



## Barcelona Meeting –March 2007

### Meeting minutes

#### WP2: PhD Curriculum Development and Assessment

**Venue:** Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona  
Societat Catalana de Biologia (IEC)  
Barcelona (Spain)

**Date:** 19 & 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007

**Attending:**

Name	Institution	Country
Peter Bossier	Ghent University	Belgium
Arnaldo Marin	University of Murcia	Spain
Süheyla Karatas	Istanbul University	Turkey
Antanas Kontautas	Klaipeda University	Lithuania
Axel Miller	Scottish Association for Marine Science	UK
Ibrahim Okumus	Karadeniz Technical University	Turkey
Yngvar Olsen	Norwegian University of Science and Technology	Norway
Bianca Maria Poli	University of Florence	Italy

**Coordinator:** Peter Bossier  
E-mail: [peter.bossier@ugent.be](mailto:peter.bossier@ugent.be)

#### A. Activities preceding the meeting

Ahead of the meeting two questionnaires were designed (partly as an outcome of previous WP2 meetings). The questionnaires, dealing either with the overall organization of the PhD programmes in universities dealing with education and/or research in the AQUA-TNET domain and or with the attitude of PhD students towards their educational programme, were put on line and filled in by 32 universities and 30 PhD students. The generated data were processed by the AquaTT secretariat and made available to the WP2 leader. The WP2 leader transformed the data into ppt presentations (see file "Results general questionnaire"), allowing to discuss the data at the WP2 meeting in Barcelona.

#### B. Activities at the WP2 meeting

The meeting started with a presentation of a summary of the results of running generic project on PhD programmes.

The results of the questionnaire were discussed at the meeting in Barcelona during Monday March 19<sup>th</sup>. The main comments (taken by Ibrahim Okumus) to the results of the questionnaire are listed below. The outcome of the discussion was presented in a plenary session (see ppt "summary Barcelona WP2 discussion") on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> march.

## C. Discussion of the WP2 questionnaire outcome

### C.1 Problems

During the discussion on the results some problems and /or ambiguities were identified by the participants:

1. In view of the fact that only a limited amount of PhD students (with bias to certain countries) have answered the PhD student questionnaire the participants were urged to contact PhD students in their own working environment to fill out the form. A new deadline is set on 15 May 2007
2. In the first Questionnaire 1, it was not clear if this had to be filled out at the university or faculty or departmental level.
3. Feedback from Eastern European countries: ask help from Lazio Varadi and Lena
4. Design a questionnaire for recent post-docs

### C.2. Recommendations

The discussion resulted in a series of recommendation with relation to the PhD programme in the AQUA-TNET domain:

1. A structured programme organized within research groups or research/graduate/doctoral schools with two phases: a taught phase (mandatory and voluntary courses or modules) and a research phase. It is acknowledged that this the major push within the EU, but it can be questioned
2. ECTS harmonisation is very important for student mobility: there needs to be a consensus for allocating ECTS to certain activities
3. Language of the PhD? Writing manuscript in English can be recommended.
4. At least A1 (peer-reviewed) paper with students as first author should be produced from PhD thesis.
5. Financial rewarding system for A1 (peer-reviewed) publications produced by PhD students should/can be considered.
6. Exploring possibility for co-funding PhD students with industry. It may increase the chance of working with industry and employment.
7. In view of the different financial regimes for PhD students a minimum monthly funding should be assessed
8. Follow code of conduct based on EU Manifesto
9. A PhD student should be treated as an employee (including pension, social security).
10. PhD students should be offered opportunities involving different occupational activities during their studies, without jeopardizing the time needed to perform their PhD studies.
11. A structured programme with high level of scientific output needs more than 3 years. Taught and research phases should not be done in sequence.
12. identify the need for highly trained people in the AQUA-TNET domain
13. The set up **a PhD portal** - student can load their thesis as PDF file