“Bologna Digital”

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Bologna Digital – a position paper

Proposed Call to Action

“Digitalisation is changing teaching, learning, credentialing processes and associated services in higher education. We [the Ministers] call on the Bologna Declaration to propose measures and guidelines on how to implement a Bologna Digital for our learners and teachers and how to encourage peer learning between policy-makers and between higher education institutions to improve teaching, learning and credentialing and further support widening participation for all parts of society.”

Key Message

Digitalisation should not be viewed as an additional challenge, but as a powerful means to meet existing challenges for higher education.

Twenty years after the Sorbonne Declaration, the key challenges of opening up higher education, improving the quality of teaching and learning, reforming assessment and recognition, and promoting internationalisation and mobility remain the same for all countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). We argue that digitalisation can significantly contribute to overcoming them.

Digitalisation has not been ignored within the Bologna Process. Policy-makers, individual higher education institutions and other education providers have been active. However, the full potential of digitalisation has not been realised on systemic level. This is partly due to digitalisation being viewed as an additional challenge, rather than a means to meet existing challenges for higher education. In order to emphasise this point, this paper discusses digital solutions in the context of the main action lines of the Bologna Process.

For each of these, it presents current challenges and discusses how digital solutions can contribute to solving them.

It is our aim that the Paris Communiqué for May 2018, and the work programme which comes after it, should pay even more attention to the benefits, but also to the challenges related to the increasing digitalisation of our lives. Also the envisaged European Universities should set examples in digitalising education, research and innovation.

Attaining a ‘Bologna Digital’ by 2020 is not a separate action line, but a cross-sectional goal which can improve higher education performance in all existing action lines.
What is the challenge?
Challenge

“The full potential of digitalisation has not been reached on systemic level. This is partly due to digitalisation being viewed as an additional challenge, rather than a means to meet existing challenges for higher education.”
What is the key message?
Key Message

“Digitalisation should not be viewed as an additional challenge, but as a powerful means to meet existing challenges for higher education.”
Why Bologna?
“Twenty years after the Sorbonne Declaration, the key challenges of opening up higher education, improving the quality of teaching and learning, reforming assessment and recognition, and promoting internationalisation and mobility remain the same for all countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). We argue that digitalisation can significantly contribute to overcoming them.”
Who cares about Bologna Digital?
Supporters

kiron

EADTU

FiBS

hochschulforum digitalisierung

Groningen Declaration

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION
Exemplary Recommendations
Admission Processes

1) Higher education institutions are encouraged to discontinue paper-based admission processes and expand the use of electronic student data in order to inform, secure and speed up recognition and admission processes, based on the principles laid down in the Groningen Declaration.

2) Governments and the EU are invited to support the establishment and networking of centralised (national) electronic depositories of student data (in line with the principles laid down in the Groningen Declaration) and implement adequate measures to ensure a high level of data security and protection.

3) The EU Student Card proposed by the European Commission should be considered a (virtual) Lifelong Learning Card facilitating admission decisions on a much wider scale.
Degrees and Qualifications

1) Higher education institutions are encouraged to make use of digital solutions (e.g. digital badges) to ensure a more detailed documentation of the knowledge, skills, competences and experience gained by students during their learning progress.

2) The EU is encouraged to continue working with governments and stakeholders on envisioning and implementing European-wide solutions, with high acceptance in the labour market (e.g. Europass reform)
Internationalisation and Mobility

1) Higher education institutions are encouraged to make better use of virtual exchange opportunities as an addition to physical exchange programmes for students and staff.

2) Higher education institutions are encouraged to consider making induction courses for their study programmes available online (e.g. through MOOCs), allowing international students to be better informed and better prepared for their on-campus studies abroad.
Recognition of non-formal (digital) learning

1) Higher education institutions are encouraged to develop and publish procedures (steps to take) for the assessment and recognition of prior (digital) learning achieved through different forms of (open) online education building up on quality assurance to be done by MOOC providers. This can also facilitate the gradual integration of non-traditional learners into full programmes of study and allow for more flexible student journeys.

2) Higher education institutions are invited to publish a list of MOOCs and micro-credentials, which they can accept as part of their degree programmes and to accordingly develop transparent digital recognition management solutions.
Quality Assurance

1) Stakeholders and public authorities (EHEA, EU) are encouraged to work together and identify a set of quality criteria (rubrics) and quality indicators that would help higher education institutions, students and accreditors gauge the quality and relevance of online learning provisions and alternative learning credentials.

2) Governments and the EHEA are encouraged to review current quality assurance measures and to extend these to include appropriate procedures for new forms of (online) lifelong learning. In this context, governments and stakeholders could encourage the creation of one or more dedicated European agencies, focusing on assessing digital lifelong learning offerings, e.g. MOOCs.
Thank you!