Let a thousand flowers bloom, responses to a pandemic: innovation and quality assurance

Quality, Competencies, and Learning Outcomes: How to Be Fit for Generation Z Employability
September 2020

- **Dr Leah Matthews,** Executive Director, Distance Education Accreditation Commission, US
- **Dr Fabrizio Trifiro,** Head of Quality Benchmark Services, UK NARIC
- **Dr Karen Treloar,** Director, Engagement Group, TEQSA
- **Dr. Khairul Sahari,** Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Quality Assurance), MQA

Structure

- Country responses to COVID 19 challenge:
  - Perspectives and emerging innovations from the US, Malaysia, Australia and the UK
- Focus on online learning and transnational education
- Strengthened role for QA bodies
- Concluding remarks
  - Flexibility
 - Innovation
  - Cooperation

"How governments act today will shape the post-Covid world for years to come. This is true not only domestically, where the right policies can foster a resilient, inclusive and sustainable recovery, but also in terms of how countries co-operate to tackle global challenges together. International co-operation, a weak point so far in the policy response, can create confidence and have important positive spillover effects."

Angel Gurria
OECD Secretary General
10 June 2020
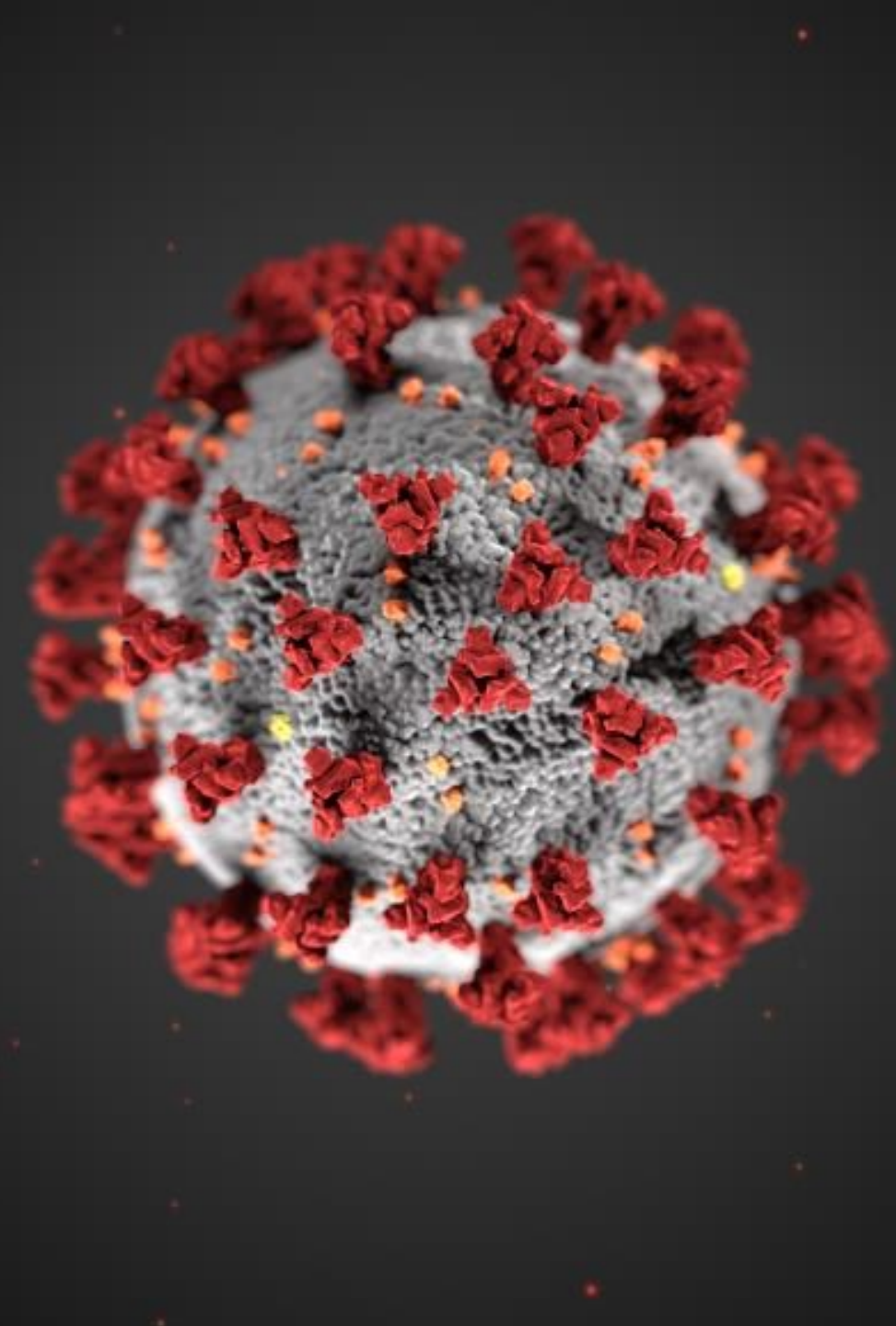
COVID-19 does not discriminate, the impact of this disease is changing our world

Country responses to COVID-19 challenge

United States

COVID-19's Impact on the Accreditation Process – United States

- The US Department of Education (USDE) granted accreditors permission to conduct virtual site visits through December 31, 2020 in place of on-site evaluations

- DEAC has a responsibility to its institutions, their students, and the public to continue its quality assurance functions

- DEAC created a model for virtual visit assessment practice

DEAC Virtual Site Visit Institutional Obligations

In accepting a DEAC virtual visit, the institution agrees to:

- Abide by Virtual Site Visit Guidelines

- Abide by the Virtual Site Visit Etiquette and Technology Protocol

- "Host" the videoconferences throughout the virtual visit

- Comply with future follow up on site evaluation

- Provide a finalized list of all participants one week before the visit and include all participants on the agenda

- Not challenge the findings of the virtual site visit solely on the basis that it is virtual rather than on site.

