

ECA and Accreditation of Joint Programmes

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european consortium for accreditation

ECA

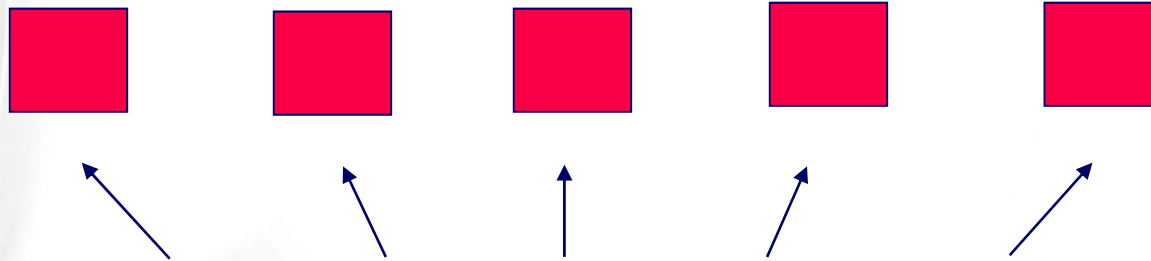
- European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA)
- Established in November 2003 (*renewed June 2008*)
- Consortium of national agencies
- 16 member organisations from 11 European countries: AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, NL, NO, PL, SL
- Aims:
 - mutual recognition of accreditation decisions
 - mutual learning and disseminating best practices
 - providing transparent information on quality and supporting internationalisation of institutions and students.

ECA: organisation

- Network of European accreditation agencies; set up as project organisation
- Affiliate member of ENQA
- Memorandum of Cooperation with INQAAHE & CEEN
- Annual Consortium meeting and regular seminars
- Management Group
- 4 Working groups:
 1. Mutual recognition
 2. Institutional accreditation and audits
 3. Crossroads and information strategies
 4. Mutual learning and best practices

Methodology: Trust building process

- Bilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements



Cooperation projects; external reviews

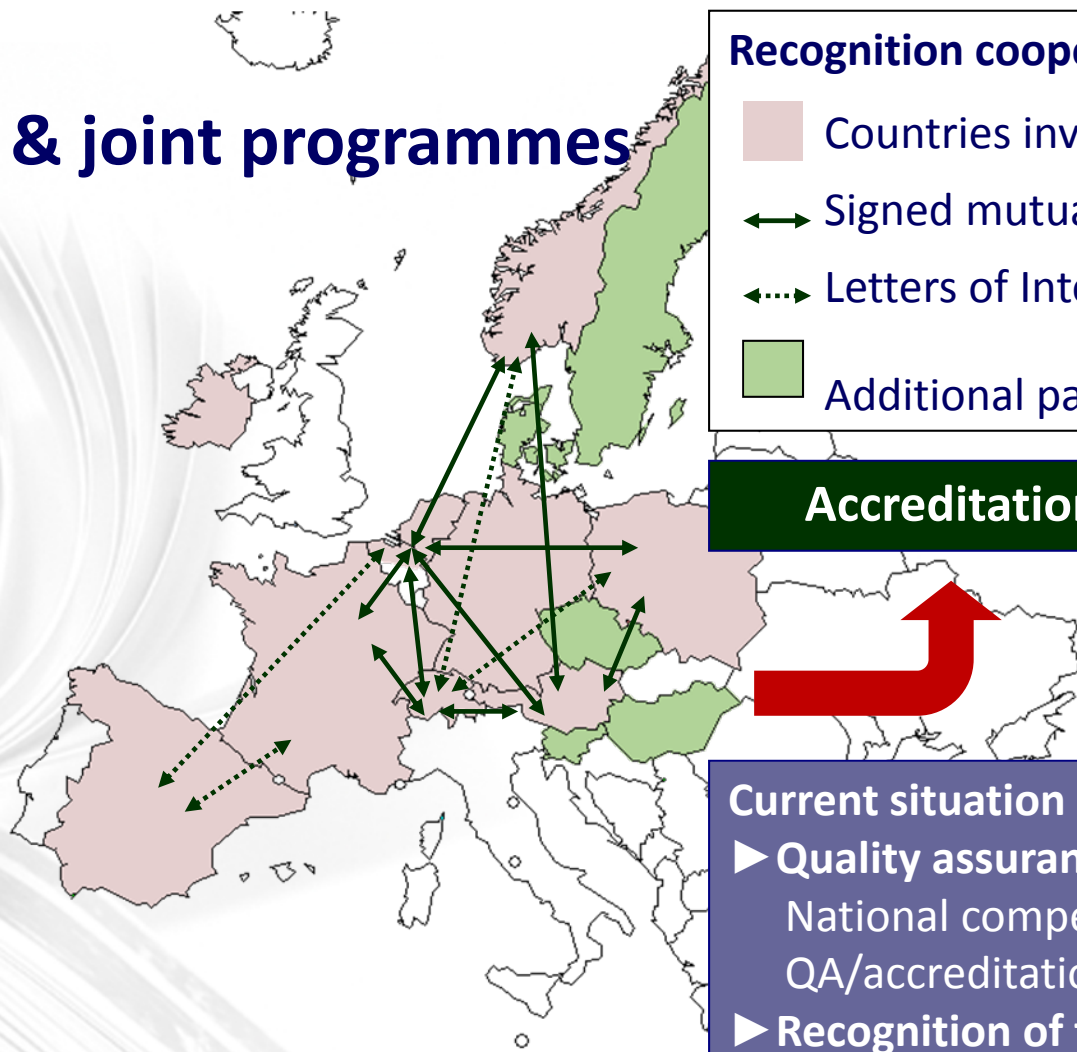
- Code of Good Practice

-Principles for: selection of experts; accreditation of joint programmes;
assessment of learning outcomes

-Agreement with ENIC-NARICs

Information exchange

ECA & joint programmes



Recognition cooperation & agreements

- Countries involved in ECA I (2003-2007)
- ↔ Signed mutual recognition agreements
- ⋯↔ Letters of Intent
- Additional partners in ECA II or TEAM II

Accreditation of joint programmes?

