



## Access to Success:

The Student Experience from Pre-entry to Employment  
(with particular focus on students from under-represented groups)

16<sup>th</sup> EAN Annual Conference, Galway, Ireland

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007

The National University of Ireland Galway

### CONFERENCE THEME AND OBJECTIVES:

The European Commission sees higher education institutions in Europe as having a fundamentally important role in contributing to the attractiveness and competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area, and in enhancing the employability of graduates within Europe and beyond. Higher education institutions are increasingly recognising the need to stimulate university-industry links and are working with local communities in order to develop the knowledge based economy.

The Bergen communiqué identified a need to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications and to create opportunities for flexible learning paths, including the recognition of prior learning. But do all routes into higher education lead to equality in employment? How can we ensure that the type of higher education received by students is relevant to the labour market? What additional skills or competences do students need to acquire other than their degree qualifications and how are universities going to facilitate their development? Does excellence in higher education always guarantee a smooth path into employment for graduates, especially those from under-represented groups?

### Keynote speakers:

**Bahram Bekhradnia**, Higher Education Policy Institute, UK [The 5<sup>th</sup> MW Memorial Lecture]

**Michael M Crow**, President, Arizona State University, USA

**Margaret Dane**, Chief Executive, Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, UK

**Michel Feutrie**, President, European Universities Continuing Education Network [EUCEN]

**Eugene Sheehy**, CEO, Allied Irish Banks [AIB], Ireland [tbc]

**Michael Kelly**, Chair, Higher Education Authority, Ireland

**Annika Persson Ponten**, Ministry of Education, Research and Culture, Sweden, and Chair of Social Dimension Bologna Group

**Jaana Puukka**, Analyst, IMHE/OECD

**Ibrahim Bokharouss**, student speaker, the Netherlands

### Working Group Contributors:

**Per Christian Anderson**, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark.

**Julie Gonzalez**, University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain [tbc]

**Joachim Klaus**, University of Karlsruhe, Germany.

**Helen May**, Higher Education Academy, UK.

**Valerie Metcalfe**, University of Westminster, UK

**Solveiga Miežitis**, University of Latvia, Latvia

**Okan Tarhan**, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

**Mantz Yorke**, Liverpool John Moores University, UK

**Representatives from FEDORA** [European Forum for Student Guidance]



European and International paper proposals are invited from policy makers, practitioners, academics, researchers, students and employers. We particularly welcome proposals from IAG and Careers Services. All proposals should be no more than 350 words and must:

- Focus directly on the conference theme of the student experience
- Relate to at least one of the conference objectives 1-4
- Relate to at least one of the three stages of the student experience
- Be in the contexts of the Bologna process and the Bergen communiqué
- Target specifically under-represented groups in higher education [under-representation can be for reason of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, nationality, low socio-economic status, vocational training, geographic location, or earlier educational disadvantage]

Please visit the EAN website at:

[www.ean-edu.org](http://www.ean-edu.org)

for booking form, call for papers, information on Galway and accommodation.

### The objectives of the conference are:

To investigate the availability and adequacy of IAG given to students to enable them to make informed decisions about entering higher education, and to explore how IAG and employability issues can be factored into the curriculum across the student life cycle to enhance the quality of the student experience.

To examine the changing role of universities in meeting the evolving needs of diverse students to ensure the success of their educational experience.

To assess the impact of student employment during their course of studies [e.g. as volunteers, mentors, student ambassadors], on themselves in terms of enhancing their learning experience and employability, and on the communities they come from in terms of supporting widening participation.

To discuss the relationship between employer engagement and student experience, in particular, the benefits of work placement or internship or work based learning, and to look at company diversity policy in recruitment and identify the factors that affect employment opportunities for graduates from under-represented groups.

**The conference will look at the student experience throughout the student life cycle, from pre-entry into higher education to transition out of the university and into employment, with particular emphasis on factors that will affect, influence or shape the experience and future employment potentials. It will:**

Consider the importance of information, advice and guidance and the role of Careers Services as an interface for student-university-employer to facilitate a three-way dialogue on employability.

Hear from the students themselves about their experience and achievements.

Share European and international examples of innovative strategies and good practice in meeting both the diverse needs of students and employers.

### Debate will concentrate on three stages of the student experience:

**Pre-entry:** information, advice and guidance [IAG] and early employer engagement to support access and raise aspirations.

**Post-entry:** teaching and curriculum, diversity of provision, student support, careers advice, employability competences, and employer involvement.

**Exit point:** postgraduate opportunities, company recruitment policies, graduate employment of under-represented groups.

**In order to facilitate more active delegate participation, this year's conference will have, in addition to parallel paper sessions, four Working Groups to focus discussion on:**

- Information, advice and guidance
- Meeting diverse student needs
- Building employability into the curriculum
- Employer engagement

### This conference will be of interest to:

Vice-Chancellors and Rectors

Principals and Directors of tertiary education institutions

Head of Technical Institutions

Academics, practitioners and researchers

Careers Services

Information, advice and guidance officers

Students/Student Union Representatives

Employers

Professional Bodies

Regional development agencies

Community organisations