



INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

President's message

Since the last Bulletin, the INQAAHE Board has held three electronic meetings. The main topics have been as follows.

INQAAHE Strategic Plan, 2007-2012.

This has been revised to clarify the difference between the high-level objectives and the operational level of activity. Performance indicators have been revised and aligned with the work of INQAAHE's many working groups. The latest version of the Strategic Plan can be consulted at:

<http://www.inqaah.org/main/about-inqaah/strategic-plan>

Performance indicators will be further discussed at meetings of the networks of QA agencies in Paris at the beginning of July, and a further report will be provided to members.

Networks

There will be a meeting of representatives of all the regional and other networks of QA agencies in Paris in conjunction with the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. The main topics are capacity-building for networks, organisation of networks, and performance indicators for networks.

Namibia Forum 2010 and Madrid Conference 2011

The committees to organise these events have been appointed. They will make their first reports to the board in July, and an update for members will be in the next Bulletin.

Publicity document

A publicity document is being designed and will soon be available to members.

Consultants Data Base

INQAAHE is collaborating with APQN and ANQAHE in the development of a database of recognised consultants on QA. You should have received an invitation to nominate consultants to the database.

Good Practices Database

You have recently received an invitation to propose good practices in QA for the INQAAHE database of good practices - see separate item in this Bulletin.

Graduate Program in QA

Work is proceeding on writing, and two universities are well advanced in implementing the first two modules. The writing is expected to be complete by the end of August.

Clearinghouse of QA Policies, Procedures and Practices

Information from 50 agencies has been catalogued and the Clearinghouse is being tested before release.

INQAAHE Membership Fees 2007 and 2008

Various reminders for the INQAAHE membership fees for 2007 and 2008 have been sent. If you haven't paid your subscription, this is the last Bulletin you will receive. You will no longer receive the Journal 'Quality in Higher Education' and your access to the memberservices on the website will be cancelled.

David Woodhouse
President
July 2009



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Call for Good Practices in Quality Assurance

INQA AHE launched a database of Good Practices in Quality Assurance (GPQA) in January 2008. It is intended to be a resource for members to seek inspiration from sister organisations' work when developing their own policies, practices and processes.

We are sure that there are plenty of good practices in place in our member organisations but you may have asked yourself what constitutes a good practice and does your organisation have any practices in place which are worth sharing with colleagues. The basic principles underpinning the GPQA are that

- a practice may be a system or action,
- it might be able to be adapted for use by another agency, and
- it is likely to add value to the growing knowledge base on QA.

In other words the good practice does not need to be a big one that applies to your entire QA approach: it can be a smaller activity which is a part of your organisations' QA approach or your work processes which you have found valuable in applying and which could be valuable to others.

We only have a few practices on the website, in the following areas:

promotion of QA, fitness for purpose, peer review and international collaboration. Remember that this is a 'good practice database' not a 'best practice database', so we hope to have lots of practices in the database in each area or topic, so INQA AHE members have a choice of what might work best for them. So don't hesitate to send in an idea because you think it has already been covered."

We are sure that there are many more good practices out there and if every member quality assurance agency submits just one idea, it will be to our joint benefit. Some agencies have gone through external reviews, and the reviewers might have drawn attention to good features of the agency, so the external review would be a good starting point to consider good practices for submission. However, the submitted good practices do not need to have gone through an external review. There is a process for the good practice to be externally reviewed by INQA AHE's GPQA working group (a paper exercise) before being placed on the website and there is a template to use for submitting the practice so there is no need to think about what information to provide.

So we encourage you to consider what you do well and what you would like to celebrate publicly which will also be valuable for your other fellow quality assurance agencies, and send them to the INQA AHE Secretariat. We look forward to your participation.

Good Practices may be submitted at any time, but the Committee will organise the next review of the incoming submissions in August, so members are urged to send contributions by 1 August.

More information about the GPQA and it's application procedures is available below and on the INQA AHE members-only website <http://www.inqahe.org/gpqa/about-gpqa>



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The GPQA is an online searchable collection of systems and activities that are relevant to good policies, practices and outcomes in quality assurance. The good practices will be organised under the following topics related to the external quality assurance agency (EQA):

- governance,
- resources,
- QA,
- reporting public information,
- relationships between EQAs and higher education institutions,
- requirements for institutional/program performance,
- requirements for institutional self-evaluation and reporting to EQA,
- EQA's evaluation of the institution and/or program,
- decisions,
- appeals,
- collaboration and
- transnational/cross-border higher education.

A template for submission of a good practice is available on the INQAAHE website: <http://www.inqaahe.org/gpqa/send-request.php>
The key requirement is for the submission to include a short description of the purpose of the good practice, the context for its use and the practice itself. The good practice will be reviewed by two members of the GPQA working group.

