

The INQAAHE Newsletter is your International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies information hub. This publication aims to provide the latest in QAA and industry trends and news to our subscribers. Contributions are most welcome – please email to secretariat@inqaahe.org.

Message from the President



Welcome to the INQAAHE Fall newsletter!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the INQAAHE's Fall 2016 newsletter - a truly unique platform offering the best of quality assurance expertise from all over the world.

In this issue of the INQAAHE newsletter, we are honoured to share the achievements, as well as major news and events on quality assurance worldwide kindly submitted by our members.

To start with, we are pleased to announce INQAAHE's upcoming biennial Conference to be proudly hosted by the [National Authority of Qualifications & Quality Assurance for Education & Training](#) in the Kingdom of Bahrain from 27 February - 2 March 2017. We hope the unique platform the Conference offers will be beneficial for professional expertise, experience exchange and promotion of future cooperation ties.

INQAAHE is also proud to launch its new initiative, the INQAAHE new Funding Scheme designed to:

- Create more opportunities for capacity building for both advanced QA systems and developing ones
- Increase opportunities for research and innovation in QA, in particular, the role of QA in the promotion of relevance of learning outcomes and employability
- Enable enhanced cooperation among the INQAAHE members leading to a better understanding of the values, cultures and needs of different systems - a crucial step towards the establishment of a better learning environment for students and faculty members

We truly hope that our members find this tool beneficial for innovation and capacity building.

The message from the INQAAHE Board shares the commitment of the Directors working as a cohesive team in developing and implementing activities in response to the requests from the General Assembly and in alignment with INQAAHE Strategic Plan 2013-2017.

Further, among the major achievements of our members, we are happy to share the following:

- HKCAAVQ's initiative to review accreditation standards and generic level descriptors of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF)
- CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) takes strategically important steps to address a range of issues for accreditation and quality assurance internationally
- Mauritius Qualifications Authority and the Barbados Accreditation Council have entered into a Technical Cooperation and Partnership Arrangement to share knowledge, experiences and expertise for the implementation of the NQF
- The UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education published a report on 'contract cheating', which concludes with a set of recommendations to address the issue
- Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) provides a brief on the analysis of the situation of joint study programmes;
- The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus adopts a new quality assurance framework for higher education in Cyprus within which higher education institutions will be driven to enhance quality and develop an internal quality culture;
- The Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education will implement the *Improvement of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Systems in Higher Education* project financed from the European Social Fund within the framework of the Operational Programme *Efficient Human Resources* from June 2016 to the end of 2018;

Message from the President (cont.)

- TEQSA Australia has undertaken a major revision of its standards to introduce a more outcome-focused and principle-based approach to quality assurance. The standards promote a culture of effective self-assurance by providers and are structured to align with the student lifecycle.
- THE-ICE and TEQSA consolidated their strategic partnership with the signing of an MoU on 7 September 2016.
- Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education implemented the first ever joint assessment of VET and higher education study programmes which took place in the [Estonian Academy of Security Sciences](#) at the end of September 2016.
- About 2,400 [EUR-ACE® labels](#) have been awarded in 32 countries, by 13 authorised European accreditation agencies. The labelled engineering programmes fulfil the highest quality criteria of [the EUR-ACE® Framework Standards and Guidelines](#) (EAFSG).

Last, but not least, we are happy to share the following events to be initiated by our members to promote the quality assurance cause all over the world:

- AMAQUEN, based in Morocco, will organise its annual event on the 13th edition of CIMQUSEF to be held on 12-13 May 2017 under the theme *Innovative Universities for Smart Cities*.
- 11th European Quality Assurance Forum will take place on 17-19 November 2016 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- FSTE and HKCAAVQ will co-organise a conference on *Enhancing Student Learning Experience* on 17 November 2016 in Hong Kong.
- QAA 6th International Quality Assurance Programme will take place at the British Academy in Central London from 10-14 October 2016.
- THE-ICE will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the IPoE Forum on 9-12 November 2016, with special events and awards being organised to mark this auspicious occasion.

We hope you find the information provided in this newsletter beneficial.

Best regards,



Susanna Karakhanyan

News from the Secretariat

Membership Mutations

INQAAHE welcomes the following new members:

- [Quality Matters \(QM\)](#) (Associate Member), United States
- [Education Quality Accreditation Agency \(EQUAA\)](#) (Full Member), Peru
- [Agencia Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación de la Educación Superior \(ANEAES\)](#) (Full Member, Paraguay
- [University of Buraimi \(UoB\)](#) (Associate Member), Oman
- [Lahore University of Management Sciences \(LUMS\)](#) (Associate Member), Pakistan
- [Balochistan University of Engineering & Technology, Khuzdar \(BUETK\)](#) (Associate Member), Pakistan

INQAAHE Conference 2017, 27 Feb-20 Mar 2017, Bahrain



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training



INQAAHE invites proposals for papers and posters for presentations during the 2017 INQAAHE Conference to be held in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The theme of the conference is **'Quality Assurance in HE between Collaboration & Competition: Promises & Challenges'**. Papers or posters may be either presentations of research or best practice experiences based on a previous or newly introduced best practice or research. The best presentations should be interactive with a high level of participant engagement. Research-based presentations should include appropriate research designs and scientific methodologies. Paper and poster proposals will be assessed by members of the Conference Programme Committee for compliance with the criteria for acceptance.

