INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

R E P O R T

JULY 2007

Contents

Foreword

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) was established in 1991.

The main purpose of the Network is to collect and disseminate information on current and developing theory and practice in the assessment, improvement and maintenance of quality in higher education.

Through this information-sharing, and otherwise, it is intended that the Network should:
• promote good practices in the maintenance and improvement of quality in higher education;
• facilitate research into the practice of quality management in higher education and its effectiveness;
• be able to provide advice and expertise to assist the development of new quality assurance agencies;
• facilitate links between accrediting bodies especially insofar as they operate across national borders;
• assist members to determine the standards of institutions operating across national borders;
• permit better-informed international recognition of qualifications;
• be able to assist in the development and use of credit transfer schemes to enhance the mobility of students between institutions within and across national borders; and
• enable members to be alert to dubious accrediting practices and organisations.

Recent years have seen an acceptance by governments and decision makers throughout the world that the provision of quality higher education is one of the most important instruments in economic and social development. Paradoxically, as the World Bank representative explained at the Toronto Conference, investment in quality higher education is a more important driver of growth in less developed countries than increased investment in primary and post primary education.

There is also an understanding worldwide that the assurance of the quality of higher education provision is critical to improving the life chances of the citizens of developing countries.

Quality Assurance in higher education has long been part of the system in more developed regions. However, methods and systems of QA are under scrutiny and under development in these regions too.

The presentations, debates and informal meetings in the margins of the conferences were helpful and enlightening to all delegates who attended the Toronto meetings.

The meeting of representatives of world regions, INQAAHE Board and representatives of UNESCO and World Bank were an innovation at this year's conference and was a very valuable and worthwhile session. It provided an opportunity for open, frank and cordial exchange of views and information for all concerned.

Developments in Higher Education and in particular developments in Quality Assurance in Higher Education are matters of major discussion in all World regions. In particular, governments and policy makers have realised the importance of quality higher education in improving the life chances for their citizens.

This report reflects the position of the Network after Toronto. I hope it will be of value to members and other secretaries in the period ahead. The past two years, from Wellington to Toronto, has been a period of intense activity for INQAAHE, its Board and Secretariat and for its members.

The next period, will be even more important as we seek to improve the capacity of our members in developing countries and regions with the support of UNESCO and the World Bank.

Séamus Puirséil
Secretary
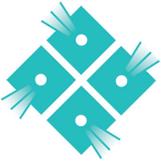
Report from the Secretariat

The INQAAHE network has grown dramatically over recent years. Membership has increased by 22 members in 2006 with an additional five new members in the first three months of 2007. There are now 185 members of the network, of which 133 are full members, 45 are associates and there are seven affiliate members.

Electronic methods of communication have proved invaluable to the secretariat, particularly during the preparations for the INQAAHE events, for hosting electronic board meetings via the website and for keeping in regular contact with the membership.

A significant development for INQAAHE is the acceptance by UNESCO to grant NGO status to the network. Another significant development is the conjoint application with UNESCO to the World Bank for funding for capacity building in developing regions. In recent years grants have been secured by the Asia Pacific Network, by RIACES in Latin America. The AAU in Africa has been awarded the first year of a three year package and funding for the Middle East region are in a late stage of development.

An application was submitted in late December 2006 and we await a response from the World Bank.

A meeting of board members and representatives of regional networks took place in Toronto on Monday 2 April. The meeting discussed progress in the application and the means by which the funds might be disbursed to best use. The World Bank representative indicated that it was likely that a significant grant would be made in the current year. In addition, the meeting discussed sustainability of funding during and after the three year grant period. This meeting led to discussion of these matters at the General Assembly during the Toronto Conference.

The revised edition of the guidelines of good practice have been produced in printed format and copies circulated to all members of the network

The work of INQAAHE is dependent on input from members in the form of contributions, comments and feedback, and the secretariat is grateful to those members who send items for the bulletin and who respond to communications.

INQAAHE conducted a survey of member agencies on behalf of UNESCO on the Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross Border Higher Education. The Secretariat is grateful to Dr Anthony Steele (AUGA) and Dr Peter Cullen (HETAC) for their work on the survey.

The members of the Board have been diligent in dealing with developments in their own regions and in attending conferences on behalf of the network. Membership of the board places considerable extra obligations on people who are already very busy as senior officials in their own agencies.

The Secretariat of INQAAHE is provided by HETAC in Ireland. We are pleased to have regular and productive contact with agencies in so many parts of the world.
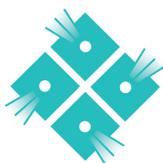
Report from Outgoing President

It has been a great privilege and pleasure to serve as President of the Network from 2003 to 2007.

It has been a period both of growth and stability. In terms of growth the number of members has more or less doubled and there are now very few countries that do not have in place a national system of external quality assurance for higher education.

With so much changing my comment about stability might come as a surprise. But I do believe that the last four or five years has, in many countries, been a period of "settling in" in that the fight is over and that it is now accepted that external quality assurance is here to stay. But that is not to say that we reached some Nirvana and all that has to be done is to keep the quality assurance ticking over. While I strongly believe that once an external system is introduced it will not go away, I am even more strongly convinced that the system should not stay the same.

Systems will have to respond to both "internal" and "external" changes. The internal changes will result from the introduction of external quality assurance itself. In particular the recognition that the approach that is fine for the first round of external reviews of programmes and/or institutions will not be suitable for the third or fourth round. The external changes will be due to the changes that are taking place in higher education itself, and I do not just mean "distance learning" but also such things as employment based learning. We will probably need to develop more flexible systems of quality assurance that will better match the more heterogeneous higher education systems that will be a feature of the future in most countries.

In terms of INQAAHE and its members, two key developments over the last four years have been the establishment of effective working relationships between ourselves and international organisations such as the World Bank and UNESCO and the increasing importance of the work of the Regional Associations. There was a danger a few years ago that, as the international agencies recognised the importance of quality assurance, they would attempt to design everything from scratch and to overlook what had already been achieved. I am delighted to be able to say that the danger was averted and that, as described in the Secretariat Report, we now have close working relations with the international organisations.

While the regional associations of quality assurance and accreditation agencies have much in common, in particular the extent to which they encourage and enhance communications between members, there are also significant differences due to such things as history and political and economic differences between the regions. It was thus never sensible that the regions should be linked constitutionally with INQAAHE. The Network has, however, been an important factor in their development, acting more as midwife than mother, and there is in practice considerable overlap between INQAAHE board members and the leadership of the Regional Associations. One of the major tasks of the new Board will be to build on what has been achieved and ensure the strengthening of the links between the Regional Associations with the Network and with each other.

I have enjoyed too many stimulating encounters and invigorating debates with members of the INQAAHE board over the last few years to be able to list the individuals concerned so I will take this opportunity to thank them collectively. I will, however, thank two people personally, Ann Graves and Séamus Puirséil. As our secretariat they have made a tremendous contribution to the work of INQAAHE over the last four years and have done so with great charm and cool efficiency. The Network owes them a great deal.

The constitution of INQAAHE allows ex-presidents to fade away over a two year period and I very much look forward to meeting old friends and making new ones as I drift into the sunset.

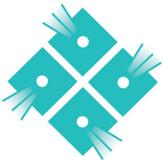Richard Lewis
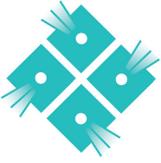
Message from the Incoming President

As one of the founders of INQAAHE in 1991, I'm delighted to have the opportunity to serve the Network again as President in 2007. It is most exciting to reflect on the growth of INQAAHE over the intervening period, from a dozen or so original members to about 150 agencies and other organisations now. It is a testimony to the hard work of many people over many years that such a significant organisation has sustained itself for so long on minimal financial resources. The increase in size also demonstrates the great increase in attention to quality in higher education over the last two decades.

Changes in the QA world over that time relate not only to its size but also its emphasis. Malcolm Frazer suggested in 1991 that the 90s would be the decade of quality, and in 2000 I suggested that the 00s would be the decade of international quality. Both these forecasts have proved to be correct. INQAAHE has always existed for mutual support of its member agencies, which has entailed international interaction. However, the 'international factor' has grown. Increasingly we need to deal with international mobility of education and personnel, which means we need to recognise each other's QA processes, and this in turn means that we need to demonstrate that we are good QA agencies in international terms not merely in our own domestic terms. INQAAHE therefore needs to lead debates on policy and procedures, to assist agencies to share their good QA practices, and to support the increasing numbers of regional agencies.

A positive note is that we may be in a position to benefit from increased funds through a partnership with the World Bank and UNESCO. For the last two years I have been Secretary of the Asia Pacific Quality Network, which has been fortunate to receive a grant from the World Bank. This has contributed enormously to capacity-building in the region, and similar global benefit may be expected if the partnership currently under discussion comes to fruition.

I look forward to working with you all in these interesting times.

David Woodhouse

INCOMING Board members

David Woodhouse
(President)

Séamus Puirséil
(Secretary)
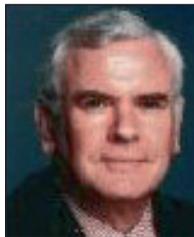
Richard Lewis
(Treasurer)

Jean Avnet Morse
(Elected)

Norman Sharp
(Elected)

Peter Cheung
(Elected)

Nadia Badrawi
(Elected)

Lis Lang
(Elected)

Maria Jose Lemaitre
(Elected)

Dhurata Bozo
(Co-opted)

Marie Odile
(Co-opted)

Lee Harvey
(Journal Editor –
Observer)

Leandro Haberfeld
(Observer)

Badr Abour-Ela
(Observer)

Outgoing Board members

Richard Lewis, President
Séamus Puirséil, Secretary
Don Baker, Treasurer
Dorte Kristoffersen

Tibor Szanto
Marjorie Peace Lenn
Peter Cheung
Jorge Mora

Mala Singh
V S Prasad
Lee Harvey (Observer)

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Full Members
Albanian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (Agjencia e Akreditimit te Arsimit te Larte)

ARGENTINA
Full Members
National Commission for Evaluation and Accreditation (CONEAU - Comision Nacional de Evaluacion y Acreditacion Universitaria)

AUSTRALIA
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Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)
Queensland Office of Higher Education
Universities Registration Council (URC)

Associate Members
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Advisory Board
Centre for Higher Education Quality, Monash University
Department Education, Science and Training (DEST)
General Practice Education and Training Limited
Griffith University

AUSTRIA
Full Members
AQA - Österreichische Qualitätssicherungsagentur (Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance)
Fachhochschule Council (FH Council)
Österreichischer Akkreditierungsrat (Austrian Accreditation Council)

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VLIR (Flemish Inter-University Council)

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Full Members
University of Botswana

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Commission d'Évaluation de l'Enseignement Collégial
Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities
Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission
Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OGCS)
Ontario College Quality Assurance Service
Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board, Ministry of Training, Colleges

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Consejo Superior de Education
CINDA, Centro Interuniversitario de Desarrollo

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Center for education assessment of Sun yat-sen university
Employees Retraining Board
Higher Education Evaluation Center of The Ministry of Education
Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA)
Jiangsu Agency for Education Evaluation (JAEE)
Joint Quality Review Committee Limited (JQRC)
Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute,
The Guadong Center of Evaluation and Development Reserach for Education (GDCEDRE),
University Grants Committee, HK

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Research Institute for Medical Education, Harbin Medical University
Teaching Research and Evaluation Centre of HeiLongJiang University

COLOMBIA
Full Members
Consejo Nacional de Acreditación,

COSTA RICA
Full Members
Central American Council of Accreditation of Higher Education (Consejo Centroamericano de Acreditación de la Educación Superior, CCA)
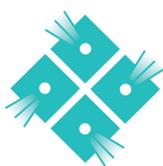Sistema Nacional de Acreditación de la Educación Superior, SINAES

CROATIA
Associate Members
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Rijeka University - Centre for Quality Assurance

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Council of Educational Evaluation - Accreditation

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DENMARK
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Danmarks Evalueringsinstitut - The Danish Evaluation Institute

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National Quality Assurance and Accreditation committee

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Estonian Higher Education Quality Assessment Council

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FINLAND
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CIET (Centre International d'Eteudes Pedagoiques)
Comité National d' Évaluation des établissements publics à caractère scientifique, culturel et professionnel (CNE)
Ecole nationale de la santé publique

Associate Members
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GERMANY
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Akkreditierungsagentur fur Studiengange der Ingenieurwissenschaften, der Informatik, der Naturwissenschaften und der Mathematik (ASIIN) e.V.
Stiftung zur Akkreditierung von Studiengängen in Deutschland (German Accreditation Council)

GHANA
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National Accreditation Board

