

INSTITUTO POLITECNICO DE SAUDE DO NORTE (IPSN)

IEP EVALUATION REPORT

December 2008

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ANNEX *Summary of recommendations*

1. Introduction

1.1 At the invitation of Professor Doutor António de Almeida Dias, President of the Instituto Politécnico de Saúde do Norte [IPSN], the European University Association [EUA] agreed to conduct a peer review exercise within the framework of its Institutional Evaluation Programme [IEP].

1.2 It therefore convened a team, consisting of:

- Professor Dr Carles Solà (chair), former Rector of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
- Professor Dr Gintautas Bražiūnas, Rector of Vilnius Kolegija, Lithuania
- Dr Howard Davies (secretary), independent consultant acting on behalf of EUA

1.3 IPSN is a private sector higher education institution, delivering professional courses in a range of healthcare disciplines. In the Portuguese binary system, it has the status of a polytechnic. It has a strong ethos of public service. The EUA team gave particular attention to two aspects of the context in which IPSN operates: its location under the umbrella of the Cooperativa de Ensino Superior Politécnico e Universitário [CESPU]; and the challenges posed by the process of rapid reform of higher education, which the Portuguese government has initiated at national level.

1.4 As a first step in the evaluation process, IPSN was asked to draft a Self-Evaluation Report. Following receipt of the report, the team made a two-day visit in June 2008, during which it held talks with staff, students and external stakeholders and viewed facilities on the two campuses in Gandra and Famalicão. It met Professor Doutor António de Almeida Dias, president of IPSN; Dr Luís Silva, who acted as liaison person with EUA; the self-evaluation steering group; academic and administrative staff; students; the deputy mayor of Famalicão, together with representatives of the regional health authority and a Porto-based pharmaceutical company.

1.5 The EUA team then requested further information regarding the IPSN budget, the distribution of competences between IPSN and CESPU, the current and future Statutes, the strategic plan, the Centro de Investigação em Tecnologias da Saúde [CITS], and ERASMUS mobility.

1.6 On receipt of this supplementary documentation it undertook a second – two-day – stay in October 2008, during which it renewed its discussions with Professor Doutor António de Almeida Dias and Dr Luís Silva. It also met the two senior staff responsible for research – Professor Doutor Vítor Seabra and Professora Doutora Begoña Criado (coordinator of CITS) – as well as academic staff with responsibility for ERASMUS coordination in the two schools, and staff and student members of the

Pedagogic Council. Finally, the team visited the Hospital da Misericórdia de Paredes.

1.7 At the end of the second visit, the EUA team chair delivered an oral report to a gathering of IPSN staff, to which the President responded. The report consisted of observations and recommendations, which are elaborated in this written report. The recommendations are also summarised in annex.

2. Preliminary observations

2.1 As indicated above, the team visited both of IPSN's constituent schools – Escola Superior de Saúde do Vale do Ave [ESSVA] in Gandra and the Escola Superior de Saúde do Vale do Sousa [ESSVS] in Famalicão. The latter is self-contained, on a site which CESPU intends to expand, while the former shares its campus and certain facilities with the Instituto Superior de Ciências de Saúde [ISCS]. ISCS has university status. Both IPSN and ISCS operate under the umbrella of the not-for-profit cooperative CESPU. CESPU also runs an adult education programme. Its various educational ventures support the delivery of healthcare services, on a commercial basis, in a series of clinics and hospitals.

2.2 The team spent some time examining the interfaces and interdependencies which characterise the CESPU project. It is evident that IPSN is a key element. Its course portfolio includes Bachelor-level programmes in biomedical engineering, cardio-pneumology, clinical analysis and public health, dental prosthetics, dietetics, neuro-physiology, nursing, oral hygiene, pharmaceutical marketing, physiotherapy and podology; Master degrees in Techniques of Molecular and Cytomic Biology in the Health Sciences, and Phytotherapy and Phytopharmacy are also available. This portfolio, and the qualified professionals which it produces, is central to the CESPU mission. It complements that of ISCS. Together, they go a long way to satisfying the labour needs of CESPU's healthcare service provision, supplying a flow of trained staff who have already had work experience with their future employer.

2.3 The team learnt that, in contrast to the national demographic downturn, the urban areas lying beyond the perimeter of the city of Porto contain pockets of population growth. This population is nonetheless ageing. These factors taken together mean that the training of healthcare professionals is a strategic priority for the regional authorities. In the range of specialisms covered by IPSN, there is thus a wider labour market for graduates possessing disciplinary expertise and the ability to function well in multi-disciplinary teams.