For further information and questions regarding the submission of papers, please contact the INQAAHE Secretariat:

Tel: +34 93 268 89 50

Email: secretariat@inqaahe.org

Message from INQAAHE Board

Taking into serious consideration issues raised by the General Assembly at the Annual General Meeting held during the INQAAHE Forum on 24 May 2016, Fiji, as well as an endeavour to move the Strategic plan forward, an INQAAHE Master Plan was compiled and shared with the Board by the then Acting President, Dr Susanna Karakhanyan on 1 June 2016.

Ideas, issues and initiatives accompanied by relevant timed action plans for implementation were discussed and adopted over the following weeks. In the Master Plan, existing committees and working groups have been left untouched. However, the functions, roles and activities of some have been revised to maximise efficiency and to enable a wider engagement from interested INQAAHE members outside the Board.

The Committees, Working Groups and their respective roles are as follow:

Executive Committee

Chair:	President, Susanna Karakhanyan
Members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice President (currently vacant, to be elected by the Board) • Treasurer: Dr Jawaher al-Mudhahki • Secretary: Dr Martí Casadesús
Roles:	Develop, oversee and manage the strategic activities of INQAAHE Master Plan, including the ongoing review and update of corporate policies and procedures, financial operations and mentorship of new incoming Board members

Membership/Member Services Committee

Chair:	Martin Strah
Members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Maiki Udam • Ms Pauline Tang • Dr Susanna Karakhanyan
Roles:	Develop committee level planning; evaluate incoming membership applications; keep members informed with call for proposals on available INQAAHE initiatives; assess applications submitted; coordinate the publication of INQAAHE research-related outputs and other publications of interest for members; maintain Good Practice database

Recognition Committee

Chair:	Dr Tashmin Khamis
Members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Eddy Chong • Dr Erika Soboleva • Mr Anthony McClaran
Roles:	Develop committee level planning; manage GGP (Guidelines of Good Practice) such as the review of GGP criteria and procedures, publication, GGP Alignment and INQAAHE Reviews

Communication and Outreach Committee

Chair:	Ms Pauline Tang
Members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Eddy Chong • Dr Susanna Karakhanyan, • Dr Yvonne Marshall (resigned, to be replaced by nomination from the Board)
Invited Members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Lee Harvey (journal editor) • Ms Jane Gentle, THE-ICE • Ms Viola Chan, FAA
Roles:	Develop committee level planning; oversee the quality and consistency of all outgoing INQAAHE communication; design and develop a sweep of communication templates to further enhance the global identity and value of brand 'INQAAHE'; maintain the currency of website content; collate and distribute quarterly newsletters and news releases to General Assembly and any promotional activities as and when required

Meetings & Events Committee

Chair:	Maiki Udam
Members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Erika Soboleva • Dr Jawaher al-Mudhahki • Dr Jagannath Patil
Roles:	Develop committee level planning; publish conference or forum proceedings and major conclusions; organise and host e-forum and webinar on topics of interest, organise events based on the results of call for proposals for capacity building, training, workshops, consultancies, etc. from members

Message from INQAAHE Board (cont.)

Marjorie Peace Lenn Centre Working Group

Chair:	Dr Carol Bobby
Members:	Dr Susanna Karakhanyan, Dr Tashmin Khamis, Dr Yvonne Marshall (resigned, to be replaced by nomination from the Board)
Roles:	Develop the Center operationalisation plan and strategy; establish an INQAAHE database



Constitution Review Working Group

Chair:	Ms Pauline Tang
Members:	Dr Carol Bobby, Mr Anthony McClaran, Dr Erika Soboleva
Roles:	Review of the Constitution and review of INQAAHE Board's Procedures Manual in alignment with the proposed changes to the Constitution



INQAAHE Conference 2017 Programme Working Group

Chair:	Mr Anthony McClaran
Members:	Dr Carol Bobby, Dr Maiki Udam, Mr Martin Strah
Invited Member:	Dr Tariq Al Sindi, QQA (National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training)
Roles:	Preparatory activities for INQAAHE Conference 2017 to be hosted by QQA in the Kingdom of Bahrain



UNESCO/INQAAHE/ICDE Conference 2018 Working Group

Chair:	Dr Susanna Karakhanyan
Members:	Dr Eddy Chong, Dr Tashmin Khamis, Mr Martin Strah, Pauline Tang
Roles:	Preparatory activities for the 2018 Conference in Paris



With the dedication of the above Committees and Working Groups, significant progress has been made over the past three months. Committees and Working Groups are invited to be involved in all INQAAHE strategic initiatives and activities. Interested parties are encouraged to contact and express their interest to the Secretariat: secretariat@inqaahe.org

Best regards,

Pauline Tang

Pauline Tang
Chair, Communication and Outreach Committee
INQAAHE Board



News from Members

Hong Kong Quality Framework (HKQF)

HKCAAVQ Initiated Review of Accreditation Standards and Tasked with Review of Generic Level Descriptors of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF)



The Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) was established on 5 May 2008 under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance. The primary objective of establishing the HKQF is to provide a platform to encourage and facilitate lifelong learning, with a view to enhancing the capability and competitiveness of the workforce in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) is tasked with the development of accreditation standards to underpin the HKQF. The current accreditation standards were promulgated in 2008 together with the launch of the HKQF.