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
Full Members
Accreditation council of the Higher Education Institutions

HUNGARY
Full Members
Hungarian Accreditation Committee

ICELAND
Full Members
Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Division of Evaluation & Supervision

INDIA
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All India Council for Technical Education
DOEACC Society
National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)
National Educational Research & Development Program. North East Region (An Autonomous International Post Secondary Non Profit Statutory Education Agency)

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DEPDIKNAS (Ministry of National Education)

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Higher Education and Training Awards Council
National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (Údarás Náisiúnta Cáilíochtaí na hÉireann)

ISRAEL
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The Israeli Council for Higher Education

Associate Members
University of Haifa

ITALY
Full Members
European Evangelical Accrediting Association
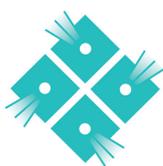
JAMAICA
Full Members
Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions
The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ)

Associate Members
National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training - NCTVET

INQAAHE Members – 2007

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Japan University Accreditation Association
National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation

JORDAN
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Al Hussein Fund For Excellence

KAZAKHSTAN
Full Members
National Accreditation Center of Ministry Education & Science of Kazakhstan Republic

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Commission for Higher Education

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
Full Members
National Commission for Academic Accreditation & Assessment

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Private Universities Council, Ministry of Higher Education

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Association of Universities and High Schools

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Quality Assurance Division for public universities in Malaysia,
Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education,

MALDIVES
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Maldives Accreditation Board

MAURITIUS
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Tertiary Education Commission

MEXICO
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Consejo para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior (COPAES)

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ITP Quality
New Zealand Qualifications Authority
New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit
New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee

Associate Members
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National Universities Commission

Associate Members
Quality Assurance and Research Development Agency Nigeria (QAARDAN),

NORWAY
Full Members
Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education

OMAN
Full Members
Accreditation Board of Oman

PAKISTAN
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Higher Education Commission

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National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

PALESTINE
Full Members
Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission

PERU
Associate Members
Consorcio de Universidades
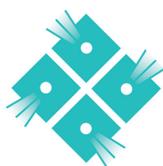
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Full Members
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Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU)
Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation

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The Polish State Presentation Committe (PKA) Panstwowa Komisja Akredytacyjna

PORTUGAL
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Fundação das Universidades Portuguesas, Conselho de Avaliação

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
Full Members
Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA)

Associate Members
Polytechnic of Namibia

ROMANIA
Full Members
Consiliul National de Evaluare Academica si Acreditare /National Council for Academic Assessment & Accreditation (NCAAA)
Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS)

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National Accreditation Agency (NAA)

Associate Members
Penza State Technological Academy
Research Centre for the Problems of Quality in Specialists' Training (RC)

SERBIA
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Komisija za akreditaciju i proveru kvaliteta,

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Temasek Polytechnic

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Accreditation Commission of the Slovak Republic

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Public Accounts' and Auditors Board

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SRI LANKA
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Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council

SWEDEN
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The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education

SWITZERLAND
Full Members
Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities (OAQ)

Associate Members
Haute Ecole Spécialisée de Suisse occidentale (HES-SO), University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland

THAILAND
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Ministry of University Affairs

THE NETHERLANDS
Full Members
European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA)
Inspectorate of Higher Education (Inspectie van het Onderwijs)
Netherlands Quality Agency (NQA)
NVAO (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie; Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders
QANU (Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities)

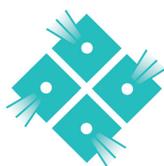**Associate Members**
Nuffic (Netherlands organization for international cooperation in higher education)

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Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago
Committee on the Recognition of Degrees (CORD)

INQAAHE Members – 2007

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Commission for Academic Accreditation

UNITED KINGDOM
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British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education
Open University
QAA - The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

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Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University
Centre for Policy and Change in Higher Education, Department of Educational Studies, University of Surrey
Council of Validating Universities
Institute of Education, University of London
University of Greenwich

USA
Full Members
Accrediting Commission for Community & Junior Colleges / WASC
Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE)
Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education / New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs
Distance Education and Training Council (DETC)

International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE)
Middle States Association of Colleges & Schools Commission on HE
National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)
National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education (NCOPE)
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
The Higher Learning Commission/North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS)
Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) - Senior College Accreditation Commission

Associate Members
Administrative and Policy Studies, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
Office of Planning and Institutional Improvement (PAII).Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
State University of New York
The Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA)
The Center for Quality Assurance in International Education

VIETNAM
Full Members
Centre for Education Quality Assurance and Research Development (Vietnam National University Hanoi)

Associate Members
Center for Educational Testing and Quality Assessment

In addition INQAAHE has Affiliate Members, individuals with a personal interest in Quality Assurance in Higher Education.
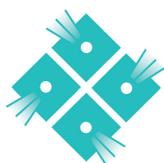
Quality in Higher Education

Report from the Editor

The journal is in its 13th year and we continue to attract good quality material. In the main we focus on issues relating explicitly to internal or external quality assurance processes but also address issues that impact on quality assurance, such as employability and learning. However, we are principally concerned with quality issues rather than, for example, innovation in learning and teaching per se.

The journal has a broad international readership and we make an effort to ensure that published contributions come from a wide range of countries the first two issues of volume 12, for example, had contributions from Australia, India, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, South Africa, UK, USA and the West Indies. This often means that contributors are writing in a second language and the editorial policy is to be accommodating and to suggest appropriate English phraseology.

Issue three of volume 12 was a special issue that contained papers and debate from the INQAAHE workshop in The Hague. This included some insightful views on guidelines and an account of participants' view of the impact of quality assurance, a rare document collating views of impact from the point of view of agencies. It is notable that the publisher has highlighted this issue with its report on the workshop in its recent marketing of the journal.

We expect the journal to retain its high quality content, which involves considerable work from the contributors and editors. I am delighted to report that Dr James Williams has now become Associate Editor, following years of hard work as the journal administrator. James' invaluable support enables us to maintain the high quality of the publication.
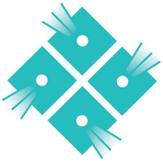
The INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice

Report

The Guidelines of Good Practice were approved by the INQAAHE membership at the biennial Conference in Wellington 2005 after endorsement at the conference in 2003. The overarching purpose of the Guidelines is to promote good practice in external quality assurance, ie promote professional development of external quality assurance agencies and their staff, be used as part of the criteria in the internal and external evaluation of external quality assurance agencies, be used as a framework to guide the construction of a new quality assurance agency and promote public accountability in external quality assurance agencies.

The guidelines cover:
1. The objectives of the agency
2. The relationship between the agency and institutions
3. The agency's decision-making
4. The external committees
5. The public face of the agency
6. The documentation used in the evaluation processes
7. The resources of the agency
8. The agency's system of appeal
9. The agency's internal quality assurance system
10. Collaboration with other agencies
11. Transnational Higher Education.

The 11th guideline was added to the Guidelines in 2006 when the guidelines were reprinted.

The INQAAHE Workshop in The Hague in 2006 included two workshops on the possible use of the guidelines by emerging agencies and longer established agencies. There was also an opportunity for the membership to discuss the value of the Guidelines more broadly in plenary. The discussions proved that the guidelines are used by the membership in a range of ways as intended. INQAAHE will continue to develop the guidelines as appropriate based on feedback from the members so they can become an even more useful tool.

Dorte Kristoffersen, March 2007

FOREWORD

The original Guidelines of Good Practice were published in 2003, this revised edition of the Guidelines of Good Practice is an important document. It is the result of discussions and consultation involving representatives of over 65 countries. It is the work of quality assurance agencies dedicated to ensuring that higher education students, throughout the world, have access to high quality education. The implementation of these guidelines has the potential to improve the life chances of people young and old in all continents and regions.

The INQAAHE board wishes to thank all those who have participated in the preparation of these Guidelines but would particularly like to thank Marie Jose LeMaitre, Dorte Kristoffersen and Prem Naidoo who acted as the conveners of the working group. Prem made a substantial contribution to the development of the Guidelines before his sad and untimely death in February 2006. These guidelines are published in his memory.

Richard Lewis
President, INQAAHE

October 2006

GUIDELINES OF GOOD PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

While it is believed that the Guidelines will be of interest to all those who are concerned with quality assurance in higher education, they are specifically addressed to quality and assurance agencies who will be referred to in this statement as External Quality Assurance Agencies (EQAAs).

The overarching purpose of the Guidelines is to promote good practice in external quality assurance and its aims can be expressed more specifically as follows:

• To promote professional development among EQAAs and their staff.
• To be used as part of the criteria in the self and external evaluation of EQAAs.
• To use as a framework to guide the construction of a new EQAA.
• To promote the public accountability of EQAAs.

THE BASIC CONDITIONS FOR THE GUIDELINES OF GOOD PRACTICE

When reading and working with the Guidelines of Good Practice the following should be taken into consideration:

- The Guidelines are intended to promote good practice and assist an Agency in improving its quality building on existing experiences.
- That each EQAA has evolved to serve a specific context and that this is influenced by its cultural and historical context.
- That there exist a diversity of approaches to, and purposes for, external quality evaluation (e.g. but not restricted to accreditation, assessment and audit), but that these approaches can be underpinned by some common agreed principles. (The words 'evaluation' or 'EQAA' will be used as generic terms to include all types of external quality checking.)
- The Guidelines should not lead to the dominance of one specific view or approach, but promote good practice, while helping to eradicate the bad.

THE GUIDELINES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The objectives of the agency

The EQAA has a written mission statement or set of objectives that takes into account the cultural and historical context of the agency. The statement makes clear that external quality assurance is a major activity of the agency, and that there exists a systematic approach to achieving the mission or
objectives. There is evidence that the statement of objectives is translated into a clear policy or management plan.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Written mission statement or set of objectives.
• Policy/strategy of the agency.
• Management plan.
• Legislation.

2. The relationship between the EQAA and the higher education institutions

The EQAA:
• Recognises that quality and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of the higher education institutions themselves.
• Respects the academic autonomy, identity and integrity of the institution.

- Applies standards, which have been subject to consultation with
  stakeholders.
- Aims to contribute to both quality improvement and accountability.

Examples of sources of evidence:

- Policies/manuals.
- Feedback from institutions and other stakeholders.
- Reports from external reviews of the EQAA.
- EQAA self reviews.

3. Decision-making

The EQAA carries out its evaluations in relation both to the higher
education institution's own self-assessment and to external reference points. An EQAA is
independent to the extent that it has autonomous responsibility for its operations and that the
judgements made in its reports cannot be influenced by third parties. The agency evinces
independent, impartial, rigorous, thorough, fair and consistent decision-making. The agency
makes consistent decisions, even if the judgements are formed by different groups, panels,
teams or committees.

Examples of sources of evidence:

- Manuals including instructions for experts.
- Criteria for the selection, appointment and training of experts.
- Legal frameworks, procedures, forms, documents, e.g. Codes of Ethics used to avoid conflicts of
  interest.
- Assessment frameworks and criteria.

4. The external committee

Where the EQAA uses external panels, teams or committees to carry out the evaluations, the
system clearly ensures that:

- The composition of the committee is in accordance with the guidelines applied by the EQAA and
  adequate to the tasks to be accomplished.
- There are no conflicts of interest.
- The committee is instructed clearly about the task.
- The committee acts independently when making its judgements,
  conclusions or recommendations.

Examples of sources of evidence:

- Procedures for nomination and appointment of experts, including the
  criteria applied.
- Methods of and material used for briefing and training of experts.
- Description of division of labour between the agency staff and the
  external panel/team/committee.

5. The public face

In its work, the EQAA informs and responds to the public in accordance with the legislation or
cultural context relating to the agency. This includes
making public and explicit its documentation e.g. policies, procedures and
criteria.

The agency also demonstrates public accountability by reporting openly on its review decisions
and making the outcomes of the evaluation public in a way appropriate to the relevant country
legislation and the type of review undertaken. The content of the public report may differ
depending on the cultural context and will also depend on the requirements set for account-
ability.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• URL address to EQAA website and short summary of the types of information provided here.
• List of publications.
• Press releases.
• Other ways and means of informing the public e.g. email service, Newsletter.

6. Documentation

The EQAA has clear documentation concerning the self-evaluation and the external evaluation and:
• The documentation concerning the self-evaluation indicates to the institutions of higher education the purposes, procedures and expectations of content in connection with the self-evaluation process. The
documentation should distinguish clearly between recommendations and requirements.
• The documentation for external evaluation sets out the matters
covered in these Guidelines of Good Practice, such as the standards used, the decision criteria, the assessment methods, the reporting
format etc. If the external evaluation leads to an accreditation, the accreditation framework and standards are public and the criteria for accreditation clearly formulated. The rules leading to an accreditation decision are transparent, public and guarantee equality of treatment.
• The documents indicate clearly what the EQAA expects from the institution. Those expectations are appropriate for an institution of HE or its core activities.
• The documents for EQAA present clearly that the framework will assure that each institution or part of it (e.g. subject area) will be
evaluated in an equivalent way, even if the external review panels are different.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Manuals or guidelines including instructions for experts and/or institutions.
• Protocols.
• Evaluation frameworks.
• Proof of adherence to internationally accepted guidelines and conventions.

