

The importance of learning outcomes: context, use, language

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Why?



LEARNING OUTCOMES (LOs):

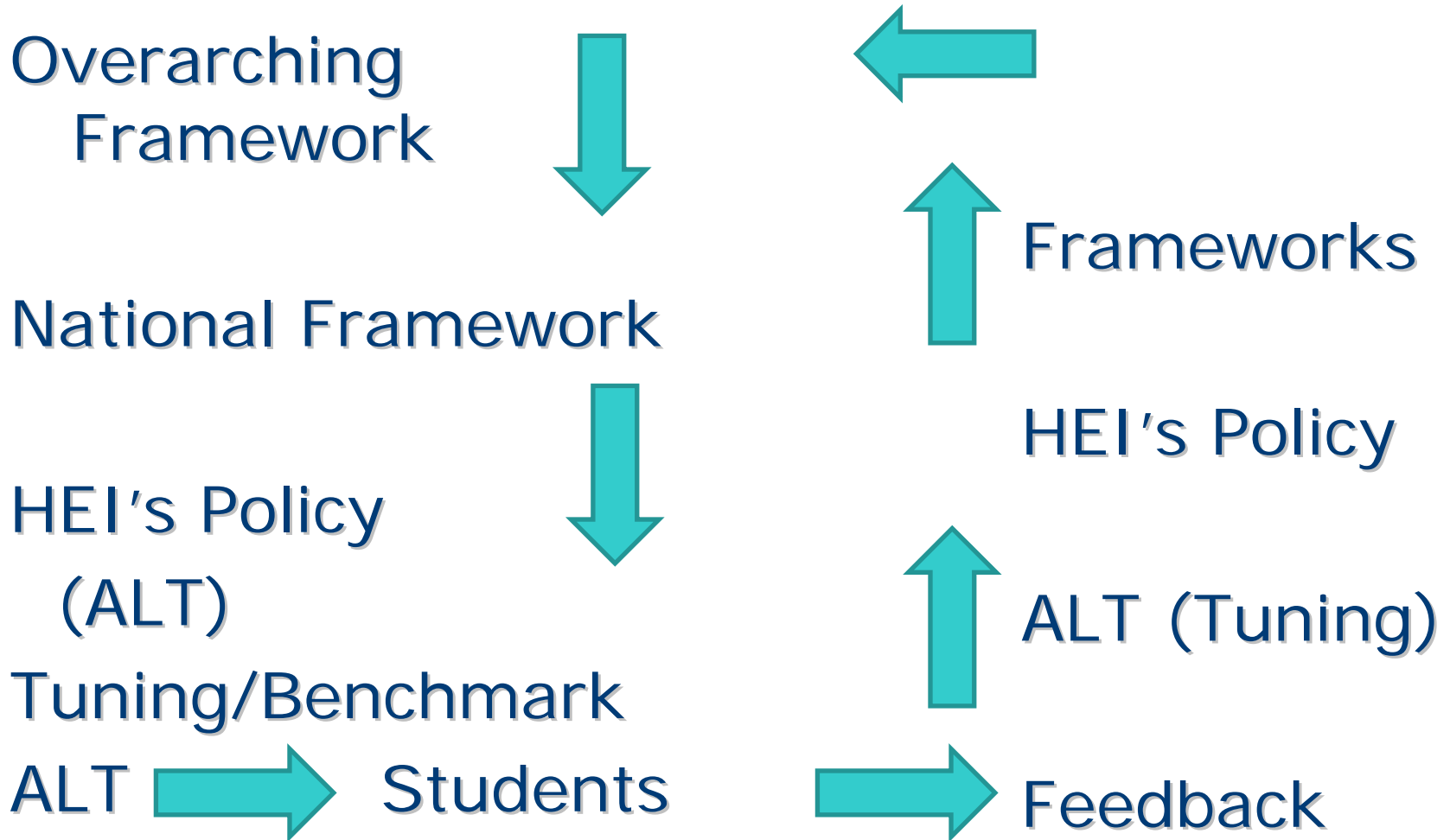
At the end of this session you will be able to:

- Place LOs in a holistic context
- Better understand the position of LOs in the context of HE in England
- Analyse the daily use of “active” LOs
- Analyse the importance of the semiotics of LOs