In the light of rising community expectations of quality and against the backdrop of the changing environment for the education and training sector, the HKCAAVQ has initiated a review of the current accreditation standards. The review will consider whether the standards sufficiently address the current and foreseeable developments of the sector, and reflect the expectations of the Hong Kong society of operators and learning programmes.

A dedicated [page](#) has been created on the HKCAAVQ's website to keep HKCAAVQ's stakeholders, and other interested parties, updated about the scope, timeline and key deliverables of the review.

Initial preparations for the review began in late 2015 and it is expected that the revised standards will be ready for endorsement by the HKCAAVQ Council in the second quarter of 2018.

The HKQF is a 7-level hierarchy and ensures the integrity and quality of qualifications in the academic, vocational and professional as well as continuing education sectors. Each qualification is assigned a level to indicate its position in the hierarchy relative to others. The level of a qualification is determined in accordance with a set of Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) which specifies, in four domains, the outcome standards expected of the qualifications at each level. The four domains are:

- a) Knowledge and Intellectual Skills
- b) Processes
- c) Application, Autonomy and Accountability
- d) Communications, IT and Numeracy

The existing GLDs have been in place since 2004 for pilot exercises and other preparatory works for the launch of the HKQF. Feedback gathered from various user groups of the GLDs during the HKQF-European QF Comparability Study completed in early 2016 suggests the need to review the GLDs and to refine the descriptors to better reflect the outcome standards at each HKQF level for clarity and user-friendliness. The Comparability Study report is accessible [HERE](#).

HKCAAVQ has been commissioned by the Education Bureau to review the GLDs and to develop Practical Tools associated with various purposes of the GLDs, including education and training, human resources management and benchmarking (the Project). The Project is the first formal review of the GLDs and will mark an important milestone to the development of HKQF. The review will take stock of Hong Kong stakeholders' experience in using the GLDs, including but not limited to suggested refinements and ideas for mechanisms to support their use of the GLDs, making reference to international good practices identified from countries and/or regions with ample experience of National quality frameworks (QFs) such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

The Project commenced in early August 2016 and is anticipated to complete in May 2017.

CHEA International Quality Group

(Washington, DC) Brian 'Blu' Christopher Kelley has been appointed Director of the CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG). He joined the CHEA/CIQG staff in September 2016 and will work with CHEA President Judith Eaton and Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, CHEA's Senior Advisor on International Affairs, as CIQG addresses a range of issues for accreditation and quality assurance internationally.



Since 2013, Mr Kelley has served as a Foreign Affairs Officer at the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) in Thailand, working on a variety of issues affecting the quality of education.

Previously, he worked in China, Canada and the United States in positions related to education. Brian holds a baccalaureate degree in political science from Lehman College, City University of New York, and a Master's degree in international studies from the University of Miami.

"We are delighted that Blu will serve as CIQG's Director," said CHEA President Judith Eaton. "His experience both in international affairs and in quality assessment will make him a strong addition to the CHEA/CIQG staff."

News from Members

Mauritius - NQF Scoping Mission

Mr Robin Phoolchund, Director (Ag), Mr V A Ramchurn, Manager, Framework Services and Mr Ramsamy Nookadee, Accreditation Officer of Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) spearheaded a Scoping Mission in preparation for the implementation phase of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), on 11-15 April, 2016. MQA and the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) have entered into a Technical Cooperation and Partnership Arrangement to share knowledge, experiences and expertise for the implementation of the NQF.

The intensive week involved capacity building of BAC staff which included examining the BAC's Quality Assurance (QA) policies and procedures. During the one day workshop, the impending implementation of the NQF was discussed and the MQA team shared their insights and experiences on the steps that would be necessary to ensure a successful outcome for Barbados.



The Mauritius team, Mr Phoolchund, Director (Ag) (centre right), Mr Ramchurn, Manager, Framework Services (right) and Mr Nookadee, Accreditation Officer (left) sharing their knowledge with Ms Valda Alleyne, Executive Director (head of table) and staff of BAC

Tertiary educational providers and other key stakeholders also benefited from a two-day workshop held at Almond Bay Caterers, Hastings on 12-13 April. The Hon. Ronald D. Jones, J.P., M.P., Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation delivered the Feature Address at the opening of the workshop. Stressing the importance of providers to seek recognition, Minister Jones stated: "Tertiary educational providers will therefore need to be, at minimum, registered in order to have their qualifications placed on the National Qualifications Framework which will signal they have met minimum standards to operate in Barbados. However, the ultimate goal will be to achieve accreditation status – either institutional or programmatic – which will provide global recognition that the institution or programme has met quality standards established by the Barbados Accreditation Council, which is most likely the follow-through organisation to carry both the qualification framework and the accreditation process."

