



INQAAHE PAPERS

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Transforming Society:

Social Responsibility Through Quality Assurance Of Tertiary Education

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THEME 1. FOSTERING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

How can quality assurance agencies promote civic engagement to have a greater impact on society?

Sophie Guillet, Head of the agency cooperation unit, Department for European and International Affairs, High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres), France

Amélie Bensimon, Project manager, agency cooperation unit, Department for European and International Affairs, High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres), France

ABSTRACT

Although it is now well known that higher education institutions ought to foster civic engagement and fulfil their third mission, the role of quality assurance agencies in society, including in promoting civic engagement, is not widely explored. This workshop will address this issue in two ways.

First, it will invite agencies to discuss how their standards and guidelines can incentivise higher education institutions to shape responsible and engaged citizens. Second, acknowledging that agencies' external quality assurance activities are more impactful when they are recognised by their higher education community, the presenters will ask how agencies can move from a "procedural legitimacy" (e.g. recognition of the agency by law) to a "substantial legitimacy" (e.g. recognition of the agency by its ecosystem in the framework of its activities) to do so.

The presenters will display the practices of their agency (Hcéres - France) through these two lenses to stimulate debate.

Outline

The design thinking workshop will be organised around the following statement of opportunity: "To help quality assurance agencies make an impact on society by promoting civic engagement". This will make sure all participants understand the purpose and objectives of the workshop. In terms of deliverables, the workshop will aim at:

- 1) developing a toolbox with examples of good practices related to the standards and guidelines used to incentivise higher education institutions to shape responsible and engaged citizens, depending on the context in which they operate;
- 2) developing a set of recommendations for agencies to help them move from a "procedural legitimacy" to a "substantial legitimacy" in order to play a greater role in society and be recognised in their ecosystem.

In order to achieve these two objectives, the presenters will start by presenting the practices of their agency regarding the role it plays in society to foster civic engagement. Then, they will invite the participants to split into groups and brainstorm on each of the deliverables successively. They will be guided by key questions and the presenters will regularly come to help them. Each brainstorming session will be summarised by a rapporteur and the presenters will take notes in order to identify key common practices and information gaps that will help the participants focus on the topic. A provisional agenda of the workshop is detailed below.

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Provisional agenda for the design thinking workshop

Time slot	Activity	Format
09:30-09:40	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The presenters welcome the participants, detail the format of the workshop, the tools that will be used and the expected deliverables.</p> <p>The presenters detail the key concepts that will be used in the workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Key concept 1</u>: civic engagement (relying on INQAAHE's definition) - <u>Key concept 2</u>: procedural legitimacy (recognition of a quality assurance agency by law) - <u>Key concept 3</u>: substantial legitimacy (recognition of the agency by its ecosystem in the framework of its activities) 	Plenary session – PowerPoint presentation by the presenters
09:40-10:00	<p>Presentation of Hcéres' practices</p> <p>Hcéres will present its practices to answer the main question of the workshop: what role do quality assurance agencies play in society to foster civic engagement?</p> <p>In order to do so, the presenters will illustrate the 3 key concepts with examples from Hcéres practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Key concept 1</u>: civic engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Hcéres example</i>: presentation of Hcéres standards and guidelines related to civic engagement and examples from successful higher education institutions stemming from national and international evaluation reports by Hcéres - <u>Key concept 2</u>: procedural legitimacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Hcéres example</i>: presentation of the decree that defines the missions of Hcéres and ensures its legal recognition in the country - <u>Key concept 3</u>: substantial legitimacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Hcéres example</i>: presentation of how Hcéres evaluation reports and thematic analyses are used by the Ministry and the Parliament to make decisions impacting society. Presentation of Hcéres relations with stakeholders from the civil society and the press, and of the challenges to overcome to establish its substantial legitimacy 	Plenary Session – PowerPoint presentation by the presenters
10:00-10:40	<p>Brainstorming session (1)</p> <p>Participants will split into groups of 6-8 people and discuss how agencies' standards and guidelines can incentivise higher education institutions to shape responsible and engaged citizens.</p>	Small groups discussing and using Padlet as a visualisation tool

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	<p>Each group will work on a specific focus of civic engagement such as student life, research-based learning and participatory science, education for sustainable development, HEIs' corporate social responsibility policy, and recognition of non-formal and informal learning that can foster civic engagement.</p> <p>While answering these questions, the participants should be able to create a toolbox with examples of good practices.</p> <p>Each group chooses one rapporteur for the reporting back session that will follow.</p>	
10:40-10:55	<p>Reporting back session (1)</p> <p>One rapporteur per group details the key findings of their brainstorming session to the whole room. The presenters take notes in order to summarise the key takeaways in the conclusion.</p>	Plenary session
10:55-11:35	<p>Brainstorming session (2)</p> <p>Since agencies' external quality assurance activities are more impactful when they are recognised by their higher education community, the participants will split into groups of 6-8 people and try to develop a set of recommendations for agencies to help them move from a "procedural legitimacy" to a "substantial legitimacy". This should help them play a greater role in society and be recognised in their ecosystem. Each group will work on recommendations to be formulated for a specific type of audience through which an agency can enhance its legitimacy: governments, higher education and research institutions, students, employers, and civil society. In the end, this second brainstorming session will investigate how the impact of the toolbox developed in the previous session can be increased when agencies achieve "substantial legitimacy".</p> <p>This transition to "substantial legitimacy" is one of the stages in the development of each agency. Agencies will also be invited to point out a series of challenges to overcome to be successful in this transition.</p> <p>Each group chooses one rapporteur for the reporting back session that will follow.</p>	Small groups discussing and using Padlet as a visualisation tool
11:35-11:50	<p>Reporting back session (1)</p> <p>One rapporteur per group details the key findings of their brainstorming session to the whole room. The presenters take notes to summarise the key takeaways in the conclusion.</p>	Plenary session
11:50-12:00	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The presenters summarise the key takeaways of each reporting back session and make a statement on the deliverables produced in the brainstorming session and that could be part of a follow-up paper.</p>	Plenary session

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Aims and intentions of the author for the proposal:

The authors of the proposal are willing to organise a dynamic workshop with a participatory format that will facilitate discussion between the participants. To prepare for this event, Sophie Guillet will attend a one-day training on design thinking methodology on the 7th of March. Confirmation of her attendance at this training is attached to this document.

The authors wish to gather more information about the role quality assurance agencies play in society and how they foster civic engagement worldwide. The INQAAHE Forum is the best place to learn from agencies coming from different regions of the world and the results of such a dynamic workshop, organised using a design thinking methodology, could feed into a follow-up paper written by the authors after the event.

From INQAAHE GGP to ISGs: How HEEACT Translates International Goals into Domestic Higher Education Institutions' Practical Actions

Prof. Dr. Chia-Yu Chang, Director of Quality Assurance and Projects Office, Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council (HEEACT), Taiwan

Prof. Dr. Angela Yung-Chi Hou, Professor of Higher Education, College of Education, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

Dr. Jackson Chun-Chi Chih, Research Fellow, Chief of Evaluation and Training Division, Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council (HEEACT), Taiwan

ABSTRACT

HEEACT, as a quality assurance agency in Taiwan, supports civic engagement by implementing standards aligned with Taiwan's governmental policies and global SDG trends to ensure institutional sustainable development. In this workshop, HEEACT will share the experiences and practices in the promotion of diversification, inclusiveness and university's social responsibility in institutional accreditation. Through various design-thinking approaches, this workshop aims to provide good strategies for quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions shaping students as responsible global citizens in response to INQAAHE guidelines. Participants will be able to develop the feasibility of best practices in their own context and advance social responsibility and SDGs in higher education by developing institutional strategic plan, making good use of resources, engaging varying stakeholders.

Outline

1. Context

Transition of INQAAHE QA guidelines and empowerment of QA agencies

Due to growing public concerns with the effectiveness of QA activities, several international and regional quality assurance organizations were obliged to support QA professionalism and international capacity building (Hou et. al, 2020; INQAAHE, 2016). As the INQAAHE aims to be a platform for information-sharing on good practices and for quality improvement in higher education between EQAAs, it has developed good principles and practices, entitled the Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance in 2003 and revised in 2009. In 2016, INQAAHE amended the Guidelines, with focuses on QA of cross-border higher education, integrity of EQAAs and the links to the QA community (INQAAHE, 2016). By 2023, 16 national EQAAs have been recognized as the GGP aligned agencies in compliance with the INQAAHE GGP (INQAAHE, 2023).

As indicated above, "a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to QA in tertiary education no longer serves the needs of diverse stakeholders and societies" (INQAAHE, 2022, p. 2). The 2022 INQAAHE ISGs are expected to "embrace the ever-increasing diversity in tertiary education (formal and non-formal) and empower the enhancement capacity of QA providers in their quest for diversification, efficiency, relevance, and transformative power" (INQAAHE, 2023, p.1). One of the manifestations is to recognize the high level of maturity of quality assurance agencies and facilitate them to moving from "efficiency (fitness for purpose) to relevance and transformative capacity" (INQAAHE, 2022, p. 12).

2. Aims and Intentions

Based on the discussed above, as the first INQAAHE GGP aligned agency during the pandemic. HEEACT will share our experiences and practices in the promotion of diversification, relevance and inclusiveness in institutional accreditation. Thus, the workshop aims to provide good strategies for quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions in response to INQAAHE guidelines. There are three objectives in the workshop:

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(1) HEEACT will empower participants to recognize the crucial role of quality assurance agencies in promoting and enhancing the development of social responsibility and SDGs in tertiary education according to INQAAHE GGP.

(2) Learning from INQAAHE ISGs, HEEACT will share good practices of social responsibility programs and SDGs initiatives implemented by Taiwan's institutions.

(3) HEEACT will lead the discussions on enhancing faculty members and students' awareness on social responsibility and SDGs and how to embed them in teaching and learning activities.

3. Problem Statements

(1) What role can quality assurance agencies play in supporting institutions for social responsibility and SDGs implementation in Tertiary Education?

(2) How can higher education institutions raise faculty members and students' awareness in social responsibility and sustainability and engage them in civic duties?

(3) What resources should higher education institutions provide to advance social responsibility and sustainability on campus?

(4) How can higher education institutions ensure the quality of their efforts social responsibility and sustainability and measure outcomes of the impacts?

4. Scenarios

HEEACT, as a quality assurance agency in Taiwan, not only observes this phenomenon but also supports civic engagement by implementing standards aligned with these values. The third cycle of institutional review, initiated in 2023, incorporates Taiwan's governmental policies and global SDG trends to ensure institutional sustainable development. Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development have been elevated as major standards with sub-standards and core indicators. For instance, the HEI demonstrates its commitment to sustainable development by providing learning opportunities and support for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, aligning with its social responsibility.

According to university characteristics and capacity, HEEACT recognizes that diverse types of universities (research, teaching, or vocational-oriented) have adopted these scenarios, aiming to develop varied and effective strategies to advance university social responsibility and SDGs in tertiary education.

5. Approach

To achieve these objectives, the workshop will employ varying approaches as designthinking methodologies

(1) HEEACT's presenters will discuss global trends of promoting civic engagement through QA mechanisms and national policies, share strategies and practices from Taiwanese higher education institutions and QA agencies, in order to facilitate discussions on good practices for university social responsibility and SDGs implementation.

(2) HEEACT's team will utilize varying tools to engage participants and to encourage diverse exchanges, such as scenario presentations, group discussions, mind mapping, social innovation canvases, flowcharts, and dot voting across different design-thinking stages.

(3) HEEACT will conclude with best practices derived from group discussions and come up with take away message at the end of the workshop.