7. Resources

The EQAA has adequate and accessible resources, both human and
financial, to be able to organise and run the process of external evaluation, in an effective and efficient manner in accordance with the mission
statement and the chosen methodological approach and with appropriate provision for development.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Budget.
• Accounts.
• Activities, tasks, workloads.
• Fee structure.
• Fees for experts.
• Average cost of external review.
• Human resources profile. (Board, or equivalent/external committee members/staff in terms of numbers and qualifications.)

8. System of appeal

The EQAA has appropriate methods and policies for appeals. While it is essential that appeals should be conducted by those who were not responsible for the original decision, appeals need not necessarily be conducted outside the agency.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Policy and procedures of appeal.
• Statistics over a five-year period, including e.g. the number of appeals, number of appeals granted and denied.

9. Quality assurance of the EQAA

The EQAA has a system of continuous quality assurance of its own activities, emphasising flexibility (in response to the changing nature of higher education), the effectiveness of its operations and its contribution towards quality improvement.

The agency carries out self-review of its activities, e.g. based on data collected and analysis, including consideration of its own effects and value. The agency is subject to external reviews at regular intervals, and there is evidence that the results are used.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Quality assurance policy/system/activities/plan.
• Former self-reviews.
• Reports from external reviews.
• Examples of follow-up activities to the continuous quality assurance activities.
• Internal feedback (Board or equivalent/external committee/staff).
• External feedback from institutions or other stakeholders.

10. Collaboration with other agencies

As far as possible, the EQAA collaborates with other such Agencies, e.g. about the exchange of good practice, review decisions, providers of transnational education, joint projects, staff exchanges.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Account of meetings and visits to and from other agencies.
• Record of participation in regional networks.
• Staff exchanges.
• Written contact between agencies on the solution of specific issues.
• Participation in projects, conferences and workshops.
• Membership of networks/organisations.

11. Transnational Higher Education

The agency should have policies relating to both imported and exported higher education, which may treat them in the same way as domestic providers and domestic provision. In formulating its policies and practices the agency should take cognisance of relevant guidelines issued by international agencies and other associations. All agencies should consult with their counterparts in the exporting or importing countries, although it is recognised that in the case of distance education this might not be possible or appropriate especially when only a small number of students are involved.

Examples of sources of evidence:

• Statements of policies and procedures.
• Documents relating to quality assurance review of, where relevant, exported and imported education.
• Account of meetings and visits to and from other agencies.
• Minutes of meetings of the relevant policy making bodies that indicate that attention has been paid to relevant guidelines such as the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines.
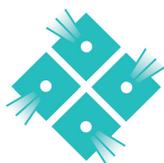
Recent Events
Biennial Conference 2005 Wellington, New Zealand

The Conference was held in Wellington 29 March – 1 April. The Conference themes were Effectiveness of Quality Assurance, Quality Assurance in Transnational Issues, Impacts on Diversity/Indigenous Education. There were 27 papers presented and three key note addresses by Professor Denise Bradley, Australia, Sir John Daniels, UK and Dr. Ranganui Walker, New Zealand.

The Conference attracted 256 registrations (98 from New Zealand and 158 international guests from 58 countries). The Local Organising Committee was very pleased with the attendance numbers which exceeded expectations. The Conference in Wellington was a considerable distance for many international travellers to attend.

The Conference was hosted by the three quality assurance agencies and local members of INQAAHE: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality, the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit and the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee.

The Conference was preceeded by four workshops which were well attended. The workshop themes were Fundamentals of Quality Assurance, Assuring Effective Site Visits, Self Evaluation, and Evaluating Quality Assurance Agencies.

The Conference was considered very successful by participants and the Conference dinner was well attended and enjoyed by all.
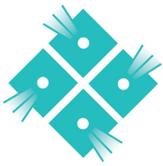
Workshop 2006 in The Hague

From 17th to 19th May 2006, NVAO organised the two-yearly INQAAHE Workshop in The Hague. The theme of the Workshop was: Transnational cooperation between agencies and institutions.

There were some 100 participants from more than 40 different countries. The Dutch State Secretary for Higher Education, Mark Rutte, gave the opening address. Before the start of the Workshop two training sessions on "The Guidelines of Good Practice" and "Internal quality assurance of agencies" were held.

On 17th May, the standards and procedures were discussed that are used to assess accreditation and quality assurance agencies and that were established by INQAAHE, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA). The differences in standards were being discussed in working groups, and some positive experiences from Germany and Chile were presented. In the evening participants were welcomed in the city hall of The Hague for a reception hosted by the Alderman for Education of The Hague.

On 18th May, the mutual recognition of accreditation decisions was on the agenda. ECA presented the progress that has already been made in this field. Participants from other regions expressed their interest in this topic. This was followed by a presentation on the international co-operation of accreditation organisations in the field of architecture. Another item on the agenda were the reports from the regions, followed by a plenary discussion. The last item that day was on quality assurance of Cross-Border Education, both from the point of view of the exporting country as from the importing country. Australia and Hong Kong/China were given as examples for exporting and importing countries, respectively. The UNESCO and OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Education are a good basis for accreditation and quality assurance organisations to establish quality assurance systems for this kind of transnational higher education. In the evening, a reception and dinner were held at Madurodam, where participants had the opportunity to see the Netherlands in miniature.

A last important issue that was discussed during the Workshop, was the impact of accreditation and quality assurance. This impact is mostly experienced positively, but cannot be easily expressed in figures. It was agreed that this should be an issue of concern for accreditation and quality assurance agencies. The self-evaluation is largely considered the major gain of accreditation and external quality assurance. At the same time, it was agreed that self-evaluation only makes sense if it is combined with a visit of an assessment panel. Input from students, graduates and employers are considered of major importance. As to return on investment, it was concluded that investment in accreditation and external quality assurance has an overall positive impact that largely outweighs the relatively small part that is used from the education budget.

The Workshop was concluded with an outlook on the future of INQAAHE and the INQAAHE Conference 2007 in Toronto. It was also concluded that, both in terms of content and organisation, the Workshop in The Hague was successful and much appreciated by participants.
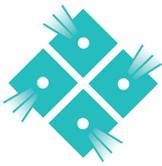
Conference, Toronto 2007

Dates:
- Monday, April 2, to Thursday, April 5.

Pre-conference Activity:
- Sunday, April 1: the INQAAHE Board held a full-day meeting. PEQAB was present for part of the meeting and gave an update on the state of QA activity in Canada.
- The World Bank held a meeting with the INQAAHE Board which was also attended by others who had received an invitation to discuss World Bank funding of regional groupings of QA agencies.
- Four official pre-conference workshops were held. There were 56 registrants in two workshops and 25 registrants in one workshop. The attendance was as follows:

Concurrent A.M. Workshops
   External Review of QA Agencies... 30
   Preparing Institutions for Self Assessment 42
Concurrent P.M. Workshops
   Transnational Quality Assessment 35
   Effective Site Visits 28

- Delegates had the option of being hosted by and meeting with one of four area institutions in the afternoon: Humber College, George Brown College, Seneca College and the RCC Institute of Technology. The average number of delegates who took advantage of this option was l0 per institution.

Conference Activity:
- The conference consisted of:
  - 4 keynote speakers
  - 55 paper presenters (3 of who did not show up)
  - 11 poster presentations:
  - 6 on the conference themes, and
  - 5 invited "show-and-tell" posters (COU, ACAATO, PEQAB, Alberta Quality Council, Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada)
  - four special workshops – one on each of the conference's major themes
  - a workshop for new agencies
  - a UNESCO/OECD workshop on the QA of cross-border provision of higher education
  - a final summation and panel session, and
  - the INQAAHE annual meeting.

Speaker/Presenter Information:
- Including keynotes, paper, poster and workshop presenters, 94 different delegates from 32 countries were actively involved.

Australia	5	Germany	3	Malaysia	2	Russia	2
Austria	2	Hong Kong	1	Netherlands	2	South Africa	6
Canada	15	India	2	New Zeeland	1	Sweden	1
Chile	1	Ireland	2	Nigeria	1	Switzerland	1
China	3	Jamaica	1	Norway	1	Thailand	3
Denmark	3	Japan	2	Oman	3	Trinidad and Tobago	`
Egypt	1	Jordan	3	Philippines	3	U.K.	8
France	3	Kuwait	2	Portugal	1	U.S.A.	9

- There were 260 paid and 5 complementary registrants to the conference representing 57 countries.

Argentina	2	Georgia	2	Lithuania	1	Slovakia	1
Australia	6	Germany	2	Malaysia	5	South Africa	6
Austria	1	Ghana	2	Mexico	1	Spain	2
Bahamas	2	Guyana	1	Namibia	2	Sri Lanka	1
Barbados	5	Hungary	1	New Zealand	4	St. Lucia	1
Canada	88	India	2	Nigeria	3	Sweden	3
Chile	4	Indonesia	3	Norway	1	Switzerland	1
China	8	Ireland	3	Oman	3	T&T	6
Costa Rica	1	Israel	3	P. R. China	1	Thailand	3
Croatia	2	Jamaica	9	Panama	1	The Netherlands	3
Denmark	3	Japan	6	Philippines	4	Tunisia	2
Egypt	2	Kazakhstan	1	Russia	2	UAE	5
Estonia	2	Kuwait	3	Saudi Arabia	1	UK	10
Finland	2	Latvia	1	Scotland	1	USA	20
France	4						

Post-conference Activity:
- Delegates had the option of being hosted by and meeting with one of three area institutions in the afternoon on Thursday: Ryerson University, University of Toronto and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. Approximately 20 went to Ryerson and UOIT, while more than 60 went to the University of Toronto.
- We have posted on the conference website an e-book containing 49 presentations and a second e-book with 51 slide decks. (Note: Some of the speakers did not use slides or have written presentations, while some that did choose not to submit these for publication.)

Finances:
- The agreement between INQAAHE and the conference host calls for the surplus of these workshops to be turned over to INQAAHE. On April 24, PEQAB sent

INQAAHE a report on the workshops listing all registrants in each workshop, the payment made by each registrant, total revenue ($17,500), and expense receipts. A cheque was issued to INQAAHE in the amount of $9.857.69.

- Conference revenues were approximately $245,000, which includes two contributing sponsorships of $2500 each from the QA agencies of Alberta and British Columbia.
- Although there are still some conference-related expenses that have yet to be received and paid, PEQAB feels that is isafe to say that the goal of breaking even on the conference will be reached. If there is a shortfall it will be minimal and quite manageable. If there is a surplus, PEQAB's intention is to forward it to INQAAHE

Post-Conference Follow-up:
- An INQAAHE- prepared delegate survey was included in the delegate package. These were collected by INQAAHE at the end of the conference, but we have not yet received a report on the results. (Note: The response was low – approximately 30 – probably due to the fact that most of the delegates did not have the survey with them at the end of the conference, so there might not be a formal collation and report.)
- Approximately 10% of the delegates at the conference have made unsolicited contact with PEQAB to comment on how much they enjoyed and learned from the conference.

Forthcoming Events

The 2008 Members' Forum

Buenos Aires, Argentina,14 May, 2008 - 16 May, 2008

The 2008 Members Forum will be hosted by CONEAU and held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from Wednesday 14 to Friday 16 May, 2008.

Host
CONEAU, the Argentinean National Commission for University Evaluation and Accreditation, is co-founder of the Iberoamerican Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (RIACES) and is engaged in the Experimental Mechanism of Undergraduate Program Accreditation (MEXA) whereby MERCOSUR and Associates countries have developed common standards and procedures to accredit undergraduate programs. www.coneau.gov.ar

Venue
The venue for the Forum will be the Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina (UCA). UCA is one of the finest and largest private universities in Argentina. It has an urban campus made of 4 impressive buildings connected by an underground tunnel. www.uca.edu.ar

Travelling to Buenos Aires
"Ministro Pistarini" international airport, located at Ezeiza, is 40 km from downtown Buenos Aires. This airport is the main gate to Argentina, where all international flights arrive. To get downtown you can book an airport transfer, take a bus or a taxi.

There is a large range of hotels, from three to five star, within a close range to the conference venue.

