

some concluding remarks

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Audience participation .. PRIZES!!!

the questions .. at the end

do *YOU*

- **think you are a true (or likely) *'believer'* (in LOs) ?**
- **suspect you may be an *'involuntary witness'* ?**
- **fear you may be a *'creature of the corridors'* ?**

Rolf's conference editorial ..

Learning outcomes:

- are a main topics of discussion in the EHEA.
- represent a shift from input oriented ..
- require changes in institutions and in external QA

Extent of knowledge, experience, and application varies between countries .. so ..

the Conference ~~offers~~ ... *delivered*

- very experienced keynote speakers (and panellists)
- opportunities to discuss the advantages ..
and disadvantages .. of the outcomes approach

Objectives (today's LOs?):

- **understanding the paradigm change in HE**
- **gain knowledge about recent European and US developments**
- **learn how to design and assess Los (tomorrow)**
- **show how LO-oriented accreditation systems work and what effect they have**

»

all delivered

Content /topics of discussion

- **history of LO approaches**
- **how to define and implement LOs in Bologna cycles**
- **methodological reflections and debate**
- **advantages and disadvantages of LOs**
- **how to ensure compatibility between definition, measurability and external assessment of Los**

»

all delivered

Peter Ewell .. 8.5 hours ago .. !

Good news:

- **clarity of goals and objectives .. but language is a key ..**
- flexible across different modes of provision
- allows comparisons .. League tables?!
- supports portable accreditation

Bad news

- **VERY difficult to define .. words needs their context ..**
e.g. 'competency'
- lack of legitimacy
- fractionation
- loss of serendipity .. not all outcomes necessarily predictable ..
--- use a 'shell module' ?

Julia G –
“LOs the stages to a competency”
cf EQF where competency = outcome

Some of Rolf's opening polemics

- reality or rhetoric? *both - but take care with the rhetoric*
- superficial or stainable? *only time will tell !*
- driven by pedagogy or enforced by regulation? *both 1st better*
- stairway to the future or prisoner of the past?
/ old wine in new bottles? *neither*

What evidence have we really seen ** / heard today to answer ..

- a good and valid idea .. but .. hard to specify and use
- should focus on what people know and can do
 - rather than procedures .. but ..
 - *start with the 'easy' .. 'tricky stuff' later - for 'education' ?*
- HEIs and QA agencies need to work together (more)
- *largo deciso* .. (slow but definitely ongoing)

are you .. a 'believer'?

* *Two thirds of what we see is behind our eyes*

Chinese proverb

** *People see only what they are prepared to see*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Other evidence ..

- the long 'reading list' in conference pack

Outcomes from institutional audit :

the adoption and use of learning outcomes (QAA174
05/2007)

[thematic summary drawing on evidence from 70 audit reports (2002-2004)]

- '.. almost all audit reports published by 2004 explicitly mention LOs ..
- .. introduction of LOs has prompted institutional [changes] ..
- .. compelling evidence that most departments in most institutions have fully adopted programme design with LOs ..
- .. ample evidence that students value the clarity that LOs have brought .. **especially to the overall purpose of programme and parts within it .. and the nature and purpose of assessment tasks .**'

- 4 'clicks' :** i) www.qaa.ac.uk .. ii) Enhancement ..
 iii) Outcomes from .. iv) select from (long) list ..

"It is the theory which decides what we can observe"
Einstein

John E: " advocates see the 'rosy' .. - others see .. ???!"

the theory .. *Learning Outcomes are 'good things' ..*

- **for 'explaining' (to those that don't know – 'stakeholders')**
what HE is all about – what it is 'delivering' ..
- **for quality assuring HE**

the evidence ..

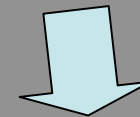
- **do they 'explain' – or merely describe / define ?**

too many definitions being developed?!

- **they good for 'measuring' some things (the 'know / can do' etc)**
but .. for higher education .. '?'

are you an 'involuntary witness' ?