6. Workshop Procedures

The workshop will be proceeded in the following phases:

Contents/Activities	Time
1. Opening Briefing + Introduction	15-20 mins

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2. Group Discussions	15 mins
3. Group Presentation	10 mins
4. Taiwan Policy and Regulations	10-15 mins
5. Case Study and Brainstorming	10-15 mins
6. Group Discussions	15 mins
7. Group Presentation	10 mins
8. Wrap up & Feedback	10 mins

7. Expected Outcomes

(1) Participants will gain a more comprehensive understanding of international trends and emerging standards for social responsibility and SDGs, from INQAAHE GGP and INQAAHE ISGs.

(2) Participants will learn the experiences and practices in social responsibility and SDGs from National accreditor and higher education institutions in Taiwan.

(3) Participants will be able to develop the feasibility of best practices in their own context and advance social responsibility and SDGs in higher education by developing institutional strategic plan, making good use of resources, engaging varying stakeholders.

Promoting Civic Engagement in Higher Education via the Assessment and Accreditation of Tertiary Institutions

Prof. Dr. Ganesan Kannabiran, Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), India

Dr. Vinita Sahu, Assistant Adviser, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), India

ABSTRACT

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in India measures the relevance of standards through a systematic evaluation process for higher education institutions by utilising the set of criteria and standards. NAAC's rigorous standards/parameters ensure that their educational programs not only meet academic standards but also actively contribute to societal well-being. Thereby, NAAC criterion and key indicators emphasize on involving or fostering a sense of social responsibility among students, teachers and management.

The recently launched National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020) aims to address various challenges in the education sector and aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4, which focuses on quality education. In line with this, NAAC shall further redefine the assessment parameters in the new accreditation framework by capturing access, equity and inclusiveness in education, community engagement, values, ethics, global citizenship & civic education to nurture responsible citizenship by achieving SDG goals combining G20 declarations as well.

Outline

National Education policy 2020 and Social responsibilities: The National Education Policy-2020 is a comprehensive framework designed to transform the education system in India, covering various levels including school and higher education. The policy emphasizes on the societal role and purpose of higher education which primarily includes Enlightened and Socially Conscious Citizens, Knowledgeable and Skilled Nation, Problem Solvers and Innovators, Socially Engaged and Cooperative Communities, Cohesive, Cultured, and Progressive Nation.

NEP-2020 emphasizes on the importance of providing equitable access to quality education for all citizens, irrespective of socio-economic background and it also advocates for inclusive education that accommodates the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities or special needs. The vision of NEP-2020 comprises Promotion of Values and Citizenship, and importance of environmental and civic education. It encourages collaboration between educational institutions and local communities which in turn fosters a sense of social responsibility by promoting community engagement, addressing local needs, and building partnerships etc. HEIs can play significant roles by teaching about SDGs and undertaking locally prioritised research for communities around them.

NAAC's role in fostering civic management: The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) assesses and accredit the higher education institutions against set criteria and key indicators. The performance against these key indicators is mapped in terms of scores against defined benchmarks for assessment and accreditation. The criteria and key indicators broadly include Curriculum Aspects, Teaching-Learning and Evaluation, Research, Innovation and Extension, Infrastructure and Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression, Governance, Leadership and Management and Institutional Values & Best Practices. Amongst these seven criteria there are various key indicators which are again split into metrics.

NAAC's criterion specifically Institutional Values & Best Practices and Student Support and Progression are primarily based on the social responsibility and outcomes. The metrics seek data and details on the extension activities in the neighbourhood community, outreach programs conducted by the institution, community outreach programs, Gender audit and measure for the promotion of gender equity, facilities for alternate sources of energy and energy conservation measures, management of the of degradable and non-degradable waste, Water conservation facilities, Green campus initiatives, Quality audits on environment and energy undertaken by the institution, facilities pertaining to (Divyangjan) friendly, barrier free environment,

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Institutional efforts/initiatives in providing an inclusive environment i.e., tolerance and harmony towards cultural, regional, linguistic, communal, socio-economic and such other diversities, Sensitization of students and employees of the Institution to the constitutional obligations: values, rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens, institutions Best practices etc.

Thereby NAAC criterion and key indicators emphasize on involving or fostering a sense of social responsibility among students, teachers and management. These aspects have certain scores associated and important during the quality assurance mechanism. Against all the criteria and key indicators NAAC collects data from higher education institutions against each Metric, Profile and Extended Profile in the form of the institution's Self-Study Report (SSR). The alignment of standards with institutional goals and the institution's capacity to make continuous improvements are key considerations. The impact of assessment contributes to NAAC's accreditation decision, reflecting an institution's ability to create a positive and transformative influence through its educational standards and practices. The performance of the institution is mapped against these criteria in terms of quantitative and qualitative indicators for assessment and accreditation. NAAC encourages higher education institutions to actively participate in community outreach programs, fostering a sense of social responsibility among students and faculty. By incorporating social responsibility into its evaluation criteria, NAAC not only ensures academic excellence but also encourages institutions to serve as agents of positive change in their communities, aligning higher education with broader societal goals and values.

Way Forward: The vision of NEP-2020 comprises Promotion of Values and Citizenship and importance of environmental and civic education. It encourages collaboration between educational institutions and local communities which in turn fosters a sense of social responsibility by promoting community engagement, addressing local needs, and building partnerships etc. HEIs can play significant roles by teaching about SDGs and undertaking locally prioritised research for communities around them. Further, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which translates to "One Earth, One Family, One Future," is the theme of India's G20 presidency. It has largely influenced the focus on the importance of civic sense and education among the youth of the nation.

The way forward for NAAC shall be to further redefine these parameters and use them in the new accreditation framework as proposed by NEP-2020 which broadly focuses on achieving SDG goals combining G20 declarations.

The aims and intentions of the author(s) for the proposal; - The proposal intends to share about the capacity building initiatives adopted by NAAC to promote Civic Engagement in Higher Education institutions in India and also to take away the methods adopted by other Quality assurance agencies through discussion amongst the group. Also it is proposed to design the new accreditation framework encompassing the social responsibilities and civic management along with other key indicators in line with the mission and vision of NEP-2020.

Program Advisory Committees Supporting Ready, Informed and Engaged Students

Karen Belfer, Executive Director, Quality Assurance for the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS), Canada

Sylvie Mainville, Manager, Quality Assurance for the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS), Canada

ABSTRACT

One of the winning strategies used by Ontario Colleges in Canada to ensure currency and relevancy of programs is also pivotal for designing curricula that help shape students to be excellent contributors to society. Program Advisory Committees (PACs) are mandatory for every program of study offered at a public college. These committees play a crucial role in informing the college program developers, faculty, deans, administrators, students, and any other participant of valuable insights and current trends in their respective fields.

PAC are not only precious subject matter experts; as they often live and work in the same community, they bring a wealth of information on relevant societal needs and/or actualities that would otherwise go unnoticed.

This active workshop will model best practices for engaging with PAC members to fully benefit from their expertise and knowledge as well as provide a forum to share best practices.

Outline

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) is an organization that serves a small number of post-secondary institutions. OCQAS oversees the self-regulatory mechanisms for the public colleges in Ontario, Canada and are responsible for the operation of the Credentials Validation Service and the College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP). OCQAS services are funded by the 24 public colleges in Ontario. Each of the colleges contributes based on the relative size of the college.

Within their QA mechanisms, OCQAS ensures that Ministry requirements are upheld by the colleges. The requirement to have a Program Advisory Committee (PAC) composed of various external subject matter experts and employers for each program of instruction or program cluster is part of these Ministry Directives¹. It is the responsibility of the college's Board of Governors to oversee the implementation of this requirement.

PACs are crucial to the development and sustainability of programs but also to the rich educational experience and environment lived by the student.

The following is one example of a valuable PAC contributions:

Governed by a Standard, Paramedic programs in Ontario have been in a state of review for many years. Political issues are halting the decision-making process and colleges wait to hear the direction on moving forward with this program, but they are not sitting on their hands.

Colleges continue to work with their PACs to identify emerging trends and priorities. They have developed new ways to address some of the physical demands and tests, socio-cultural needs, as well as provided insight in new programs and courses that could support a graduate's future. Some of these courses or microcredentials include Gerontology for Paramedics, Community Paramedicine and Introduction to Indigenous Health and Healthcare.

¹ Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, College of Applied Arts and Technology Policy Framework, Framework for Programs of Instruction <https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/documents/FrameworkforPrograms.pdf>

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Engaging PAC members in meaningful conversations is crucial to gaining true insight in the diverse ways students can actively participate in educational activities that also further involve them in their community.

Colleges and Programs interact with PAC members in many ways, some of which are quite brilliant! PAC members can be mentors, guides, panel members on a presentation assignment, model interviewers, presenters, teachers, and resources. They can invite students to participate in volunteer initiatives and practical community projects that are meaningful to their field of study. They often will guide the college in finding unique experiences for their students which can include in person experiences but also simulated experience and case studies. They play a crucial role in bridging the gap between academic learning, the professional world and how it all belongs in their community. Here's how they help inform students of potential paths towards employment and relevance in their field:

A Deep Understanding of the Industry: PAC members represent a cross-section of persons that can speak to the current trends, varying demands, skill requirements and ongoing commitments in their respective fields and their impact on society. These industry professionals provide valuable insights into what employers are looking for. Faculty members and program developers translate these insights into applicable experiences, which can be incorporated into the curriculum to better prepare students for the current job market.

- **Curriculum Development:** PACs provide feedback on graduate skills and on topics needed to remain current and relevant in their field, they can suggest updates or modifications to the curriculum to ensure it aligns with industry standards and expectations. Curriculum conversations revolve around established Vocational Learning Outcomes and aim at providing the student with the most current information available which can include tools that can be used in the program to simulate real-world applications of the field of study. They offer timely case studies, speak to opportunities and challenges in their field and allow students to ask questions and draw inspiration from their stories, successes, and failures. Results from these discussions include introducing new tools, courses, updating course content, experiential learning opportunities or incorporating practical projects that simulate everyday scenarios that reflect the local/regional scope of practice.
- **Career Insight ²:** Through mentorship, presentations, workshops, one-on-one sessions, mock interviews and meetings, PAC members share their professional experiences, discuss various career paths, and provide advice on job search strategies. Students appreciate these experiences as they get a sense of peeking into their future in their field of study.
- **Networking Opportunities:** PAC members suggest, plan, or facilitate networking events where students get the opportunity to interact with industry professionals. These events can open doors for internships, co-op placements, or even full-time employment opportunities.

The goal of this session is to engage the audience in a PAC experience and thoughtful conversation about ways PACs are used to help connect students to their community and their field of practice. By providing a hands-on PAC experience and a platform to share best practices, this practical training will increase awareness of how PAC involvement can help bridge the gaps between knowledge, real-world applications, and societal realities to support the transition from student to employee and active member of society.

In the scope of Quality Assurance, these innovative PAC contributions power positive change in society, providing it with a workforce that is ready, informed and engaged. Having a PAC is no longer a checkbox in a list of QA activities, it is the conduit for bringing the field to the student, and that is powerful!

² Some descriptions were crafted with the assistance of Bing Chat GPT.

THEME 2. BRIDGING THE GAP TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

Sharing ideas and practices to enhance equity in Tertiary Education

Dr. Anna Prades, Head of Internationalisation and Knowledge Generation Department of AQU Catalunya (AQU), Spain, and Treasurer of INQAAHE

Dr. Eva Fernández de Labastida, Internationalisation and projects manager of the Agency for Quality of the Basque University System (Unibasq), Spain

ABSTRACT

The objective is to identify, or devise, global policies and practices to help to increase opportunities to address inequalities in Tertiary Education, aiming at transforming the four Ps of equity: Perception, Policies, Practices and Participation.