Organisation
Dr Lis Lange, Executive Director of the South African HEQC and an INQAAHE Board member is Chair of the Program Committee, and Dr Leandro Haberfeld of CONEAU is Chair of the Local Organising Committee.

Theme
The Theme for the Forum will be decided by the INQAAHE Board within the next few months. Whatever the theme, the emphasis will be, as with all INQAAHE's fora, on practical work of direct interest and use to the agencies that are INQAAHE's Members.

Further details of the Forum will be posted on the INQAAHE website at www.inqaahe.org

2009 Biennial Conference

The 2009 INQAAHE Conference will be held in the UAE and hosted by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research will host the 2009 INQAAHE Conference in the city of Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The CAA has been a member of INQAAHE since 2003.

The Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan, has given his full support for the CAA to host the INQAAHE 2009 Bi-annual Conference. The CAA works directly under the Minister. In his other capacity as the Supreme Chancellor of the three Federal Higher Education Institutions in the UAE (UAE University, Zayed University and the Higher Colleges of Technology), he expressed his willingness to help the CAA in hosting this conference through logistic and organizational support provided by all three federal institutions.

Venue

As the vibrant capital city of the United Arab Emirates and base for the Ministry of Higher Education and the CAA, it is appropriate for Abu Dhabi to host the first Biennial INQAAHE Conference in the Middle East. The UAE is considered to be a readily accessible venue for participants from both northern and southern hemispheres, and with its reputation as a tourist destination and business hub, the location will no doubt be a popular choice with delegates for the 2009 Conference, and an appropriate geographic variation from this year's event in Toronto.

Both Abu Dhabi and Dubai Airports are considered as a hub for international travelers and international airlines.

Further details will be advised to the members of the network as they become available.

Regional Reports

Introduction

"The creation of a Regional Network is a welcome development. The question of how INQAAHE and the Regions should work together has been high on the agenda of INQAAHE for a long while. In 2003, there was a discussion which culminated in an agreement amongst all concerned, supporting closer cooperation and an evolving relationship. An INQAAHE workshop in 2004 at Oman recognized the need for information sharing and liaison mechanisms. Since then, slots for 'regional meetings' have been created alongside INQAAHE conferences. In April this year (2007), at the Toronto meeting, we saw the start of 'regional meetings', which will become a regular forum for INQAAHE and the Regions to discuss issues of mutual concern.

The rapid growth of regional networks and the possibility of a global grant from the World Bank in support of Quality Assurance have brought additional urgency to the topic. The President of INQAAHE has recently written to the Regions asking for views and suggestions. Two Board Members have been given special responsibility for liaison with the Regions. Together the QA community must build a consensus on the way forward and identify the means to achieve our common purposes of professional development, capacity building and strong advocacy".
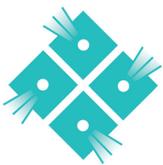
Association of African Universities (AAU)

The following are the major activities in the African Region during the period under consideration:

(1) The Association of African Universities launched its World-Bank supported project on Quality Assurance programme for African higher education. January 01, 2007. Details of the activities in this programme can be found at www.aau.org/qa

(2) The Association of African Universities is hosting the African Quality Assurance Network and a database of African Quality Assurance practitioners has been opened at www.qqu.org/qa

(3) The African Union Commission hosted an expert meeting on the Harmonization of higher education programmes in Africa, from 5 - 6 March, 2006 at Addis Ababa , Ethiopia. A follow-up expert meeting on Higher Education ratings in Africa is being planned to be hosted by the Association of African Universities, Accra, Ghana.

(4) The Economic Commission of West African States(ECOWAS) hosted an ad-hoc Committee meeting on Equivalence of certificates, diplomas and degrees in the Region at Abuja, Nigeria . 3 - 5 October, 2007.

(5) QAARDAN organized the 2nd Annual Quality Assurance Conference in Nigeria: 7 Nov, 2006.

(6) Announcements of the following forth-coming activities :

(a) The UNESCO Harare Cluster Office, in collaboration with GUNI Africa, the Open University of Tanzania, the Tanzanian National Commission for UNESCO and other partners within and outside Africa, organize the Second International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (ICQAHEA), in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on September 17 - 19, 2007.

(b) 3rd Global Forum in international quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications. Dar-es.salaam, Tanzania, 13 - 14, Sept, 2007.

(c) training workshop on national qualifications, quality assurance: Anzibar, Tanzania. 21 - 22, September, 2007. Framework for SADR counties,

(d) 4th International Congress of Quality Management in systems of education and training. Morocco. April 17, 2007

1. Introduction

Until recently, the quality assurance activities in African higher education were uncoordinated. However, the Association of African Universities has taken up the initiative to coordinate quality assurance activities in the African Higher Education system. This is being done through the Quality Assurance support programme for African Higher Education. The objective of the World Bank supported programme is to lay a foundation for institutionalized quality assurance mechanisms within tertiary institutions, national quality assurance and accreditation agencies, and an eventual regional network for coordination of cross-border protocols and specialized capacity building in quality assurance. The Association of African Universities through this programme is coordinating the quality assurance efforts and practioners in the African continent to forming the (a) African Quality Assurance Networks (AfriQan) and (b) the African Quality Assurance Agencies Network.

This report is therefore a briefing on the Quality Assurance activities in Africa within the past six months.

2. Activities

2.1 The Association of African Universities launched its Quality Assurance programme for African Higher Education, effective January 01, 2007

As part of efforts at the revitalization of African Higher Education in order to optimize its contribution to social and economic development on the African continent, the World Bank has just made available a special support programme to African countries through the Association of African Universities.

The purpose of the programme is to support the strengthening of quality of Higher Education in Africa in order to optimize its contribution to economic growth and social development in the continent as part of the programme.

The expected overall outcome of the GPP with the Association of African Universities is the establishment of a regional framework for quality assurance (QA), accreditation and the recognition of study programs and awards. The partnership will also prepare tertiary institutions and national QA agencies to increase their capacity to respond to external pressures from commercial providers of higher education, particularly as relates to the World Trade Organization's (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) under which higher education is increasingly becoming a tradable commodity.

The AAU- World Bank Quality Assurance programme has the following three major components
- Component 1: Strengthening member institutions' internal Quality Assurance Systems
- Component 2: Support for existing and emerging quality assurance/accreditation agencies in developing strong external evaluation and monitoring systems within national higher education systems in Africa.
- Component 3: Development and implementation of a Regional Framework on Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in Africa, based on the Arusha Convention - the first attempt by African countries to harmonize recognition of higher education study programmes and awards within the continent.

2.2 The Association of African Universities is hosting the African Quality Assurance Network and a database of African Quality Assurance practitioners opened

The need to involve all Quality Assurance practitioners in Africa in this World Bank sponsored project on "Quality Assurance Support programme for African Higher Education" has been identified. Towards this, we are compiling a database of quality assurance practitioners in Africa and all those who are interested in quality assurance in higher education. One of the goals of this database, is to organize a formal African Quality Assurance Network. The database will also help us to involve you in this project.

For registration process, kindly check on the network web sites at :

www.aau.org/qa; www.afriqan.net; or contact Prof. Olusola Oyewole at Oyewole@aau.org

2.3 The Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) hosted an ad-hoc Committee meeting on Equivalence of Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees in the Region at Abuja, Nigeria, 3 - 5 October, 2007

The Economic Commission of West African States constituted an expert meeting on the recognition and harmonization of degrees, certificates and diplomas in its member states. As of now, a Consultant has been employed to work out the modalities of effecting action in this regard.

2.4 The African Union Commission hosted an expert meeting on the harmonization of Higher Education programmes in Africa, from 5 - 6 March, 2006 at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The African Union Commission hosted an expert meeting on the harmonization of higher education programmes in Africa, from 5 - 6 March, 2006 at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The African Union (AU), which has a vision of integration, peace, prosperity and peerage in the global community, regards education as a key instrument in achieving its vision of developing quality human resources and contributing towards increased mobility of Africans around the continent. However, within Africa, there are many different systems of education which are based on different national or colonial and other legacies across Africa. One of the results of this is the lack of recognition of different forms of certification, and this limits African integration and the mobility of students across Africa.

The AU Commission has therefore embarked on a process of developing a framework for harmonization of Higher Education Programmes in Africa. The rationale for this is based on the belief that such an initiative will help to foster cooperation in information exchange, harmonization of procedures and policies, attainment of comparability among qualifications, and possibly the standardization of curricula, so as to facilitate professional mobility for both employment and further study.

There is increasing realization globally of the importance of close cooperation between countries through sharing of resources and technologies, addressing common problems, and facilitating the free movement of people. Increased cooperation through trade and services has resulted in a corresponding need for education systems to be adapted to respond to the demands for trained people with recognized qualifications who are able and ready to move and serve in any part of the world. In Europe, the responses have been in the form of strengthening and expanding the European Union and, in the education sector,

in the launch of the Bologna Process towards the European Higher Education Area.

2.5 Expert meeting on the development of institutionalized rating system for African Higher Education – May 07- 08, 2007, African Union and the Association of African Universities, Accra
The African Union Commission is embarking on a project to establish quality criteria and develop an institutional rating system for African Higher Education institutions. These criteria will be used as a transparent and open mechanism to judge which institutions should be eligible to participate in the Scholarship Scheme, and form a standard against which institutions can measure their capacity and quality. In addition, this will feed into the Commission's unfolding strategies to enhance harmonization Higher Education programmes in Africa, and for the establishment of AU Centres of Excellence.
The AU Commission has appointed Neil Butcher as a consultant to develop the African Quality rating mechanism for higher education institutions. An expert meeting to be hosted by the Association of African University has been convened for May 7 -8, 2007.

2.6 QAARDAN organized the 2nd Annual Quality Assurance Conference in Nigeria, 7 – 9, November, 2006
A National Quality Assurance Meeting was organized at Abuja, Nigeria. The President of INQAAHE was present at the meeting, which had about 50 participants in attendance.

3. Announcements of the following forthcoming activities:

The following dates and venues were suggested:

	Proposed Dates & Venue	Conference Event
1	13-14 September: Dar es Salaam	3rd Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications
2	17-19 September: Dar es Salaam	2nd International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa
3	21-22 September: Zanzibar:	Training Workshop on development of National Qualifications/Quality Assurance Frameworks for SADC Countries

Report by:
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Quality Assurance Programme support for African Higher Education, Association of African Universities, Accra, Ghana.
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APQN Report
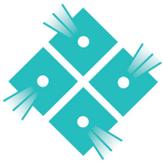
Major Developments 2006-2007

The second formal Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) was held in Kuala Lumpur on 4-7 February 2007. Since its creation in 2005, APQN has struggled to formulate a useful and appropriate definition of the region that does not overlap or interfere with other networks. The definition presented to the membership in KL which received broad support is:

All Pacific island nations and territories, New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea, all island and mainland nations and territories in Asia, including Russia, Afghanistan and Iran, but excluding the other central 'stans (which are covered by another network), and excluding the Gulf states (which are covered by another network).

At present, APQN has 34 members classified into three categories, namely, 17 full members, 7 intermediate members, and 10 associate members. In addition to these categories, APQN accepts observers from outside the Asia-Pacific region. APQN also receives an increasing number of inquiries from higher education institutions that are interested in becoming members of the network.

In keeping with APQN's mission to serve as a network for quality assurance agencies, it further acknowledges the interrelationship between the work of the quality assurance bodies and higher education institutions. Towards this end, therefore, the General Council at the AGM approved an amendment to the Constitution adding an 'Institutional Membership' category to the network. .

APQN seeks to enhance the quality of higher education in Asia and the Pacific region through strengthening the work of quality assurance agencies and extending the cooperation between them. The members pay annual fees and contribute to the network through participation in annual conferences and project groups. Since its establishment in 2005, APQN has been fortunate to be the recipient of a three-year Development Grant Fund from the World Bank. The DGF has enabled APQN to pursue a high level of activity and conduct conferences and workshops that respond to the needs of its members.

During the period under review, five conferences were held in places such as Malaysia, Pakistan, India, Shanghai and Hong Kong. Six workshops were conducted in Vietnam, Cambodia (2), Australia, Mongolia and the Philippines (see appendix for summary of activities: APQN Annual Report 2005-06).

APQN relies on its members to seek support for capacity building activities, especially for countries with emerging quality assurance systems. It is expected that these countries contribute to the event financially and in kind and that the event is open to other APQN members. Participation of members from DGF eligible countries is supported by the DGF. So far, most events have focused on training experts in external quality assurance for higher education institutions and in self evaluation. Some events have launched the debate on the benefits of external quality assurance. The APQN Board hopes that applications for support in the coming year will focus on building alliances between members and widen the participation of colleagues identified in the Reviewers and Consultants Database.