Current situation

- ▶ **Quality assurance and/or accreditation**
National competencies ⇒ Multiple QA/accreditation procedures
- ▶ **Recognition of the qualification/diploma**
National competencies ⇒ Not necessarily recognised in all countries concerned

Joint programmes

Recognition cooperation & agreements

- Countries involved in ECA I
- Signed mutual recognition agreements
- Letters of Intent
- Additional partners in ECA II or TEAM II

Accreditation of joint programmes

Single accreditation procedure

- Principles ; focus on jointness and learning outcomes

Accreditation decision

Accreditation in all national systems

Recognition of qualifications of joint programmes?

Principles for accreditation of joint programmes

- To increase mutual trust and transparency
- Joint programmes are included in MR agreements
- Information sharing and transparency
 - Agencies inform each other
 - Legal situation & status of degree
- Composition of expert panel
 - Particular emphasis on international experience
- Assessment process
 - Totality of programme included in information, site visit and assessment by panel
 - Include at least 1 observer of other agency

Principles for accreditation of joint programmes/2

- Accreditation decision
 - Based on assessment of totality of joint programme
 - Communication of decision to other involved agencies
- Similar principles for the QA of joint programmes through institutional accreditation
 - Agencies should inform accredited institutions that they are expected to quality assure new joint programmes with a rigour equivalent to that which provided the basis of the institution's accreditation

5 pilot projects in ECA-TEAM II

- ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTERS -Journalism and Media within Globalisation: The European Perspective
- European Teacher Education for Primary Schools (ETEPS)
- Joint European Master in Comparative Local Development (CoDe)
- Joint European Master in International Humanitarian Action (NOHA)
- Research Master Geosciences of Basins and Lithosphere (BASINS)

Outcomes of ECA-TEAM II

- European methodology for single accreditation (quality assessment) procedures regarding joint programmes
- Facilitating ENIC/NARICs for sharing good practices regarding the recognition of qualifications from joint programmes
- Transparent information on the quality assessment and learning outcomes of joint programmes (via Crossroads)
- Dissemination conference in Graz on 10-11 June 2010

New project proposal for EU funding: JOQAR

- Joint programmes: Quality Assurance and Recognition of degrees awarded (JOQAR)
- Partnership of 15 organisations: 8 European accreditation agencies; 4 European ENIC-NARICs; 3 QA agencies from other regions: Australia (AUQA); Colombia (CNA); India (NAAC)
- Project outcomes include:
 - multilateral recognition agreement and refining methodology for accreditation of joint programmes;
 - coordination point for assisting in organising single accreditation procedures and information-sharing
 - shared principles for recognition of qualifications from joint programmes and raising awareness among HEIs
 - Inclusion of Erasmus Mundus joint masters in Qrossroads



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Accreditation organisation: [AAC](#), [FH Council](#)





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Programme	Qualification	Institution	Location
Applied Economics	Master of Applied Economics	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	Leuven
Complementary Studies in Business Economics	Master of Complementary Studies in Business Economics	Universiteit Gent	Gent
Complementary Studies in Economics	Master of Complementary Studies in Economics	Universiteit Gent	Gent
Economics	Master of Economics	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	Leuven
Economics of International Trade and European Integration	Master of Economics of International Trade and European Integration	Vrije Universiteit Brussel	Brussel-hoofdstad
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QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION

- AAC (Austria)
- FH Council (Austria)
- CTI (France)
- GAC (Germany)
- ZEVA (Germany)
- FIBAA (Germany)
- ACQUIN (Germany)
- AQAS (Germany)
- AHPGS (Germany)
- HETAC (Ireland)
- NVAO (Netherlands-Flanders)
- NOKUT (Norway)
- PKA (Poland)
- ANECA (Spain)
- OAQ (Switzerland)

Quality assurance and accreditation in Europe

Quality assurance can serve several purposes, including:

- safeguarding national academic standards;
- recognition of programmes and/or institutions;
- accountability (in return for autonomy);
- the provision of independently-verified information about programmes and/or institutions;
- improvement and enhancement of quality.

European models of quality assurance can include evaluations and accreditation at subject, programme and institutional levels and a combinations of these. European quality assurance can however best be characterised in the light of the Bologna Process. One of the aims of this process is European co-operation with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies. In 2005, this led to the adoption by the European Ministers of Education the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (European Standards and Guidelines).

European Standards and Guidelines

The following fundamental principles permeate the European Standards and Guidelines:

- the interests of students as well as employers and the society more generally in good quality higher education;
- the central importance of institutional autonomy, tempered by a recognition that this brings with it heavy responsibilities;
- the need for external quality assurance to be fit for its purpose and to place only an appropriate and necessary burden on institutions for the achievement of its objectives.

The European Standards and Guidelines lay down the European standards and guidelines for

- internal quality assurance within higher education institutions
- external quality assurance of higher education
- external quality assurance agencies
- a peer review system for quality assurance agencies

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www.ecaconsortium.net

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