These practices are to be found across different levels: macro-level (institutional policies, governmental policies), meso-level (internal units, such as equity units, career services; or external quality assurance bodies), and micro-level (classroom activities, learning environments). These may happen at different times of the student life-cycle (before enrolment, once enrolled, post-graduation..), and may be targeted to different types of under-represented Tertiary Education students.

Certainly, no miracle is going to happen at the last level of education. However, this workshop aims to identify or devise practices that at least ensure that Tertiary Education does not contribute to worsening existent inequalities.

Outline

We assume that there will be 6 tables with 5 to 8 people in each.

The presenters/facilitators of the workshop will offer a structured dashboard, which will include as key dimensions the level of intervention, the moment of the life of the student, and the types of under-represented students targeted. They will begin explaining the dimensions and present briefly (20') from their own EQABs how they think they can contribute to the dashboard:

- AQU has carried out an study about the role of HEIs in social mobility. AQU has also developed a catalogue of equity indicators that allows governmental and university tracking of access, progress and success in Higher Education. AQU has also developed a Framework for Higher Education Providers for the “Incorporation of the gender perspective in University Education” and adapted its external quality assurance methodology accordingly. These activities are located at meso-level. The first two are targeted to track students according to their gender and social class, and the last one to adapt curricula, teaching and learning activities and support to student so it fosters gender equity and inclusiveness.
- Unibasq has been assessing the fulfilment of the agreements made among the Basque Government and the universities of the Basque University System in the framework of the periodic Basque University Plans since 2008. These agreements have included among others strategic objectives regarding equity, equality and inclusion at the institutional level. The Basque Government funds specific actions with the main purpose to mobilize universities for the achievement of the specific objectives established in the Basque University Plans.

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Sub-theme 2. Bridging the Gap to Quality Education for All

After this presentation, which will be of 20', the facilitators will explain the dynamic of the session. Each of the tables will have a dashboard, where they will be able to place their idea or good practice.

Work in the tables (5' individual work + 20' discussion + 5' voting = 30')

- Each of the participants will have 5' to either think ideas or identify good practices about what could be done, in their internal or external quality assurance activities (procedures, seminars, etc.), to enhance diversity and equity, fostering inclusive learning environments, and contributing to breaking down barriers to quality education for all.
- They will proceed to classify these ideas in the dashboard and discuss them with the whole table (20').
- The table will take a vote on the ideas with more potential impact and more cost-effective and decide a spokesperson for the group.

There will be a pause of 15'

Joint presentation: 30-45'

- Each of the 6 tables will present a maximum of 2 ideas per group. They will have 5' each (45').

Closing remarks:

- Each participant will be invited to provide their conclusion of the workshop with a drawing (and for those who are unable to draw, they will be asked to provide a keyword). And this drawing will be showcased in a mural.
- The presenters will close the session.

Aims and intentions of the authors of the proposal:

- Being able to frame the different types of action to fostering diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Sharing experiences, sharing insights among the participants.
- Facilitating networking and interaction.

Incorporating Criteria for Social Inclusion in the Framework of ESG

Prof. Dr. Siyka Chavdarova-Kostova, chairperson of the Standing Committee on Educational Sciences and Social Activities, National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA), Bulgaria

Dyani Kurulenko, overseer of International Cooperation, National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA), Bulgaria

ABSTRACT

In recent years, policies and practices for the social and educational inclusion of students from vulnerable groups have gradually begun to be implemented in the higher education institutions. Nevertheless, in many systems of higher education, there is still much room for improvement, and there exists a lack of research into inclusion approaches and their applicability and universality.

The START project, a partnership between NEAA, ARACIS, the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science and the Bulgarian Council for Refugees and Migrants, funded by Erasmus+, is specifically aimed at addressing the social dimension in HEQA.

The proposed roundtable discussion is centered around the social inclusion in higher education of the aforementioned vulnerable groups, and specifically – students with disabilities and students-refugees. The purpose of the discussion will be twofold – measuring the sensitivity of this issue among HEQA agencies, and gathering information regarding potential and/or existing practices in HEQA related to social inclusion.

Outline

The social inclusion of students from vulnerable groups is an essential component within the social dimension of higher education. Creating optimal conditions for access to higher education, as well as for effective learning and social integration within higher education institutions, is a key factor for both educational and social inclusion, the creation of necessary prerequisites for successful realization of representatives of vulnerable groups on the labor market after their graduation.

Making this happen requires planning and organizing activities aimed at the access of people from vulnerable groups /with disabilities, refugees, from ethnic minorities, poor, etc./ to the entire process within the framework of the "student life cycle" - from accessing information about opportunities to continue education in higher schools, through access to application and training, as well as participation in extracurricular activities, to graduation. This requires a careful review of the needs of main vulnerable groups in terms of higher education attainment.

What has been mentioned so far is directly related to the improvement of the quality of education in higher education institutions - the successful integration of students from different vulnerable groups should be part of the strategies of higher education institutions for quality education. This, in turn, can be subject to assessment through accreditation procedures, through which to signal higher schools about the importance of ensuring quality educational and social inclusion of people from vulnerable groups.

In view of what has been said so far, a discussion within the round table is foreseen on issues such as:

- Which vulnerable groups should be targeted by higher education institutions in terms of improving their social and educational inclusion? What are their specific needs?
- Do higher education institutions have policies directly aimed at such groups, with a view to achieving their optimal social and educational integration?
- Do higher education institutions have activities to investigate the special needs of students from such groups, as well as to track problems within their studies?
- Do the higher schools have activities regarding the career guidance of students from vulnerable groups, do they track their realization after graduation?

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- Are there good practices in the field of social inclusion in the space of higher education?
- What kind of indicators within the ESG can be added?
- Is there a need for a separate standard, and if so, how can it be defined?

Further to the purposes of the conference and of the outlined issues, we propose for a roundtable discussion of type #1 to be held. As per the provided literature, we propose for up to six tables to be held, with four questions asked consecutively:

Q1: Which vulnerable groups should be targeted by higher education institutions in terms of improving their social and educational inclusion?

Q2: What are the identified groups' special needs within the context of higher education?

Q3: What policies/activities/good practices related to the special needs of vulnerable groups have the participants observed in their respective systems of higher education?

Q4: Should new ESG be constructed specifically targeting the policies/activities/good practices outlined so far? If yes, what indicators would such an ESG encompass?

A group will be given a question, after which they will be given some time (the amount is dependent on the allocated timeframe for the session by the conference) to brainstorm and draft down up to 3 answers to each question, and each question's answers will be dependent on the answers of previous questions. After each question, the group will present their findings. After all groups have finished with their discussion, a large-format discussion with all participants can take place.

The proposed format can be adapted for either separate sessions, with one or several tables taking place at once, or a larger scale discussion, where all six tables take place at the same time.

The aims and intentions of the author(s) for the proposal

The aim of the START project, and the proposed discussion in particular, is to ascertain and further the sensitivity of the topic of social inclusion among HEQA agencies in Europe and worldwide. The inclusion of students with special educational, lingual, physical, informational needs within higher education is among the crucial steps to social inclusion. The quality of life and outcomes of students from these and other vulnerable groups can be massively improved by both providing opportunities not previously available to them, and, by consequence, further their inclusion within their respective communities. One way in which HEQA agencies can assist with these goals by incorporating the social inclusion aspect into their respective systems of higher education accreditation, by evaluation of the policies higher education institutions have in place to ensure that the special needs of all students are met, and that their opportunities for academic and social success are the same as any other student's.

SWITEX – The Swiss Index for Teaching Excellence

Prof. Dr. Michael Derrer, Business School of Lucerne University for Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU), Switzerland

The presentation will address the sub-theme of "Bridging the Gap to Quality Education for All." Specifically, we will explore practical steps institutions can take in their internal quality assurance protocols to create inclusive learning environments, enhance diversity, and provide quality education that transcends socio-economic disparities. Specific

The presentation will delve into the Swiss Index for Teaching Quality (SWITEX), highlighting its relevance in assessing and improving teaching quality within tertiary education institutions.

By sharing experiences and best practices related to SWITEX, the session aims to incite participants to get acquainted with actionable strategies to enhance teaching quality and promote inclusivity within their respective institutions.

How transnational education can serve to widen access to quality international education

Dr. Fabrizio Trifiro, international expert in quality assurance and international education and member of the BAC Accreditation Committee, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

Transnational education (TNE), as the provision of education programmes in other countries, can play a crucial role in widening access to international education, by helping meeting demand from students who might be unable or unwilling to travel internationally. However, TNE still faces important recognition challenges, which ultimately rests on consideration of quality and quality assurance. This round-table session aims to facilitate discussion about the value of TNE as means to meet SDG4, the quality assurance and recognition challenges it faces, and possible shared solutions.

Outline

TNE has significant potential as a mode of delivery that can widen access to education and specifically international education. Many students internationally would consider pursuing an international degree but might not be willing or able to travel internationally, be it for economic or personal reasons. A broad range of international dynamics such as the Covid pandemic, increased social unrest and armed conflicts, financial downturns, environmental deterioration, and tightening international student visas in traditional receiving countries of international student mobility, have increased demand for international education 'closer to home'. TNE can meet this demand, whilst also delivering other benefits, such as halting brain drain, facilitating knowledge transfer, and supporting the internationalisation of local education systems.

However, TNE still faces significant challenges to its recognition as an acceptable mode of study. Not all countries recognise TNE qualifications, with particular modes of TNE delivery such as online delivery and franchise and validation collaborative arrangements facing more challenges than others, despite their socially progressive potential. Most of these recognition challenges rest on different views and perception about the TNE, differences compounded by the lack of an international framework for the quality assurance of TNE and different quality assurance practices.

This potential of TNE and the recognition challenges it faces have been clearly captured and acknowledged by the UNESCO Global Recognition Convention, which places specific emphasis on:

- the role of that non-traditional modes of learning, such as TNE and online learning, can play in supporting progress towards SDG4, widening access to quality education and support life-long learning for all
- the importance of developing adequate quality assurance mechanisms and solutions to inform international confidence, and ultimately recognition, of TNE qualifications.

In order to overcome the challenges affecting less traditional modes of learning, and thus untap their social and progressive potential the UNESCO Global Convention calls for the development of 'platforms for national authorities to collaborate across borders and regions to develop better tools and practices for the recognition of higher education qualifications.' INQAAHE is ideally placed to provide such a platform.

This session aims to leverage the convening power of INQAAHE to facilitate a collective discussion amongst the international quality assurance community about the social value of TNE as means to widen access to quality (international) education, the quality assurance and recognition challenges TNE faces, and possible shared solutions. It will offer a platform for quality assurance agencies to share their views and experiences of TNE, and their different practices of quality assuring TNE, with a view to helping improve reciprocal understanding and informing shared understanding about the value of TNE and its quality requirements.

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The approach adopted

This session will be highly interactive. It will start by setting out briefly (no more than 10 minutes) the context as outlined in the above description. This context setting will focus on the value of TNE, its recognition challenges due to a diversity of quality assurance approaches and views about what quality TNE should look like, existing international policy documents (such as the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines, the UNESCO Global Convention, and the INQAAHE International Standards and Guidelines), the importance of cross-border dialogue and cooperation, and a recent concrete tool developed by the presenter to inform international benchmarking of TNE.

Delegates will then be asked to share in small groups their views and experiences. The discussion will be structured around four main areas:

- *Benefits and value*

What do delegates view as the main benefits and value of TNE

- *Quality and quality assurance*

What do delegates view as the main challenges for safeguarding the quality of TNE, and for its quality assurance and recognition?

- *Good practice and solutions:*

What is the delegates' experience with quality assuring TNE, either in-bound or out-bound? Any good practice to recommend? Any suggested solutions to the existing recognition challenges?