Minister Jones also thanked the Board of Directors of the MQA and the MQA team for readily consenting to assist Barbados at this 'critical juncture in the development of its human resources', and reminded those gathered that the island's key resource was indeed its human resources.



Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Hon. Ronald D. Jones, J.P., M.P. addressing the participants of the 2-day workshop, with Ms Valda Alleyne, Executive Director, BAC and Mr Phoolchund, Director (Ag), MQA at the head table

The themes discussed amongst the various break-out groups at the workshop included: NQF Qualification Development, Delivery of NQF Qualifications, Assessment and Award, Recognition of Qualifications/Courses, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and NQF Governance: Articulation of Legislations, Policies and Regulations. The sub-themes included Promotion of RPL, Credit Rating System, Accreditation and Quality Audits, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, Qualifications Register, Promotion of RPL and Stakeholder Engagement, and Harmonising Policies and Guidelines.



The providers chosen for the pilot of the implementation phase being briefed by Ms Valda Alleyne, Executive Director, BAC and the Mauritius team

For the purpose of the pilot phase, Technical-Vocational qualifications in the priority areas of Health and Wellness (including Beauty Services), Green Energy, Agriculture and Creative Industries pegged at Levels 2 & 3 of the NQF Framework were chosen. The providers selected for the pilot phase of the NQF Implementation - Barbados Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Allied Health Institute, Semaj

News from Members

NQF Scoping Mission (cont.)

International School of Cosmetology and Trichology, Career Development Institute and Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB) were briefed during a one-day meeting with the BAC and Mauritius team. This meeting outlined the expectations of the pilot providers and the need for them to champion the process and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

On the fifth and final day of the scoping mission, the Mauritius team met with the NQF Working Group which is responsible for the managing the design, development and implementation of the NQF.



Dr Sylvia Henry, Instructional Development Specialist, The University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus, leading the discussion with this group of providers offering Cosmetology programmes

The NQF Working Group comprises representatives from the BAC, The University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill and Open Campuses, Ministry of Education, Science, Technology & Innovation (METI), and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development (MLSD). At this special meeting, the way forward and expectations of the BAC were discussed.

In the afternoon, the Mauritius team along with the Executive Director of the BAC paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Education, Science, Technology & Innovation, Hon. Ronald D. Jones, J.P., M.P., which brought a close to the official visit of the MQA and the Scoping Mission.

Later in the evening, the MQA team was able to experience the hospitality and culture of Barbados at the Oistins Bay Gardens, Christ Church.

NQF Pilot Implementation Phase Launched

The Council has commenced the pilot implementation phase of the NQF with the selection of six (6) tertiary education and training providers from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. The TVET sector was chosen at a wider stakeholders' forum for the pilot implementation phase given the diverse nature of these providers and the qualifications being offered to the public.



Courtesy call on the Minister of Education, Science, Technology & Innovation, Hon. Ronald D. Jones, (head of table); Senator Harcourt Husbands, Minister of State in the Ministry (on his left) and acting Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mr Manasseh King (on his right). On the right is the three-member team from the Mauritius Qualifications Authority.

The six (6) providers, Barbados Community College (BCC), Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP), Career Development Institute (CDI), Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB), Allied Health Institute, and Semaj International School of Cosmetology and Trichology, were selected based on national areas of interest namely, Health and Wellness (including Beauty Services), Green Energy, Agriculture and the Creative Industries.



Representatives of providers offering the Nursing Auxiliary/Care for the Elder programme

Dr Sylvia Henry, Instructional Development Specialist, Instructional Development Specialist, Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at UWI Cave Hill Campus, was the facilitator for the first meeting held on 29 June; and Ms Valda Alleyne, Executive Director and Mrs Sharon Alleyne and Mrs Alitia Quintyne, Quality Assurance Officers of the BAC were the facilitators for the meeting on 14 July this year. These meetings entailed working on the providers' qualifications that would be pitched at Levels 2 and 3 (Certificate and Diploma levels) of the NQF in the specific areas identified to ensure that these qualifications meet the NQF requirements.

It is anticipated that the NQF will be in place by early 2017.

News from Members

Contract Cheating – QAA Leads on Action in the UK



At the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, UK), we have been looking closely at the issue of 'contract cheating'. Contract cheating is the term given to the practice of students paying a third party to write assignments which they then submit as their own. The organisations offering these assignments are also known as essay mills. Our findings and recommendations for actions are set out in this report: '[Plagiarism in Higher Education](#)'.

Our position has long been that plagiarism in any form is unacceptable, and our Expectations and supporting guidance in the UK Quality Code set this out clearly, stating that providers of higher education must operate equitable, valid and reliable assessment processes. Contract cheating is a particular facet of plagiarism and we have not dealt with this directly until now.

We drew together findings from academic research already done in this field, as well as recent press reports and some investigations of our own. We found that while the scale of the problem is difficult to quantify with precision, there are sufficient risks to fairness in the assessment, integrity of awards and public interest to justify strong action against essay mills.

