

Mission Statement

Founded in 1985 and formally constituted by Charter in 1987, the Coimbra Group is an association of long-established European multidisciplinary universities of high international standard committed to creating special academic and cultural ties in order to promote, for the benefit of its members, internationalisation, academic collaboration, excellence in learning and research, and service to society. It is also the purpose of the Group to influence European educational policy and to develop best practice through the mutual exchange of experience.

Aims

In pursuit of its Mission the Coimbra Group aims to:

1. Facilitate knowledge transfer between its constituent universities by means of staff and student interchange so that they can benefit from the added value given by membership of the Group, whilst respecting the cultural and national identities of individual universities and their individual freedom in learning and research.
2. Work with European Union (EU) institutions with a view to participating in or organising EU higher education and research projects to the benefit of its members.
3. Contribute to the debate within Europe on quality in higher education and promote the adoption of quality assurance mechanisms within its member institutions.
4. Become a driving force in the creation and further development of the European Higher Education Area and promote the academic expertise of its members within this area and the European Research Area.
5. Be recognized as an expert body, able to advise its members and EU institutions on various matters relating to higher education, such as Information Technology (IT) as applied to new teaching methods and life long learning.
6. Encourage cooperation in cultural, social and sporting activities between its members.
7. Promote the Group worldwide as a source of academic excellence in Europe, with a view to attracting students to the universities in the Group and encouraging academic collaboration and interchange with its members.

Objectives

These aims will be achieved in the following ways:

1. The creation of an administrative structure for the Group which allows decisions to be taken swiftly and efficiently, without stifling discussion, and which allows the Group's views and policies to be clearly and widely known.
2. The creation of such Task Forces and Committees as are needed to carry forward the work of the Group. Each should have its own rules and objectives, approved by the annual General Assembly for a specified term. Task Forces and Committees may establish their own working groups for specific purposes.
3. Ensuring that information about the discussions in and decisions taken by the Group as a whole and by the Task Forces and Committees is widely disseminated amongst the member institutions and brought to the attention of the relevant authorities in those institutions. The role of each University's representative on the Task Forces and Committees is crucial in this context.
4. Seeking funding that will enable the Group to undertake higher education projects which will benefit its members.
5. Ensuring sufficient support (including staffing) for the administrative office of the Group based in Brussels to enable it to be proactive as well as reactive on the Group's business.
6. The active involvement of the member institutions, through their Rectors or Vice-Chancellors and their representatives, in the work of the Group.

Organisation

To carry the work of the Coimbra Group through:

1. The General Assembly will set the overall priorities, policy, aims and objectives for the following year, including guidance for the work of the Task Forces and Committees.
2. The Honorary President will chair the business of the annual General Assembly. The Honorary President and the Chairman of the Executive Board will determine the agenda for the annual General Assembly.
3. The Executive Board will devise an administrative structure that is able to carry out the Mission, Aims and Objectives of the Group. The Honorary President will take part in meetings of the Executive Board.
4. The Chairperson of the Executive Board will function as spokesperson for the Group.
5. The Executive Board will be responsible for monitoring progress in achieving the aims and objectives for the year and will report to the General Assembly each year on whether those aims and objectives have been met.
6. The Executive Board will devise effective ways of involving member institutions, their Rectors/Vice-Chancellors and academic and administrative staff in the work of the Group.
7. The Chairperson of each Task Force or Committee will ensure that the business of their meetings is focused and follows the overall priorities set for them by the General Assembly and Executive Board for the year.
8. The Coimbra Group administrative office will be responsible for ensuring that decisions taken are followed through and that discussions and decisions are disseminated to all member institutions.
9. The Coimbra Group administrative office will ensure that the Honorary President and the Executive Board are aware of new projects, policies and directives, from whatever European source, that might affect Coimbra Group universities. The office should, through the Chairperson of each Task Force, assess their potential value to the Group, or any of its members, and propose ways of taking these forward, as appropriate, to the benefit of the Group and its members.