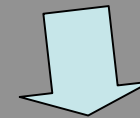
John E's .. fractionation !



**just add water
and .. ?
it's not the same !!**



JE .. fractionation !



JE ..

“ don't measure everything

- don't be as precise as possible**
- do be as precise as necessary ”**

**just add water
and .. ?**

it's not the same !!

but LOs for equiv of 'taste' / 'maturity' / etc ?

“For every [teacher] gamely [doing their best] there is, back at HQ, a battalion of worse-than-useless, middle-ranking meddlers .. “creatures of the corridors” ..

They exist in a parallel universe of meetings about meetings. They are masters of work creation, digging holes in order to fill them in, communicating largely by sanitised memos. They abhor accountability [of themselves].”

Jeff Randall in Daily Telegraph 27/07/2007 .. about the BBC

are you really just .. ‘a creature of the corridors’ ?

***[there’s a late paragraph on developing a standards framework !!
Don’t read if you are of a sensitive disposition]***

Before the questions ..

do you remember .. today we have heard LOTs about ..

Definitions:

Aims - learning outcomes -- competences (*uncertain relationships*)
('to do' statements cf 'state of being' ..)

Education (cf training) also about

'thought' / 'innovation'
developing values and attitudes
plurality and maturity



as LOs ?

Status of LOs?

role of the discipline communities ..

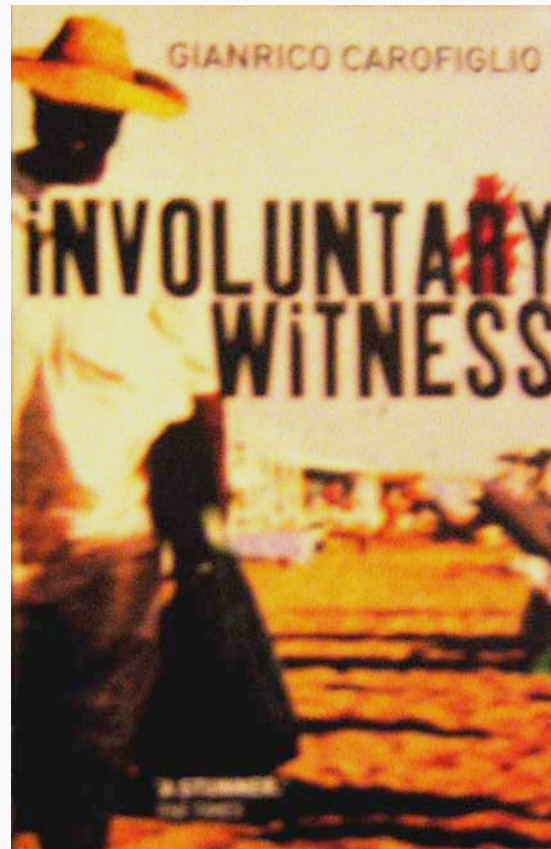
to represent or serve?

Anne M "to make an impact or just participate?"

LOs and 'workload' .. independent of 'defined' time?

room for ECTS AND ECVET ? "seems crazy"

idea for talk 'plagiarised' from ..



***What a caterpillar thinks is the end of the world,
the rest of the world calls a butterfly***
Lao-tzu, The way of virtue

The questions ..

'arms up to indicate ..'

do you

- think you are a true or likely *'believer'* (in LOs) ?

Almost but not all

- suspect you may be an *'involuntary witness'* ?

Only About half

EVERYONE MUST CLOSE THEIR EYES !!

- fear you may be a *'creature of the corridors'* ?

Quite a lot!

less with eyes open!

and the PRIZE ? ..

300 x 9 / 25 = 108 ECTS .. but only if we have the answer

but .. at what level ? 2nd cycle -- a Joint Masters surely

**awarded to those honest ones who answered the same
with eyes closed and open**



***by contrast to Rolf's opening .. a voyage of discovery into an open ocean –
a 'canal' voyage constrained by the 'boundaries of politics and employers?
- but with music of course ..***