The number of secondments of staff to sister organisations in the region has taken off over the past year. A total of seven staff movements among member agencies have been recorded.

In 2006, APQN worked in collaboration with UNESCO towards the development of the APQN-UNESCO Toolkit based on the OECD-UNESCO Guidelines for Cross-border Education. The final version which is available for download on the APQN website was presented to the membership in KL. A second phase of the cooperation has already been launched.

An important initiative taken this year is the launching of a Distance Education course on 'External Quality Assurance: Options for Higher Education Managers', jointly organised with the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) and the UNESCO Bangkok office. The course is scheduled to be held from 2 April to 29 June 2007 and is open to APQN members. APQN hopes that the course can serve as the platform for similar courses on other topics in the future.

Late last year, APQN was approached by the Australian government which is currently chairing a Senior Officials Working Group (SOWG) established after the meeting of ministers in the Asia-Pacific in Brisbane in 2006. The ministers signed a joint declaration (the Brisbane Communique) presenting joint objectives for education in the region, including quality assurance. The SOWG has expressed an interest in discussing how APQN can contribute to the achievement of the objectives in the Brisbane Communique.

APQN is entering an interesting period where it has to continue to support its members, strengthen cooperation with its current partners and develop new partnerships to ensure a sustainable future even as the regional DGF expires at the end of 2007. This is the challenge to APQN as it strives to respond to the needs of a region that contains over half of the world's population. The APQN Board looks forward to the discussions with INQAAHE about a future global grant.

Concepcion V. Pijano
Vice-President, APQN
March 3, 2007

Appendix
APQN Report
INQAAHE Meeting with the Regional Networks
2 April 2007
Toronto, Canada

Based on the APQN 2005/06 Annual Report and the updated information on the APQN website, the following important features have been identified:

1. Board Members for 2005/07
(i) Peter Cheung, HKCAA, Hong Kong (President)
(ii) VS Prasad, NAAC, India (Vice-President)
(iii) David Woodhouse, AQUA, Australia (Secretary/Treasurer)
(iv) Takahiro Saito, NIAD-UE, Japan (Member)
(v) Antony Stella, AUQA (Member)
(vi) Concepcion Pijano, PAASCU, Philippines (Member)
(vii) Manuel Corpus, AACCUP, Philippines (Member)
(viii) Dorte Kristoffersen, AUQA (Member)
(ix) Jagannath Patil, NAAC (Member)
(x) Varaporn Seehanath, Commission on Higher Education, Thailand (Member)

2. Board Members for 2007/09
(i) Peter Cheung, HKCAA, Hong Kong (President)
(ii) Concepcion Pijano, PAASCU, Philippines (Vice-President)
(iii) Dorte Kristoffersen, AUQA, Australia (Secretary/Treasurer)
(iv) Jiang Yanqiao, SEEI, China (Member)
(v) Akihiko Kawaguchi, NIAD-UE, Japan (Member)
(vi) Zita Mohd Fahmi, LAN, Malaysia (Member)
(vii) Nuanthip Kamolvarin, ONESQA, Thailand (Member)
(viii) Colin Peiris, QAAC, Sri Lanka (Member)
(ix) Antony Stella, AUQA (Member)
(x) Jagannath Patil, NAAC, India (Member)

3. Membership Update
(i) 17 Full members; 7 Intermediate, & 10 Associate Members = 34 Members
(ii) plus 2 observers
(iii) Prospective members --- 29 agencies from 21 countries/places
(iv) Country/place of origin--- 34 members from 24 countries/places
(v) Number of existing members who are also members of INQAAHE --- 24

4.   Project Groups (PGs)
(i) Completed PGs
- Identify Constituency
- Workshops, Seminars and Training) (reallocated)
- Staff Secondments and Exchanges (reallocated)
- Survey: Monitoring of Transnational Activities

(ii) Current PGs
- Qualifications Frameworks

- QA of DE/e-learning
- Indicators of Quality
- Mutual Recognition of QA Agencies
- Student Participation in Quality Assurance

5. Highlights of Activities for 2005/06 (1 Oct 05 to 30 Sept 06)
(i) Conferences
- APQN Conference & AGM in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia "Emerging Challenges, Emerging Practices: Sharing a Global Vision of Quality Assurance in Higher Education" (Feb 07)
- First International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education (ICAQHE): "Prosperity Through Quality Education" in Pakistan (Dec 06)
- "Student Participation in Quality Enhancement" in India (Sept 06)
- APQN Conference & AGM in Shanghai, China
  "Regional Mobility: Cooperation in Quality Assurance" (March 06)
- "The WTO and International Trade in Education Services: The Opportunities and Challenges of Transnational Higher Education" in Hong Kong (Dec 05)

(ii) Workshops
- External Review for Higher Education in Vietnam (Jan 06)
- Training of External Reviewers in Cambodia (Dec 05)
- AUQA Auditor Training in Australia (Nov 05)
- Training of External Reviewers in Cambodia (Sept 05)
- Quality Management of Quality Assurance Agencies in Mongolia (Aug 05)
- "How to Conduct Institutional Accreditation" in the Philippines (July 05)

(iii) Seven staff movements amongst member agencies
(iv) One consultancy between the Philippines and Cambodia
(v) Signing of 2 Memoranda of Cooperation --- AUQA & NAAC; HKCAA & SEEI

6. Finance
(i) Total expense (2005/06): USD308,960
- Administration --- USD46,000
- Consultancy --- USD139,623
- Goods (bank fees, equipment, postage, etc) --- USD4,568
- Training --- USD118,769

(ii) Income (2005/06)
- Total: USD363,911 [USD362,200 (grant) & USD1,711 (interest)]
[Note: Membership fees –-- Estimate income in 2007 is USD15,000 (initial joining + membership fee) + USD2,000 (interest)]

7. Reviewers and Consultants
(i) No. of reviewers ---- 32
(ii) No. of consultants --- 24

8. Co-operation with other Agencies: UNESCO-APQN Toolkit.

Arab and MENA Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Background

Tertiary education enrollment is growing rapidly in the MENA Region. The average enrollment in MENA countries is above 30% of the population aged 18-24, which is high compared to other regions. Many countries have experienced rapid enrollment increases in the past five years,

In addition to this rapid expansion, tertiary education systems are seeking to diversify the type of tertiary education available, ranging from University graduate and undergraduate programs, to technical and professional degrees granted by polytechnic institutes, Community Colleges, as well as Open University programs. With this variety of programs and institutions available, and the increasing levels of population migration, it is important to provide quality assurance of the educational inputs and outputs and the academic and professional programs offered by the variety of tertiary education institutions.

Five main initiatives to leverage regional efforts in QA are ongoing in the MENA region:

1 The Network for Arab Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE)

Nine Arab countries had decided to collaborate together and establish an Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher education in 2005 (ANQAHE). They had a consensus on a constitution and bylaws. . It includes 9 Arab countries as founders which are Egypt, UAE, Palestine Saudi, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar. This network is not yet activated

2 The British Council regional initiative to support Quality Assurance in the NENA region (Near East and North Africa).
The objective of the British Council initiative is Capacity building and establishment of core for academic standards for certain programs. The Five countries involved until now are Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Tunisia and Morocco in this initiatives. The initiative is active and we had meeting in Syria and Cairo in 2006 to set up the objectives and the activities. Another meeting was held in Tunisia and Morocco in February 2007 to begin the activities.

3 The Association of Arab Universities, and its proposal for Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education

4 The results of the consultation held by **UNESCO** on developing a Comprehensive Framework for Cooperation in Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Arab Region.

5 The UNDP initiative is to train competent peer reviewers to perform external evaluation for programs. UNDP performed three programs in two Universities in each Arab Countries

Consultation meeting was held in Paris in the context of the Conference on Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education, on June 18-20, 2006, with representatives from Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Djibouti, Algeria, Tunisia, Association of Arab Universities, ANQAHE, RIACES (Latin America Regional Network), APQN (Asia-Pacific Network), UNESCO, CIEP, L'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie and the World Bank.

During this meeting, a consensus was reached regarding the need to consolidate the regional experience on QA, and to ensure that the proposed regional network be inclusive, both in terms of expansion of membership to countries in the region, and regarding flexibility on the type of organizations, both public and private that can be part of the network.

Accordingly, the leaders of the MENA Network submitted a proposal for the World Bank to receive a grant to establish the network in December 2006

The objective of the Middle East and North Africa Quality Assurance Network (MENAQAHE) is to build the capacity of management and provision of Quality Assurance in Higher Education at the national and regional level.
To pursue these objectives the MENA Quality Assurance Network will promote the following:

1 To consolidate the existing regional initiatives into a Network of organizations dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of National Quality Assurance Systems in the MENA region.

2 To develop a comprehensive scheme for QA that will enable countries in the region to develop National Quality Assurance systems, relevant for their tertiary Education Systems

3 To build Capacity at national and regional level to help participating countries to establish, consolidate, expand or improve their higher education quality assurance systems

4 To promote and disseminate the exchange of knowledge and expertise in the practice of institutions and programs self-assessment, in setting up peer reviewing systems, external evaluations, and development of improvement plans for institutions and programs.

The Grant of the World Bank will be used to support the following activities
(1) Development of a Comprehensive Framework for QA relevant for the Tertiary Education Systems in the MENA region.
(2) Capacity Building of national accreditation and quality assurance bodies
(3) Knowledge sharing and Dissemination.
(4) Capacity Building at the Regional level.

Structure
The partners of Mena network will be the Association of Arab universities (AARU), the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), QA bodies in Mena countries or any HE institutions in the Arab world wether public, private or non profit.
The Network is still inactivated

Canada

In Canada, postsecondary education is a provincial/territorial responsibility. Therefore, the direct funding of postsecondary education institutions and the accompanying quality assurance mechanisms are provincial/territorial responsibilities.

Each province and territory has its own system of postsecondary education institutions, and there are no common or national quality assurance policies and programs. However, it has become apparent to jurisdictions over the last few years that it is important to have a set of consistent and coherent standards at a pan-Canadian level to facilitate mobility and transferability domestically and to increase understanding of Canada's postsecondary education institutions internationally.

At the initiative of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board of Ontario, the quality assessment agencies of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia scheduled a workshop in 2004 to discuss matters of mutual interest with regard to the issues, standards and technical procedures of their respective quality assurance agencies, with the intention of harmonizing these wherever possible in order to promote the maximum level of mutual recognition.

Invitations to this workshop were also sent to agencies in the other provinces that might also have an interest in QA issues in higher education. The interest was significant, and it included senior government officials from higher education ministries from a number of provinces.

Before the conference was completed, these officials commenced an initiative that quickly resulted in the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) establishing a committee to draft standards and procedures to assist provincial and territorial governments in assessing the acceptability of new degree programs and new degree-granting institutions. This committee was comprised primarily of the individuals and organizations present at this workshop. The Pan-Canadian Committee on Quality Assurance of Degree Programming produced its report, which contained three major sections: Degree Level Qualifications Framework, Procedures and standards for degree program quality assessment, and Procedures and standards for institutional assessment   In February 2007, it was announced that the report was endorsed by all provincial ministers.
(http://www.cmec.ca/releases/press.en.stm?id=51)

It is to be noted that the recommendations of the report are guidelines to be used by each provincial jurisdiction and do not constitute mandatory national standards. Given the local responsibility for education, the regional update from Canada must necessarily consist of a series of provincial/territorial reports.

Alberta: The Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC), the arms-length body that provides a recommendation to the Minister with respect to the quality of all new degree programs and the viability of institutions to implement and sustain them, has adopted and will adapt the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework (CDQF) to reflect more fully degrees offered in Alberta. The CDQF has been used in a number of CAQC's reviews and institutions are finding it helpful as they develop new degree programs. The CAQC and BC's Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) are exploring the possibility of mutual recognition. The first step being taken by the two agencies is to harmonize our standards.

British Columbia: The Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) provides assessments and recommendations to the Minister of Advanced Education of new degree programs at both public and private institutions as well as assessment of applications for institutions to use the word "university" under the Degree Authorization Act. The DQAB recently conducted a review of British Columbia's criteria and guidelines for the assessment of degree-granting institutions in part, to ensure that the revised criteria were consistent with the Canadian Degree Qualifications framework. BC's revised criteria came into effect in December 2006. With a view to possible mutual recognition of degree programs DQAB is also working with the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) on harmonizing its standards while ensuring they are closely aligned to those in the Ministerial Statement.

Manitoba: The Council on Post Secondary Education Secretariat has adopted the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework (CDQF). This information is now available to the three public universities and the two university colleges in Manitoba. Manitoba's newest post-secondary institution, The University College of the North, has utilized the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework in developing its new university degrees and will continue to do so as further new programs are developed. The institutions have been encouraged to utilize the CDQF to facilitate credit transfer and articulation. Manitoba is committed to continue to work on quality assurance issues in the province.