Security and Confidentiality

To ensure the security and confidentiality of the information shared in the virtual site visit, all parties will be required to abide by the below policies:

- Institutions will be required to use HIPAA approved videoconference software and filesharing technology

- Each participant will be required to have their own login to the videoconference meeting

- No individuals outside of the agreed upon participants (specific institutional stakeholders being interviewed, DEAC Staff, state observers, and evaluators) may participate, listen in, or otherwise observe the process

- Participants are encouraged to use the video feature at all times during the interviews

- No participant may record audio or video from the videoconference for any reason

- Evaluators will be required to sign DEAC's usual confidentiality agreement

Before the Virtual Visit

- Institution submits a self evaluation report six weeks prior to Virtual Site Visit

- Subject specialist reports are completed and sent to institution for response

- DEAC provides institution Evaluation Team names and bios for conflict of interest disclosure and approval

- All participants provided and subject to DEAC Virtual Site Visit Etiquette and Technology Protocol, and will sign usual confidentiality agreements

- Institution Compliance Officer, DEAC Staff Member and Chair coordinate a detailed agenda. Every agenda item includes:
  - Interview Time (lists time for all relevant time zones)
 - List Interview Participants
  - Link to Meeting

During the Virtual Visit

- Evaluators conduct interviews with institutional stakeholders, including Board Members, faculty, staff, and students, via video conference software

- The institution will "host" all virtual meetings on the agenda

- Evaluators will contact students independent of institution, either by phone or separate videoconference hosted by DEAC.

- Evaluators may request additional documentation to verify findings

- Evaluation Team will have an independent virtual meeting as a group to discuss findings

- DEAC Staff Member and Chair conduct closing interview with the institution's president

After the Virtual Visit

- Institution will provide documentation requested during virtual site visit no later than 2 days following the virtual site visit
- Evaluators will write their reports and provide them to the Chair, who will then create the Chair's Report
- Chair's Report is provided to the institution for response
- Chair's report and Institution's Response will be provided to the Commission
- Following the Commission Meeting, a follow-up on-site evaluation will be scheduled
- Composition of the evaluation team for the follow-up on-site evaluation will depend on the Commission's findings
  - Team size for follow up can range from the Chair and DEAC Staff Member only, up to a visit from the full Evaluation Team
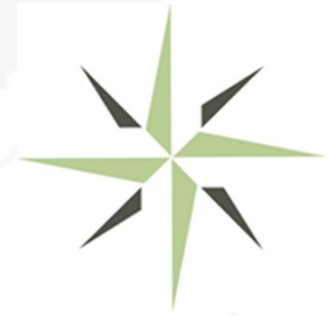
Benefits of the Virtual Visit Procedure

- Enables DEAC to continue oversight and quality assurance to currently accredited institutions

- Maintains the cycle of review for renewal of accreditation

- Allows institutions to continue through the accreditation process

- More cost effective to institutions

- Maintains revenue flow for DEAC and budget solvency

Malaysia

MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER (MCO)

RECOVERY MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER (RMCO) EXTENDED UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 2020

1. Enforcement action under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988, or Act 342, could still be taken

2. To ensure that all parties comply with the Standard Operating Procedures and health protocols set

3. The country is still facing immense difficulties in combatting COVID-19 given that the virus is actively spreading worldwide

4. Strict quarantine procedures in certain places will continue to be enforced

NADMA'S COVID-19 FUND

TABUNG COVID-19

→ To be extended until **Dec 31, 2020**

→ Will continue receiving contribution to help COVID-19 victims & provide essentials to curb the pandemic

Source: Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin

Published: Aug 28, 2020
Bernama Infographics

Source: Prime Minister's Office, Malaysia

During the implementation period of RMCO, more restrictions will be relaxed to allow the public to carry out their daily activities while complying to the standard operating procedures.

YAB Tan Sri Dato' Haji Muhyiddin bin Haji Mohd. Yassin
Prime Minister of Malaysia

Source nst.com.my

Surge in online/ remote learning

94.1% of 186 HEIs in Malaysia made swift changes

JPT | JABATAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI

KEMENTERIAN PENGAJIAN TINGGI

Handling of Academic Programme at Private Higher Education Institutions

CALENDAR

Can continue the existing / current semester and commences a new semester according to the respective academic calendar.

All PHEIs are requested to always consider the following factors:

Current Movement Control Order (MCO) and Instruction on Management of COVID-19.

Local and International student whereabouts at the respective location.

Readiness to implement several methods of teaching and learning including online and others.

The safety and welfare of students.

Source: http://jpt.mohe.gov.my/portal/index.php/ms/

MQA'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 CRISIS

Advisory Note No. 1/ 2020 (March 29, 2020)

> **Guidelines on the Delivery of HE Programmes During and Post-Covid-19 Movement Control Order (MCO)**

Advisory Note No. 4/ 2020 (May 29, 2020)

> **Guidelines on the Delivery of HE Programmes During and Post-MCO**

Guidelines for all HEPs in planning and implementing interim measures, the continuation of online/ remote learning as required and recovery of the disrupted education systems, which:

- Provides flexibility and autonomy to the HEPs in making the necessary decisions
- Covers modification of face-to-face T&L activities (classes, assessments, industrial training or exposures) to online/ remote learning
- Encourages innovation and creativity in ensuring critical aspects or components of students' learning, achievements and welfare are not affected

