

**INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Meeting of INQAAHE General Assembly
to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina
at 1600hr on Thursday, 15 May, 2008**

President's Report

1. Strategic Plan & Constitution

The Board has developed a Strategic Plan for the next five years to guide the directions and emphases of the Network.

The Board reviewed the Constitution, and Members supported the proposed changes. In approving these changes, some Members mentioned other possible improvements. These are now in the attached proposal for some further tidying of the Constitution, which is presented to Members for approval.

2. Board Members

Peter Cheung retired from HKCAAVQ and so resigned from the INQAAHE Board. Dr Zhang Minxuan of the Shanghai Municipal Education Council has been co-opted to the Board.

We still need to re-fill Peter's position, and we have one more slot for a co-option. We would love to co-opt someone with fund-raising skills, and someone with a strong background in professional accreditation, so suggestions are welcome.

3. Secretariat

Seamus Puirseil, is retiring from HETAC later this year, and so will resign from the position of Secretary of INQAAHE. Proposals were called for the Secretariat role. Several member agencies offered, and after careful consideration, the Board decided to appoint NVAO, the Dutch/Flemish quality agency. HETAC will hand over to NVAO on 1 June, 2008.

4. Website

The website was totally re-designed during the year. After a few initial hiccoughs, I believe it is now working well, with greater simplicity and fuller content.

The public part of the site contains everything that was previously on the site, and is being further augmented with copies of papers and presentation, and will host a discussion area. The Members Services section will eventually include four services, namely the GPQA, the Clearinghouse, the Consultants and Reviewers Database, and the Query Service (more on these later).

5. Guidelines for Good Practice (GGP)

These Guidelines were approved by the Members at the 2003 Conference, based on work done in 1999, since when it has been incrementally amended. The Board decided it should have a thorough look at the Guidelines, and then let them stand for a five-year period so Members can use them without finding that the work is constantly superseded by new versions.

Increasingly, agencies are being reviewed against the Guidelines for Good Practice. Any member agency that has been reviewed and found to be substantially in alignment with the Guidelines might want this fact recorded publicly. INQAAHE has agreed to assist in this. If you believe your agency operates in a manner that aligns with the GGP, and would like to be so listed on the website, please advise the Secretary, with evidence. The Board expects that the most likely and credible source of evidence will be the result of an independent review, but Members may contact the Secretariat to discuss other possibilities.

6. Relation with other networks

The Board developed a position paper on how it can best support and relate to regional and other networks of QA agencies. It aims to work with each region for mutual benefit and support. Networks were invited to present information about themselves at a meeting in Toronto at the 2007 INQAAHE Conference, and the results were included in the report distributed to Members during the year. In January, the first designated meeting of INQAAHE and other networks took place in Washington DC, and the second was held here in Buenos Aires. Several useful initiatives and collaborative opportunities are emerging.

One specific collaboration that has been on INQAAHE's agenda for many years is the support of '**small states**'. We have now established a project group on this, including Antony Stella, AUQA, Australia (Chair); Norman Sharp, QAA, UK; Dhurata Bozo, AAAL, Albania, Fepulea'i Sinapi MÖLĪ, Samoa Qualifications Authority, Ethley London, UCJ and Akemi Yonemura of UNESCO.

During the year, the Board was delighted to hear of the establishment of the Arab Network for QA in HE (ANQAHE) and the African Network for Quality Assurance (AfriQAN) and sent them warm greetings.

7. Professional Qualifications

There is a need for development for QA professionals that goes beyond the short workshop. INQAAHE is working with several universities to develop a curriculum for some post-graduate qualification in the field.

8. GPQA

We improve by learning from each other, and I proposed a database of good practices in QA agencies (GPQA) to the Jamaica INQAAHE forum in 2002. This is now being designed by a team including Janice Ross, QAA, UK (Chair); Antony Stella, AUQA, Australia; John Jennings, NZUAAU, New Zealand; and Nadia Badrawi, NQAAC, Egypt, supported by the Secretariat. The Board has approved the Manual and Procedures. An invitation will soon appear for agencies to submit practices that they have found work particularly well.

9. Clearinghouse

There has long been a felt need by both new and developed agencies for an easy way of referring to the policies, procedures and practices of other agencies. This is not a list of endorsed **good** practices like the previous item, but an easily accessible compendium of 'what agencies do'. This is a complicated task, and is being undertaken by a working group including Wong Wai Sum, JPQA, Hong Kong; Joy Fraser, Athabasca University, Canada; Ana Philipa, CONEAU, Argentina; Roger Brown, formerly HEQC, UK; and David Woodhouse, AUQA, Australia.

10. Query Service

Agencies often want a rapid answer to a very specific question about practices or procedures. INQAAHE plans to set up an on-line mechanism whereby members can send these questions to a small group of folk from QA agencies for advice. Any members willing to be on the panel providing this service should inform the Secretariat.

11. Consultants' Register

Many agencies have registers of accreditors or auditors that they call on, and many of us ask each other from time to time to suggest one of our trusted reviewers. Automating this through an international list is potentially helpful. INQAAHE has had this in mind for a number of years, but APQN is now working on this and INQAAHE has offered to collaborate to avoid duplication.

12. GIQAC grant

INQAAHE is represented on the Steering Committee of GIQAC (the Global Initiative for QA Capacity-Building), a partnership between the World Bank and UNESCO. INQAAHE has been fortunate to receive funding under this initiative. We have received \$100,000 over the next 12 months for four projects:

- QA support for small states (#6)
- Support for networks of QA agencies more generally (#6)
- The development of qualifications for QA professionals (#7)
- Establishment of a Clearinghouse of QA information (#9)

APQN, AfriQAN, ANQAHE and RIACES also received funding. APQN's funding includes creation of a Consultant's register, with which INQAAHE has offered to assist

13. INQAAHE Reviews

INQAAHE has carried out or co-ordinated reviews for member agencies, and has now drawn up formal procedures for this.

14. UNESCO

INQAAHE continues to work and liaise with UNESCO in an effort to sustain and strengthen the existing regional and international networks and with a view to promoting the establishment of regional networks in regions that do not already have them.