- *Cross-border cooperation*

What measures and initiative would delegates suggest to foster cross-border cooperation in the quality assurance of TNE, with a specific view to addressing difference in views and practices, quality assurance gaps, and regulatory burden?

Each discussion group/table will be asked to report in plenary the main points discussed after each thematic discussion. These points will be captured on flip-charts, or other similar means, with a view to identifying key points for consideration that could inform INQAAHE's activity in this area, and/or that of its membership.

Ensuring inclusive and diverse teaching approaches within quality assurance protocols

Radu-Ioan CIOBANU, Associate Professor and researcher at the Computer Science department of the Faculty of Automatic Control and Computers, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

Monica DRĂGOICEA, Full Professor in Systems Engineering at the Faculty of Automatic Control and Computers, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

Ciprian DOBRE, Leader of the MobyLab group, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

Petrișor ȚUCĂ, Head of the Quality Assurance Department, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

ABSTRACT

This proposed roundtable addresses the challenge of inclusivity and diversity within teaching materials and methodologies in higher education. Focusing on quality assurance protocols, the session aims to dissect the problem, analyze approaches, and discuss implementing quality measures. Divided into three segments, each consisting of three 20-minute discussions, participants will rotate between tables to explore topics ranging from homogeneous teaching resources and suitable pedagogical methods to language barriers. The roundtable commences with an introduction contextualizing the issue and real-life examples, followed by the three segments: problem analysis, addressing approaches, and quality assurance protocols. Each segment explores vital aspects, including curriculum review, faculty development, multilingual support, integrating diversity criteria, audits, and benchmarking practices. The session concludes with a synthesis of key takeaways, emphasizing collaboration for inclusive education. The session duration is approximately 3.5 hours, promoting collaboration, the exchange of ideas, and the formulation of actionable strategies aimed at achieving fair access to quality education for everyone.

Methodology

One practical problem that a quality agency in a higher education institution might face when aiming to bridge the gap to quality education for all could revolve around the inclusivity and diversity of teaching materials and methodologies. Institutions of higher education should aspire to provide equitable access to quality education for all students. However, existing teaching materials and methodologies might inadvertently perpetuate socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic biases, creating barriers for certain student demographics. This poses a challenge in the pursuit of inclusivity and diversity within internal quality assurance protocols.

In the roundtable proposed here, our aim is to offer several rounds of discussions. In such a round, around 8 people would sit together at 6 tables and discuss the points mentioned below in about 20 minutes. After this time interval passes, the participants are shuffled between tables and begin a new discussion of a new topic with a different group. We envision a three-pronged roundtable: the first set of 20-minute discussions will focus on analyzing the problem in three steps, the second set will analyze various approaches of addressing the problem (also in three steps), and the final set will discuss quality assurance protocols that can be implemented to help address the problem (again in a three-part discussion format).

Prior to the 9 discussions split into three sections, the session will begin with an introduction to the problem statement. The moderator will contextualize the issue with real-life examples and data highlighting the impact on students from different socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. This part will take about 10-15 minutes.

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After the introduction, the roundtable will begin. Overall, it will have a total of 9 separate discussions, so it would last about three hours (naturally, this can be adjusted according to what the organizers require). We now present the three components of our proposed round table.

Analysis of the problem (three 20-minute talks, participants switch tables after each of them)

1. Homogeneity in teaching materials. The discussion will assess the degree in which current educational resources lack diverse perspectives, representing a limited range of cultures, languages, and socio-economic backgrounds, in their organizations.
2. Teaching methodologies' suitability. The second talk will analyze to what degree are pedagogical approaches able to cater to varied learning styles, and whether they are hindering engagement and comprehension for some students.
3. Access barriers. Finally, the last talk of this analysis will focus on the unique obstacles confronting universities as they strive to impart knowledge and expertise in Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) to the next generation. Achieving social inclusion necessitates improving access, participation, and learning outcomes for students in economically disadvantaged regions, as well as those attending schools with limited resources to offer comprehensive education.

Approaches to addressing the problem (three 20-minute talks, participants switch tables after each of them)

1. Curriculum and material review. This talk will analyze how institutions (with the help of quality assurance protocols) can implement a systematic review of existing teaching materials and curricula to identify the gaps in diversity and inclusivity, encouraging the creation or adaptation of resources that represent a wide array of cultural perspectives and languages.
2. Faculty development. Based on a curriculum and material review, the next natural step would be to offer training and support for educators to employ inclusive teaching methodologies, embracing diverse learning styles and cultural backgrounds, encouraging the utilization of multi-modal resources to cater to varied student needs. This 20-minute discussion will analyze various methods of implementing this task.
3. Enhancing Academic Assistance. Concluding this section, the last discussion will present strategies for offering educational support services and materials in multiple languages, catering to students with varied linguistic backgrounds. This approach aims to create an environment that encourages students to unleash their creativity while mastering knowledge across a range of academic subjects.

Quality assurance protocols (three 20-minute talks, participants switch tables after each of them)

1. Incorporating diversity criteria. The purpose of this last section (composed again of three parts) will be to propose new quality assurance protocols (or analyzing existing ones, if there are any) that can help in applying the conclusion from the first two sections. For the first part of this section, the discussion will revolve around integrating diversity and inclusivity metrics within quality assurance assessments, and in evaluating curriculum, teaching methods, and materials based on their ability to cater to diverse student populations.
2. Regular audits and feedback mechanisms. This discussion will propose methods for implementing periodic audits and feedback loops to assess the inclusivity and effectiveness of teaching materials and methodologies, using student feedback and performance data to make necessary adjustments.
3. Benchmarking with best practices. Finally, methods of benchmarking against other institutions that have successfully implemented inclusive practices will be addressed, that can help institutions learn from their approaches and adapt them to suit each unique context.

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After the discussions finish, we aim to conclude the roundtable with a summary of key takeaways, emphasizing the importance of collective action in addressing the identified challenges. We will attempt to encourage ongoing collaboration and the creation of a network for sharing resources, best practices, and continued support in promoting inclusive education. This final part will take approximately 10-15 minutes. Thus, the overall duration of the event will be about 3.5 hours.

By structuring the roundtable in this manner, we believe that it facilitates an inclusive, collaborative, and solution-oriented approach, harnessing the expertise and perspectives of various stakeholders to address the multifaceted challenge of creating inclusive learning environments within higher education institutions' quality assurance frameworks.

The aims and intentions of the author(s) for the proposal: By addressing the lack of inclusivity and diversity within teaching materials and methodologies through internal quality assurance protocols, higher education institutions can take substantial steps toward providing equitable access to quality education. Such efforts not only break down socio-economic and cultural barriers but also create a more enriching and supportive learning environment for all students, ensuring they can thrive regardless of their background or language. Our aim is to challenge participants to discuss methods of implementing these efforts, their feasibility, and the difficulties that they may possess.

Quality Assurance for Digital Education and Micro-credentials

Mag. Diane Freiberger, MBA, Managing Director, Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), Germany

Michael Stephan, M.A., Division Manager Certifications, Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), Germany

ABSTRACT

Quality higher education is not only a country's or a region's investment into development and prosperity, but also a personal investment in the future. For those who cannot afford this investment due to their socio-economic background or other impairments, access to higher education is a challenge. To lower the threshold to higher education, online education and micro-credentials can be useful pathways to low-level access to quality education. Participants in this round table format will discuss important aspects of conceiving digital education and micro-credential offerings and the importance and role of quality assurance in this process.

Outline

Quality (higher) education is an investment in the future. For a huge part of the world population access to quality higher education is hampered by lacking the perspective to conduct a several year study programme (with simultaneous waiver of income), the distance to the next higher education institution, mental or physical impairment or simply by inability to present admission documents.

FIBAA will focus on two innovations in the field of Higher Education that provide opportunities to overcome these obstacles, lower the threshold to higher education and bridge the gap for disadvantaged people: Online education and micro-credentials. With that focus, FIBAA will draw attention to necessary questions of internal and external quality assurance for conceiving and offering online education and micro-credentials. Online education in this context is seen as an alternative or supplement to traditional face-to-face teaching, whereas micro-credentials are small learning entities seen as an alternative or supplement to full academic programmes.

The following aspects describe the potential of online education and micro-credentials to overcome socio-economic constraints to participate in higher education:

Online education bears the potential to study with unlimited flexibility in terms of place and time. Thus, students are enabled to learn without having to cover or commute large distances and without having to afford a living far away from family infrastructure.

Online education may also help to achieve more flexibility in terms of when students invest time to study. Students can better balance responsibilities within their families with completing learning programmes at the same time. From an economic point of view, the investment in providing students with internet and technical devices seems to be lower compared to the investment of neglecting potential students in remote areas or investments to get students closer to HEIs and away from their families.

In this context, micro-credentials may allow entry into education in small steps, avoiding the obligation to commit oneself for several years. This lower investment is twofold: there are fewer actual costs and less opportunity costs. Micro-credentials easily allow for part-time learning and education in small entities. This makes education available and manageable for those who have obligations like caring for children or ill family members or earning their living.

Moreover, micro-credentials can be designed as face-to face-teaching to develop regional population as well as online education for remote students. Online education and micro- credentials also offer the access to

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education for people with physical or mental impairments. Impairments may obstruct people to commit themselves to a long and dense study programme, or to participate in all aspects of face-to-face-teaching.

Micro-credentials can also open ways to specific job profiles that require less formal admission documents. In this way, micro-credentials gradually open the way to more economic independency. This again will enable new perspectives for continuous further development whenever needed or intended. Thus, micro-Credentials will contribute to a diverse landscape of learning paths and educational biographies.

Micro-credentials can help to ensure employability in transforming economies by up- or re- skilling, thus enabling people to continuously develop themselves and keep up their employability or help them re-enter the job market after periods of disengagement. Micro- credentials can help making sure that people do not get lost during the transformation of the economy, society or organisation and finally end up in long-term unemployment. Thus, micro- credentials help to support the idea of life-long learning and keeping up with technological, societal, and organisational development.

As a summary, online education and micro-credentials offer great potential to bring together students from diverse socio-economic and regional backgrounds. By applying micro-credentials and online education to reach and activate students that would otherwise be out of reach for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), HEIs will enhance the diversity of educational biographies.

To sustainably exploit the potential of micro-credentials and online education, quality assurance is crucial: Validated elements of quality assurance have to be applied, like defining target groups and objectives of the educational offer, setting up appropriate didactical concepts, ensuring qualified teaching staff, creating content, ensuring internal quality assurance to continuously evaluate and monitor the success of the educational offer. Furthermore, interfaces and redundancies with, demarcations against, and transitions to traditional educational offerings (face-to-face teaching, full academic programmes) have to be considered.

External quality assurance following cross-border principles has the potential to make online educational programmes and micro-credentials comparable, transferable and recognisable. Credibility of digital programmes and micro-credentials is enhanced, and they develop a legitimation against traditional and formal educational offerings. By this, external quality supports HEIs in creating diverse educational biographies and in fulfilling the promise of permeability and flexibility of life-long learning independent of (economic/social) status, place or other impairments (see also: UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education).

FIBAA (Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation) is a European quality assurance agency for higher education and continuing education programmes. Founded in 1994, FIBAA is registered as an accreditation agency in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Vietnam and Ukraine. FIBAA is also registered with EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and a member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education) and AQAN (ASEAN Quality Assurance Network). FIBAA has developed two certifications applicable for online education and micro-credentials:

- With the certification "Excellence in Digital Education"®, FIBAA has created an instrument for quality assurance in digital teaching, defining quality standards for digital teaching and learning and making them nationally and internationally comparable. The certification is preferably applied as an institutional certification but can also be applied for department or programmes.
- The "FIBAA Quality Seal for certified continuing education courses" is a nationally and internationally applicable instrument for quality assurance in continuing education and micro-credentials. The certification defines quality standards for courses without an academic degree, makes them comparable across borders and contributes to the permeability of educational biographies by also checking the requirements for an ECTS accreditation recommendation.