Maritime Provinces: The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) is the organization charged by the three Maritime provinces with quality assurance of university education. The Commission, in consultation with its stakeholders, has devised a Maritime Degree Qualifications Framework (MDQF), which is an adaptation of the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework. While not a prescriptive document, the Maritime Degree Qualifications Framework will be used as a reference tool for understanding degree structure/expectations within the region, and to encourage universities to consider these expectations when developing new or modified academic programs, and when hiring external reviewers in their assessment of proposed programs, as it provides a description of the region's current degree structures, some of which may not be familiar to academics working outside the Maritime provinces. The Commission had determined early on that the Standards for Programme Assessment were already in place within its Policy on Quality Assurance. They are also addressed within the process managed by the Commission to review programmes under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act, process which is currently under review and for the reviews it conducts under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act. The Standards for Institutional Assessment constitute the basis for consideration of a process to assess organizational appropriateness under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act.

Newfoundland and Labrador: Newfoundland and Labrador has endorsed the Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada and has shared the same with Memorial University, the only degree granting institution in the province.

Nunavut: Nunavut is now developing its own approach to quality assurance. As part of this process the Government of Nunavut, in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (the Inuit Land Claims implementation body), has completed the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy, a 20-year strategy for improving post secondary and adult education in Nunavut. The Strategy contains 23 objectives, including a major component on quality assurance

which is based on the work of the CMEC Working Group. The Department of Education is now moving into implementation of the Adult Learning Strategy, and will be forming an Implementation Panel which will report to the Legislative Assembly. This panel will be addressing the issue of the development of key performance indicators, and other quality assurance issues, and will form a de facto Quality Assurance Board for the new territory, until appropriate structures are defined.

Ontario: The Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) is responsible for the assessment of applications for the Minister's consent to offer degree programs. Quality assurance of degree programs at publicly assisted universities is in accord with policies and procedures established by the Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee (UPRAC) and the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS). PEQAB, UPRAC, and OCGS use the standards and principles contained in the Ministerial Statement, and a variation of the degree qualifications framework tailored for Ontario's circumstances. Ontario is currently consulting on a provincial qualifications framework which will describe the skills and knowledge expected of holders of all postsecondary education qualifications (degree, diplomas, and certificates) offered in Ontario.

A recent development in Ontario is that in late December 2006, the Minister of Training, College and Universities denied consent to four private applicants to offer the degree following programs - Master of Arts in Leadership & Ministry, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Buddhadharma Studies, Bachelor of Education (Childhood Education), and Honours Bachelor of Liberal Arts – and one proposal from a non-Canadian public institution to award an honorary degree. In each case, the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board had assessed the application and unconditionally recommended that consent be granted. The Minister's reason communicated to the applicants was the same in each case: "I have received the Board's recommendation. After considering that recommendation as well as relevant issues and public policy matters, I have decided to reject this application and not grant consent to the application … (application specified) … In accord with section 5(4) of the Act, this decision is final." On the same day, the Minister also announced that the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellent Act, 2000, would be subject to a review for the primary purpose of ensuring that the "public's investment in its public institutions" is being protected

Quebec: Quebec universities have independent mechanisms to verify the quality of new degree programs.

Saskatchewan: The province is not conducting any degree program reviews.
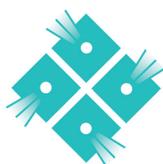
U.S. Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions ("C-RAC")

AN EXPLANATION OF U.S. ACCREDITATION

Direct quality assurance of U.S. colleges and universities is conducted primarily by a public/private partnership:

• The 50 state governments license colleges in their states to grant degrees. The extent of their requirements varies greatly among states. Colleges can operate without accreditation (except in states that require accreditation as a pre-condition for licensing), but their students will not qualify for federal loans and grants.
• U.S. accreditors are non-governmental, peer-reviewed based, private, non-profit organizations. Most accredit both private and public institutions/programs. Accreditation has served since early in the 20th century to assure the public of the quality of an institution.
• In addition, if an accreditor is approved by the U.S. federal government, then the students who attend the accredited college are eligible to receive federal grants and loans. Therefore, the U.S. federal government indirectly affects quality assurance through the requirements that it imposes on accreditors who serve as "gatekeepers" for such federal funding.
• All accreditors review areas required by the federal government: student achievement, curricula, faculty, facilities and equipment, fiscal and administrative capacity, student support services, recruiting and admissions practices, measures of program length and degree objectives, student complaints, and compliance with certain federal regulations. Federal law and regulations also require self-study reports, site visits, certain procedural protections for institutions, ongoing monitoring, approval of new sites and other substantive changes, regular review of accreditation standards.

There are 3 types of accreditation agencies:
• Regional accreditors: C-RAC is composed of the seven "regional" accreditors that accredit over 3,000 colleges and universities throughout the U.S. Each regional accreditor operates within a specified geographic region and accredits entire institutions.
• National accreditors also accredit entire institutions, but they are more likely to review particular types of institutions, such as distance learning providers.
• Specialized accreditors review individual programs such as law or medicine. A single institution may be accredited by one institutional accreditor and one or more specialized accreditors.

CHEA, the Council of Higher Education Associations, is a membership organization composed of presidents of accredited institutions. Accrediting agencies may seek review and recognition by CHEA on a voluntary basis.

C-RAC, the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, is composed of the seven regional accreditors that accredit over 3,000 colleges and universities in the U.S. Each operates within a specified region of the U.S. and conducts activities abroad.

ASPA, the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors, represents specialized accreditors.

CRNAA, the Council of Recognized National Accrediting Agencies represents national accreditors.

SUMMARY OF C-RAC ACTIVITIES

Under its new Chair, Barbara Beno, C-RAC's primary recent activities have included:

1. Working with the U.S. Congress and Department of Education on new legislation and regulations that would affect the operations of accreditors. Working with higher education organizations, institutions, and others in these areas.
2. Strengthening C-RAC's organizational structure by adopting new by-laws and authorizing employment of new staff.
3. Cooperating on matters of mutual concern, such as treatment of institutions that operate in more than one region.
4. Working towards adoption of joint policies, such as mutual recognition of "sister" regional accreditors and treatment of accredited institutions that are subject to outside control.
5. Promoting interregional cooperation among the professional staffs of all of the regional accreditors.

In addition, the seven regional accrediting agencies each have conducted extensive accreditation activities such as:
• Training chairs and evaluators
• Training institutions conducting self-study
• Workshops in important areas such as student learning outcomes assessment
• Creation of new standards and policies
• Annual meetings for all members
• Pilot Projects

DISCUSSION

1. PENDING LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS
Both the U.S. Department of Education and Congress have expressed interest in increasing the "accountability" and "transparency" of the accreditation process. The Department of Education has issued draft regulations that would, if adopted, significantly change the traditional role of accreditation as a process that is tailored to the individual "mission" of each college. Under the proposed regulations, accreditors would be required to adopt new approaches for measuring student achievement, which include setting specific measures and performance levels, developing rubrics of measures for similar types of institutions, or by determining whether measures and performance levels set by the college for each of its programs are satisfactory. The goals and results must be made public by the colleges. There are several other proposed regulations relating to matters such as due process for accredited institutions and the nature of changes that require specific review by accreditors.

Congress has been scheduled to pass legislation affecting these matters, but it is unclear when this legislation will be passed.

C-RAC is attending hearings, submitting responses, and working with their member institutions and with higher education agencies to promote accountability in forms that are practical and realistic.

2. ORGANIZATION
The roles of the accreditors' permanent employees (i.e., presidents) and their Chairs (i.e. college representatives who are elected to the agency's decision making Commission) have been clarified. The need for support staff has been recognized, and recruiting for staff should begin in the summer of 2007.

3. COOPERATION RE NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
More colleges and universities are operating in more than one geographical region in the U.S. Through C-RAC, accreditors have tried to coordinate processes to ease the burdens on such institutions.

4. JOINT POLICIES
Some areas of concern to accreditors are interregional by their nature. C-RAC has recognized this in the past by adopting similar best practices for student learning, for distance learning, and for review of institutions with locations in two or more regions.

Currently, C-RAC members are working on a common policy for accredited institutions that are controlled in some way by a private owner (for-profit institutions), by a system (such as state systems that include many colleges within that state), or by an outside funding agency. The policy under consideration would require greater disclosure of the nature of the control and assurances from the controlling entity about compliance with accreditation standards.

Another area of cooperation is adoption by every region of a policy that explicitly recognizes the validity of decisions of other regional accreditors.

5. PROFESSIONAL STAFF
The Presidents of the regional accreditors speak at least twice monthly, and all members communicate frequently by e-mail. The Commissions' Chairs attend annual meetings. C-RAC has long recognized that much of the work and policy of individual accreditors is done by their professional staffs, and each Commission has paid for all professional staff to attend "retreats" that raise several issues for follow-up action. A staff retreat will be held this summer.

Submitted by
Jean A. Morse
Vice-Chair C-RAC
President, Middle States Commission on Higher Education
March 2002

List of C-RAC Members

Barbara A. Beno
Chair, C-RAC
President, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Barbara E. Brittingham
Director of the Commission
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Steven D. Crow
Executive Director, The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Sandra E. Elman
President, Commission on Colleges and Universities
Northwest Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities

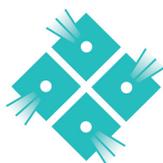Belle S. Wheelan
President, Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Ralph A. Wolff
President and Executive Director
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

CANQATE Report

CANQATE
Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education

VISION
To be the preferred professional network of the tertiary education and training sector in the Caribbean working purposefully towards quality assurance and quality improvement in the context of national development, regional integration and global competitiveness.

MISSION
CANQATE serves as a catalyst for the development of a quality culture in Caribbean tertiary education and training through a strong, vibrant and cohesive network of external quality assurance agencies, institutions and individuals committed to making quality tertiary education a reality to the people of the Caribbean and the global community.

ISSUES & ACTIVITIES
During the week of February 5 - 9, 2007 the Board of Management of CANQATE met in Jamaica. Among the items discussed were issues such as capacity building for quality assurance and accreditation agencies in the region, enhancing the ability of territories to quality assure and accredit, the role of cross border education, developing standards for tertiary education and public awareness on quality assurance issues.

The CANQATE agenda for the next few years is centered around the following activities:
- Improve the capacity for quality assurance and accreditation in the region;
- Assist smaller countries in the region to sustain and enhance their capability to quality assure and accredit;
- Work with institutions, governments, CARICOM, student organizations, employers and others to sustain and enhance the standards and quality of tertiary education in the region;
- Through INQAAHE, form effective working relationships with other regional groupings of quality assurance and accreditation agencies;
- Establish productive links with professional associations and other similar bodies in the region;
- Encourage public awareness of the role that quality plays in the education system particularly at the higher education level.

It was decided that in order to achieve the goal of capacity building in tertiary education, funds were needed for:

- Training of a core of assessors (evaluators) and team leaders in accrediting processes and standards e.g. 100 persons to be trained over the next three years;
- Training of tertiary education institutions on how to conduct internal quality assurance;
- Production of manuals on best practices in quality assurance for assessors, institutions and accrediting agencies in the region;
- Brief attachments to other quality assurance and accrediting agencies regionally and internationally;
- Sponsorship for deserving members to attend conferences, workshops and meetings regionally and internationally.

WORKING PARTIES
Working parties so far include:
- Core groups in each island to increase public awareness and further the aims of CANQATE;
- Newsletter group. The CANQATE newsletter is being undertaken by the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) – the first issue was published in November 2006 and there are plans for a second to be published in May 2007;

- Management Group which has two meetings per year (the last meeting was held February 7, 2007) supplemented by monthly electronic meetings.

There is need for more sub-committees to deal with specific issues.

CONFERENCES
Report on Third Annual CANQATE Conference
The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, St. Lucia hosted the Third Annual Conference and Workshop on Quality Assurance on November 21 – 23, 2006 at Sandals Grande St. Lucian Spa and Beach Resort under the theme "Strengthening Tertiary Education in Response to Global Integration Trends".

This event was a huge success. A workshop on "Credential and Institutional Fraud" was held on November 21, 2006 and this was followed by the Conference and Annual General meeting on November 22 – 23, 2006. The event brought together 125 CANQATE members (full, individual and associate) and prospective members in order to present and discuss issues with regards to quality assurance in tertiary education.

