

EFPTA Board Meeting, 20 April 2013, Brussels

Stage 3 of the EFPTA research project:

Whose curriculum is it anyway?

**Interim report on findings from focus group discussions
on the pre-tertiary psychology curriculum, held during
EFPTA Conference, April 2012, Copenhagen**

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The round table discussion at the EFPTA Copenhagen conference, April 2012

The aims were:


- to provide all conference delegates with the **opportunity to share experiences and views** on the psychology curriculum
- To provide **‘focus group’ data** for the EFPTA research project (Stage 3)



Method and procedure

- 47 participants, from 10 countries
- divided into 3 parallel groups, each with a mixture of at least 5 nationalities, & each led by a facilitator
- discussion was prompted by a semi-structured schedule of open-ended questions, on 3 key aspects of curriculum:
 - what should be the **purpose** of the psychology curriculum
 - what should its **content** be
 - **who** should design it
- discussion was in English, lasted c.45 minutes & was audio-recorded
- participants also made handwritten responses to some questions

Responses were coded. Sub-themes were identified within the 3 curriculum aspects:

Purpose ?	Content ?	Who ?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a range of transferable skills• self-development / identity• social awareness / adaptation /communication• progression to university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• balance• core & options• psychology as a science• research methods & practical research skills• applications to 'real life'• promote student well-being• match content to students' needs/interests• integration / inter-disciplinarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• range of relevant bodies / groups• high-level specialist expertise needed• top-down national control v. teacher /school autonomy• need for dialogue• student choice• influence of textbooks• schools' resources vary• in-house expert support

Dissemination of findings

Once data analysis is complete, findings may be publicised by various means:

- research report for publication in a journal
- poster which can be printed by any EFPTA association and presented at conferences
- items in our own website and newsletters
- ask other suitable organisations to publicise findings (eg psychologists' professional associations, education authorities, etc)



Relevance of these findings to pretertiary psychology education (PTPE) in Europe?

Some countries have '**benchmarks**' or '**criteria**' or '**standards**' for pre-tertiary subjects (including psychology). For example:

- England & Wales: '[The Future of Psychology A-level](#)', a document from the British Psychological Society, proposes benchmarks for pre-university psychology
- Denmark has established 'national standards' for psychology in schools
- The American Psychological Association (APA) has long-established '[National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula](#)', in the USA.



'common benchmarks' for PTPE in Europe?