Dedicated page on guidelines and announcements related to the crisis

ADVISORY NOTE #1/2020

Guidelines on the Delivery of HE Programmes During and Post-Covid-19 Movement Control Order (MCO)
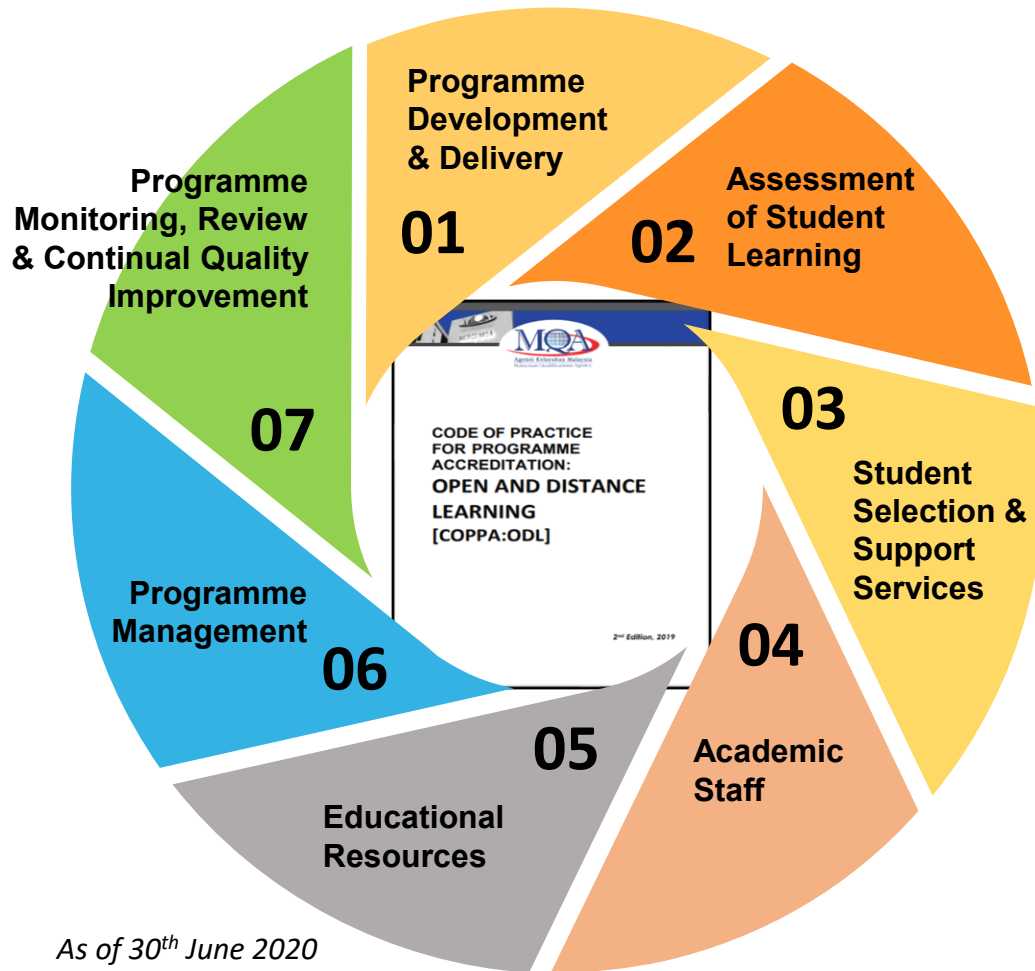
- Modification of the face-to-face teaching and learning activities to fully online activities including practical component
- Cancellation or postponement of teaching and learning activities which are not replaced by online/ remote learning methods and will not be replaced even after the HEPs resume operation
- Effect of modifications and changes to the calculation of SLT or credit as well as student learning and assessment
- Replacement of shortened industrial training period
- Replacement of industrial training course with other methods of industrial exposure
- Replacement of final examination with other methods of student assessment such as online examination, assignments, and others
- Cessation of final examination without replacement with other forms of student assessment
- Replacement of the grading system to Pass/ Fail
- Arrangement of courses involving long and short semesters

ADVISORY NOTE #4/2020

Guidelines on the Delivery of HE Programmes During and Post-MCO

- **Guidelines for all HEPs in planning and implementing interim measures, the continuation of online/ remote learning as required and recovery of the disrupted education systems, which**:
- Provides flexibility and autonomy to the HEPs in making the necessary decisions
- Covers modification of face-to-face T&L activities (classes, assessments, industrial training or exposures) to online/ remote learning
- Encourages innovation and creativity in ensuring critical aspects or components of students' learning, achievements and welfare are not affected

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION : OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING

Programme Development & Delivery 01

Assessment of Student Learning 02

Student Selection & Support Services 03

Academic Staff 04

Educational Resources 05

Programme Management 06

Programme Monitoring, Review & Continual Quality Improvement 07

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION: OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING [COPPA:ODL]

2nd Edition, 2019

As of 30th June 2020

i. As guidelines for ODL providers to prepare their programme for accreditation and programme audit purposes.

ii. Guide for a HEP in its planning to offer ODL programme.

iii. ODL programme means:

❖ **more than 60% of the courses offered in the programme are conducted via open and distance learning; and**

❖ **at least 80% of the student learning time (SLT) must be delivered via open and distance mode.**

v. Must be supported through regular and substantive interaction.