The participants of this conference included various professionals, educators, policy and decision makers from Guyana, Belize, United Kingdom, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis, Bermuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, United States of America and St. Lucia. A number of papers were delivered on the key issues and best practices of quality assurance, accreditation, Regional and International Standards in Tertiary Education, Distance and Transnational Education, Economic Imperatives for Tertiary Education, Instructional and Assessment Issues. This conference was therefore very rewarding to its participants.

Upcoming Conference
The next major event of CANQATE will be the fourth annual Conference to be hosted by the University Council of Jamaica from October 9 - 11, 2007 at the Sunset Jamaica Grande Resort and Spa. The theme for the conference is "Transforming Tertiary Education to meet Global Challenges". The strands for the theme are:

- Governance and Policy Issues
- Cross Border Education
- Quality Issues
- Curriculum Issues
- Partnerships and alliances
- Leadership

The call for papers is to be sent out shortly.

ELECTIONS
Election of officers for 2007 - 2009 will be held at the CANQATE Annual General meeting in October 2007 in Jamaica.

MEMBERSHIP
Membership as at January 31, 2007 stood at 70. Currently there are 12 countries represented in CANQATE. These are: Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos.

Ethley D. London, Ph.D.
President, CANQATE
March 2007

The Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

Background, objectives and organisation

The CEE Network was founded on October 13, 2001 in Krakow, Poland, and was formally established on October 19, 2002 in Vienna. It succeeds the Regional Subnetwork of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, established November 19, 2000 in Budapest, Hungary. The CEE Network is a non-governmental and non-profit organization. According to its Regulations, adopted in 2002, the CEE Network holds a General Assembly every two years and its Steering Committee meets annually. A workshop is held each year.

The objectives of the CEE Network are:
- To share experiences and to foster cooperation among member agencies.
- To exchange information about background, aims, procedures and outcomes of activities of member agencies.
- To recommend experts.
- To serve as a clearing house for issues on quality assurance in higher education in the Central and Eastern European countries.
- To assist each other in elaborating measures for harmonizing activities in quality assurance, in order to participate in the European dimension of higher education, and to play a proactive role in shaping the European Higher Education area.
- To open common possibilities in launching new projects for the sake of better quality in higher education and build consortia for joint activities, including the applications to funds.

Members of the CEE Network are:
- Accreditation Agency of Higher Education, Albania
- Accreditation Council, Austria
- Austrian Fachhochschulrat, Austria
- Austrian Quality Assurance Agency (AQA), Austria
- National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, Bulgaria
- National Council of Croatia
- Accreditation Commission, Czech Republic
- Accreditation Centre, Estonia
- Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre, Latvia
- Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Lithuania
- Evaluation Agency, Macedonia
- University Accreditation Commission, Poland
- State Accreditation Committee, Poland
- National Accreditation Centre, Russian Federation
- Accreditation Commission, Slovak Republic
- Commission for Higher Education Quality, Slovenia
- Hungarian Accreditation Committee, Hungary
- National Council for Academic Assessment and Accreditation, Romania
- Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute ACQUIN, Bavaria/Germany

Membership is open to agencies which are recognized as national or regional higher education quality assurance agencies by the lawful authority/ies in their respective CEE country, and which operate on a non-profit and non-commercial basis.

The CEE Network has a five-member Steering Committee, which includes the chairman and the treasurer. Since 2006 the chairman is Pavol Navrat, Chairman of the Accreditation Commission of the Slovak Republic. The office of the CEE Network is in the Hungarian Accreditation Committee, whose staff member Christina Rozsnyai is the General Secretary of the CEE Network.

Activity Plan 2006-2010

Fundamental activities of the CEE Network derive from the objectives set down in the Regulations, namely:
- To share experiences and to foster cooperation among member agencies.
- To exchange information about background, aims, procedures and outcomes of activities of member agencies.
- To recommend experts.
- To serve as a clearing house for issues on quality assurance in higher education in the Central and Eastern European countries.
- To assist each other in elaborating measures for harmonizing activities in quality assurance, in order to participate in the European dimension of higher education, and to play a proactive role in shaping the European higher education area.
- To open common possibilities in launching new projects for the sake of better quality in higher education and build consortia for joint activities, including the applications to funds.

Specific Activities
- The www.ceenetwork.hu website, run by the Secretariat, to which members contribute updated information about their own activities and other events that might be of interest to members and website visitors.
- Workshop (annually) on quality assurance issues such as university quality culture and quality assurance; readability of diplomas and their quality assurance; evaluation vs. accreditation; staff training; European trends and issues in quality assurance.
- Steering Committee meeting (at least once a year).
- General Assembly (2006 and 2010).
- Follow-up activities on CEE Network survey.
- CEE Network participation in international events/activities.

Workshops

Since 2000 the CEE Network has held annual workshops on the following topics
- Krakow, Poland (2001), Tempus JEP 'UNIQUE', Accreditation in Poland.
- Vienna, Austria (2002), Accreditation: Three Case Studies from Austria, Germany, Serbia and the European Perspective.
- Bucharest, Romania (2003), After Berlin: The Bologna Process and Evaluation / Accreditation in Central and Eastern Europe.
- Prague, Czech Republic (2004), Convergence and Divergence in Quality Assurance Systems. The CEE contribution to the European Higher Education area.
- Poznan, Poland (2005), Mapping External quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe: A Comparative Survey.
- Schloss Retzhof, Austria (2006), The CEE Network as a Player in the European Higher Education Area.
- St. Petersburg, Russia (2007), The European Standards and Guidelines in the Central and Eastern European context after London.

Links with other organizations

Since its founding in 2001, the CEE Network is associated with the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) as a regional subnetwork.

In 2007 the CEE Network became an affiliate organisation of the European Association for quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and has signed a cooperation agreement with the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

Publications and website

- Accreditation Commissions and Agencies in Central and Eastern Europe. Bucharest: The Romanian National Council of Academic Assessment and Accreditation 2004. 68 p.
- Stefanie Hofmann, Mapping external quality assurance in Central and Eastern Europe. A comparative survey by the CEE network. ENQA Occasional Papers 8. Helsinki 2006. 69 p.
- www.ceenetwork.hu

Report on activities of the Eurasian Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN)

On the 29th of October, 2004 in Almaty (Republic of Kazakhstan) the Agreement on the creation of the Eurasian Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) was signed by representatives from bodies and quality assurance agencies in higher education of Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Latvia, Russia and Estonia. In Moscow 2005, at a conference of the 2nd Assembly, Moldova and Belarus became members of EAQAN on the grounds of application and acceptance. "The Guidelines of Good Practice INQAAHE" is the basis of EAQAN activity.

The main objectives of EAQAN:

• Assistance in good practice dissemination with the purpose of education quality promotion in Eurasian countries.
• Information support and assistance in organization of new quality assurance agencies in the region.
• Realization of mutual research in the sphere of quality assurance.
• Development of compatible methodologies of national quality assurance systems.
• Mutual development of the position and active role in educational space; protection of rights and interests of students, teachers, HEIs, employers and other consumers of educational services.

The methods of EAQAN activity:

• Organization of conferences and workshops for experience exchange and problems statement.
• Internet-server development for the efficient information exchange between Network members.
• Development and publication of the Network members' accredited institute (programs) register.
• Creation of experts' selection and exchange.
• Organization of Network members' training.

During the current period the following organizational and methodical activities were conducted:

At the first EAQAN Assembly the Agreement on the creation of the Eurasian Quality Assurance Network was signed.

Developed and approved:
- Regulation on Eurasian Quality Assurance Network;
- Work plan of Eurasian Quality Assurance Network.

The network was created as a public organization without constitutive and annual membership fees and has no financing from any other sources or sponsors at this time.

All activities based on mutual support of professional interests due to quality assurance organizations from each country.

The Web-site is supported by the National Accreditation Agency of the Russian Federation. The informational-public activity on illustration of EAQAN activity conducts by magazine "Accreditation in Education", publishing in Russia and by other magazines of EAQAN country members.

According to the EAQAN Statement, the Assembly conference of the network members takes place at least once a year. At this moment three Assembly conferences have taken place; financing of the conference was at the expense of inviting side:
• Almaty – October 2004;
• Moscow – October 2005;
• Bishkek – June 2006.

The next EAQAN Assembly conferences are planned for Saint-Petersburg, in May 2007, and in Tallinn 2008.

During two years the informational work is conducted in EAQAN member countries, although the agencies of (Russia, Kazakhstan, Estonia and other) pays the mutual visits. The groups of mutual consultations are created. The experts trainings are organized, for example, the Russian experts were on the training in Accreditation Center of higher education of Estonia, and 10 experts from Kazakhstan were on the training in Russia Accreditation Agency on December 2005.

On the XI Conference of Council on recognition and equivalency of documents about admission of Eurasian Economic Community (Astana, October, 2006), which is presented by the vice-ministers of 6 countries (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan,, Russia, Tadzhikstan, Uzbekistan) and a solution was made: "To charge the development of coherent methodic on quality assurance of Eurasian Quality Assurance Network". This data testifies the recognition role of EAQAN on the governmental level, as organizations which are charged to develop the particular documents.

At present, the development of general principles of institutional accreditation conduction is being conducted and the accreditation of education programs on the base of European standards and guiding principles, taking into consideration cultural conditions and national traditions.

The data base of international experts is being set up for the conduction of external evaluation, and the pilot approbation of external evaluation is planned to be conducted with the participation of international experts in Kazakhstan, Russia for technology and methodic of external evaluation conduction practice. In Latvia and Estonia the external evaluation conducts only with participation of international experts.

In May 2006, for the first time the EAQAN representatives provided the results of network activity on the EAQAN conference in the Hague. EAQAN Regional Network considers itself a part of EAQAN Common International Network and governs by the principles and approaches which EAQAN worked out.

The President of EAQAN,
Professor
Sh. Kalanova

Eurasian Quality Assurance Network (2004)

Members:
Byeloruss; Estonia; Kazakhstan; Kirghizstan; Latvia; Moldova; Russia

ENQA Report
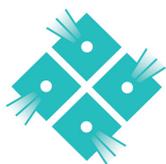
1. Introduction
The present document updates the Meeting of Regional Representatives of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) on the current developments in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) since the INQAAHE meeting in The Hague in May 2006.

2. Issues
During the past year the main focus in the work of ENQA has been on the implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). As an important part of this implementation process consists of the external reviews of ENQA member agencies (cf. 3.2). ENQA has also been involved in the E4 Group (ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE), the main task of which has been to explore the practicalities of implementation of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies (cf. 3.1).

The ENQA General Assembly of September 2006 decided that ENQA, in order to enhance its profile as a European organisation and to be located in the same town with its European partners, should move its headquarters from Helsinki (Finland) to Brussels (Belgium) by the year 2009 at the latest. It also agreed to create two types of formal relationship with ENQA - association and affiliation – for those bona fide quality assurance bodies that do not wish or are, for whatever reason, unable to apply for ENQA membership. Associates and Affiliates will be entitled to receive ENQA publications and attend seminars and workshops, and be given access to the password protected parts of the ENQA website. They will not however, be entitled to call themselves 'members' of ENQA and will not have voting rights.

3. Activities

3.1 Activities related to Bologna Process
ENQA has participated actively in the work of the E4 Group. The E4 meetings since May 2006 have been concerned mostly with the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and with the organisation of the first European Quality Forum (Munich, Germany, November 2006). The second European Quality Forum will be co-organised by the E4 Group in Rome, Italy, in November 2007. ENQA will provide, on behalf of the E4 Group, the final report on the practicalities of implementation of the European Register of the Quality Assurance Agencies to the London meeting of European Ministers of Education (May 2007) through the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

3.2 External reviews of ENQA member agencies
ENQA's membership criteria require that its members should undergo an external review on a five-yearly basis. These are normally organised through national arrangements but, if this is not possible or the agency so requests, they can also be co-ordinated by ENQA.

The first agencies that had their ENQA membership reconfirmed on the basis of their national reviews were HETAC of Ireland (August 2006), EVA of Denmark (September 2006) and HsV of Sweden (September 2006). In addition, two agencies have been granted a Full membership in ENQA as a result of their external reviews: OAQ of Switzerland (December 2006) and ASIIN of Germany (February 2007). In 2007 several other ENQA member agencies will undergo a national review and, in addition, three reviews will be coordinated by ENQA. The review results are subject to rigorous examination by the ENQA Board before any decisions are taken.

3.3 The second Transnational European Evaluation Project (TEEP) II
The TEEP II was a European-wide transnational quality evaluation scheme and a follow-up to the first TEEP project conducted by ENQA in 2002-2003. The project involved many actors from several countries: six quality assurance agencies (which were all ENQA members), three joint master's programmes and experts from across Europe. In addition, it included a project administrator from ENQA and representatives from EUA, the ENIC-NARIC network and the European Commission. The final conference was held in May and the project ended in June 2006.

