Tuning of education programmes in speech-language therapy across Europe

Introduction
Current speech and language therapy (SLT) education in EU-countries differs in curricular structure, and also in award/degree level. In order to ensure that all citizens in Europe have access to equal standards of care it is important that SLTs across the countries of the European Union (EU) have comparable competences.

Methods
We adopted the Tuning Methodology to address this need for agreed standards by harmonising standards and quality of education of SLTs in Europe through defining educational benchmarks & sharing best practice in teaching, learning & assessment.

The three-year long NetQues project (2010–2013) involves SLTs from all countries of Europe in collaboration and receives 75% funding from the European Commission’s ERASMUS Life Long Learning Programme through the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and is coordinated by CPLOL.

Take home message
In 2013 the main outcome of NetQues will be: EU-level benchmarks for quality standards of SLT education defining clinical competencies of newly qualified SLTs that can be applied cross-nationally.

Other results in 2013
1. A common vocabulary to enable sharing and comparison of education programmes and the clinical practice of SLTs across Universities/ Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)/and across EU countries.

2. A web-based resource describing successful and innovative learning, teaching and assessment methods which can assist HEIs in quality enhancement of their programmes and through which SLTs can maintain Life long Learning throughout their professional careers.

3. Information to help EU-countries seeking to establish new SLT programmes and review existing ones.

4. More opportunities for staff and student mobility, as well as workforce mobility in the EU.

NetQues (Network for Tuning Standards and Quality of Education programmes in Speech and Language Therapy across Europe) is a multilateral academic and professional network of 65 partners representing all 27 EU member states plus partners from Liechtenstein, Norway and the EU-candidate countries of Iceland and Turkey. Visit: www.netques.eu

References
3. TUNING PROJECT: Tuning Educational Structures in Europe http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/

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CPLOL (Comité Permanent de Liaison des Orthophonistes-Logopédes de l’Union Européenne), the Standing Committee of EU Speech and Language therapists and Logopedists, is the umbrella organization of 31 SLT professional associations in 28 European countries. Visit: www.cplol.eu (@cplol_eu)

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