

NVAO
Dr. K.L.L.M. Dittrich, Chair of the Board
Postbus 85498
2508 CD Den Haag
Nederland

Dublin/Haarlem, 2 February 2009

RE:

Reports of the Verification Committee on The Netherlands and Flanders, Self-Certification of the Dutch and Flemish National Qualifications Frameworks for higher education vis-à-vis the overarching framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

Dear Mr. Dittrich,

We hereby attach the reports of the international committee established to verify the compatibility of the National Qualifications Frameworks for Higher Education in The Netherlands and Flanders. In deciding to use a mainly international panel the NVAO has set a high goal for the project in terms of transparency. The committee has tried to grasp the complexities of the higher education traditions and structures of the systems under study in order to arrive at judgments about their compatibility with the overarching European Framework. Some of the recommendations we make address steps to enhance transparency, especially for users from the international community.

National qualifications frameworks are properly developed as national policy and informational instruments; it is not surprising, and mirrors the experience of other verification projects, that domestic understandings embedded in the frameworks require further explanation for international readers.

The committee is grateful to the NVAO and all the stakeholders for their assistance in carrying out its work. The method of meeting with groups of stakeholders contributed significantly to evidence available to the committee for making its judgements. At the same time the condensed nature of the exchanges meant that some issues may not have been explored as thoroughly as we might have wished and as a result our recommendations for improvement of the frameworks are less comprehensive than they might have been. It might also have been useful for the panel to have met more often but the timetable did not permit this. However we are clearly satisfied and unanimous in our view that the frameworks presented are compatible with the Bologna Framework and congratulate The Netherlands and Flanders on making this significant contribution towards the achievement of the European Higher Education Area.

Yours sincerely,



Bryan Maguire
Chairman of the Verification Committee