Professional and Specialized Accreditors

In January 2009 INQAAHE organised a workshop for specialized and professional accreditors.

One of the results of this meeting is that INQAAHE is now developing a special section for these specialized accreditors on the INQAAHE Website.

We would like to ask you to provide us with useful information such as papers and/or presentations that can be placed on this website.

For more information and/or suggestions please contact Carol Bobby, the convenor of the INQAAHE Workinggroup on professional accreditors:

cbobby@cacrep.org





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Bologna follow up: Leuven 2009

On 28 and 29 April 2009, the Ministers responsible for higher education in the 46 countries of the Bologna Process met in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve to establish the priorities for the European Higher Education Area until 2020. They highlighted in particular the importance of lifelong learning, widening access to higher education, and mobility. By 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad.

A ranking system for European universities will also be introduced according to multiple and objective criteria, which will hopefully decrease the dependence on the hit-lists like the Shanghai and Times Index.

Concerning Quality Assurance the Leuven communiqué stated that:

- Higher Education Institutions need to pay particular attention to improving the teaching quality of their study programmes at all levels. This should be a priority in the further implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance.
- Transnational education should be governed by the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance as applicable within the European Higher Education Area and be in line with the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education.

The E4 group is asked (ENQA-EUA-EURASHE-ESU) to continue its cooperation in further developing the European dimension of quality assurance and in particular to ensure that the European Quality Assurance Register is evaluated externally, taking into account the views of the stakeholders.

- There are several current initiatives designed to develop mechanisms for providing more detailed information about higher education institutions across the EHEA to make their



diversity more transparent. Any such mechanisms, including those helping higher education systems and institutions to identify and compare their respective strengths, should be developed in close consultation with the key stakeholders. These transparency tools need to relate closely to the principles of the Bologna Process, in particular quality assurance and recognition, which will remain our priority, and should be based on comparable data and adequate indicators to describe the diverse profiles of higher education institutions and their programmes.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/conference>



JUAA accreditation results available online

The 2008 accreditation results of the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) are now published online at

<http://www.juaa.or.jp/en/index.html>

JUAA do hope that we establish relations with Quality Assurance Agencies in the world by continuing to exchange information and opinions.



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Capacity-Building workshop for Quality Assurance/Accreditation Agencies in Africa, 15 - 17 April 2009

As part of the activities the AAU's support to Quality Assurance in African Higher Education programme, the AAU organized a capacity building workshop for both emerging and existing national quality assurance agencies in Africa from 15th to 17th April 2009 at Dodowa, near Accra, Ghana. The workshop provided an opportunity for the agencies to share their experiences and learn from each other; exchange and update information; disseminate good practices of quality assurance; reinforce regional harmonization; and facilitate networking and continental cooperation. Moreover, it created the basis for promoting the establishment of a network for QA agencies on the continent, the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN).

The capacity building workshop was funded by the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (GIQAC), which is a joint initiative of the World Bank and the UNESCO.

The following ten themes were addressed during the workshop.

- * The Notion of Quality in Higher Education and Quality Assurance Concepts
- * External Quality Assurance and Accreditation Mechanisms: Country Experiences
- * Setting up a National Quality Assurance Agency: General Perspective
- * Similarities and Differences in QA and Accreditation Practices of African QA Agencies
- * Approaches to External Quality Assurance and Methodological Options
- * Framework for Evaluation of Quality in Higher Education Institutions
- * The Processes in Carrying out External Quality Assurance: A Practical View
- * Regulation and Quality Assurance in Cross-Border Higher Education
- * The African Union Harmonization Strategy and Quality Rating Mechanism
- * Towards Harmonization and Establishing African Quality Assurance Network

The workshop was also intended to lay a foundation for emerging national quality assurance agencies, and to provide additional input for strengthening the work of already established regulatory bodies mandated in the quality assessment or accreditation of higher education institutions. For more information about AAU visit: <http://www.aau.org>
more information about Afriqan can be found at:
<http://www.ohmeslogistics.com/afriqanbeta>



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CEE Network Workshop in Vilnius

The CEE Network held its annual workshop on 30 May. It was hosted by the Lithuanian agency CQAHE. The title was “External Reviews of Agencies: Lessons learned” and Giedrius Viliunas, State Secretary at the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania, set the motivating tone of the workshop with his opening words.