There are several aspects to this problem. Firstly, there is clearly a demand for these services and a market eager to supply. Advertising is becoming more commonplace, with posters going up in areas near university campuses, and advertising materials being handed out directly to students. Studies have found a lack of awareness among students to the seriousness of this practice, finding relaxed attitudes to this type of cheating, or a misunderstanding of the severity of the punishments they might face if discovered. Another problem is that traditional methods of detection, like text-matching software, do not always work – this is not 'copy and paste' plagiarism, and the essays can be wholly original pieces of work.

The quality of the end product is often poor, but some researchers have purchased essays which have then been assessed by academic staff, gaining high marks. The mills themselves will often publish warnings that their products should not be submitted as the customer's own work; an attitude which changes when the customer asks specific questions about the legal or academic position.

The picture is not entirely bleak. Government and higher education providers here and around the world have expressed positive feedback on our efforts. The latest is from a group of Canadian, UK and US academics who are partnering with the Carnegie Council for Global Ethics Day to launch an [international day of action against contract cheating](#) on 19 October 2016.

We are now taking forward the report's recommendations, which concentrate on education, deterrence and detection, in partnership with the UK higher education sector as well as agencies across the world. The report found that the problem is international; the internet allowing essay mills and ghost-writers to be based anywhere, so the solutions must be international too.

Our next step is to learn from measures to tackle this problem in the US, Australia and New Zealand, including the effectiveness of targeted legislation, raising students' awareness and how assessment design can reduce the opportunities for contract cheating. We also want to learn from partner agencies through networks like INQAAHE, as well as share our ideas with them as they develop.

If you think you could help and would like to get involved in this endeavour, contact Simon Bullock at the QAA s.bullock@qaa.org.uk.

SKVC Joint Study Programmes and their Assessment, 2010-2015



Joint degree programmes have recently been attracting more and more attention from higher education institutions, students and employers because they provide the opportunity for students and teachers from different countries to study and teach in different cultural and academic environments and to adopt best practices from different countries or higher education institutions. Furthermore, they promote international inter-institutional cooperation and help expand employment opportunities for graduates. Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) analysed the situation of joint study programmes (2010-2015) in Lithuania. The analysis covers general statistics of joint study programmes provided in Lithuania. It also presents the numbers and results of already evaluated and accredited joint study programmes and reveals the attitude of Lithuanian higher education institutions towards this kind of programmes.

The full text of analysis can be found [HERE](#).

New Legislative Framework and System for QA and Accreditation in Cyprus



On 5 November 2015, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus appointed, after consultation with related stakeholders, the members of the Council of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, on the basis of the 'Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Law, of 2015'.

The Agency has assumed the responsibilities of the Council of Educational Evaluation-Accreditation (CEEAA), the Advisory Committee on Higher Education (ACTE), and the Evaluation Committee for Private Universities (ECPU).

The new Legislation provides a quality assurance framework for higher education in Cyprus within which higher education institutions will be driven to enhance quality and develop an internal quality culture. In addition to assuming the responsibilities that the above-mentioned bodies had, the Agency is responsible for the following:

- Institutional, Departmental and Programmatic Evaluation and accreditation of higher education
- Quality Assurance in higher education on the basis of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)
- The Evaluation and Accreditation of cross-border forms of education, offered by local institutions in member states or third countries
- Assessment of the conditions for the provision of cross-border education from foreign institutions in Cyprus
- Assessment of inter-institutional cooperation of higher education institutions
- The provision of information of Quality Assurance in higher education

Most importantly, the Legislation provides for the Agency's independence and autonomy. According to Article 26 (9), of the Law 'The Agency shall be independent to the extent required to do its work autonomously and to exercise independently its functions so that its conclusions and recommendations contained in the evaluation reports shall not be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or others.'

The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, a full Member of INQAAHE, is responsible for ensuring the quality of Higher Education in Cyprus and to support, through the procedures provided by the relevant legislation, the continuous improvement and upgrading of higher education institutions and their programmes of study. Operating within the European Standards and Guidelines, the Agency will contribute towards the establishment of Cyprus as the district center of quality higher education.

Croatian Agency Launches a New EU-Funded Project



agency for science and higher education

The Agency for Science and Higher Education will implement the *Improvement of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Systems in Higher Education* project financed by the European Social Fund within the framework of the Operational Programme *Efficient Human Resources* from June 2016 to the end of 2018.

The main objective of the project is to increase the quality and efficiency of Croatian higher education institutions by developing a new model for internal and external quality assurance which would be adjusted to the Croatian Qualifications Framework and the integration of universities.

Specific objectives are the improvement of external quality assurance and internal processes of ASHE, and the improvement of internal quality assurance systems at Croatian higher education institutions. They will be achieved by carrying out activities such as the establishment of a new model of reaccreditation, programme evaluation for the Qualifications Framework and the new model of initial accreditation, monitoring graduate employability, the improvement of an integrated system for providing information on higher education, training, etc.

This project will contribute to the achievement of some of the strategic objectives in the field of higher education, defined by the European and national strategic documents such as the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Agenda for the Modernisation of Europe's Higher Education Systems, the Strategy for Education, Science and Technology, etc.

News from Members

TEQSA Update: New Standard and New International Partnerships

Australia has 1.5 million higher education students, 171 higher education providers and is the third most popular international student destination.

TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) is Australia's independent national quality assurance and regulatory agency for higher education. It regulates higher education providers within the Higher Education Standards Framework.

Recently the 2011 Framework was extensively revised. The new Standards, which will apply from 1 January 2017 are more outcome-focused and principle-based. They support a culture of effective self-assurance by providers. More importantly, they are structured to align with the student lifecycle.

TEQSA CEO Anthony McClaran said: "A risk and standards based approach to quality assurance in Australia's diverse higher education sector is unique and the TEQSA model for regulation has processes for protecting and assuring quality."

TEQSA has been active in promoting the new standards to Australia's 171 higher education providers.

In April and May 2016, Mr McClaran and the Agency's Commissioners hosted 12 roundtable briefings around Australia for providers in five (5) capital cities; 291 participants from 168 providers attended. TEQSA has also hosted briefings for 90 professional bodies.

TEQSA's focus on international collaboration

In 2016, TEQSA's key focus is to collaborate and share its unique model with quality assurance agencies around the world.

In November 2016, TEQSA is leading an APEC summit in Bali, Indonesia, together with fellow APEC countries such Hong Kong and Malaysia to share their experience assuring quality of online higher education.

[The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a forum for 21 Pacific Rim member economies that promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region.]

Mr McClaran said: "In Australia, we have seen new and dynamic business models evolve as providers respond to changing market dynamics. The TEQSA Act covers the many and diverse ways that higher education is delivered. We are hoping to share the TEQSA quality assurance model with international countries and collaborate to enable the development of quality assurance frameworks which accommodate online teaching and learning."

"Australia's experience is valuable to illustrate progress on the continuum of online learning modes and methods and how it can be integrated into existing Quality Assurance frameworks. As countries in APEC, we can all learn from each other's experience."

It is intended that this will lead to the development of a quality assurance toolkit, translated into various APEC languages, to provide an adaptable international guide with a focus on the practitioner perspective.

TEQSA visits Beijing

On 12-14 September 2016, Mr McClaran, travelled to Beijing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with two Chinese quality assurance agencies, the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange and the Higher Education Evaluation Center of the Ministry of Education.

He also visited the Chinese Education Association for International Exchange with whom TEQSA already has an agreement, the China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center with whom we will be working more closely and two universities that have partnerships with Australian providers.

"International collaborations and partnerships are a key focus for TEQSA, not only to share our unique quality assurance model but also to learn from like-minded organisations to help maintain Australia's position as a top educator with world recognised standards."

To date TEQSA has signed agreements with the following international quality assurance agencies:

- Council for Private Education, Singapore, 28 July 2016
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, United Kingdom, 27 February 2013, renewed 1 June 2016
- Higher Education Evaluation Centre of the Ministry of Education, P.R. China, 6 June 2016
- Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, 28 April 2016
- Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 19 September 2013
- National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, 20 May 2014
- University Quality Assurance International Board of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority, United Arab Emirates, 9 January 2015
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), 17 July 2015

Other International Agreements

- China Education Association for International Exchange
- Office of Higher Education, Papua New Guinea

News from Members

TEQSA Update: (cont.)

TEQSA collaborates in Australia

From signing Memoranda of Understanding with local professional bodies to presenting at conferences and hosting briefings, TEQSA seeks ways to engage professional bodies and associations as effectively as possible in Australia.

TEQSA has now signed ten (10) Memoranda of Understanding with professional bodies.

TEQSA's approach is to:

- Engage with professional bodies to develop complementary approaches to course accreditation processes and requirements
- Use professional bodies as a source of expert advice
- Share information with professional bodies to inform TEQSA's regulatory activity and to protect the interests of students and the higher education sector
- Encourage alignment of professional outcomes with the learning outcome requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- Foster communication between TEQSA and professional bodies regarding our respective roles



THE-ICE & TEQSA: Strategic Partnership

On 7 September 2016 [TESQA](#) (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) and [THE-ICE](#) (International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education), a not-for-profit international QA agency specialising in the evaluation of tourism, hospitality, events and culinary art education (TH&E), signed a Memorandum of Understanding, with further development of collaborative agreement for potential joint-accreditation in negotiation.

This is an excellent example of TEQSA's commitment in developing cooperative relationships with national and international professional QA agencies, to streamline the accreditation/re-accreditation process for Australian institutions.

Global QA agencies interested in developing cooperative relationship with THE-ICE please contact:

accreditation@the-ice.org



Anthony McLaren, CEO of TEQSA and Pauline Tang, CEO of THE-ICE consolidated the strategic partnership between the two QA agencies

News from Members

First Joint Assessment in VET and Higher Education



Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education ([EKKA](#)) conducted the first ever joint assessment of VET and higher education study programmes at [Estonian Academy of Security Sciences](#) in September 2016. The assessment included 12 study programmes, which were divided into five (5) areas or subcategories:

- police and border guard
- rescue
- justice
- finance
- internal security

All of these areas contain VET and higher education programmes. There were six (6) VET programmes, five (5) higher education programmes and one (1) master's programme.