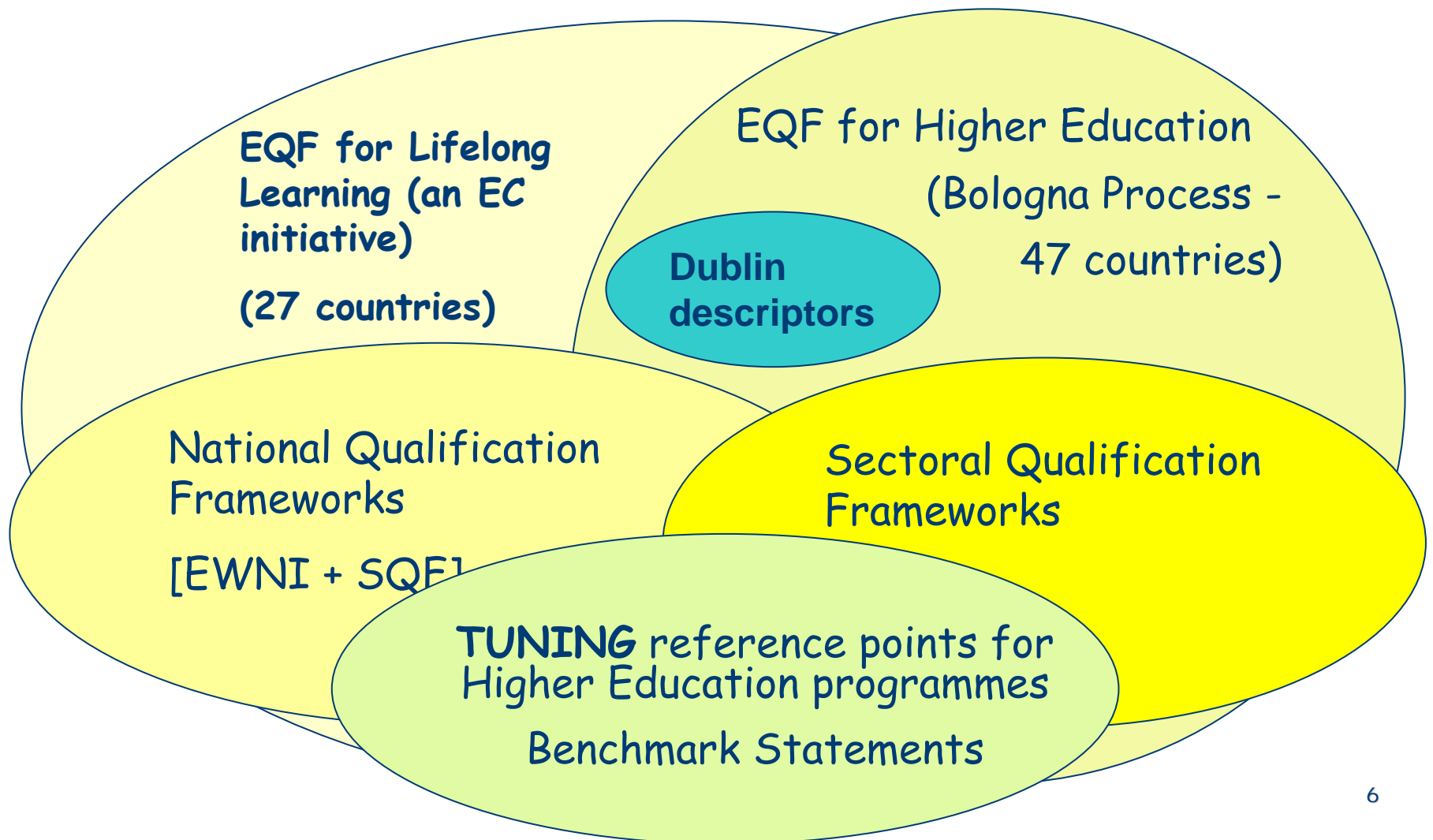
Semiotics/Vocabulary

- Learning outcomes (LOs)
- Active LOs (not in a desk drawer)
- Ratchet up – it is ALL in the verbs
- Level descriptors/Levels
- ALT (not TLA or even LTA)
- Student centred learning (LOs/ALT)
- Frameworks (Russian Dolls +)
- Time – linear/volume – LLL –
APL/APEL

INFORMED & CONTAINED



Qualifications frameworks



Where do we start?



'I am always ready to learn although I do not always like being taught'

Sir Winston Churchill

It is the achievement of the learning outcomes that is important for the award of credit, not how or where the learning took place, or how it was assessed, or how long it actually took.

Academic credit



is awarded for the
successful achievement of



'sets of
learning
outcomes'

Students usually demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes

Each credit value (see page 3) has a level that indicates the relative difficulty of the learning involved.

Eight credit levels are used in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; of these levels 4 to 8 represent the types of work undertaken in HE.

Credit level	is typical of the learning expected of
8	a doctorate
7	a masters degree
6	the last part of a bachelors degree
5	the last part of a Foundation Degree; middle part of a bachelors degree
4	the first part of HE study
3	entry qualification for HE

LEARNING OUTCOMES ---

“Yes, we know” BUT:

- Paradigm shift from teaching to learning
- Basic educational building blocks:
 - Improve curriculum design & progression
 - Emphasise link between assessment, learning and teaching
 - Improve national/international transparency of qualifications
 - Provide frameworks for quality and standards by relating to external reference points

Levels (Dublin Descriptors)

Once again "We know ****" and once again "BUT":

- Level is an indicator of relative demand; complexity; depth of study and learner autonomy (dependent; inter-dependent; independent?)
- Level descriptors are generic statements describing the characteristics and context of learning at each level
- Credit is awarded where students have achieved the learning outcomes (threshold versus desired debate) Ref: Moon 2002

All of this relates to international comparisons



External reference points
eg Qualification/level descriptors
Subject benchmark statements
Programme specifications

Identify **AIMS** of programme

Write **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Design **ASSESSMENT**

Define **THRESHOLD**
assessment criteria

Define **GRADING**
assessment criteria

Develop **ASSESSMENT**
METHOD to test achievement
against both criteria

Develop a **TEACHING STRATEGY**
to enable learners to achieve both
learning outcomes and
assessment criteria

Develop Programme by
reviewing Learning Outcomes
Assessment Methods & Criteria
Student Achievement

Active Learning Outcomes

- Programme LOs
 - Matching Qualification Framework
- Level LOs
 - What cognitive complexity is needed?
- Module LOs
 - What outcomes & skills/competencies are sought to be achieved?
- Session LOs
 - Specifying what the learner will – know, understand and be able to do – at the end of the session using specific content as the vehicle for the cognitive skills to be developed

Example of „Ratcheting up“

At the end of this session regarding the Supreme Court the student will be able to:

- ❖ describe its role
- ❖ understand its role
- ❖ analyse its role
- ❖ critically evaluate its role
- ❖ compare and contrast its role with that of the Supreme Court of the United States

and finally.....



*Tell me and I'll forget
Show me and I may
remember*

*Involve me and I will
understand*

Chinese proverb