010.

Follow-up on use and access of data and results of the feasibility study

12. The GNE asked the Secretariat to distinguish and further explore the notion of data and results, to revise the principles guiding the use and access to data results taking into account policies of other similar OECD projects and the purposes of the AHELO feasibility study, and to explore the scope for providing HEIs with access to benchmarks in an anonymous way. To this end, information pertaining to data access and use of results in PIAAC, PISA and TALIS has been collected and compiled.