VET and higher education sides of EKKA worked closely together to develop a suitable methodology for this assessment. There was a single joint expert panel, consisting of employer representatives, VET and higher education experts and student representative. Since Estonian Academy of Security Sciences has a unique profile, most of the panel consisted of international experts from the UK, Finland and the Baltics.

Combining VET and higher education assessment has been suitable for all the stakeholders, since it allowed the consolidation of a number of tasks: especially when it came to allocating time and resources.

The most challenging aspect was the comparative analysis of VET and higher education study programmes, which was necessary in order to set suitable criteria for the assessment. It was an exciting process of learning and development, as the assessment was the first of its kind.

ENAAE Position Paper on Transnational Accreditation



ENAAE is proud to report that about 2,400 [EUR-ACE® labels](#) have been awarded in 32 countries, by 13 authorised European accreditation agencies. The labelled engineering programmes fulfil the highest quality criteria of [the EUR-ACE® Framework Standards and Guidelines](#) (EAFSG).

These figures demonstrate that authorised agencies engage in a significant range of accreditation activities in countries outside their national jurisdiction. In accordance with the spirit of [the European Higher Education Area](#) (EHEA), ENAAE promotes trans-border activities under conditions which avoid conflict and preserve the mutual trust between agencies that have signed [the EURACE Accord](#).

In order to ensure a proper approach to transnational accreditation by authorised agencies, ENAAE decided to establish guiding principles for such trans-border activities. The final objective of ENAAE is to focus more on the development of high quality national systems for engineering programme accreditation using the EAFSG, than the mere growth of the number of labels awarded.

The Administrative Council (AC) set up a working group on this issue which drafted a document '*Transnational Accreditation by ENAAE Authorised Agencies: A Good Practice Guide*'; the document was approved at the last AC meeting in June and will be presented at the ENAAE General Assembly in November 2016. It can be viewed on the [ENAAE website](#).

Several situations were considered and clarified:

ENAAE Authorised Agencies accrediting outside their own country arising from a request from a Higher Education Institution (HEI); the rules differ depending on whether or not an ENAAE authorised agency has been established in the HEI country.

ENAAE Authorisation of Agencies based outside the EHEA: in this case, particular care must be paid to full compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG) as well as with the EAFSG.

In all situations, collaboration with the local Quality Assurance agencies must be sought.

The last section of the document provides guidelines for the accreditation of double (dual) and joint degrees.

News from Members

Quality Enhancement Cell, Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute Pakistan

The 10th Progress Review Meeting & Workshop of Quality Enhancement Cells (QEC) was held on 9-10 March 2016 at Hotel Grand Regency. The event was organised by QAA, Higher Education Commission Pakistan for 15 Private Sector Higher Education Institutes and Degree Awarded Institutions. Coordinator (QEC), Dr Zahid Halim also attended the workshop on Bloom's taxonomy.



Dr Zahid Halim, Coordinator (QEC), Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute Pakistan, and Annum Ghauri, Assistant Director (QEC), attended the 10th Progress Review Meeting & Workshop



Professor Dr A. K. Salahriya, External Expert, Wah Engineering College, University of Wah Pakistan, visited GIK Institute on 15 June 2016 for the Assessment of BS Chemical Engineering Programme of Department of Chemical Engineering.

In spring 2016, the QEC team conducted an online Course/Teacher Evaluation and as well as an Alumni Survey, Employer Survey, Graduating Student Survey & Faculty Survey, all of which are essential annual activities of QEC.

Dr Zahid Halim, Coordinator (QEC) conducted a comprehensive Training Session & Quality Awareness Seminar for all deans and faculties at the Institute on 29 March 2016. In order to improve the standard of education, the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) at GIK Institute continuously monitors the quality level of teaching and learning at the Institute.

The official notification of the new Coordinator (QEC) replacing Dr Zahid Halim was made on 5 May 2016. Dr Khalid Rehman, Assistant Professor assumed his responsibilities on 16 May 2016.

Upcoming Events

11th European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) 2016 - early-bird registration deadline approaching



The 2016 EQAF, entitled '**Quality in context – embedding improvement**', will be hosted by the **Slovenian Student Union and the University of Ljubljana**. Through a mix of plenary and parallel sessions, the Forum will combine presentations of current developments in quality assurance (QA) with practice-oriented and research-based discussions that will take place in paper sessions and workshops. Specifically, EQAF 2016 will examine the different disciplinary, institutional and national contexts and cultures to which QA has to be tailored and will consider how policies and practices are adapted to respect diversity and remain fit for purpose.

EQAF has been co-organised by [ENQA](#), [ESU](#), [EUA](#) and [EURASHE](#) since 2006 and provides a unique platform for the higher education and QA communities to monitor, shape and anticipate developments in the field. The main purpose of the Forum is to foster a dialogue on QA that bridges national boundaries and leads to a truly European discussion on QA in higher education, and to create a common European understanding of QA through discussions and networking among different stakeholder groups.

Registration is still open for the 11th European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF), which will take place on **17-19 November 2016 in Ljubljana, Slovenia**.