2.4 The representative of the regional health authority confirmed this analysis. He reported that IPSN is making an important contribution to the welfare of six municipalities. These will constitute a new conurbation with a population of 0.5m. In a context in which the public health system is contracting and in which the need for new cross-disciplinary medical and paramedical professions will grow, CESPU and

IPSN will be well placed to flourish. In his view, they have the vision and the dynamism to do so.

2.5 The team found in its discussions a strong engagement with teaching. Contact with students, learning support systems, and the optimal integration of placements into course structures are generally regarded by IPSN staff to be of paramount importance. The task of achieving compliance with Decreto-Lei 74/2006 – the alignment of courses with the structures and instruments recommended by the Bologna Process – was taken as an opportunity to consolidate practices of student-centred learning. This is because the creation of good employment possibilities for students, in CESPU's own companies as well as elsewhere, requires a pedagogy in which theoretical, practical and clinical knowledge and competences are mutually reinforcing. One local employer, operating in the pharmaceutical sector, expressed his satisfaction with the quality of IPSN graduates.

2.6 In short, the EUA team found that a positive attitude prevailed. The Self-Evaluation Report reflected this widespread feeling. Its list of strengths and opportunities is substantially longer than the list of weaknesses and threats. A capacity for critical self-analysis nevertheless exists, and is accompanied by a readiness to address problems, to move forward and to seek opportunities for institutional improvement.

2.7 The team did not give close scrutiny to the links between IPSN and ISCS. This was beyond its remit. It notes however that the missions of the two institutions are complementary and that relations appear good. It is worth recording that, in its visit to one half of the binary micro-system that exists on the Gandra campus, the team found no evidence of the negative feeling which sometimes characterises polytechnic sectors.

2.8 Finally, the team – in reaching its conclusions – always bore in mind the fact that higher education in Portugal is in a phase of rapid transition. The new Bologna-aligned programmes have had little time in which to be prepared and have been running for insufficient time to be properly evaluated. The governance reforms triggered by Lei 62/2007 are not yet fully implemented. Nor are the quality assurance measures which were put in place by Decreto-Lei 369/2007. IPSN has prepared a new set of Statutes, as required by law, and these await final confirmation by the ministry. This is a context in which, on the one hand, strategic thinking risks being dominated by contingency planning; on the other, a full review of development scenarios and a detailed assessment of opportunity becomes possible.

2.9 On the basis of these observations, the EUA team makes a number of recommendations – having given due consideration to the Self-Evaluation Report, the supplementary documentation, and the fruitful and informative discussions which it had during its many meetings. The recommendations concern: strategic planning; teaching methodology and the Bologna Process; research; quality assurance; internationalisation; and facilities.

3. Recommendations

3.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING

3.1.1 In discussion with senior management, the EUA team observed that the locus of strategic planning is CESPU. It is at the level of the cooperative that the appropriate synergy of education, training and healthcare service delivery is decided and planned. It is at the highest level, too, that revenue generation is managed and that the financial contribution to be made by the for-profit side to the not-for-profit side is calculated. The same is true of the broad lines of collaboration with the leading regional stakeholders, as well as matters for negotiation with government ministries and with foreign partners.

3.1.2 This feature of IPSN governance is confirmed in Article 17 of the proposed new Statutes. This makes it clear that the function of IPSN's supreme council, the *Conselho de Gestão*, will be to coordinate and operationalise the policy lines passed down from CESPU, the founding body.

3.1.3 IPSN does have a four-year plan, but it is given a provisional character by the difficulty in estimating student numbers. The team learnt that demography, the degree of competition, and low attainment levels in the secondary sector all suggest that numbers will decline in the future. IPSN is nevertheless well placed: for nursing it is a first-choice destination, and for other disciplines it is second choice. It intends to expand the number of courses, maintain its commitment to post-graduation employment, and extend its access courses and courses for mature students (for which there is no government funding).

3.1.4 IPSN is also working on a 'new opportunities' programme which does receive government funding. This is for non-completers in the secondary system. Successful students will receive credit for prior learning, as per Bologna, for the final year of secondary schooling, and will then be able to access Bachelor programmes.