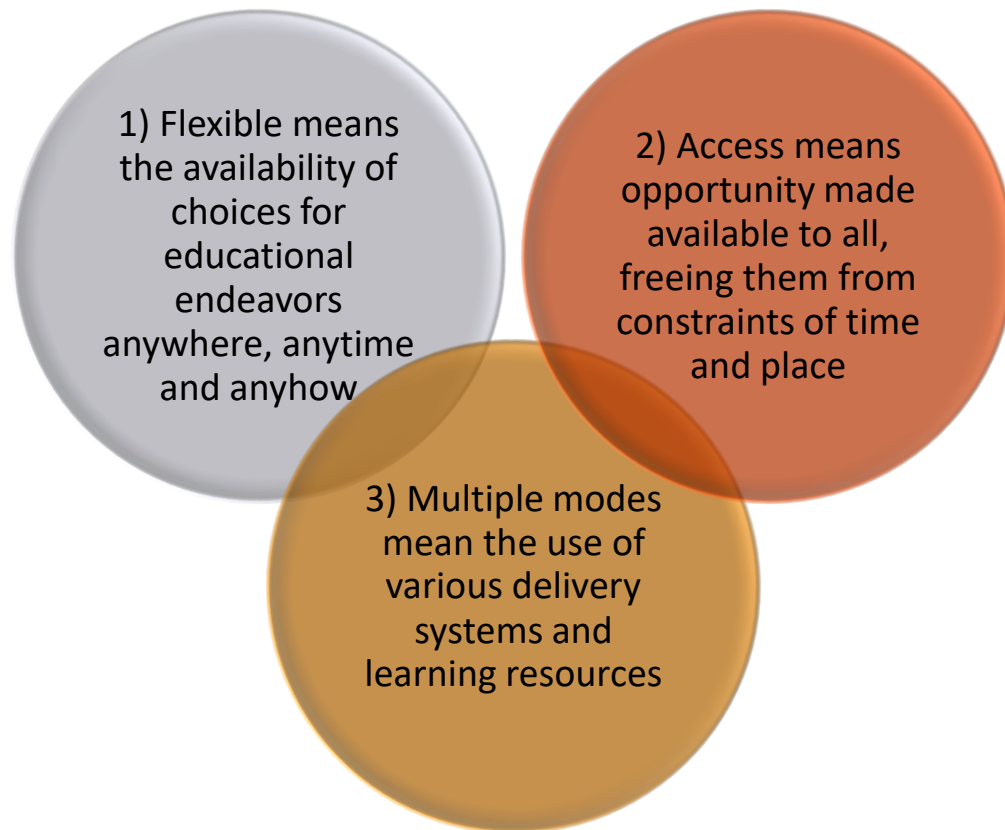vi. The face to face contact sessions between the learner and instructor can be conducted in various modalities

117 institutions offer ODL in Malaysia

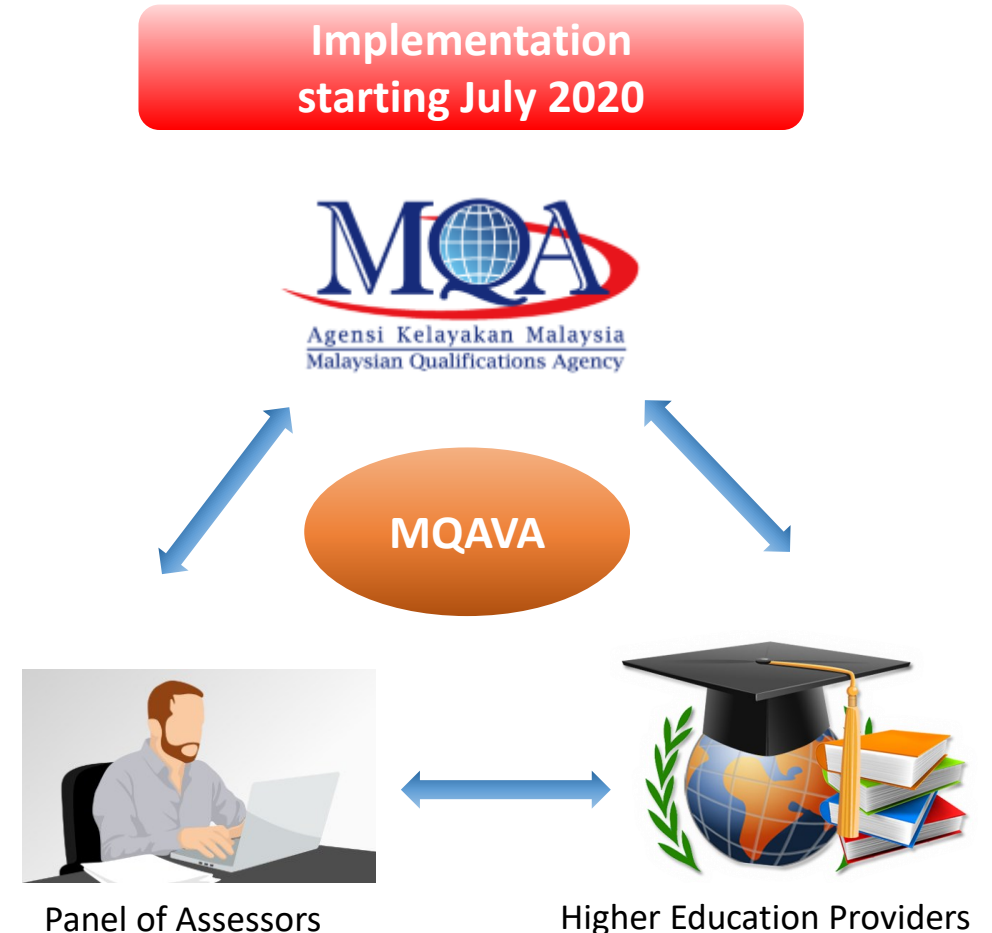| Accreditation Level	Total Programmes
Provisional Accreditation	321
Full Accreditation	84
Grand Total	**405**

As of 27th Sept. 2020

ODL refers to the provision of flexible educational opportunities in terms of access and multiple modes of knowledge acquisition

1) Flexible means the availability of choices for educational endeavors anywhere, anytime and anyhow

2) Access means opportunity made available to all, freeing them from constraints of time and place