The deadline for the early-bird registration fee is **3 October 2016**. After this date, late registration fees will apply. It is important to register as soon as possible as capacity is limited and registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

To register, please visit the [EQAF website](#). Here you will also find the programme, abstracts of papers and workshops, as well as further information about the Forum.



Upcoming Events

ANAQUEN - CIMQUSEF13 Innovative Universities for Smart Cities

Morocco, 12-13 May 2017



Call for papers

Since 2004, AMAQUEN has organised the international conference on quality in education and training (CIMQUSEF) every year to provide an opportunity for decision makers, researchers and experts to meet and think about the best way to improve the quality of educational and training systems. This year this community is invited to address the issue of the link between universities and cities with focus on the role of science and innovation in the transformation of our cities to become smarter and more attractive for the citizen. The theme of the 13th edition of CIMQUSEF to be held on 12-13 May 2017 is 'Innovative Universities for Smart Cities'.

Submitting contributions

CIMQUSEF13 welcomes original submissions of research papers and presentations of relevant and best practices related to the theme of the conference, addressing questions and providing evidence on the role of science and innovation systems in universities in the building and the improving of smart cities. Academic and professional contributions with clear policy relevance are encouraged, but submissions must also include concept papers outlining strategies for Quality Assurance that can improve the engagement of universities in innovative projects serving the good implementation of smart cities.

The scientific committee of the conference will select submitted contributions, and the best papers will be published in the 'Journal of Quality in Education'.

Subthemes of the conference

- Innovation policy initiatives
- Digitalisation of science and innovation
- Digitalisation of cities
- Science and innovation for smart cities
- Internet of things and Big Data to drive smart cities
- Innovative networks and diffusion of innovation results
- Skills for innovative universities
- The benefits of the digital economy in smart cities
- Links between digital innovation and smart cities
- R&D and innovative projects in Global Value Chains
- Public procurement and innovative universities
- Regional innovation ecosystems
- Competitiveness and sustainable urban development by innovative universities
- Smart city models
- Innovative university models
- Innovative approaches to external QA in innovative universities
- Impact of QA in the good implementation of smart cities
- National qualifications frameworks in the context of innovative universities

Agenda

- 2 December 2016: Submission deadline for abstracts (max 250 words)
- 31 December 2016: Notification of abstract acceptance
- 1 January 2017: Registration opens
- 31 January 2017: Early bird registration deadline
- 17 February 2017: Submission of complete accepted papers (min 2000, max 3000 words)
- 17 March 2017: Notification of complete paper acceptance
- 07 April 2017: Submission of complete accepted papers
- 5 May 2017: Registration closes
- 12-13 May 2017: Conference

Registration

- The registration fees include admission, conference materials, lunch and coffee/tea break on 12-13 May 2017.
- Registration fees: €250; Early bird: €150; Students: €100



Upcoming Events

FSTE and HKCAAVQ Conference



The Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education (FSTE) and Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) will co-organise a conference on Enhancing Student Learning Experience on 17 November 2016 in Hong Kong.

Owing to the dwindling student population in the coming decades, challenges facing the self-financing tertiary education sector have been fierce. On the other hand, institutions have been increasing efforts to enhance the learning experiences of students in order to meet the emerging educational needs of society. Co-organised by the FSTE and HKCAAVQ, the conference aims to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders in the sector to report their latest research, explore ideas, views and experience, and share their professional experience with others.

<http://www.fste.edu.hk/conference2016/>

QAA 6th International Quality Assurance Programme



The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is pleased to announce that places are still available for the 6th International Quality Assurance Programme on 10-14 October 2016, taking place at the British Academy in central London.

Currently we have delegates attending from Barbados, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia and the Cayman Islands.

Please email s.hashmat@qaa.ac.uk to register and book to avoid disappointment. Please visit our [website](#) for further details.

THE-ICE 10th International Panel of Experts Forum 2016, Lucerne



This year, THE-ICE (International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education) is thrilled to be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the IPOE Forum from 9 to 12 November 2016, with special events and awards being organised to mark this auspicious occasion.

The Forum, being proudly hosted by César Ritz Colleges Switzerland in Lucerne, also features a series of panel sessions drawing on the expertise of leading educators and industry professionals in the field of tourism, hospitality, events and culinary arts (TH&E), offering the latest from a diverse field of world-class experts.

[Academic papers are invited](#) on the IPOE 2016 theme '*Excellence – Defined and Measured*' and sub-themes: *employability; pedagogy; transferable skills; technology; and research and scholarship.*

View the proposed programme [HERE](#) and [register online](#) today to be involved in this occasion. For further information, please email ipoe2016@the-ice.org.

All INQAAHE members are invited to send contributions for the next issue of the Newsletter to secretariat@inqaahe.org.

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Contents of this Newsletter have been submitted by members and networks, compiled by INQAAHE Secretariat in cooperation with the INQAAHE Communication and Outreach Committee (C&O).

Although the responsibility of content remains with members and networks, the INQAAHE C&O Committee reserves the right to edit, correct, revise or omit any submitted articles as required for consistency.

If major revisions are required, the INQAAHE C&O Committee will contact the member or network (author) before accepting or publishing the material.

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