3.1.5 The four-year IPSN plan is nevertheless elaborated in CESPU. From the supplementary information requested by the team, it became clear that the schools and departments play a different role. Their responsibility is to extrapolate and fulfil short-term action plans, articulated in generic terms at school level and translated into practical and achievable tasks by the departments. In the form in which the team had sight of these plans, it was not clear how far they constituted detailed work programmes, with precise timelines, prioritisations, impact assessment, monitoring procedures, and costings, or how far they were realistic aspirations to be dealt with on a fairly ad hoc basis in the course of the academic year.

3.1.6 At first sight, the team found it difficult to establish to what extent schools and departments are aware of the strategic thinking elaborated above them in CESPU. When asked about this, the self-evaluation steering group said that they were

unsure whether a strategic plan for IPSN actually exists. They added, by way of explanation, that they felt that private institutions responded more quickly to strategic imperatives and that there was no need for complex processes of deliberation and decision. In the initial view of the team, IPSN is in a situation characterised by the uncertain top-down transmission of corporate strategy and by an insufficiency of the sort of institutional autonomy which the Bologna Process seeks to promote.

3.1.7 However, the team subsequently learnt that CESPU's cooperative status means that the members of the IPSN community, students as well as staff of all categories, are eligible to subscribe to it, thus becoming potentially active in the strategy- and decision-making process. In effect, this possibility creates a supplementary structure, albeit in constant mutation and incompletely visible. The additional communication channels and information flows, which the additional vertical dimension generates, render CESPU strategy more intelligible to the internal stakeholders working in IPSN.

3.1.8 Nevertheless, while it is easy to see how this structural complexity can facilitate an effective and transparent bottom-up contribution to institutional strategy, it is difficult to see how it can guarantee it. In the regime founded on the 'old' statutes, much depended on the extra, but unmeasured, flexibility given to the formalism of the structures by the open and informal discourse of the cooperative. This was necessary, but – in the view of the EUA team – insufficient. The team believes that the new Statutes may assist the evolution of IPSN towards autonomy, as it is understood in the Bologna Process.

R1 *The team recommends that IPSN explore ways of using its new Statutes and structures to give more formal recognition to those participatory processes which are currently informal and implicit.*

3.2 TEACHING METHODOLOGY AND THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

3.2.1 The bulk of the IPSN course portfolio has now been adapted to the Bologna template, with ministry approval. The submission to government has been very successful, in the sense that 4-year course duration has been obtained for programmes with an important element of clinical placement. These have been approved as full-time courses carrying 240 ECTS points, broken down year by year into designated modules, each with its own credit allocation. They have been up and running since the beginning of the 2008-09 academic year.

3.2.2 The teaching body, on the other hand, has not yet reached the level of qualification specified by Law 62/2007. The law requires a certain ratio of PhD-holders and *especialistas* to full-time students. The team was assured that an appropriate number of doctorates are approaching completion. IPSN is also confident that sufficient *especialistas* will be designated by external juries, once the government has provided a legal definition of the grade. IPSN is a young institution. It has not yet had time to give academic posts to its own graduates in large numbers

– and is therefore unmarked by the inbreeding which is visible in many older establishments. This is a danger which IPSN will one day have to confront.

R2 *The team recommends that IPSN reach its staff development targets as soon as possible*

3.2.3 Once the Statutes have been approved and the teaching body qualified to the required level – according to a timetable not wholly within the control of IPSN – the team believes that it will be possible to augment the mandatory structures with others designed to enhance the efficacy of teaching and learning. One such additional body, mentioned in discussion with the team and thus already under consideration, is a council on which would sit a mix of teaching and hospital staff.

3.2.4 This is not to suggest that currently the two groups have no contact. On the contrary, there is considerable overlap and many staff have dual roles. The team learnt that only 40% of IPSN teachers have teaching-only duties; the remaining 60% combine teaching with clinical work or research or both. Nonetheless, given the premium set on clinical placements, the team regards the setting up of a formal council as beneficial, in the sense that it will be able to monitor the performance of students on placement and to make significant input into the quality assurance process. The team accepts that appropriate supervision takes place, while remaining unclear of the extent to which the procedures are formalised and accountable.

3.2.5 IPSN institutional strategy aims to give all its students at least one year of CESPUE employment post-graduation. It monitors employment rates (which are good in all disciplines, with the exception of neuro-physiology and the unregulated podology), a fact confirmed by students in discussion with the team. Now that the Portuguese government, too, has begun to monitor employment rates, a new council may have a useful role to play in the tracking of alumni and in the facilitation of their career progression.

