



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 02.07.1998
COM(1998) 405 final

97/ 0121 (SYN)

Re-examined proposal for a

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

concerning European cooperation in quality assurance
in higher education

(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 189 c (d)
of the EC Treaty)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. On 28 May 1998 the European Parliament proposed at its second reading an amendment to the Council's common position on the Council recommendation on European cooperation in quality assurance in higher education¹. In accordance with Article 189 C(d) of the EC Treaty, the Commission must re-examine its proposal on the basis of which the Council established its common position, in the light of the amendment proposed by the Parliament.
2. The amendment concerns the following change to Part I, section A, second indent, of the common position:

"to encourage and help higher education institutions to use appropriate measures, particularly quality assurance, as a means of improving the quality of teaching and learning, as well as training in research, another important aspect of their task".
3. At the first reading, the Parliament had adopted an amendment which referred to the introduction of evaluation systems in research in general. The Commission had rejected this amendment because the legal basis of the recommendation (Articles 126 and 127 of the Treaty) does not cover research.
4. However, the amendment submitted at the second reading refers to training in research, an important aspect of the vocation of higher education institutions and often intimately bound up with general education. The inclusion of this reference is a useful clarification and the Commission accordingly accepts the amendment proposed by the Parliament.

¹ Adopted 26 February 1998; not yet published.

Commission's original proposal: COM(97) 159 final; Commission's modified proposal: COM(97) 707 final.

RE-EXAMINED PROPOSAL

The amendment adopted by the Parliament and accepted by the Commission includes a change to the text of Part I, section A of the Recommendation which thus reads as follows (the change is underlined):

- “A. to support and, where necessary, establish transparent quality assurance systems with the following aims:
- to safeguard the quality of higher education within the specific economic, social and cultural context of their countries while taking due account of the European dimension and of a rapidly changing world;
 - to encourage and help higher education institutions to use appropriate measures, particularly quality assurance, as a means of improving the quality of teaching and learning, as well as training in research, another important aspect of their task;
 - to stimulate mutual exchanges of information on quality and quality assurance evaluated at Community and world level and to encourage cooperation between higher education institutions in this area;”.

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