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Aims and intentions of the author(s) for the proposal

In this format, FIBAA will at first present practical insights into external quality assurance of micro-credentials and digital educational concepts. FIBAA will then discuss and strategize with higher education institutions about their way of doing online education and providing micro-credentials, their motivation or restraint to move forward with it, gather new ideas and perspectives and encourage a fruitful discussion and learning among all participants.

Participants will get the opportunity to discuss several aspects and challenges of quality assurance for digital education and micro-credentials, e.g.

- necessary didactic considerations for online education (opposed to face-to-face teaching)
- necessary didactic considerations for small learning entities (against full academic programmes)
- ensuring staff qualification (technical and didactical) for online education
- ensuring internal qualification for evaluation and recognition of micro-credentials
- making education permeable and stackable by assigning credits (e.g. ECTS) and qualification levels (e.g. EQF), by avoiding redundancies and by creating logical interfaces and transitions
- creating a common understanding of quality
- exploiting the opportunity to cover future skills
- discussing and balancing the advantages and disadvantages of digital teaching and learning against face-to-face-learning, and how to meet disadvantages by QA
- discussing and balancing the advantages and disadvantages of micro-credentials against fixed curricula, and how to meet disadvantages by QA.

THEME 3. DESIGNING CURRICULA FOR SOCIETAL IMPACT

Quality Nursing Education: Linking the Curriculum to Program Assessment

Nell Ard, PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF, Chief Accreditation Officer, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), United States

Keri Nunn-Ellison, EdD, MSN/Ed, RN, CNE, Senior Director, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), United States

ABSTRACT

This workshop will provide information about the essential elements of a nursing curriculum that reflects quality education. The participant will be able to share their curriculum challenges with other colleagues, critique their program outcomes and link these to quality indicators for international nursing programs. Participants will also be able to begin developing a systematic plan of evaluation to ensure data regarding the quality of the program are available to faculty to inform program decision-making related to a nursing program.

Outline

- I. Discuss the key elements in a quality nursing curriculum.
- II. Discuss the importance and components of having a systematic plan of evaluation to assess the overall program.
- III. Discuss the importance of identifying student learning outcomes for the overall curriculum and ensuring the student learning outcomes are specific and measurable.
- IV. Critique the current student learning outcomes for your nursing program.
- V. Discuss how evaluation methods should align with the student learning outcomes.
- VI. Discuss the use of direct and indirect assessment methods in a nursing program.
- VII. Develop a systematic plan of evaluation.

Aims and Intentions

Assist international nursing programs to identify the quality indicators for the program. Assist nursing programs to determine how their nursing programs can be improved. Assist programs to have data available to verify quality as well as to assist faculty in making changes as needed.

Approach Adopted to Deliver the Session and engage the learner

Provide an overview of the key elements and quality indicators for a nursing program anywhere in the world. Multiple interactive exercises to critique the components of a curriculum. Critique or develop a systematic plan of evaluation.

From goals to gains: embedding social impact and sustainability literacy into the curriculum

Scott G. Blair, PhD, Content Development Editor, Sulitest Impact; CANIE – Climate Action Network for International Educators, France

Dr. Kerr Castle, Quality Enhancement and Standards Specialist, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This session addresses principles, approaches, and good practice in evaluating, revising, and assessing curricula in ways that maximize social impact and environmental stewardship. Using an innovative technique called reverse brainstorming, this session engages participants in an interactive process of identifying and overcoming impediments to curricular reform. Premised upon embedding key concepts and issues of the UN Sustainable Development Goals across the disciplines, this forum focuses upon empowering instructors to provide students with the core knowledge and cognitive skills they require if they are to both meet the sustainability challenges of the 21st century and thrive professionally within it. Our shared goal is to improve skills in designing and assessing impact-oriented Education for Sustainable Development (ESD–UNESCO 2030) as a hallmark of both quality education and quality assurance oversight. As such, this forum highlights the important role quality assurance agencies play in both informing the process of curricular reform (via quality assurance indicators on social and environmental impact) and in acknowledging meaningful action therein (via accreditation tied to corresponding data-based student learning outcomes).

Outline

In the face of the global climate crisis, the very notion of what constitutes a quality education is fast changing, both in terms of institutional operations and student learning outcomes. *Education for sustainable development* is the new, good practice in higher education and curricular reform for societal impact plays a critical role in this process. How we introduce, normalize, and evaluate ESD principles and competencies—both within individual higher education providers and as a sector—is of the utmost importance.

Aims and Intentions (Intended Learning Outcomes)

1. Appreciate the important role social-impact-oriented curricular reform plays in Higher Ed quality assurance regimes
2. Identify institutional, cultural, and societal impediments to curricular reform processes and goals
3. Enumerate case studies in which institutions overcome impediments and effect meaningful reform
4. Develop effective strategies for facilitating the work of instructors and administrators in curricular reform processes
5. Provide insight into tools and techniques for assessing the societal impact of curricular reform
6. Relate curricular reform to the fostering of student global citizenship, ESD competencies, and employability
7. Demonstrate the important role quality assurance agencies have in accompanying and validating institutional efforts in effecting curricular transformation for societal impact

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Sub-theme 3. Designing Curricula for Societal Impact

Session Approach and AV Requirements

This session is highly interactive. It is the participants who must do the heavy lifting in working together—via the reverse brainstorming activity—to identify and navigate impediments, articulate tactics for winning over stakeholder allies, and design and deploy assessment strategies. The forum is designed to provide participants with the practical experience of understanding the many challenges of designing and reviewing curricula in order (as quality assurance professionals) to better advise and assess institutions in their respective journeys towards this important societal goal.

Academic integrity-artificial intelligence nexus

Assoc. Professor Fernando F. Padró, PhD, Associate Professor (Pathways) and Chair of the Academic Board, University of Southern Queensland, Australia

Professor Karen Trimmer, School of Education, University of Southern Queensland, Australia

ABSTRACT

Universities face regulatory, ethical and legal considerations in treating academic integrity cases. These are complicated by the development of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) software. The nexus of the two challenge the relevance and effectiveness of curricula in meeting disciplinary/professional outlooks and social impact. Institutional agility, particularly through policy and procedure development and implementation, is critical because the fast-evolving technology and the learning curve that occurs to determine the negative and positive impacts of GAI on the assurance of the outcomes derived from learning and research processes. This presentation takes a risk-based look at issues influencing institutional agility in maintaining quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) from the perspective of implied warranty of fitness, i.e., that student performance is the student's own, and the research output of staff and students is the result of their own efforts.

Outline

This presentation is the result of working on various projects related to academic integrity and the rise of GAI use in industry and in educational practice. One area of concern was how to deal with both from a perspective of risk. Academic integrity concerns have morphed, if not evolved, in higher education throughout the 21st century. Interest in terms of contract cheating, third party providers of prior assessment items and identification of students partaking assessments face-to-face and online (invigilation) had become the major concerns alongside the traditional concerns over cheating in exams, plagiarism and collusion. Then in 2022, the advent of ChatGPT 4.0 became the Black Swan event that has added a new and higher level of worry (Padró et al., 2023). The problem here is that the mixing of the two has created a nexus that presents a wicked problems to regulators and HEIs because of the fluidity of technological developments and the ensuing unknown unknown dealing with this nexus represents.

Our university, as most other universities, have had to figure out how to manage this nexus by [1] identifying it, [2] getting to know what current practice by students and institutions, [3] becoming aware of the impact of the ensuing arms race (Eaton, 2022), [4] determining disciplinary interests and concerns, [5] identifying risks that can be associated with the academic integrity-artificial intelligence nexus, and [6] figuring out how to adapt institutional policies and procedures relating to academic integrity to meet the challenges of GAI. A broad review of the traditional literature strands had yet to address GAI because of its newness. These strands often treated academic integrity as a risk, but arguably do not truly use a risk lens when discussing the various elements often associated with academic integrity from an institutional practice, student or social perspectives. Reflection of what management and staff knew about the nexus and institutional response to intrinsic and regulatory interests in managing the nexus came up with areas of concerns, where the academic integrity-artificial intelligence nexus generates risks to the university and the sector (especially in light of legislative and regulatory requirements). Policy and procedures, the ability to adapt to changes of all types brought about by the need to be brought up-to-date to ensure proper management of acceptable and non-acceptable parameters within the nexus was the biggest risk problem identified by us who have to deal with the problem at the unit level, at the investigative level, at the decision-making level and the appellate level (when this comes into play). Risk registers themselves and the corollary concerns of different levels of risk registers within HEIs and their coordination within institutions also seemed to be another major risk to effective HEI management of the nexus. Related have been issues of linkage of risk register formation and oversight with strategic planning and the politics of risk register 'ownership'. A risk of a broader sweep that we identified is of a social nature that

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represents a clash between traditional academic values and the student as consumer culture that has become socially acceptable when students pay a high proportion of their cost of education (Bunce, 2022; Padró et al., 2023).

What this forum envisions is to:

1. Provide a background of the issues that will be discussed at each table.
2. There will be an initial discussion of all participants of how we define the academic integrity-artificial intelligence nexus to identify level of acceptance of the nexus, if there is such a connection.
3. Each table will discuss the merits of the risks identified above to determine if the risk is appropriate; if no, then how should the risk be framed; regardless, if the identified risk is considered to be a legitimate risk, provide ideas for good institutional QA and QC practice in light of regulatory compliance and effective HEI governance and management.
4. Because of time constraints, the discussions are meant to be thought provocations; however each table is expected to report and lead a quick discussion on their deliberations to see if there is a form of initial consensus is found.

Aims/intentions

1. Provide the basis for considering and treating the connection between academic integrity-artificial intelligence as a nexus with its special parameters.
2. Give feedback on the appropriateness of the issues identified by the presenters affecting the nexus by adding, eliminating or modifying the initial areas given.
3. Generate a discussion from a risk-based perspective to the issues impacting effective institutional responses to this nexus to inform the guideline documents to higher education institutions (HEIs) regarding institutional approaches to meeting regulatory requirements on academic integrity and/or acceptable/unacceptable application of GAI software within an HEI.
4. Identify practices HEIs can use to meet regulatory requirements and/or establish good practices on how to manage the academic integrity-artificial intelligence nexus.

Delivery approach

The format used is based on getting participants to contribute to solving the issues surrounding how HEIs manage the challenges associated with the academic integrity-artificial intelligence nexus in a way that does not inadvertently disallow the teaching of GAI within disciplines adopting GAI as part of their professional skill sets while still allowing them to warrant the veracity of their academic credentials and outputs. Therefore, a combination of a modified Delphi technique and 'World Café' format will be used. The six tables for the practical problem forum approach will focus on particular risks that have been identified to determine whether these make sense overall, if the approach toward the risk is the appropriate one and what can be done from a regulatory perspective (and institutional perspective as well, if sufficient institutional representatives are part of the presentation). The idea is for each group to discuss and then report the results of their discussion to all members of the session and then to provide a quick overall discussion to note additional concepts, ideas and proposals. This approach provides feedback to the presenters as well as notions that participants can use at their own agency, organisation or institution.

Curricular Mapping for Societal Impact: A Strategic Framework for Curriculum Design

Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa, senior researcher of Development Economics and independent researcher, Brussels

Prof. Marius Gabriel Petrescu, PhD Professor and PhD advisor at Faculty of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti (Romania)

Prof. Dr. Mirela Panait, PhD Professor at Faculty of Economic Sciences, Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti, Romania

ABSTRACT

Curricular mapping stands as an important tool in modern educational landscapes, substantially serving in shaping curricula tailored for societal impact. This paper investigates the strategic utilization of curricular mapping methodologies as a means to craft educational frameworks that transcend traditional paradigms, fostering a profound societal imprint. Emphasizing the interaction of academia with the societal needs, this study explains the systematic approach of curricular mapping to envision, design, and implement curricula geared towards addressing pressing societal challenges.