3.2.6 Certainly it should help consolidate the current positive situation, in which clinical placements and teaching are well integrated, and in which qualified staff with professional expertise attract high-quality students who declare themselves well contented with the service provided.

R3 *The team recommends that IPSN confirm the setting up of a joint council of teaching and hospital staff*

3.2.7 In its discussions with staff the team were led to conclude that there is scope for greater use of e-learning techniques and ICT-based teaching materials: both to exploit a wider variety of student-centred learning resources and to augment existing library book stock. Such a development may assist further integration between academic and practical work and between elements of those courses which are delivered on two campuses. The telemedicine, which the team witnessed in the Hospital da Misericórdia de Paredes, was a telling example of the capacity of IPSN

to keep pace with scientific and technological advances in healthcare. The team believes that it has the opportunity to be at the forefront of developments in teaching and learning methodology.

R4 *The team recommends that IPSN incorporate more ICT-based teaching materials*

3.2.8 The ministry approval of programmes adapted to Bologna has, as indicated above, a multiple focus: on structure, duration and credit allocation. The detail of syllabus design and pedagogic approach, on the other hand, is a matter for IPSN rather than for government. Central to the Bologna Process, as well as to Portuguese legislation on higher education, is the conviction that pedagogy is truly student-centred when it is framed within precise statements of what a student is expected to know, understand and demonstrate at the end of each module and at the end of the course. The team thus encourages IPSN to consolidate its output-based pedagogy, based on learning outcomes.

3.2.9 The explicit identification of the competences and skills which a successful student may expect to attain is likewise a key feature of the quality assurance process, as it is understood in Bologna. It will eventually be equally central to the Portuguese national qualifications framework, which – like all other NQFs – will be referenced to the Dublin Descriptors.

R5 *The team recommends that IPSN describe its curricula in terms of learning outcomes*

3.3 RESEARCH

3.3.1 IPSN is committed to the development of research in the healthcare disciplines – as an objective in itself, as a mode of staff development and as a contribution to the quality of teaching. The current profile is clearly low, but the speed of innovation in bio-medical and healthcare fields, together with the facilities shared with ISCS, mean that there is capacity for growth.

3.3.2 However, a very high percentage of IPSN expenditure goes on staff costs and the strategic decision has been taken to limit internal research funding to a pump-priming level. There is thus scope and necessity for sustained application to external funding agencies, public and private, national and international. The current credit crunch will doubtless intensify the urgency.

3.3.3 Moreover, as the critical mass of active researchers in IPSN rises, so the viability of international collaborative research will increase. Some already exists – with Santiago and Valencia in particular. Partly this is the result of the work of CITS, which aims to promote multi-disciplinary and inter-departmental research, at a time when the academic departments are progressively being restructured as centres of teaching.

3.3.4 As indicated above, current projects in CITS are internally funded, with the exception of one project backed by the Ministry of Health. In the period 2004-08 CITS received its first phase of internal support, to the tune of €35k. From 2008 onwards, CESPU will dedicate a modest 1.5% of its revenue to CITS-based research. One tranche will be ear-marked for match funding. This arrangement will allow a shift from a global model to a system of school allocations.

3.3.5 With the inauguration of the European Institute of Technology and the European Research Council, which complement the range of opportunities embodied in the 7th Framework Research Programme, opportunities for EU-funding are likely to expand. At the same time, competition will also intensify.

3.3.6 The team considers that economies of scale can be made, the level of risk reduced, synergies identified and the available expertise be concentrated, if the various modes of accessing European funds (FP7, ESF, ERDF, ERASMUS, etc) are located in a single technical assistance office. The work of pre-bidding, bidding, selecting and working with partners, monitoring, reporting and archiving, is demanding. Too much dispersal may undermine the chances of success.

R6 *The team recommends that IPSN consider setting up a Europe Office, to develop expertise in bidding to EU funds and in project management*

3.4 QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.4.1 The established quality management procedures rely on ISO 9001 compliance, certified by a Spanish agency, to assure administrative efficiency. IPSN was the first Portuguese polytechnic to secure this certification. On the question of the quality assurance of administrative staff performance, the team heard that a system of performance review is in place. It involves a self-assessment and an assessment by one manager and one peer, measured against objectives set the previous year; bonuses are awarded. There is no student participation.

