Network for Tuning Standards and Quality of Education programmes in Speech and Language Therapy/Logopaedics across Europe.

Speech, language and communication difficulties are highly prevalent in the EU population in all age groups. Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) are responsible for assessment, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of these and in many countries also for the management of swallowing disorders. The SLT practitioner requires a high level of academic knowledge and clinical competencies.

What is NetQues?
NetQues is a multilateral academic and professional network representing all EU member states plus partners from Liechtenstein, Norway and EU-candidate countries of Iceland and Turkey.

The coordinator of the project is the Standing Committee of EU Speech and Language Therapists/Logopedists – CPLOL (Comité Permanent de Liaison des Orthophonistes-Logopèdes de l’Union Européenne).

The three-year long project (2010–2013) receives 75% funding from the European Commission’s ERASMUS Life Long Learning Programme through the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

Why is NetQues important?
- In order to provide effective management of speech, language, communication and swallowing difficulties SLTs need to be highly qualified in all aspects of their work and able to integrate academic knowledge and research skills with clinical expertise.
- The curricular structure and level of initial education of SLTs varies in different EU-countries. In order to ensure all European citizens can access equally high standards of care it is important that SLTs across the EU have comparable competencies.

How will NetQues address the needs of tuning SLT education across the EU?
- By SLTs with academic and professional expertise across all Europe working together collaboratively, surveying EU Higher Education Institutions offering SLT programmes; SLT Professional Associations; and key stakeholders including employers, related professionals and significant user groups to define educational benchmarks.
- By identifying best models of learning, teaching and assessment, clinical practice and quality assurance in SLT education

What will be the outcomes of NetQues?
- EU-level benchmarks for minimum standards of SLT education and clinical competencies of newly qualified SLTs that can be applied cross-nationally.
- A common vocabulary to enable sharing and comparison of education programmes and the clinical practice of SLTs across Higher Education Institutions and EU countries.
- A web based resource describing successful and innovative learning, teaching and assessment methods which can assist HEIs in quality enhancement of their programmes and through which SLTs can maintain Life Long Learning throughout their careers.
- Information to help EU-countries seeking to establish new SLT programmes and review existing ones when needed.
- More opportunities for staff and student mobility, as well as workforce mobility in the EU.