Furthermore, the paper explores the iterative process of identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing key learning outcomes, content, pedagogies, and assessment strategies, culminating in a cohesive curriculum that not only imparts knowledge but also instigates transformative societal change. Moreover, this study illustrates how this methodology facilitates the cultivation of critical skills, ethical consciousness, and civic engagement among learners, empowering them to become proactive contributors to societal advancement.

Finally, this paper examines case studies and best practices across diverse educational settings, illuminating the adaptability and efficacy of curricular mapping in varying contexts. By extrapolating lessons from these instances, it advocates for the integration of curricular mapping as a strategic framework within educational institutions, envisioning curricula that serve as catalysts for positive societal transformation, and not only.

Responding to the Third Qatar National Development Strategy: An NCQAA Perspective

Dr. Mazen O. Hasna, researcher, represents Qatar on the Arabian Gulf University's Board of Trustees

Dr. Rashid S. Al-Kuwari, member of the National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation (NCQAA), Qatar

ABSTRACT

In 2023, the National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation (NCQAA) developed a set of institutional accreditation standards for higher education institutions in Qatar. Towards the end of the year, the State has announced the third national development strategy (NDS3) 2024-2030 that should guide the strategic directions of the country in all aspects toward the year 2030, the year of realizing Qatar National Vision (QNV). In response to that, NCQAA has analyzed the NDS3, and put an action plan to align with the new strategy. In the presentation, a summary of NDS3, its implications on the higher education sector, and the response of NCQAA as the national accreditation agency will be provided with specific examples.

Outline

In 2008, a national vision for the state of Qatar was published to lay down how the country should look like in 2030. With its emphasis on human development, calling for an educated population, there have been ever since three national development strategies that were articulated, the latest of which came in early 2024, to guide the realization of the national vision.

The national committee for qualifications and academic accreditation (NCQAA) was established in late 2022 to manage the national qualifications framework, and to start the process of institutional and programmatic accreditation in the country. In 2023, NCQAA has developed a set of institutional accreditation standards that followed best international practices while catering to the local needs of Qatar. NCQAA standards are being piloted in 2024 with two institutions, and throughout the process, comments and implementation feedback is being collected to adjust the standards before a wider implementation. When NDS3 was released, NCQAA felt the need to have a thorough examination of the strategy for an effort to align, not only its standards, but rather its overall operation. The response of NCQAA has two folds: Operational, and on the standards' level. Operational response: NDS3 has a strong focus on efficiency and competitiveness, especially in the governmental sector which usually suffers from lower efficiency levels. NCQAA is currently revising its organizational structure and is in the process of developing an internal quality assurance manual to enhance its operations' efficiency. Institutional Accreditation Standards Response: after careful reading of NDS3, specific strategic directions and keywords that are related to higher education have been identified. These include: Enhancing the status of Qatar as hub for higher education, focus on quality of graduates to support emerging economic and industrial clusters, increased focus on STEM disciplines, support for the innovations and entrepreneurship national frameworks, among others. The alignment of the standards can be done through different approaches:

- a) Updating the standards: where more specific key words can be introduced to the relevant standards to reflect the focus of the strategy (e.g., entrepreneurship, sustainable development, etc.).
- b) Adding a specific criterion under standard 5 (Making Impact and Meeting Stakeholders Expectations) which requires institutions to report on how NDS3 requirements were addressed by the institution.
- c) Keeping the standards unchanged but updating the resource manual of the standards to include examples and clarifications on how to respond to NDS3.
- d) Adding a section to the self-study report which requires institutions to report on how NDS3 requirements were addressed by the institution.

The presenters plan to engage the audience to learn more about their experiences of aligning accreditation standards to national strategies, and what level they believe will be both more effective and sustainable.

Harmonizing Heterogeneity: Ensuring Quality in Interdisciplinary Programs Offered through a 'Multiversity' Framework

Samah Gamar, PhD., Director of Academic Affairs, Qatar Foundation Higher Education, Qatar

ABSTRACT

Tertiary education, and its quality assurance systems, need to be agile, adapting to society's increasingly complex and nascent challenges. The "**Multiversity Model**" exemplifies a shift towards socially-responsive interdisciplinary qualifications by blurring academic and institutional boundaries, enabling customizable student pathways through interdisciplinary qualifications. This roundtable session will explore the possibilities for the adaptation of quality assurance mechanisms to such interdisciplinary programs, the tracking and utilization of student and stakeholder feedback, the overcoming of structural barriers within quality assurance systems, and the measurement of initiatives' success in fostering civic engagement and societal contributions among graduates.

Outline

Over the past few centuries, the focus of higher education has expanded well beyond the development of reasoning and philosophical inquiry to the preparation of individuals with academic and professional skills for employment. This has further evolved in the past two decades to incorporate civic knowledge, skills, and values, particularly in Western university systems where such institutions are believed to be social actors and conduits of participatory values (Kołczyńska, 2020). The Bologna Process 2020 Report (EECEA, 2020) highlights the social dimension of higher education quality, prompting institutions to demonstrate commitment towards 'developing policies that encourage and support higher education institutions to fulfill their social responsibility and contribute to a more cohesive and inclusive society' (p. 91). Studies which assess linkages between education systems and citizenship demonstrate a positive correlation between educational attainment and active citizenry; as such, universities are increasingly expected to play a more prominent role in preparing graduates to be civically-engaged, leading as agents of change towards the resolution of critical and emergent issues (GUNI, 2017).

Enter the framework of interdisciplinarity, increasingly recognized for its capacity to tackle pressing societal challenges. As both mode and modality, interdisciplinarity integrates multiple fields and approaches of study to offer a nuanced perspective essential for addressing complex issues in today's world. Acknowledging interdisciplinarity's value underscores the imperative for tertiary educational curricula to transcend rigid curricular structures and traditional disciplinary boundaries, to foster a more holistic and adaptable learning environment conducive to solving nascent problems. And yet, many higher education institutions still adhere to traditional, concretized curricular structures that limit students' ability to customize their educational pathways to avail of diverse cross-disciplinary methods, a practice we argue is at odds with growing student and workforce needs as evidenced by data trends. Programs across many tertiary education institutions predominantly mandate 'set menus' of core and specialization courses, and when general education courses are required, irrelevance and inapplicability to emergent societal issues become a likely risk. Given the complexity of global challenges, students and the labour market are increasingly in need of a carefully-curated 'buffet' to allow learners the flexibility to select program components, research, internships, and co-curricular choices that augment their proficiency in addressing burgeoning societal problems.

The Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, with its Education City flagship model that hosts **eight universities** and over 30 qualifications combined, has, until recently, reflected said traditional model of singular disciplinary focus, where each individual program adhered staunchly to programmatic and institutional accreditation and quality assurance standards that herald from different U.S. States, span different quality assurance systems and accrediting bodies, and follow different institutional academic models. However, with the advent of the "**Multiversity Model**" -- campus, disciplinary, curricular, and pedagogical boundaries have been blurred, creating an opportunity for students to **self-chart a pathway**

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that leads to their desired academic, social and professional goals through an interdisciplinary degree earned through credits from different tertiary education institutions within Education City that dually maintains quality assurance standards.

The **Multiversity Model** views not one, but multiple, tertiary education institutions as necessary life-giving components of an educational ecosystem. Within this biome, courses, programs, internships, co-curricular, and research initiatives and endeavours interact with one another – across campuses -- in synergetic ways to facilitate customizable pathways for students. To date, the **Multiversity Model** has yielded such previously uncharted pathways as a joint minor in **Media and Politics** between Northwestern University and Georgetown University; a joint minor in **Film and Design** from Virginia-Commonwealth University and Northwestern University; a joint degree in **Biological Sciences** from Carnegie-Mellon University and Weill Cornell University; and a certificate in **Energy Studies** from Texas A & M University and Georgetown University. In each of these cases, student and workforce demands, prompted by a recognition of growing glocal complexities that require nimble, adaptable programming, instigated what we see as the epitome of social responsibility that contributes to a more cohesive and inclusive society.

The practical problems inherent in this new approach centre on the room - and mechanisms- through which quality assurance systems can adapt to interdisciplinary programs offered in such dynamic ways, potentially across multiple colleges and institutions. The issues that likewise arise pertain to structural barriers that may exist in tertiary education institutions that can ‘trip’ such innovative programming models.

Questions arising from such a model that promotes close collaboration and intense student-centricity while striving towards maintaining quality assurance protocols include (see small group **roundtable questions** below):

Small-Group Rounds

Round One Question:

→ *How can quality assurance mechanisms adapt to ensure their rigour and coherence of interdisciplinary programs, especially when they span multiple institutions (and countries!) with potentially differing standards and accreditation requirements?*

Round Two Question:

→ *How can student learning outcomes and stakeholder feedback be effectively tracked, monitored and utilized to continuously refine and improve interdisciplinary offerings, within a Multiversity Model or otherwise, in order to ensure such offerings remain responsive to student and labour market needs and societal challenges?*

Round Three Question:

→ *What structural barriers currently exist in quality assurance systems at respective tertiary education institutions that restrict the effective implementation and recognition of multi-institutional or joint interdisciplinary programs, and how might these be overcome to foster more flexible, integrative educational pathways that are socially responsible and sensitive to emergent glocal challenges?*

Round Four Question (time-allowing):

→ *How can the success of initiatives such as the Multiversity Model, in their nurturing of socially responsible and adequately prepared graduates, be measured by quality assurance systems? What indicators can be utilized to assess their impact on learners' civic engagement and societal contributions?*

This roundtable session seeks to solicit dynamic perspectives on transforming traditional norms in the tertiary education sector. It is anticipated that attendees will generate and co-construct new insights on how tertiary education institutions can dismantle existing boundaries to leverage strengths for an optimal student experience that provides choices and opportunities for diverse program pathways, interdisciplinarity, and glocal engagement -- all within a sound academic quality, socially-responsive, system.

As a result of attending this roundtable session, participants are anticipated to be able to:

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1. Describe a sample high-level framework for interdisciplinary studies (“Multiversity Model”) that is responsive to student and societal needs and transcends traditional boundaries within tertiary education institutions using the Qatar Foundation Education City model;
2. Discuss strategies for adapting quality assurance frameworks to effectively evaluate and ensure the coherence of interdisciplinary programs across multiple institutions;
3. Explore methods for systematically tracking student outcomes and stakeholder feedback to continuously improve interdisciplinary offerings and their alignment with societal needs; and
4. Propose solutions to structural barriers in tertiary education institutions that hinder the implementation of flexible, socially-responsive interdisciplinary programs.

THEME 4. FOSTERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGES

Bridging HEIs and the Society for promoting the Lifelong Learning: A Case in Japan

Akinori Matsuzaka, Associate Director of the Research and Planning Division, Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA), Japan

Miharu Kato, Assistant Director of the Research and Planning Division, Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA), Japan

ABSTRACT

Given the ongoing birthrates declination and the increasing needs for lifelong learning, shift to the adult education is one of the most realistic ways for many HEIs in Japan. However, when it comes to the present situation, there is an unignorable gap in the understandings between HEIs and the society, and this might be an obstacle to the successful lifelong learning. This paper will describe the landscape in Japan and focus on the efforts by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) to bridge HEIs and the society. In its conclusion, this paper will review the results of the efforts and some remaining issues.