3) Multiple modes mean the use of various delivery systems and learning resources
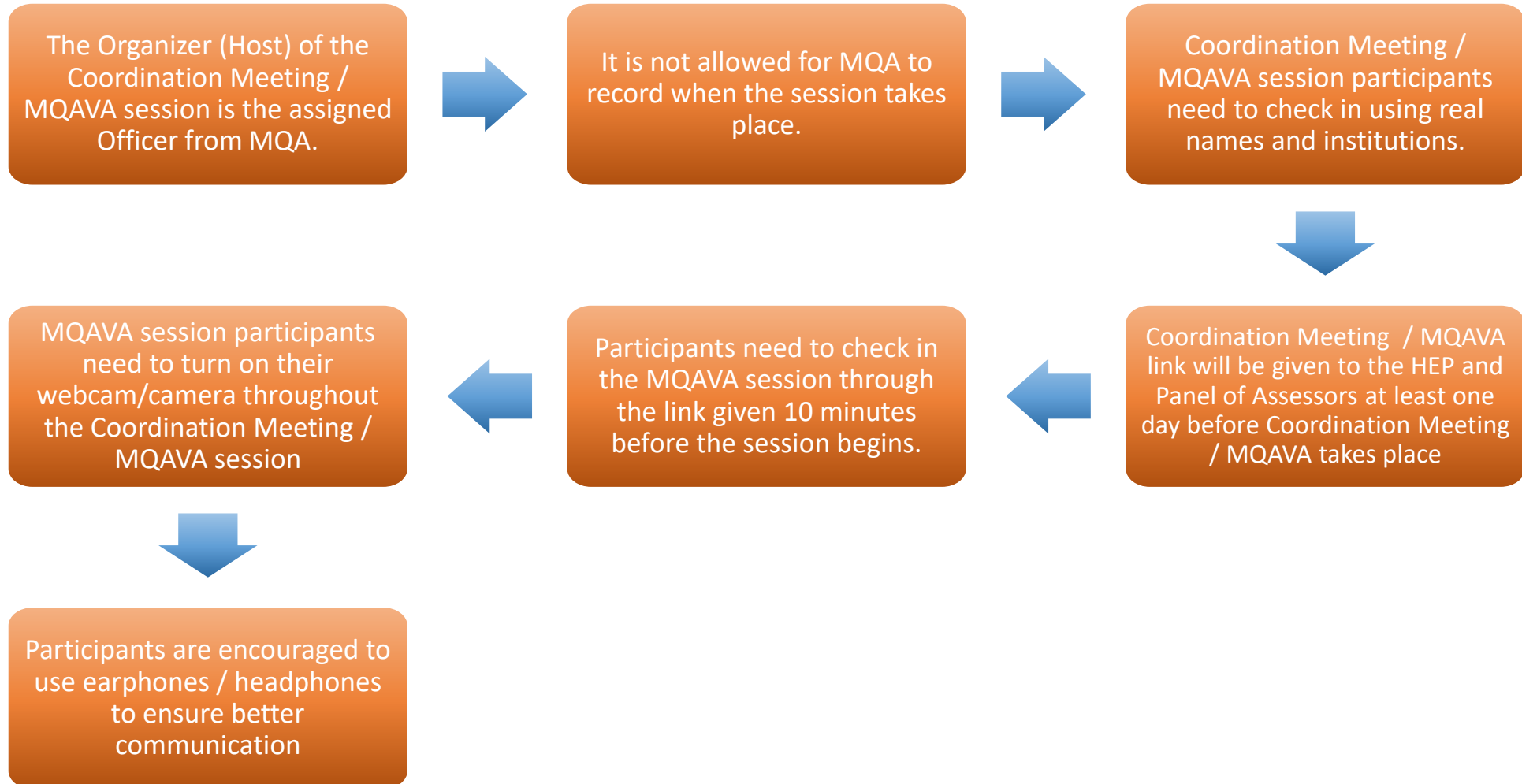
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is face-to-face learning and teaching compulsory and what is the allocation of these face-to-face meetings?	Based on COPPA-ODL, face-to-face (F2F) definition refers to real physical interaction or other communication through technological media featuring students and tutors / facilitators / coaches in real time to enable direct response. F2F learning and teaching is compulsory, but the allocation of face-to-face meetings can be set by the HEP itself according to the suitability of the field of study program.
Can new programs continue to be offered on ODL?	**No. According to the existing policy, HEPs wishing to offer ODL programs must first have offered and obtained full accreditation for the same program conducted conventionally.**
Do the programs to be offered on ODL need to be applied for accreditation separately from the same program that is currently being run conventionally?	Yes, programs that want to be offered by ODL must apply for accreditation separately from the same program that is being run conventionally.
Can industrial training be replaced with other courses for study programs offered by ODL?	**This matter is subject to the stipulations in the MQA Notification Letter No.2/2018: Replacement of Industrial Training with Other Curriculum Components for Part-Time Students.**
What are the specific documents that can be referenced to implement the ODL program?	Documents that can be referenced to implement the ODL program are: 1) Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation: Open and Distance Learning (MQA, 2019) 2) Guidelines and Standards for Conducting Open and Distance Learning (JPT) 3) e-Learning Guidelines for Malaysian HEIs (KPM, 2014)

