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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 5-6 November 2009 AHELO GNE, Paris 18-19 November 2009 EDPC, Paris 25-26 November 2009

The AHELO GNE discussed this document at its November 2009 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 - (ABRIDGED VERSION)

1. The AHELO GNE met for the second time on 27-28 April 2009.

Country participation

2. As of 2 November 2009, 11 countries have already formally signed up to support or participate in the AHELO feasibility study. These include Australia, Belgium (Fl.), Finland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Contracting strategy

3. The AHELO feasibility study work has been tendered. Furthermore the OECD Secretariat has engaged concrete discussions with the Council for Aid to Education which was selected to adapt the collegiate Learning Assessment instrument.

Tuning-AHELO meetings

4. Two parallel meetings of experts were held on 4-5 May 2009 in Brussels to define a framework of expected/desired learning outcomes in the two disciplines. Each meeting involved a group of about fifteen experts covering different regions and countries in the world. The goal was to reach consensus at global level regarding the (level) descriptor for the first cycle as well as the key competencies and expected/intended learning outcomes for that cycle. In developing these descriptors and learning outcomes, different degree profiles and relevant occupations were taken into account. Each group produced a report as a result of the meeting, outlining the expected/desired outcomes in each of the fields of economics and engineering.

Fundraising activities

5. Parallel to substantive work, the OECD Secretariat has also launched a fundraising campaign to attract funding from foundations and organisations with an interest in the outcomes of the AHELO feasibility study work.

Communication

Follow-up on the Stakeholders Consultative Group

6. During its second meeting, the AHELO GNE welcomed the involvement of stakeholders in the Stakeholders' Consultative Group (SCG) as an efficient means of communication with them. The GNE suggested however that invitations to join the SCG should be extended to the umbrella organisations of higher education institutions from those countries directly involved in the AHELO feasibility study. As a result, the OECD Secretariat prepared a proposal clarifying the membership of the SCG.

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

7. During its second meeting on 27-28 April 2009 in Paris, the GNE welcomed greater openness and transparency on results to enable HEIs to receive feedback on their performance but agreed that it is not the aim of a feasibility study to publish the results of the performance of individual HEIs and students. The OECD Secretariat prepared, in light of country-specific constraints, concerns and/or legislations, a proposal for a set of guiding principles related to access to AHELO feasibility study results, confidentiality of data and testing materials, and use of results by different parties (participating higher education institutions, countries, contractors and the OECD Secretariat). To this end, a survey collected opinions and facts from the AHELO participating countries to better understand their preferences, concerns, constraints and legislation regarding the possibility to access, use and publish the data deriving from the AHELO testing and other related work.