3.4.2 Regarding the quality assurance of research, the team asked about procedures to ensure that research informed the practice of teaching and the development of teaching materials. It was assured that it did. However, there was no clear mechanism by which this could be undertaken systematically. Nor was there any one body which had responsibility for the task. When questioned, staff confirmed that it was not the remit of either the Pedagogic Council or the Scientific Council.

3.4.3 As far as teaching staff are concerned, a system of on-line questionnaires completed by students and staff was piloted in the 2007-08 academic year and has now been introduced to coincide with the launch of the Bologna courses. It will come into full operation at the end of the first semester of 2008-09 and will then begin to

generate linear data. Some of the students met by the team confirmed that feedback was given; others said they had not received any. The system is overseen by the Scientific Council, on which there is no student representation.

3.4.4 When asked about the quality of the courses, the teachers themselves reported that it is reliably monitored by the Pedagogic Council. They acknowledged, however, that there is no external benchmarking or referencing. Students also spoke positively about the manner in which the Pedagogic Council received and handled their requests and complaints. The team learnt that the Provedor do Estudante – an office prescribed in new Statutes – will act as a conduit between institution and students, but is unlikely to have a seat on the Pedagogic Council. It is not clear how strong or formal a role the Provedor – effectively an ombudsman for student affairs – will play in the quality assurance process.

3.4.5 At national level, the new arrangements for quality assurance put in place by Decreto-Lei 369/2007 have not yet come into effect. In particular, the new Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior [AAAES] is not yet up and running. When it is, its requirements are likely to cover many of the matters raised above. It will insist on compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines [ESG] and use of the instruments attaching to them – notably, as mentioned earlier, learning outcomes. Adherence to ESG will become the basis on which a quality culture can be created and on which the work of one institution can be recognised by others. They therefore figure prominently in the strategic planning of universities and polytechnics across Europe; they will give IPSN the opportunity to ensure that its quality assurance processes – and the quality of its course provision – are internationally acknowledged.

R7 The team recommends that IPSN use the opportunity of new structures and statutes to plan for compliance with the 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area'

3.5 INTERNATIONALISATION

3.5.1 The team learnt with interest of the current and future activities to which CESPU is committed at international level. Its development work elsewhere in Europe and in Africa, as well as in Portugal, constitutes an ambitious portfolio. To the extent that this work draws on the synergies mobilised by CESPU – between education and healthcare services, and between for-profit and not-for-profit companies – IPSN is necessarily involved in it. The team therefore looked for evidence of the contribution made by IPSN and of the direct benefits that accrue to it. It found that the intensity of activity in CEPSU is not mirrored or reinforced by IPSN as strongly as might be the case. Indeed, at school and departmental levels, the degree of internationalisation appears to be weak and not visibly informed by the projects undertaken by CESPU.

R8 *The team recommends that student and staff mobility be strongly promoted and linked to strategic priorities.*

3.5.2 To the extent that such linkage can be provided by participation in EU-funded programmes, such as ERASMUS MUNDUS and ERASMUS, the point made above in para.3.3.5 holds good. The team believes that the positive synergies to be identified in the strategic planning process and operationalised by cooperation between CESPU's component parts also require adequate infrastructural support.

R9 *The team recommends that administrative support for the ERASMUS coordinators be provided by a new Europe Office (to include the existing ERASMUS Office).*

3.5.3 The team was pleased to learn that plans to set up an English-language website are well advanced. Such an instrument is key to the raising of institutional profile beyond the national level. Well edited and well maintained, it can serve many purposes. In particular, it can convey a sense of mission and vision, of integration and efficiency, as well as identifying a central contact point for all international affairs.

R10 *The team recommends that an IPSN website in English be set up – to facilitate student recruitment, mobility, research and curriculum development, partner search and profile raising.*

3.6 FACILITIES

3.6.1 On both its visits to the Gandra campus, the team had the opportunity to inspect the library facilities which are shared with ISCS. These had been the object of the rare negative comments made by students to the EUA team. Considerable expansion had taken place in the intervening period – the number of study places had been doubled – but the team is of the view that the library remains small, in terms of the numbers of students on campus and the number of courses to be supported.