1. Introduction

Traditionally Japanese higher education institutions (HEIs) have mainly enrolled 18-years students. But, with the ongoing birthrates declination, more and more HEIs are now getting difficult to do so and some HEIs are facing financial difficulties due to less enrollment. This is the reason why closing or mergers among HEIs are now on the top of the national policy agenda. If a HEI wants to avoid closing itself, the choice is nothing but making reforms to become more attractive.

In this context, it should be noted that enhancing improving opportunities for adults is also a key issue in Japan. For economic prosperity and individual well-being, lifelong learning including recurrent learning and reskilling are seen as crucial today, and the Japanese government now sets a policy target to it so that more educational programs are offered, especially in graduate schools. Although what described here is a facet of the landscape, making a shift to adult education is one of the most realistic ways for many HEIs.

2. The Needs of Bridging HEIs and the Society

Making successfully such shift requires many efforts for HEIs including sharing understandings on the education with the society. Because without matching the needs in society, any educational program will not attract the people. In this sense, building a communicative relationship between HEIs and the society is necessary. However, when it comes to Japan, communicative relationship is not well formed so far. This is obvious, for example, in the survey by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA).

The JUAA is one of the external quality assurance (EQA) bodies in Japan, having more than 70 years history. As an EQA body, the JUAA is engaged in accreditation, but its working area is not limited there. To support qualitative enhancement by each HEI, the JUAA also works in, for example, research. The abovementioned survey was done under the research institute of the JUAA (RIQAHE) to understand the learning contents or competencies needed today. The table 1 shows the details of the survey.

table 1

Survey Date	<HEIs> From April 22 to June 3, 2022 <Labor market> From 13 to 16, 2022
Methodologies and Process	<HEIs> JUAA sent the questionnaire sheet data to all HEIs and collected online. The sheet consisted of the close-ended questions as well as the open-ended questions. <Labor market> JUAA collected the answer through a panel survey company, targeting the workers for the personnel affairs. The workers at both small and large companies as well as non-profit sectors were invited. The questionnaire included only the close-ended questions.
Number of the Valid Answers	<HEIs> 374 (47.5%) <Labor market> 750 (each 250 from smaller companies, larger companies, non-profit sectors)

The survey brought some noteworthy results. One of these is an unignorable gap in the understandings between HEIs and the society (the labor market). Whereas the emphasis on the data-sciences and its related competencies is common, interdisciplinary education which HEIs offer does not fully meet the interests of the respondents from the labor market. These respondents do not see the importance of it in the same degree as HEIs (figure1, 2). This gap suggests that not all the educational programs might fully match the needs in the society, or at least, there is necessity to encourage both HEIs and the society to communicate for better mutual understanding.

figure 1 (HEIs)

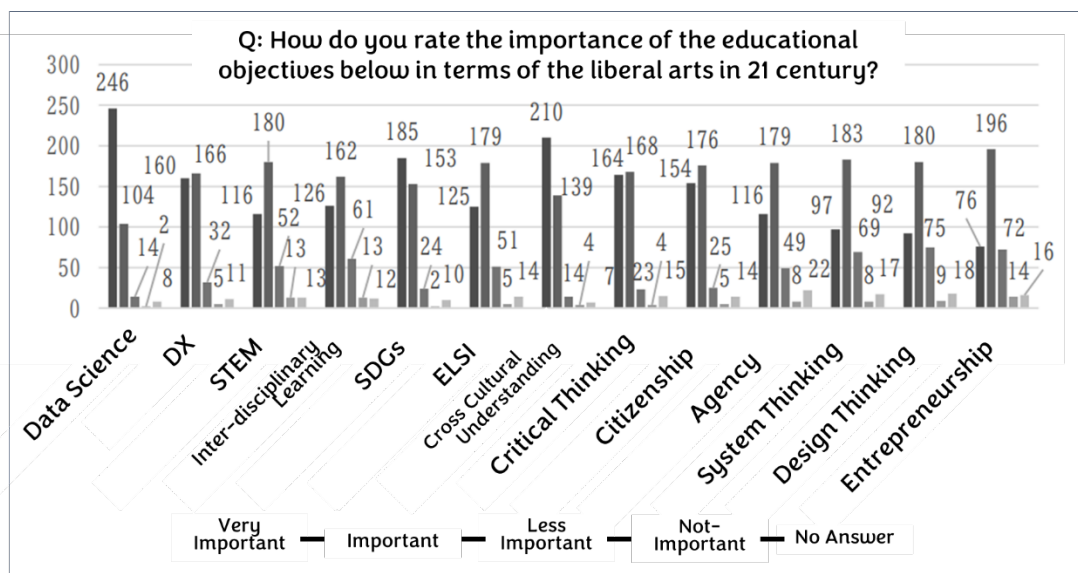
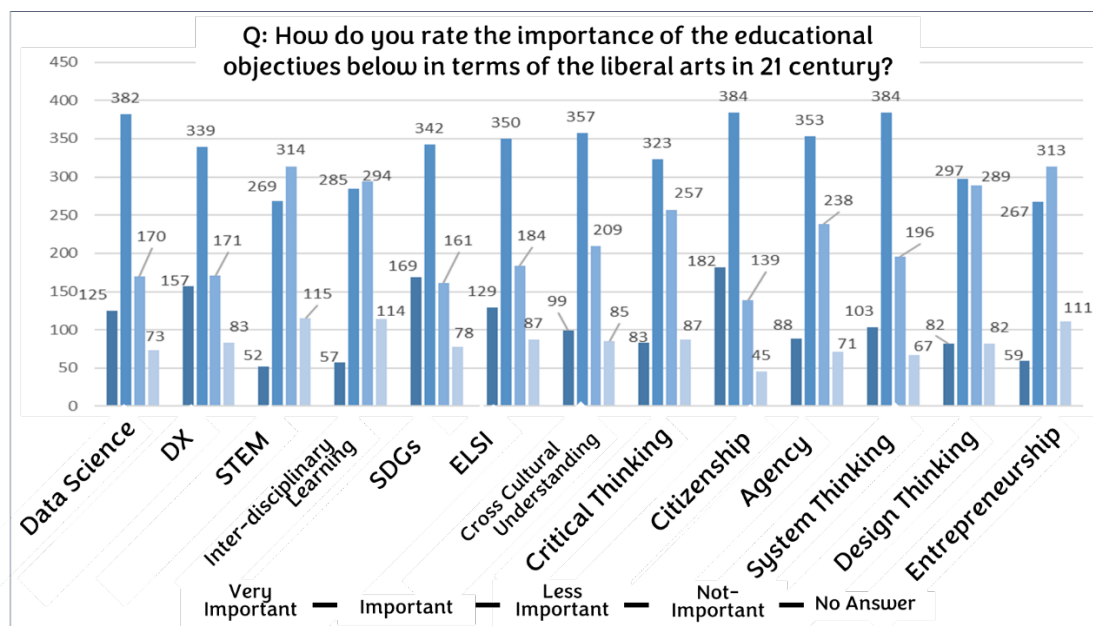


figure 2 (Labor Market)



3. The Actions by the JUAA

Upon the survey results, the JUAA has taken several actions to bridge HEIs and the society. Of course, the JUAA involves some evaluators from the industrial sector and other related parties besides the peers from HEIs, and makes public the accreditation results so that the society can get better understandings on HEIs. The JUAA even has website where anyone can easily get information on the notable points of each accredited HEI and programs. But JUAA is sure that these are not enough, because ultimate responsibility in quality assurance and enhancement exist in HEIs themselves, and this is the case with enhancing the adult education too. HEIs themselves should take actions to close the gap, and the JUAA as a EQA body should support them with giving advice and even intermediating HEIs and the society. Therefore, the JUAA decided to take some actions.

Among these actions, this paper sheds light on the seminars. The JUAA has held the seminars twice so far which concerned with the dialogue between HEIs and the society. The first seminar was held online on December 20, 2022 with the name “RIQAHE’s open seminar,” and second one was on July 28, 2023 in the same name and delivery style. The table 2 shows the details of the two seminars. Each of two seminars had the speakers from both the industrial sector and HEIs, and also invited participants from both sides as well. In each case, the participants were encouraged to exchange opinions and discuss.

table 2

	1st seminar	2nd seminar
Date	Dec. 20, 2022	Jul. 28, 2023
Topic	How the society see the educational outcomes of HEIs?	Liberal Arts for 21st Century and the Possibilities of the dialogue between HEIs and the labor market
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Speeches on the topics (one speaker from HEI & one from a global company) Panel Discussion Discussion among All Participants 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Speech on the Topics (one speaker from HEI) Panel Discussion (incl. short presentations by two panels from a global company & smaller company) Discussion among All Participants
Number of Participants	HEIs: 171 Labor market: 3	HEIs: 160 Labor market: 4

4. Conclusion

The paper concludes with a review of the results and some remaining issues.

On the positive side, many participants found the seminars good opportunities to learn what the other parties think. The feedback questionnaire was answered with lots of such positive comments. The comment “Good opportunities” implies that the seminars could potentially complement the efforts of individual HEIs. Today many HEIs have dialogues with some companies and the other related parties, and sometimes cooperate with them. But it is only a one-to-one relationship. Thus, the seminar might serve HEIs to meet wider range of the parties outside HEIs.

On the other side, there remains some issues. First, the number of participants. The number of participants from outside HEIs were small. This was partly the result of the current ties which the JUAA has with the relevant parties of the society. While the JUAA regularly contacts with some major economic organizations or the other bodies, ties are still not close enough to fully involve them. This means to the JUAA the necessity of strengthening the ties for the first step.

Second, mutual communication was not so active enough yet. This is partly because of the aforementioned less participants from outside HEIs, and partly because of the seminar agenda. Thus, continuous efforts are needed to get wider range of participants and contents improvement of the seminars.

The Aims and Intentions of the Authors for the Proposal

The EQA bodies are, in a sense, the “intermediators,” because they evaluate and accredit the HEIs or the programs so that the society could have more clear and adequate pictures of the HEIs. Given this as a core role of the EQA bodies, there might be any other works more for EQA bodies as an “intermediators.” The authors would like to discuss this issue with taking a case in Japan. In so doing the authors aim to find answers or any keys to the answers to the question, “how a quality assurance might contribute to delivering system level policy intent or reform.”

Access, transfer and progression for learners and the role of quality assurance agencies

Dr. Bryan Maguire, Director of Integration, Quality and Qualifications Ireland, Ireland

ABSTRACT

Following a major review after 20 years experience and implementing policies and criteria for access transfer and progression, QQI, the national Quality and Qualifications agency in Ireland, is faced with the challenge of renewing its approach. While the traditional approach has had some successes, the systemic affect has been less than hoped for. The review as outlined the major priorities, but there remains the task of designing new policies and criteria and renewing the vision to serve a changed society and educational system. The workshop explores options for the agency's response.

Outline

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is a national body with responsibility for external quality assurance of higher education and of further education and training. It is also the National Qualifications Authority. QQI is required under the law to publish policies and criteria for access, transfer, and progression. Providers of higher education and training are required to implement these procedures. QQI, has a further obligation to periodically review the implementation of the procedures by the providers. This has long been seen as a key aspect of promoting lifelong learning in Ireland.

The policy and criteria currently adopted by QQI were initially adopted over 20 years ago, but its predecessor body National Qualifications Authority of Ireland when it first established the national framework of qualifications. QQI has reviewed the implementation of procedures by providers in tandem with its review of their quality assurance procedures.