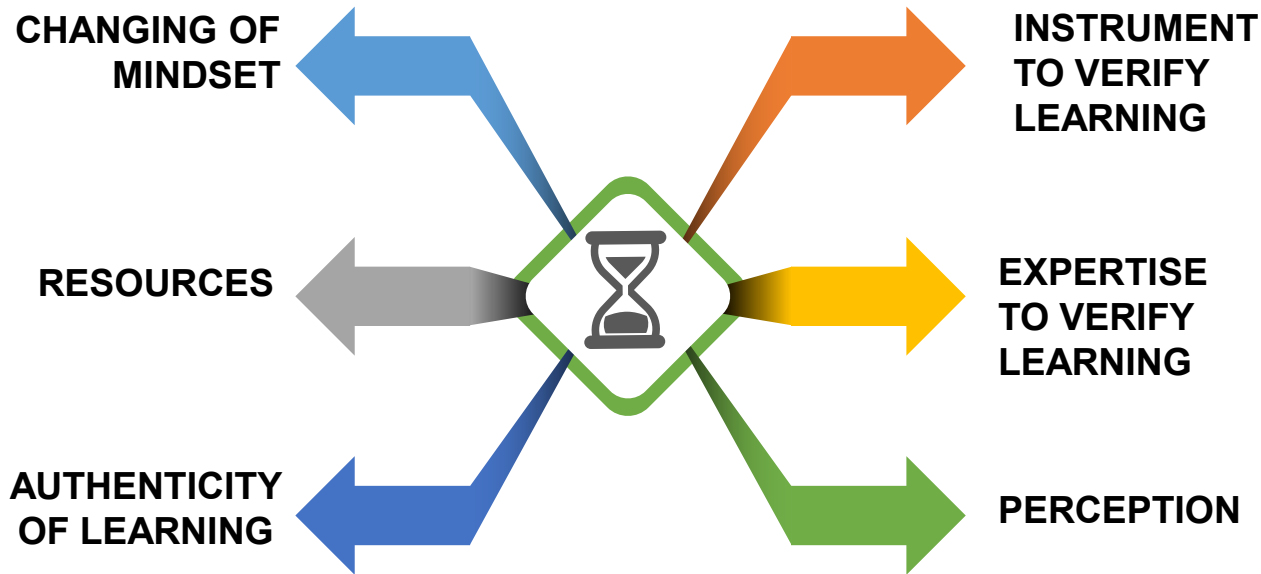*https://www.mqa.gov.my/pv4/bm/faqs_ODL.cfm*

MQA VIRTUAL AUDIT (MQAVA)

✓ A virtual audit approach that uses a **combination of applications through online technology** for MQA accreditation assessment and audit.

✓ The MQAVA **assessment was conducted remotely** where all assessments including communication between Higher Education Providers (HEP), Panel of Assessors and MQA officers take place online, in their respective locations without being physically present at the HEP location during the audit.

✓ As of 19/9/2020, a total of **33 program evaluations** have been conducted through MQAVA (25 accreditation audits, 7 follow-up audits and 1 compliance audit).

✓ **Questionnaires are distributed** to all parties involved to obtain views on the implementation of MQAVA for the purpose of improvement (still in collection stage).
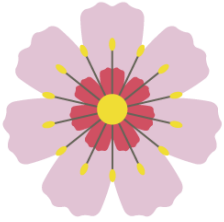
Implementation starting July 2020

MQAVA

Panel of Assessors

Higher Education Providers

MQAVA PROCEDURE

The Organizer (Host) of the Coordination Meeting / MQAVA session is the assigned Officer from MQA.

→

It is not allowed for MQA to record when the session takes place.

→

Coordination Meeting / MQAVA session participants need to check in using real names and institutions.

↓

Coordination Meeting / MQAVA link will be given to the HEP and Panel of Assessors at least one day before Coordination Meeting / MQAVA takes place

←

Participants need to check in the MQAVA session through the link given 10 minutes before the session begins.

←

MQAVA session participants need to turn on their webcam/camera throughout the Coordination Meeting / MQAVA session

↓

Participants are encouraged to use earphones / headphones to ensure better communication

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

CHANGING OF MINDSET

INSTRUMENT TO VERIFY LEARNING

RESOURCES

EXPERTISE TO VERIFY LEARNING

AUTHENTICITY OF LEARNING

PERCEPTION

Readiness

Etiquette

Integrity and reliability

THINGS TO GIVE ATTENTION

Identity

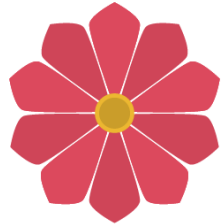Confidentiality of documents

Integrity and reliability

Australia

Australia

Greater use of online delivery
- Quality assurance of teaching, learning and assessment
- Impact on student and staff experience
- Student performance and outcomes

Changed nature of higher (and professional?) education
- Shorter courses, microcredentials, portability
- Closer relationship with industry and professional accreditation bodies

Partnership models of regulation and quality assurance
- Reduced administrative burden of regulation
- Strengthened internal quality assurance
- Recast approach to risk and monitoring
- Increasing power of information and education

TEQSA has undertaken a QUALITY ENHANCEMENT role in its work with providers and online learning over the pandemic

Quality Enhancement

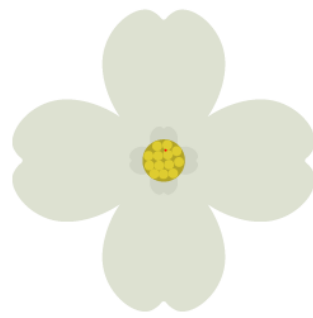Proving good practice and guidance for providers transitioning to online learning https://www.teqsa.gov.au/online-learning-good-practice

Online learning resources collected and developed for the sector and by the sector and global higher education community

United Kingdom

United Kingdom

Significant shift towards enhancement and support by part of sector bodies:

- Office for Students (OfS) Guidance on Student and Consumer Protection and moving towards a collaborative approach to evaluation

- QAA Preserving Quality and Standards Through a Time of Rapid Change: UK Higher Education in 2020-21

- UK NARIC Charting the impact of COVID-19 on UK admissions and recruitment

- JISC has produced a range of guidance and support services in areas such as IT and technology, teaching and learning, libraries and learning resources, research and TNE

- Universities UK (UUK) is coordinating national efforts to respond to many of the challenges facing universities including student and staff health and welfare, admissions issues, international students, and the longer-term impact on universities

