



# OECD Feasibility Study for an AHELO

**AHELO: Assessment of  
Higher Education Learning  
Outcomes**

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**Recent developments in higher education lead to greater attention to quality by all stakeholders**

**International agreement on the need to tackle the quality challenge**

- Students and employers (better-informed choices)
- HEIs, departments or faculties (comparative strengths and weaknesses)
- Policymakers (supply of high-level skills, impact of policy decisions)

# Context: why undertake the study?

**Peer pressure and public accountability now more powerful than legislation and regulation**

**International comparisons now inevitable in this previously national-only domain**

**Action is challenging ...  
But the cost of inaction is high too!**

**Judgements about higher education outcomes will continue to be made on the basis of rankings derived from inputs or research-driven outputs**

**AHELO is not about ranking nor standardization, it is about evidence for policy and practice**

# Moving from Quantity to Quality...

## Consensus on need to tackle quality challenge

2006: Tokyo Ministerial Meeting

## But how? Information gap on LO...

2007: Experts meetings to explore the scope for an AHELO

**Conclusion**

**Carry out a feasibility study to provide a *proof of concept***

## From decision to action

2008: Seoul Informal Ministerial Meeting

Launch of AHELO feasibility study, provided it takes into account institutional diversity

Recruitment of team and participating countries

2009: Initial work and Call for Tenders



# The feasibility study at a glance

## Goal?

To assess whether reliable cross-national comparisons of HE learning outcomes are **scientifically possible** and whether their **implementation is feasible**.

## What?

Not a pilot, but rather a research approach to provide a proof of concept and proof of practicality.

## Why?

The outcomes will be used to assist countries to decide on the next steps.

## When?

The testing window is from August 2010 to April 2011.

## Who?

Data will be collected from a targeted population of students who are near, but before, the end of their first 3-4 year degree.

## How?

OECD's role is to establish broad frameworks that guide international expert committees and contractors charged with instrument development in the assessment areas.

# AHELO: 4 strands of work

## Discipline strand in Economics

Initial work on defining expected learning outcomes through 'Tuning' approach.

## Discipline strand in Engineering

Initial work on defining expected learning outcomes through 'Tuning' approach.

**Focus on 'above content' skills:**

***students' ability to reflect, and to apply their knowledge and experience to novel and real world tasks and challenges***

# AHELO: 4 strands of work

## Discipline strand in Economics

Framework of expected learning outcomes to be defined through 'Tuning' approach.

Instruments yet to be determined.

## Discipline strand in Engineering

Framework of expected learning outcomes to be defined through 'Tuning' approach.

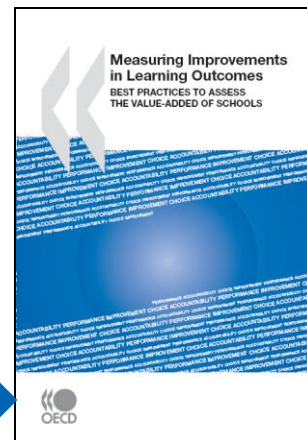
Instruments yet to be determined.

## Generic skills strand

Experts recommended an international pilot test of the US Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), to assess the extent to which problem-solving or critical thinking can be validly measured across different cultural, linguistic and institutional contexts.

## Research-based “Value-added” or “Learning gain” measurement strand

Several perspectives to explore the issue of value-added (conceptually, psychometrics), building on recent OECD work at school level.



# AHELO: 4 strands of work

## Discipline strand in Economics

Framework of expected learning outcomes to be defined through 'Tuning' approach.  
Instruments yet to be determined  
**+ Contextual data.**

## Discipline strand in Engineering

Framework of expected learning outcomes to be defined through 'Tuning' approach.  
Instruments yet to be determined.  
**+ Contextual data**

## Generic skills strand

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## With each assessment, a collection of contextual information

- To look beyond student performance: (e.g. institutional missions, selectivity, students' characteristics and exposure to "good practices", satisfaction).
- to make AHELO an effective tool to reveal best practices and to identify shared problems.

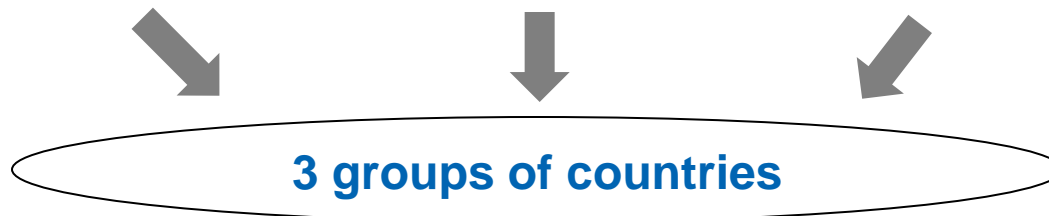
# AHELO tests of instruments

## 3 assessment instruments

<b>Generic skills</b>	<b>Engineering</b>	<b>Economics</b>
<b>Finland</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Belgium (Fl.)</b>
<b>Korea</b>	<b>Japan</b>	<b>Italy</b>
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>Mexico</b>
<b>Norway</b>		<b>Netherlands</b>

## 4 contextual instruments

**Contextual indicators and indirect proxies of quality**



# Available on the AHELO website

**[www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo/](http://www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo/)**

- **AHELO brochure**
- **AHELO Guide for Sponsors**
- **AHELO Newsletter**
- **AHELO Meetings and Documents**
- **Feasibility Study Road Map**
- **Initial work on frameworks in Economics and Engineering**
- **Initial work on the contextual dimensions**
- **Interviews with participating countries**
- **FAQs**



**[www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo](http://www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo)**

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