

**11<sup>th</sup> Biennial INQAAHE Forum**  
**4-6 May 2010**  
**Windhoek, Namibia**

**Plenary Report from Breakaway  
Groups, Sessions 2 and 3, Day 1**

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**CEO Samoa Qualifications Authority**

# Session 2: QA and HE Social Responsiveness

## Role of EQA

- A general agreement by all groups on EQA's having a role in evaluating HE social responsiveness
- Government policy/legal frameworks [some countries mandated]
- Maybe advisory, not planning
- Balance between government, EQA and HEI needs [institutional autonomy]
- Balance between social responsiveness - local/global

Note: process of assuring quality is itself a social responsibility!

# Session 2: QA and HE Social Responsiveness

## Assessing Social Responsiveness

- Diversity of practices
  - Evaluation at programme or institutional level, curriculum design and development
  - Evaluation of vision, mission, goals of HE
  - Evaluation of internal quality frameworks
  - Evaluation in terms of fitness for/of purpose
  - Review panel composition
  - Stakeholders' feedback, community engagement
  - Research agenda
  - Consultative & not as a standard

# Session 2: QA and HE Social Responsiveness

## Assessing Social Responsiveness (cont'd)

- Context specific
  - social responsibility dimensions & meaning
  - Fitness for/of purpose

Note: Generally no clearly established criteria to measure/ evaluate social responsiveness in most countries

# Session 2: QA and HE Social Responsiveness

- Issues
  - Influence of stakeholders eg funding by Government of certain areas only
  - Relation between Government, EQA and HEI
    - has to be a balance between local and international needs, and institutional autonomy
  - Who sets the standards
  - What standards/criteria – what evidence
  - Willingness of HE to respond

# Session 3: QA agencies between the global and the local

Main elements taken into account from global to local:

- Methodological ideas & Best practices [peer review, independence of QAA]
- Process Standards almost universal
- Programme accreditation gaining popularity
- Student involvement in QA becoming popular
- Student interests have varied and changed
- QA activities and decisions becoming highly political
- Role of professional accreditors – links with QAA

# Session 3: QA agencies between the global and the local

Main elements taken into account from global to local:

- Legal/regulatory framework increasingly demanded to inform QA
- Mutual Recognition and portability of qualifications
- Growth of regional networks

# Session 3: QA agencies between the global and the local

## Challenges:

- Imposition of global on local
- Sustainability issues – how global methodology can be used to sustain QA locally
- Determining requirements and mechanisms to quality assure transnational providers
- How to indigenise ‘borrowed’ models in a meaningful way
- Is it realistic to harmonise standards globally?
- Language issue
- Work on mutual recognition, comparability vs equivalence needs to progress

# Session 3: QA agencies between the global and the local

## Unavoidable local characteristics when designing/implementing a QAA:

- Local legal provisions
- Labour market
- National politics
- National identity and policies
- Educational focus of the country
- Different community needs
- Status of development of HEIs
- Size and structure of HEI
- Principles of QA

# Session 3: QA agencies between the global and the local

## Constraints on QAA:

- Standards determined elsewhere
- Localised conditions do not have international benchmarks

# Session 3: QA agencies between the global and the local

## Methodologies used to accredit/audit HEI operating offshore:

- Different experiences
- Ascertain validity, treat as a local institution, visit foreign campus to assess validity
- ❖ **Importance of developing partnership and trust across borders between the QAAs.**