The European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) is represents more than 250 institutions in higher music education and training in 54 countries and covers almost 90% of all officially recognised institutions in this sector in Europe. The AEC membership includes independent music academies, music universities or conservatoires, as well as music faculties/departments of multidisciplinary educational institutions.

Since 1999, the AEC has pursued a pro-active approach to the Bologna Declaration process, which has shown the great potential of a strong contribution to the process by a specific discipline resulting in:

1. The Bologna & Music website (www.bologna-and-music.org) for Information and Dissemination, being one of the most extensive multi-lingual subject-specific websites addressing Bologna to date.
2. A Sectoral Qualifications Framework for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles in European higher music education.
3. A subject-specific framework for external Quality Assurance and Accreditation for European higher music education with criteria, procedures and a register of experts.
4. A handbook on Recognition tools, procedures and regulated music professions in more than 30 countries.
5. The DoReMiFaSOCRATES website (www.doremifasocrates.org) for students, teachers and ERASMUs coordinators promoting mobility and the European dimension in higher music education.
7. The Mundus Musicalis project addressing the Global Dimension of higher music education.
8. Social dimension: an extensive European study addressing pre-college music education and the access to higher music education.
10. Various other Supporting Documents, such as handbooks on curriculum design & development, the use of credit points, internal quality assurance, joint programme development, alumni policies and more.

All these documents are available in various languages on the www.bologna-and-music.org website.

Taking into account that in many disciplines a lack of information on (and therefore understanding for) the Bologna reforms still exists among teaching staff and students, and based on its experience gained during the development of the above-mentioned subject-specific outcomes, the AEC would like to stress the need for a stronger role for disciplines in the next steps of the Bologna process after 2010.

Therefore, in preparation of the various meetings on the future of the Bologna process taking place in the near future, the AEC would like to suggest to the Bologna Follow-Up Group and the European Commission to:

1. Conduct a mapping exercise of the current status of (and challenges to) the implementation of the Bologna principles in the various academic disciplines by involving European subject-specific higher education associations and ERASMUS Thematic Networks, and discuss the outcomes of this mapping exercise at European seminars.
2. Support the development of European-level subject-specific approaches for quality assurance and accreditation that can be used in national quality assurance and accreditation procedures to give these procedures a greater European dimension.
3. Support the development and implementation of sectoral qualifications frameworks at the European and discipline levels that are compatible with the generic European Qualifications Framework.
4. Support the global promotion of the European Higher Education Area by involving European subject-specific higher education associations and presenting subject-specific content instead of superficial marketing campaigns promoting higher education in general.
5. Arrange the recognition of joint degree programmes as soon as possible in all Bologna signatory countries.
6. Recognise music as a discipline at all 3 cycles of higher education in all Bologna signatory countries.

We are convinced that, with the Bologna process having made great progress with the implementation of structures and recognition tools, a more subject-specific approach to Bologna will create new levels of creativity and innovation among institutions, students and teachers. This new momentum will develop the European Higher Education Area into the most dynamic and attractive higher education area in the world.