United Kingdom

Sector wide <u>focus on online learning</u> (unsurprisingly) and more widely TNE

- OfS <u>Digital Teaching and Learning Review</u> to identify lessons learned for governments, providers, and students

- QAA, <u>Questions to Inform a Toolkit for Enhancing Quality in a Digital Environment</u>

- UK NARIC <u>Guide to Recognition Issues in International Distance Learning</u>, and <u>TNE Quality Benchmark scheme</u>

- UUKi has established an Task and Finish Group on Transnational Online Learning to develop recommendations on approaches to enhance and demonstrate the quality of UK online degrees,

- UUK, JISC, Advance HE, <u>learning and teaching reimagined</u>: a collaborative project, which draws on the collective experience within the HE sector to plan for a post-coronavirus future – first <u>report</u> on changing needs and challenges for students, staff, and leaders in a context of technology-enhanced learning
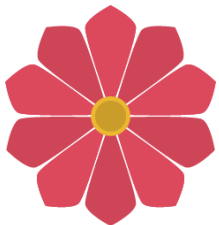
Impact of COVID 19: *focus* on online learning and TNE
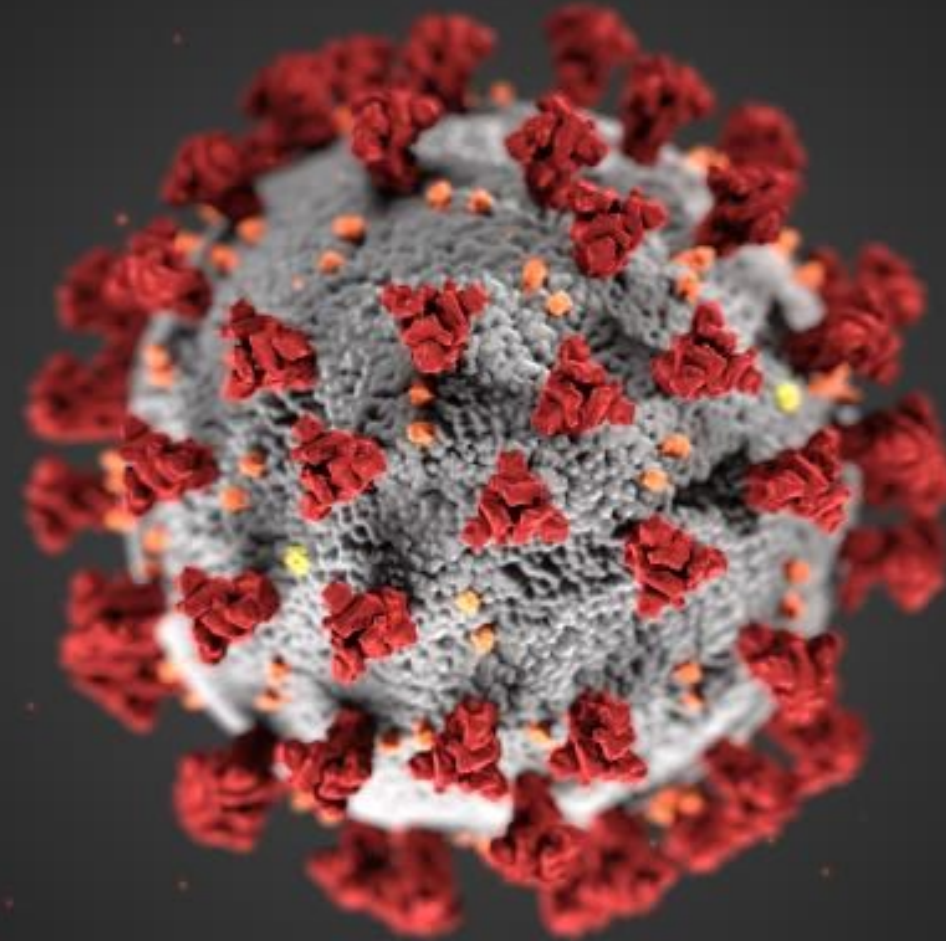
Online teaching and learning has become the focus of education practice, theory, and policy – contributing to enhance institutional and regulatory capacity and public confidence

Looking ahead: growth in online, TNE, blended, and multi-modal forms of delivery

On the basis of the education sector experience in responding to the COVID crisis we can expect :

- Growing demand and supply for online delivery as its quality, public perception, regulatory climate improve

- Growing online delivery, and in fact TNE delivery in its different forms, as a risk mitigating strategy for providers

- Growth in blended/hybrid forms of TNE delivery

- Growing blurring distinction between TNE and international students (multi site/modes of study)

- Growing recognition / articulation agreements – opening to micro-credentials

- Growth in blended forms of TNE management and quality assurance (both internal and external)

# Looking ahead: face-to-face engagement is still to stay, …but

Studies containing practical elements will still require in person engagement

The motivation to study abroad and have an international experience, beyond gaining a foreign degree, will remain

BUT

*The benefits of a face-to-face and international experience will need to be **better articulated**, as the quality and recognition of online learning and TNE grow*

Learning outcomes vs. learning experience
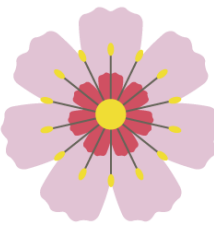
The recent focus on online learning has allowed us to better appreciate that is possible to achieve the <u>same standards</u> or learning outcomes, through very <u>different learning environments</u>…

…allowing us to overcome a traditional barrier to the recognition of TNE:

> *the idea that the learning experience of TNE students should be **as comparable as** that of the experience of students at the home campus*

The recent experience has allowed us to appreciate that, while the comparability of learning outcomes should be an **uncompromisable expectation** for TNE, the learning experience, over beyond the necessary support for achieving the learning outcomes, should be regarded more as a matter of **student expectation** and choice (and costs)