In 2023 to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the introduction of the national framework and the associated policy and criteria for access transfer and progression, QQI commissioned an independent, external review of the overall operation of its arrangements for excess transfer and progression. findings of this review were presented to the national conference in November 2023. The key recommendations are as follows:

The recommendations set out in this report are directed specifically at QQI as the commissioning authority for the review; however, issues are identified throughout the report that are relevant to the range of other national stakeholders identified above. 1. Following consultation with key stakeholders, QQI should restate the original vision or articulate an updated vision and set of objectives for ATP that emphasises enabling successful participation as a core principle; 2. In order to ensure coherence of approach and support successful implementation of ATP in practice, QQI should seek to ensure that ATP is appropriately integrated into all relevant QQI QA Guidelines, policies, procedures and criteria. For example, ensuring that inclusive practice considerations and universal design are brought to the fore in general, and are a particular emphasis within guidelines pertaining to programme development and approval, staff development, teaching and learning, assessment, information and supports for learners. 3. In its role as custodian of the National Framework of Qualifications, QQI should take all necessary steps to ensure parity of treatment of NFQ Levels 5 and 6 major awards for progression purposes. 4. QQI should evaluate the continued benefits of maintaining two national credit systems and whether having two credit systems acts as an enabler or a barrier to successful access, transfer and progression of learners through the qualifications system. 5. QQI is encouraged to continue the progress towards the development of a national policy approach to RPL to support consistency of practice across the tertiary education sector.

Aims and intentions

The aim of this workshop is to present the key findings of the review and explore with participants how QQI might proceed in implementing the recommendations of the reviewers. The intention is that by considering

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explicit requirements for access, transfer and progression and how these are embedded within broader, Quality Assurance activities colleagues may be able to suggest how QQI can fulfill its mandate, and may find prompts for how to bring two decades experience in Ireland to bear similar questions in their own countries. The relationship of quality assurance to the implementation of National Qualifications frameworks is central to this discussion.

Workshop approach

The workshop will include a brief scene-setting outlining the features of the Irish system, as presented in the independent report, followed by working groups, considering each of the five questions recommendations made by the committee panel and brainstorming methods of implementation and prioritization for the agency. Participants will also be encouraged to articulate take-home messages, relevant to their their own countries, based on the issues raised.

Aligning Upskilling and Reskilling Training Programmes to the Needs of the Industry and Staff

Dr Rabie'e Kayid Al-Rashdi, Quality and Accreditation Consultant, External Review Director, OAAAQA, Sultanate of Oman

ABSTRACT

Upskilling and reskilling of staff have become so essential in today's fast-paced and dynamic business environment. Indeed, organizations and individuals must now continuously adapt to emerging trends, environmental changes and technological advancements. Upskilling and reskilling training programmes in tertiary education therefore play a crucial role in equipping employees, especially faculty, with the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the evolving needs of the industry and their roles. However, ensuring that these programmes are aligned with both the industry's requirements and the specific needs of the staff members is essential for their success. My presentation in this important INQAAHE Forum aims at exploring the importance of aligning upskilling and reskilling training programmes to the needs of the industry and staff. By examining the benefits of alignment and providing strategies for achieving it, the presentation will provide insights into the crucial role of customization and relevance in the success of training initiatives. In particular, my presentation will focus on the following headings:

1. Understanding the Need for Alignment:
2. Identifying Industry Needs:
3. Assessing Staff Needs:
4. Customizing Training Programmes
5. Collaboration with Industry Partners
6. Continuous Evaluation and Feedback

Outline

Aligning upskilling and reskilling training programmes to the needs of the industry and staff is very much crucial for ensuring their relevance and effectiveness. By customizing training initiatives based on industry demands and individual aspirations, organizations can empower their employees with the skills and knowledge required to thrive in their roles.

External quality assurance mechanisms to support the quality of blended and distance learning in tertiary education to foster learning opportunities for individuals of all ages. The Romanian approach

Iordan Petrescu – Professor CEng, PhD, Full professor, Technical University of Civil Engineering in Bucharest, Romania

Prof. Dr. Mircea NEAGOE, Full professor at Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania

Alexandru CHIȘ, PhD. Assoc. Prof., Faculty of Economic Sciences and Business Administration, Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania

Florin MIHAI, PhD. Professor, Director of the Management Information Systems Department, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

ABSTRACT

This proposal topic aims at contribution to the discuss on the changing Taxonomy of Education and developing learning models that could help students engage with their learning in deeper, more interactive, flexible and social contextual ways. The blended learning model proposed by ARACIS through its EQA provisions, provides supplementary support, flexible instructional design and reliable assessment process for those with time and access opportunity disadvantages. It recommends strategies and migration objectives, from traditional instructional model to a more efficient, flexible and interactive learning models. EQA standards for blended learning models have to incorporate the following attributes: engaging content that gets students interested and involved, chunking strategies to help students develop new skills, checks for understanding and assessments that align with learning outcomes.

Outline

In recent years, the field of education and teaching practice have gone through significant curricula, structural, taxonomic and pedagogical changes as well as policy reforms. As a consequence of that educators and the Education Ministries had to keep updating and adapting instructional innovations to make teaching more effective, learning more inclusive and instructional strategies more efficient.

These changes were driven by significant technological advancements, so the educators were increasingly challenged to migrate and design contents and learning models to help digital native students engage with their learning in deep interactive ways. From this perspective, the proposal paper reviews of QA of Distance and the Blended Instructional Methods, adopted by ARACIS in the Romanian Higher Education system. It recommends strategies and migration objectives, from traditional instructional models to a more efficient, flexible and interactive learning models.

According to the current legislation in Romania, university study programs can be organized and conducted in one of the following forms of education: face-to-face in campus, at distance and with reduced attendance. Distance learning was first given a legal framework for higher education in Romania in 1999 by an Order of the Minister of Education. This framework has been subsequently improved by the provisions of the Education Law of 2011 and 2023. Under this legal framework, accredited or temporarily authorized universities that have their programs accredited at the full-time form by an EQAR-registered QA agency can offer distance learning programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Upon completion of a distance education program, the graduation diploma is recognized if the structure and content of the curriculum, as well as the number of ECTS credits per subject, are identical to those of the full-time program. University degrees and certificates issued by higher education institutions for the same university study programs, regardless of the form of education completed or the language of instruction, are equivalent.

Transforming Society: Social Responsibility Through Quality Assurance Of Tertiary Education

Sub-theme 4. Fostering Opportunities for All Ages

Assuring the quality of education provision is a fundamental aspect of gaining and maintaining credibility for programmes, institutions and national systems of higher education worldwide. Despite a long and generally successful track record, distance learning is still required to prove that the quality of student learning is at least equivalent to face-to-face teaching. In distance learning QA is designed to prove and improve the quality learning materials, academic programmes, services and support, as well as standards of student learning.

In Romania, a mushroom growth of higher education institutions, particularly in the private sector, has taken place since 1992. Encouraged by certain legislative acts from the Ministry of Education and involvement in European projects, these institutions have started to develop and implement university-level distance learning programs. These study programs operated without accreditation until 1999, but they were recognized by the Ministry of Education based on institutional-level accreditation conducted by the National Council for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation (CNEAA) established by law in 1993.

In 1999, after the first distance education regulations were issued by Ministry of Education, CNEAA developed and implemented the first standards and performance indicators for the external evaluation of distance education programs. Once the Bologna process was implemented, these standards were taken over by the new agency for quality assurance in higher education - ARACIS, and subsequently improved in line with the provisions of the current legislation and technological developments in education.

Considering the legislative constraints and the requirement for the equivalence of diplomas upon completion of studies, ARACIS, after consulting with universities, proposed and developed a blended learning model for the organization of didactic activities in distance education. The blended learning model was formalized into a set of standards and performance indicators for the external QA evaluation of study programs delivered by universities through distance learning. The model is a combination of multiple approaches to learning as self-paced, collaborative or inquiry-based study, and can be accomplished through the use of technology-based materials, face-to-face sessions and print materials.

The development of QA standards for blended instructional model has considered the following aspects: be in line with ESG 2015 that is equally applicable to all forms of teaching and learning, but it needs for an appropriate interpretation of its application, and with ARACIS methodology for QA of traditional face-to-face in campus teaching & learning, the full transposition of the programme curriculum delivered traditionally to those delivered by distance including ECTS credits, provide high quality educational services on an up to date basis and finally, to include the assessment of e-learning platforms.

The initiation, development, implementation, and management of distance learning programs are handled by specialized institutional structures, called ID Departments/ Centers. They are organized and function under a regulation approved by the university senate.

For organizing the learning process adapted to distance education, the scheduling and sequence of subjects in the curriculum will be aligned with the duration and content of the study program in the full-time education. To ensure the equivalence of both educational approaches, each subject will involve the following types of activities:

- a) tutoring activities (AT) - that consist of face-to-face meetings on the university campus and synchronous online sessions, along with ongoing assessment (TC) through recommended assignments conducted preferably via online asynchronous, equivalent to seminar hours in full-time education. The total seminar hours in the full-time education format equal the combined hours designated for assessment tasks (TC) and tutorial activities (TA);
- b) assisted practical activities (AA), equivalent to laboratory, project, or practical hours in full-time education, are conducted face-to-face on the university campus or, only in well-documented cases, synchronously online. The number of hours for laboratory, project, and practical work in the full-time education is equal to that of assisted applied activities (AA);

- c) classroom hours in the full-time education are compensated through self-instructional activities (AI) based on the specific learning resources provided to students in digital or printed format, tailored to distance learning.

Following the COVID-19 outbreaks, HEI had to figure out how to continue providing their educational programmes to the students. This brought to light a set of challenges: lack of training of faculty to ensure quality education delivery and follow-up of programme delivery at a distance; content not being ready to be delivered online; lack of modern technology access points to meet the sudden and unforeseen demand for students to be able to follow educational programmes; and, maintenance of day-to-day instructional services.

It is noteworthy that those higher education institutions that offered accredited distance education programs were able to maintain their instructional activities within these programs even during the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, they provided support for the adaptation of other study programs to utilize cutting-edge educational technologies specifically designed for distance and online learning.

The experience gained by HEIs during the pandemic was later put to good use by adopting the use of synchronous online technology in a certain percentage within the traditional face-to-face form of education.

– **The aims and intentions of the author(s) for the proposal:** To present the practical and results-oriented approach adopted by ARACIS to ensure the quality of blended and distance learning study programmes offered by Romanian HEI

– **The approach adopted to deliver the session and engage participants, including any specific: audio-visual requirements:** a combination of live presentation and interactive activities that may include: polls, quizzes, and group discussions

Recent years have seen significant changes in education and teaching practices, including curriculum, structure, taxonomy, pedagogy, and policy. To keep pace, educators and education ministries have had to adapt teaching methods to enhance effectiveness, inclusivity, and efficiency.

Technological advancements have driven significant changes in education, challenging educators to migrate and design learning models that engage digital natives in interactive ways. In response, ARACIS has proposed strategies and objectives for migrating from traditional instructional models to more efficient, flexible, and interactive methods in Romanian higher education.

Romanian law permits higher education institutions to offer distance learning programs alongside traditional face-to-face and reduced attendance options. Distance learning programs must meet the same quality standards as traditional programs, and graduates receive the same diplomas and certificates. The legal framework for distance learning in Romania has been further strengthened by the Education Law of 2011 and 2023. Only accredited or temporarily authorized universities with full-time programs accredited by an EQAR-registered QA agency can offer distance learning programs. Graduates of distance learning programs receive the same diplomas and certificates as graduates of traditional programs, provided the curriculum and ECTS credit requirements are met.

Ensuring the quality of education is essential for the reputation of educational programs, institutions, and higher education systems worldwide. While distance learning has a proven track record, it still needs to demonstrate that it can deliver equivalent learning outcomes to traditional face-to-face instruction. Quality assurance (QA) in distance learning is designed to assess and improve the quality of learning materials, academic programs, services, and support, as well as the standards of student learning.

INQAAHE

International Network
for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
(INQAAHE)

Enric Granados 33
08007 Barcelona SPAIN

secretariat@inqaahe.org
+34 93 268 89 50