

Revised Guideline for Subject Areas¹

Subject Areas – Definition

ELLS joint study activities are developed and implemented by the Subject Areas that concentrate on a thematic subject. For each ELLS Subject Area a lead university is designated with the responsibility of coordinating the jointly developed activities. The leading institution appoints an academic Subject Area coordinator with the responsibility of:

- identifying relevant partners and establishing the academic contact network
- planning of Subject Area meetings
- coordination of joint activities including preparation of a joint concept with annual activity plans
- presentation of the activity plan and the achieved progress at the annual meeting of Board, Task Force and Subject Area coordinators
- internal dissemination of network related information
- involvement of colleagues in SA projects and
- keeping the ELLS Secretariat informed about the group's members, their name and contact information (the Secretariat will keep the group's information updated on the ELLS website)

Criteria for approval of Subject Areas

- 1 Societal relevance, European dimensions – Contribution to the ELLS ambition to spear-head the European Education and Research Area
- 2 Attractiveness for students/effective in stimulating students' mobility/better chances on the labour market for the graduates
- 3 Educational need: Important field of knowledge/innovative/interdisciplinary field
- 4 Participation of at least 3 ELLS universities, accepted by the involved faculties
- 5 Academic merit/availability of expertise
- 6 Added value: Complementing competence, improvement of the quality of education of the ELLS partners
- 7 Operational efficiency of the SUBJECT AREA: functional network, clear leadership, joint concept with clearly defined short- and long-term goals including a timeline with stipulated and achievable milestones
- 8 Mutual recognition of ELLS study courses by all ELLS universities, no extension of study period

¹ As approved by the ELLS Board in May 2004: Revised according to the results of the ELLS meeting in Vienna, October 2004

Formation process of Subject Areas – a stepwise procedure

The development of a Subject Area has to be considered as a step-by-step process, where each step should be monitored for achievement/success. The step-by-step development of Subject Areas should be encouraged as opposed to over-ambitious action plans.

1 Proposal of a Subject Area Establishment of Subject Area groups is based on common interest expressed by the ELLS institutions. A bottom-up approach is preferred and proposals for new Subject Areas should primarily come from the departmental level. For the initiation of a new Subject Area, all criteria should be basically met. Setting up a Subject Area group: The initiating scientist contacts and invites interested representatives of the other ELLS universities to help form a group. The group decides on contents and title of the Subject Area and appoints the coordinator. The coordination of a Subject Area may be changed according to a joint decision of the SA group. The SA coordinator presents the joint proposal for a new SA to the Task Force and applies for preliminary approval. If the group is granted a preliminary approval by the Task Force they must plan a kick-off meeting as soon as possible.

2 Preliminary approval by the Task Force If the Task Force agrees on the potential feasibility of a new Subject Area and gives its preliminary approval, a one-year pilot phase is started. The ELLS Secretariat will send the group's coordinator a welcome package, when informing him/her about the Task Force members' decision. The package will contain:

- a) ELLS Memorandum of Understanding
- b) ELLS Policy Document
- c) ELLS Strategy
- d) Revised Guidelines for Subject Areas
- e) The current Plan of Operation
- f) Directives for Joint ELLS Fund for Incentives
- g) ELSA information brochure
- h) ELLS Summer School Manual (when ready)
- i) Membership login (all ELLS documents, corporate design and promotion material can be found at the ELLS member section of the ELLS website)

The coordinator must also visit the ELLS website to learn about:

- j) Current ELLS Subject Area groups: <http://www.euroleague-study.org/94448>
- k) Current ELLS Joint MSc Programmes: <http://www.euroleague-study.org/94137>
- l) ELLS History: <http://www.euroleague-study.org/94452>

The coordinator must forward the above listed information documents (welcome package) and links (to the ELLS website) to the rest of the group.

ELSA will, shortly after the preliminary approval, identify an ELSA student representative, who will join the group. The ELSA students must become an integrated part of the group. Moreover, the ELSA student must be informed about the group's projects and activities at all times.

3 Pilot phase During the one-year pilot phase each participating ELLS university will provide their group member with financial support (travel expenses) for the meetings necessary to develop an efficient network and a joint action plan. There is no general rule for the development of a Subject Area (there must be "many ways to Rome"); in principle, all three types of joint study

programmes as listed in the ELLS policy document are possible. Subject Areas which do not present concrete results after a pilot phase of one year are not further supported and will be terminated.

4 Final Approval as ELLS Subject Area Upon the pilot phase, the Task Force checks whether the Subject Area entirely meets the criteria listed above. After successful evaluation by the Task Force, the Task Force recommends the Subject Area for final approval by the Board.

5 ELLS Fund All Subject Areas can apply for a common ELLS fund for incentives that was raised by the ELLS Board on occasion of the meeting in Vienna in October 2004.

6 Responsibilities of the Subject Areas The Subject Area coordinators will submit an annual activity report to the Task Force with information on the achieved progress and an activity plan for the following year. The ELLS Secretariat will send out a form in due time, which the coordinators will be asked to fill out and return to the Secretariat. This form makes up the annual activity report. The activity report must include concrete milestones, time lines and identified responsible anchor persons for each milestone as well as a budget proposal. On the basis of these reports the Task Force prepares an annual ELLS Plan of Operation including a budget for the coming year. This Plan of Operation will be discussed at an annual meeting of the Board and the Task Force (the meeting takes place each fall). Prior to the meeting with the Board the Task Force evaluates whether the goals of the past year were achieved and decides on the activities to be supported and financed during the next year.

“To do” list in connection with ELLS Subject Areas:

- In order to keep the ELLS Task Force updated on the developments and the activities in the ELLS Subject Area groups, each IRO member (at the universities where there is a Subject Area Coordinator) must present a status report from the coordinator(s) at their home university at each TF/IRO video-link meeting. It is therefore each IRO member's responsibility to contact the Subject Area Coordinator(s) at their home university in due time before each TF/IRO Video-link meeting and ask them for a status update, which can be presented to the Task Force.
- The ELLS Secretariat must remind all Subject Area Coordinators to check the ELLS website (more specifically the list of SA group members) approximately every six months and ask them to send a status update to the Secretariat stating whether or not there are any changes to the list of members. The ELLS Secretariat must be updated, in terms names and contact information, at all times.
- When the ELLS Secretariat sends out information to the Subject Area Coordinators it must be sent CC: to all IRO members.