The TNE Quality Benchmark (TNE QB)

A learning outcomes based, independent international peer-review scheme aimed at offering international reassurance about the standards, quality and relevance of TNE provision, in all its modalities

Underpinned by <u>international standards</u> and <u>international cooperation</u>, it intends to be an international tool that can satisfy the quality assurance needs of multiple stakeholders, in this way

- Improving <u>international understanding of and confidence</u> in TNE provision
- improving the recognition climate for and <u>global portability</u> of TNE qualifications
- helping addressing <u>regulatory gaps and overlaps</u>

Strengthened role of quality assurance agencies

Strengthened role of QA Agencies

- Quality Agencies must continue to develop and innovate to contribute to and drive quality in higher education
- Greater role in benchmarking and global engagement
- Sharing good practice and advice, not reinventing the wheel
- Reduction in bureaucracy, smarter use of technology and streamlining regulation
- Quality Agencies must strike a positive balance between quality assurance and quality enhancement in working with the higher education sector
- Technology is enabling Increased flexibility for quality assurance agencies to engage in global conversations

The pandemic has created a convergence of themes and issues in quality assurance globally.

Concluding remarks on Emerging innovation: across UK, US, Malaysia and Australia

Emerging innovation

1. Strengthening focus on risk based regulation and reduction of administrative regulatory burden
   - Using data and feedback as evidence
   - Financial viability
   - Streamlining regulation
   - International cooperation

2. Realising the power of online and digital learning
   - How do we quality assure delivery to safeguard standards and the student experience
   - Strong focus on digital online delivery and learning
   - Do we have an academic workforce that is technologically enables to build future higher education scenarios

3. Short courses and Microcredentials in the spotlight
   - Raising needs of more flexible pathways to learning, meeting the learning needs of more diverse, interconnected, complex global societies/economies

4. Re-examination of the quality of the student experience
   - What are the thresholds for an acceptable student experience, across increasingly different modality of learning
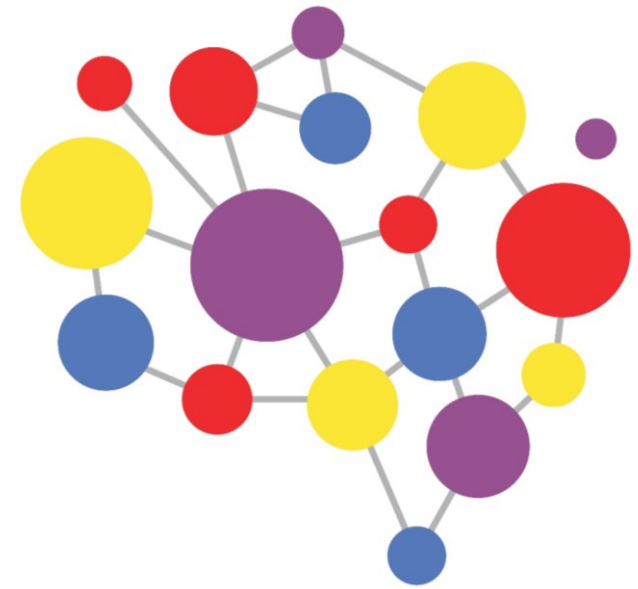
Emerging innovation

5. Re-examination of the added value of a higher education
- Employability and support for a future workforce
- flexible routes to learning and up-skilling
- Technology will be a key player in any future Higher education scenarios

6. Authentic assessment and assessment integrity
- Reduction in reliance on exams
- Assessment based in real life student experience
- Online invigilation is developing
- Achievement of Learning outcomes are key Assessment and Assessment integrity are vital

7. Academic Integrity, fighting contract cheating
- Protection of academic integrity
- Combatting contract cheating
- Quality assurance agencies working together
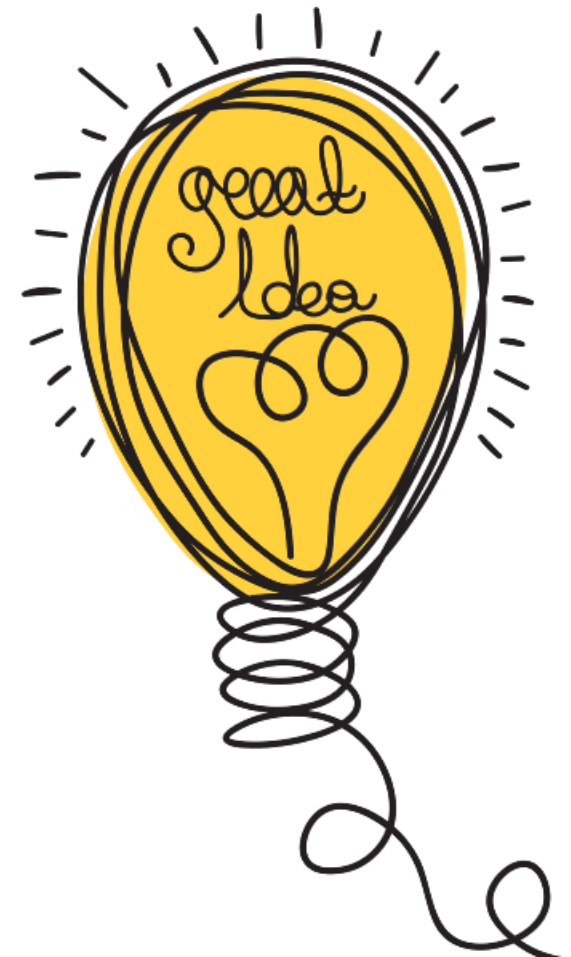
Thank you

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https://www.mqa.gov.my/pv4/index.cfm