

1 Introduction of China-Europe Civil Engineering Joint Tuning Project

1.1 Background

The Tuning Study project, originated from European Union's Bologna Process, is aimed at directing education to the requirements of economic and social development and enhancing the transparency and inclusiveness of higher education in all the countries by shifting from the knowledge-centered education model to a competence-centered one, so that the courses can become more helpful for students when they begin to work in the society. Originally carried out among EU member countries, the Tuning Project has prevailed in Canada, USA, Australia, Russia, Africa, Latin America and other regions in its 12 years of development, and now it boasts a membership of over one hundred universities.

This project is mainly set for postgraduate education, covering a wide range of subject areas including natural sciences (mathematics, physics, etc.), humanities (history, literature, etc.), medical science (nursing, etc.), social sciences (pedagogy, management, etc.), engineering and so on. Several sets of questionnaires and indicators are designed for this project, which are applicable for teachers, students, graduates, employers and other groups.

The approaches include group interview, questionnaire survey, data analysis, etc. It will be focused on the following five aspects, generic competence, professional competence, the role of credit transfer and accumulation system, teaching assessment method, and the role of teaching in enhancing education quality. All these can help build curriculum criteria for research objects and compare with international counterparts. To be more specific, we shall first select subject areas, and carry out questionnaire surveys to the experts, employers, graduates and quasi-graduates. We shall then write a report after analyzing the data sourced from the surveys and comparing with EU data. On the basis of the report, we can then put forward suggestions on optimizing course contents and pedagogy and on building curriculum criteria so that the education quality can be enhanced and the education system can be more compatible with Europe.

The initiators of the Tuning Study project are Robert Wagenaar, the "Father of Tuning Study" and the Dean of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Teaching Center of University of Groningen of Netherland, and Julia González, the "Mother of Tuning Study" and Vice Principal of University of Deusto of Spain. The responsible institute is Office of International Affairs of Bureau of Education and Culture, European Commission (C4 DG EAC).

1.2 Significance

The rapidly developing economy and society have put forward increasingly high requirements on higher education. The most pressing task of China's higher education is to enhance quality and boost connotative development. Currently, China is at a crucial stage of reforming its talent training mode, where EU's advanced experience and approaches in Tuning Study and pedagogy can provide good reference for our programs, such as "Excellent Plan", "High-end Skill-Based Talent Training Model", etc.

In addition, while organizing universities to join the pilot work of Tuning Study and building connections with universities and the academic community in other regions, we can study the popular teaching assessment concept, research approach and training model. The better understanding generated by the cooperation between experts and between universities can help build qualification criteria, which may strengthen exchange among Chinese and European students,