3.4 ENQA review of the accreditation and quality assurance
practices in the Portuguese higher education (EPHE)
ENQA review of the present accreditation and quality assurance practices in the Portuguese higher education was concluded in November 2006. The project was part of the overall assessment and quality review of the Portuguese higher education system and was financed by the Portuguese Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

3.5 European Quality Convergence Study (QCS) II
QCS I (2003-2005) was a survey on the development of common working methods between the European quality assurance agencies. The aim of the QCS II in 2006 was to continue a little further along this path by offering the member agencies of ENQA an opportunity to reflect together on the values that underpin their activities. The QCS will have a follow-up project in 2007, QCS III.

4. Scale
The main goal of ENQA is to disseminate information, experiences and good practices in the field of quality assurance (QA) in higher education to European QA agencies, public authorities and higher education institutions. It also represents its member agencies (47 member agencies from 23 countries) at the European level. In order to fulfil these tasks, ENQA organises seminars, workshops and an annual General Assembly to its members. Also, ENQA disseminates information through its publications, website (www.enqa.eu) and being actively involved in international activities with its key stakeholders in the field of higher education.

5. Working Parties
ENQA has collaborated, through common project planning and attendance at events, with several European and international actors including, inter alia, the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEEN), the European University Association, the ENIC/NARIC networks, Council of Europe, INQAAHE and OECD.

In addition, CEEN and the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) have formalised their relationship with ENQA through being granted affiliate status in ENQA.

6. Reports
In June 2006 ENQA published the report "Mapping External Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe". It was a comparative survey by CEEN, which charted how far the member agencies matched up to the good practice described in the Standards and

Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

After the final conference in May of the TEEP II, ENQA published on its website three subject-specific reports (Water Management, Cultural and Communication Studies, Law and Economics) and a methodological report of the project. In addition, the methodological report was published in hardcopy in August 2006.

ENQA has developed and adopted a set of National Review Guidelines, which provide guidance on the characteristics of national reviews that will be necessary for acceptance by ENQA for its membership purposes. The Guidelines were published in a hardcopy in October 2006.

The final report of the ENQA review of the accreditation and quality assurance practices in the Portuguese higher education (EPHE) was published by ENQA in November 2006.

The report "European Standards and Guidelines in a Nordic Perspective" was the outcome of the project conducted by the Nordic Quality Assurance Network in Higher Education (NOQA) in 2005-2006. ENQA published the report in December 2006.

ENQA produced a report on "Student involvement in the processes of quality assurance agencies" on the basis of the workshop held in October 2006. A report on the language of European QA (a follow-up to the ENQA workshop of Warwick in June 2006) and the Quality Convergence Study (QCS) II report on terminology of the European QA were integrated into a single report. Both reports have been recently published in hardcopy.

7. Conferences
The TEEP II final conference was organised on 4-5 May 2006 in Stockholm, Sweden.

On 29-30 June 2006, the QAA (UK) coordinated a two-day ENQA workshop on the Language of European Quality Assurance at the University of Warwick, UK.

The ENQA General Assembly was held in Brussels on 21-22 September 2006. Also, the ESG Seminar on implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines was organised in conjunction with the General Assembly.

ANECA (Spain) co-organised an ENQA workshop on student involvement in external quality assurance in Madrid on 19-20 October 2006.

ENQA co-organised with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB the first European Quality Forum on 23-25 November 2006 in Munich.

The Austrian FH Council hosted an ENQA-CEEN (Central and Eastern European Network for QA) seminar on the implementation of Part 3 of the European Standards and Guidelines in Vienna on 4-5 December 2006.

In 2007, ENQA will organise several regional seminars on the implementation of the ESG. Also, two workshops – one on the relation between quality assurance and qualifications frameworks, and the other on knowledge production and roles of experts – will be organised by ENQA in 2007. This year's Quality Assurance Forum will be co-organised by the E4 organisations on 15-17 November in Rome, Italy.

13 March 2007
Emmi Helle
Act. Secretary General
ENQA

RIACES

ACTION PLAN FOR 2007

The Board met in Santiago, in October 2006 and developed some guidelines for actions in 2007. Specific projects will be approved by the General Assembly in March 2007. The guidelines for these projects are the following:

- One of the important roles of the Network is the maintenance of an updated record of the developments of each member. This was the responsibility of ANECA during its period as Secretariat. With the appointment of CONEAU as Secretariat, the decision to keep the website under the supervision of ANECA and the changes in the leadership of ANECA, the update was delayed.

- It was emphasized that the main role of RIACES is to serve as a support mechanism for the development of QA actions in those countries where QA is still in its initial stages or has not yet been institutionalized. Its ability to coordinate the provision of mutual support and the importance of clearly identifying the needs of those members was essential for it to be able to fulfill its role.

- The issue of sustainability after the end of the DGF was analyzed by the members of the Board. The general consensus was that sustainability was mostly a matter of the support that could be given to the consolidation of QA related activities in the member countries. While of course external resources meant a big contribution, sustainability was seen to be more closely linked to the establishment of alliances and partnerships within or outside the region, which could serve to advance the Network's goals.

On these bases, the following action plan was established.

1. Support to the development of agencies in countries with incipient QA activities

The main activities in this respect are the following:

- Carrying out a study which would characterize the problems faced by the different countries, their needs and the actions through which RIACES could make a contribution. The representatives from the Ministry of Education from Uruguay were charged with making a proposal of the TORs for such a study. The study should focus on the Central American countries (with the exception of Costa Rica), Venezuela, Perú, Bolivia and Uruguay.
- Support activities in countries where, even though there are formally established agencies, the level of activity is still scarce.
- Search for strategies for dissemination and sensibilization. Once the above mentioned study has been completed, it will be possible to identify the most significant strategies. For the time being, it was suggested that it would be useful to promote the participation of specialists from those countries in international QA related activities. It was also mentioned that a good way to promote a discussion and increase visibility of QA issues would be to carry out RIACES sponsored seminars, meetings or other activities in these countries.

2. Alliances and partnerships with other organizations, in order to promote the sustainability of the QA actions within the region.

The main issues here are the establishment or recuperation of the links with IESALC, with INQAAHE and with ALCUE , as well as with university or professional associations and networks:

IESALC: The Network was invited to take part in the 1st Meeting of University Networks and Councils of Rectors from Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Brasilia in November 2006. As a result, RIACES signed an agreement with IESALC to carry out a study on the standards and procedures for the accreditation of graduate programs, which will be carried out by CAPES and CONEAU. At the same time, it will take part in the other main projects IESALC is sponsoring, the development of a map of HEIs in Latin America and the organization of a number of discussion forums on several significant issues.

INQAAHE: Many members of RIACES are also members of INQAAHE. This network is working on a global project which could provide a significant support in terms of coordinating many activities that all regional networks are working on (such as the development of quality standards for distance education, or for graduate programs; QA in small countries, or countries with small HE systems). At the same time, a stronger link between regional networks and the international network could be helpful to both. It was agreed that RIACES should take part in the discussion of such a global project, which can be done through the Latin American member of the INQAAHE Board, Jorge Mora, from SINAES, Costa Rica.

At the same time, CONEAU reported that the next INQAAHE workshop, in 2008, would be held in Buenos Aires, under the coordination of CONEAU. This is a good opportunity to promote the participation of Latin American specialists in this activity.

ALCUE: ANECA is organizing a meeting of the European Union – Latin America and the Caribbean space for higher education, which was initially planned for December 2006, but has been postponed until 2007.

3. Continuation of projects already initiated

The projects started in 2006 must be completed, in the following way:

- Criteria and procedures for the assessment of graduate programs. This will be carried out by CONEAU and CAPES; once they have a preliminary result, an experimental application will be considered.
- Distance education. The work will be carried out in 2007. A collection of the main criteria and procedures will be made, and depending on the outcome, an experimental application may be carried out.
- Self assessment of agencies. Once the manual is completed, its use will be promoted as an improvement tool for the agencies in the region.
- Harmonization and experimentation of standards for the MERCOSUR programs. The process of harmonization will continue after the workshops, in order to move towards an experimental application in countries volunteering for it.
- Training and exchange of external reviewers and staff. The 2006 experience shows that this has been a useful and successful exercise, which will be continued in 2007. ANECA has proposed training three staff persons from Network agencies in a program of three to six weeks' duration.

4. Information systems and use of the website as a communication tool

One of the main components in the initial proposal was the development of a clearing house which would make it possible to exchange information, to gather, translate and disseminate materials and instruments used by the main QA agencies in the world, publications on QA and a dialog tool for the Board.

The development of the website, thanks to the contribution of ANECA, was a significant step in this direction, which needs to be strengthened and enhanced.

CONEAU, as the Secretariat, has appointed a staff person, with the following responsibilities:
• Creating a regional database with the standards, criteria and instruments used for the assessment and the accreditation of programs and institutions within the region.
• Creating a regional information system to include accredited programs and institutions, as well as a general overview of transnational offerings.
• Documenting the outcomes of the activities carried out by RIACES, including the papers presented at the seminars, conferences and workshops held prior to the General Assembly; the outcomes of the harmonization workshops for Agronomy, Engineering and Medicine; the reports on the internships; the outcomes of the different projects funded or supported by RIACES; the glossary and other relevant documents.
• Developing a dialog tool for the use of the RIACES Board.
• Updating electronic linkages to other regional networks and organizations dealing with quality assurance and improvement of higher education, or to other relevant sites.
• Translating materials and documents coming from other regions into Spanish, and RIACES materials into English.
RIACES would fund the salary of the person responsible for these activities, and the expenses of the action plan to be proposed.

5. Studies on significant issues

The Board is interested in identifying significant issues and promoting their study and analysis. Issues that have been mentioned are the following:

• Relationship between program accreditation and institutional accreditation.
• Mechanisms for the promotion and facilitation of student mobility (transfer credit systems, recognition of studies, national and institutional experiences).
• Identification of good practices in the management of a QA agency and the development of benchmarking processes through an analysis of the work of more experienced agencies (with the support of ANECA).

6. General Assembly 2007

The GA for 2007 will be held in Montevideo, Uruguay, on March 21 to 23, with the following structure:

Day 1: Open seminar, addressed to representatives from HEIs in the country
Day 2: Workshops for Network members
Day 3: General Assembly

The Board appointed an organizing committee with the participation of CONEAU, CNAP and the Ministry of Education of Uruguay. This committee must make a proposal on the issues to be addressed in the seminar and the organization of the workshops. The Secretariat will make a proposal for the GA.

Members may apply for support in terms of travel and living expenses for a second person from their organizations.

Maria Jose Lemaitre del Campo – March 2007
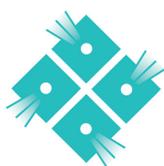
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK of QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES in HIGHER EDUCATION
INQAAHE

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006

	2006 USD		2005 USD	
Membership subscriptions		61,402		47,494
Surplus from workshops		13,296		10,506
CNAP review administrative fee		-		1,000
		74,698		59,000
less				
Fee to secretariat	24,000		24,000	
Taylor & Francis				
Cost of the Network's Journal				
supplied to members	6,531		5,721	
Printing of GGP and information leaflets	4,397		1,993	
Network Newsletter	-		650	
Officers' expenses	4,630		1,480	
Board meeting expenses (note A)	11,931		20,871	
Bank Charges	440		622	
Difference on foreign exchange	-2,671	49,258	1,011	56,348
Net surplus for the year		25,440		2,652
Transfer to Development Fund		-		8,002
Surplus after transfer		25,440		-5,350
General Fund 1 Jan 2006		38,518		43,868
General Fund 31 Dec 2006		**$63,958**		**$38,518**

DEVELOPMENT FUND
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006

	2006 USD	2005 USD
Balance at 1 January 2006	0	3,337
Contributions from members	-	853
Contribution from UNESCO	-	4,992
Transferred from the General Fund	-	8,002
	0	17,184
Expenditure	-	17,184
Balance at 31 December 2006	**$0**	**$0**

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 DECEMBER 2006

	2006 USD	2005 USD
Balance at Bank	83,489	66,642
Debtors	-	1,000
	83,489	67,642
Less		
Creditors	19,531	29,124
	$63,958	**$38,518**
General Fund	63,958	38,518
Development Fund	0	0
	$63,958	**$38,518**

Prepared as at 26 March 2007

Note 1   Membership fees are accounted for on a cash basis, net of collection charges

Note 2   The following rate of exchange have been used, 1.33 USD to 1 euro

Note A   There was in the 2005 accounts an overprovision of $4,309 in respect of the amounts outstanding
for the London board meeting. The cost of the 2006 Toronto Board meeting was $16,240.