Invited speakers were the Director of the hosting Lithuanian agency Eugenijus Stumbrys, who described his agency’s preparations for their external review; Mieczyslaw Socha of PKA Poland, who raised a number of questions agencies should ask themselves when embarking on their review; the President of ENQA, Bruno Curvale, and the Acting Director of the European Register EQAR Colin Tück, who shared their respective organizations’ experiences with external evaluations; Karl Dittrich, Chariman of NVAO, who gave a thought-provoking presentation about the role of agencies in the European context; Todor Shopov from the Bulgarian agency, who spoke about the external review of the Bulgarian agency; and András Bohák who presented the student view about the external review of the Hungarian agency.

To introduce the discussion, Dhurata Bozo, Director of APAAL Albania, presented the results of her survey on CEEN agencies’ participation in external reviews and their purposes. Very generously, the Albanian agency also produced a “Directory” on CEEN agencies, which may be requested by e-mail from Christina Rozsnyai, CEEN Secretary General (rozsnyai@mab.hu). Following the closing discussion, Ivan Panayotov gave A short presentation as an invitation to the CEEN to hold its next General Assembly in Bulgaria on 28-29 May 2010. For more information please visit the CEE Network website at <http://www.ceenetwork.hu>



Sightseeing at Vilnius University

Changing Academics: Quality Audit and its Perceived Impact

Quality audit is the main way in which the quality of university teaching and learning in England is assessed. However, it is a source of controversy. There are issues of power and control underlying its operation.

This book of Ming Cheng presents a picture of how academics perceive the impact of quality audit on their work. It does not privilege views 'from the top' about quality audit issues in the university sector. Instead it aims to interpret the different views held by academics regarding quality audit in order to give an in-depth account of the audit culture and the quality audit. Reflecting on real stories from academics the book identifies a central tension between quality audit and academics' notion of their professionalism.



Cheng, M. (2009). *Changing Academics: Quality Audit and its Perceived Impact*. Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag



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Conferences and Fora



THE CARIBBEAN AREA NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TERTIARY EDUCATION 6TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE) will be hosting its 6th Annual Conference from October 6 – 8, 2009 in St. Michael, Barbados. The Conference, which is being organised by the Barbados Accreditation Council, has as its theme “Balancing Quality and Quantity: The Global Challenge for Tertiary Education”.

The theme for the conference is considered to be highly relevant across the globe as increasing focus is being given to providing greater access to tertiary education to all citizens while at the same time, improving the quality of tertiary educational provision. The 2009 CANQATE conference will provide the opportunity for participants to discuss and analyze global challenges associated with increasing student numbers and the impact on the maintenance and advancement of quality in tertiary education. The strands of the conference will address the following areas:

- Balancing quality and quantity: the global challenge for tertiary education
- Quality assurance trends for the future
- Technical and vocational education and training (tvvet) and academia: bridging the gap
- The role of community in quality tertiary education
- Developing internal and external quality assurance mechanisms
- Quality assurance of distance education
- Developing meaningful and strong partnerships
- Successful planning and training for quality assurance leadership in the Caribbean
- Strategic approach to quality tertiary education and training in the Caribbean
- The role of the alumni in maintaining quality in tertiary education
- Quality tertiary education and training and the labour market
- E-libraries and e-learning resources

A Pre-Conference Workshop will be held on October 6, 2009 and will address the topic “Building a High Quality Self Study Report”.

More information can be found at http://www.bac.gov.bb/canqate_2009/index.php



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21st Annual EAIE Conference

From 16-19 September 2009, the European Association for International Education will hold its 21st annual conference in Madrid, Spain. The conference theme is 'Connecting continents' and a wide range of seminars and workshops will be offered. From a seminar about connecting Latin America and Europe to a workshop on quality assurance of student exchanges.

More information can be found at: <http://www.eaie.org/Madrid/>



Fourth European Quality Assurance Forum "Creativity and Diversity: Challenges for quality assurance beyond 2010"

The fourth European Quality Assurance Forum – co-organised by EUA, ESU, ENQA and EURASHE will be held from 19-21 November in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The forum is supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission – and will be hosted by the Copenhagen Business School.

More information can be found soon at:

<http://www.eua.be/eua-events/>



Annual Conference MSCHE



MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education will host its annual conference, "Accreditation: Promoting Excellence," December 9-11, 2009, at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. This world class convention hotel commands a towering presence at the hub of Philadelphia's business and historic districts and is within walking distance of many attractions, restaurants, and shopping. Philadelphia is the primary international hub for US Airways, with many daily flights between Philadelphia and leading European cities.

The conference will feature several keynote speakers, breakout sessions on focused accreditation-related topics, an exhibit hall, and many networking opportunities. Details will be available in mid summer on the Commission's website: <http://www.msche.org>

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is the regional accrediting agency for colleges and universities in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands, as well as selected institutions abroad.