R11 *The team recommends that IPSN further extend the library facilities to meet the needs of students.*

3.6.2 Academic staff members report that requests for additions and modifications to the physical space available are addressed very quickly by IPSN management and by CESPU. It had occasion to corroborate this, not only in respect of the library, but also the new administrative offices installed at Gandra. Between the two visits by EUA, a new auditorium had been built, together with three new laboratories for clinical analysis, and a number of student study places. The team saw the excellent facilities at the Hospital da Misericórdia de Paredes, albeit before they became fully

operational, and was briefed on the plans for the future developments in Famalicão; these include a hospital, a research centre and a hotel. It was impressed by the way in which the property portfolio is managed.

3.6.3 In summary, it found facilities to be excellent. They are appropriate to the IPSN mission of education, practical and clinical training, and insertion into the regional community. The staff and students with whom the team discussed the matter were in general very satisfied.

4 Conclusion

4.1 The EUA team formed a very positive impression of IPSN. In terms of its alignment with the Bologna Process, much of the groundwork has been accomplished by legislation enacted – if not completely implemented thus far – at national level. Into this category come the different cycles of qualifications, the reforms of institutional governance, and quality assurance. It is clear to the team that IPSN will be in a position to comply with the new laws, and also, that it has the opportunity and the capacity to anticipate some of their provisions. The most clear-cut example is the use of learning outcomes, to which IPSN's mission and pedagogy make it eminently suited.

4.2 Bologna has other action lines – such as employability and lifelong learning – in which IPSN can claim to have achieved a great deal. In respect of what in Bologna is called the social dimension – the widening of participation, the extension of opportunity, the promotion of social cohesion in its student recruitment policies – the team found evidence of genuine commitment.

4.3 It is in terms of governance and strategic planning that the EUA team found most to question. This feature of institutional life is itself a Bologna action line – autonomy – as well as being at the core of the expectations of EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme. What, the team asked, does IPSN do? How does it do it? How does it know that it is actually doing what it intends? And does it have the capacity to remedy its shortcomings?

4.4 As reported above, the team first viewed IPSN as a component in a wider project – the CESPU project – in the strategic planning activity of which IPSN did not demonstrably participate, and which it could not be guaranteed to understand. In such circumstances, EUA questions could not easily be answered positively. However, visits and dialogue softened the team's view, to the point at which it now believes IPSN to be a credible and coherent higher education service provider. The IPSN mission is clear and its fulfilment of its mission is evident. The team's remaining reservation has been made clear in its recommendations. It realises that there is tension between institutional autonomy and the division of institutional labour within CEPSU. It thinks that there are means of resolving this tension and that

consideration should be given to formalising them, rather than trusting to informal communication and consultation.

4.5 Finally, the team wishes to extend its sincere thanks to Professor Doutor António de Almeida Dias for his invitation to visit IPSN – and to him and all his colleagues, in particular the liaison person Dr Luís Silva, for their hospitality and for their kind and constant attention. The team met many members of the IPSN community and was treated by all with the greatest courtesy and openness. It wishes IPSN every success in the future.

Brussels, December 2008

Annex: summary of recommendations

Strategic planning

- R1** The team **recommends** that IPSN explore ways of using its new Statutes and structures to give more formal recognition to those participatory processes which are currently informal and implicit.

Teaching method and the Bologna Process

- R2** The team **recommends** that IPSN reach its staff development targets as soon as possible.
- R3** The team **recommends** that IPSN confirm the setting up of a joint council of teaching and hospital staff.
- R4** The team **recommends** that IPSN incorporate more ICT-based teaching materials.
- R5** The team **recommends** that IPSN describe its curricula in terms of learning outcomes.

Research

- R6** The team **recommends** that IPSN consider setting up a Europe Office, to develop expertise in bidding to EU funds and in project management.

Quality assurance

- R7** The team **recommends** that IPSN use the opportunity of new structures and statutes to plan for compliance with the 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area'.

Internationalisation

- R8** The team believes that it is for IPC to determine at what level it wishes to engage and against which institutions it wishes to benchmark itself. It **recommends** that IPC use the new EU mobility programme to increase the number of mobile students, and in particular to raise the level of staff mobility.

- R9** The team **recommends** that administrative support for the ERASMUS coordinators be provided by a new Europe Office (to include the existing ERASMUS Office).
- R10** The team **recommends** that an IPSN website in English be set up – to facilitate student recruitment, mobility, research and curriculum development, partner search and profile raising.

Facilities

- R11** The team **recommends** that IPSN further extend the library facilities to meet the needs of students.