



Executive Summary

Tuning Legal Studies in Europe: Initial Findings [Report of QUAACAS Hamburg 2008]

The creation of the European Higher Education Area within the Bologna Process is explained with its concomitant need for national qualification frameworks to emerge along with “learning outcomes”, all to be linked together by the European meta-framework. The Report explains the background to the work of QUAACAS and ELFA in the Tuning Legal Studies process. It outlines the selection of national representatives¹ and how the questionnaires were developed and the methodology of the project. The Tuning Legal Studies Project is then briefly explained: - **an organised consultation of graduates, employers and academics about what they consider to be their most important generic and specific competences gained during legal studies at university.** The idea of competences and outcomes on the law context then follows.

In Tuning Legal Studies there were four questionnaires. Employers and graduates were asked about generic competences learned during legal studies, with academics then ranking these results. Within the broader Tuning project these generic competences are very similar for all disciplines. Academics were additionally asked to rank a set of “specific” legal competences, devised by QUAACAS in consultation with national representatives, in order of importance.

The results show gaps between competences and achievement which raise a lot of questions about curriculum design in legal education, focus on teaching or learning activities, alignment between described learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessment. As competences are recognised as significant or important there is clear scope for further work on curriculum reform to enhance and develop those particular competences. It is conceivable that some work could be undertaken in co-operation with the European legal professions for certain competences in develop both curricula and extra-curricula activities. Co-ordination could be sought with the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) for example. ELFA could develop its own policies on which competences should be recognised or enhanced (by further collaborative work). There is also a clear chance for ELFA to help and advise law schools across Europe in the ongoing development of national qualification frameworks in relation to legal studies. There is a likelihood that a sectoral qualification framework could emerge for law in Europe as a result of the processes described in the Report.²

¹ The national work of the country representatives was all carried out on a voluntary basis with no direct funding support. The project is much indebted to them.

² The Report is styled “initial” as not all ELFA/Bologna countries were represented, and for some that were represented we have had an insufficient response rate. Additional responses have yet to be integrated into the results.