



INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

Conclusions of the Meeting of QA Networks Windhoek, Namibia, 7 May 2010

Present: see attached participants list.

Program: see attached.

Conclusions

1. The following networks gave updates on their activities and projects: AfriQAN, APQN, AQAN, CAMES, CANQATE, CEEN, ECA, ENAEE, EQANIE, INQAAHE, RIACES. The discussions focused on clarifications of networks' activities, and topics like the difficulties experienced by starting networks; mutual recognition agreements in relation to academic and professional accreditation; and the role of networks within their region. With regard to the latter it was remarked that regional cultural contexts very much determine what kind of role a network has within a region.
2. Regarding the role of INQAAHE there was satisfaction with the current role played by INQAAHE as both a global network and a facilitator for interregional communication and information sharing.
3. It was remarked that it is important for networks to publish information on past and current projects on their websites. It is not always easy to make this information available in a good and comprehensible manner, but website publication is crucial for a wide dissemination.
4. Some dissatisfaction was expressed by the way in which GIQAC had assessed the websites of the networks. It is important to do such appraisals in a thorough and consistent manner. The networks can also facilitate this by providing regular website statistics (the Google analytic tools were mentioned as a useful tool).
5. Making information available in multiple languages on websites is useful but also provides a major challenge. Translators are costly and not always apt to translate texts regarding QA. A pragmatic solution could be that members of the networks (native speakers) assist with the translation. It should be kept in mind though that this

may require a significant amount of time for those volunteers. A selection of texts that are most useful for members could be made. It was suggested that INQAAHE members would be asked (e.g. in needs surveys) which information on the website they would find useful to translate. In addition, the links to the translated pages of the website should be clearly visible on the website in English.

6. A discussion emerged on the usefulness of providing glossaries on the website. Several networks have made glossaries or investigated this issue. It was agreed that agreeing on terminology takes a lot of effort and that it is very dependent on the cultural and national contexts. A few networks have made glossaries available on their websites. Practice shows that this availability is no guarantee that members of the networks use the terms and definitions of the glossary.
7. With regard to the INQAAHE Clearinghouse (QAHEC) it was mentioned that this should include key documents, also from agencies which are in the starting phase. Requests for annual updates would be sent through e-mails.
8. The virtual meeting place for regions was presented and it was pointed out that providing current information on the meeting place is dependent on the networks providing information on their strategies, plans, projects, etc. A call was made to networks to provide this information to the INQAAHE Secretariat.
9. A format for a fact sheet for networks was presented and a few comments were made regarding the inclusion of website links on the format. The revised format is attached and networks will be asked to fill in the format and send it to the INQAAHE Secretariat after which these formats will be placed on the INQAAHE website.
10. It was asked how networks know that they are serving their members well. One of the answers given pointed to the useful experience with an external review of the network and its activities. It should be an independent review and carried out regularly. A second way to answer this question would be to regularly ask members (e.g. through a needs survey) about their satisfaction with the membership services provided. Finally, there are also networks which rely on more informal ways such as feedback during a general assembly or responses to a work plan.

The presentations can be downloaded from:

<http://www.inqaahe.org/main/networks/regional-reports-2010>