



Recent developments in QA systems in Europe - an EUA and EQAR perspective

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Structure of the presentation

- The European quality assurance framework – in brief
- MAP-ESG project and its recommendation
- The Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué and Bologna Policy Forum Statement
- Follow-Up: the revision of the ESGs, recognition of QA agency decisions of EQAR listed agencies, international cooperation in QA

European Quality Assurance Framework (1)

- QA: one action line in the Bologna Process
- 2003: The Berlin Communiqué
 - stated that *“consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself”*
 - Invited ENQA to develop – in co-operation with other stakeholders – standards and procedures for quality assurance
- 2005: European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) adopted
 - Proposed by the E4 Group (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE)
- 2007: European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) endorsed (launched in 2008)

European Quality Assurance Framework (2)

- Different approaches when creating national quality assurance systems: (programme or institutional) accreditation, evaluations or audits
 - Level of institutional autonomy in creating internal QA systems varies
 - Countries and also institutions are in different phases in implementing institutional as well as national QA systems
- > *There is not one model of European QA - the ESGs provide a framework for developing good practice across the EHEA***

European Quality Assurance Framework (3)

- Some challenges identified:
 - National QA agencies established -> national agendas
 - Recognition remains a challenge
 - Increased demands for QA to provide information on higher education to various stakeholders (~ transparency function)

MAP-ESG project: overview (2011/2012)

- Project carried out by E4 Group
- Aim to investigate how the ESG had been implemented and applied in relation to their original purpose
- Each partner organised consultation among their members plus public consultation
- Result: plenty of evidence how the ESG has been implemented and experiences of using it

MAP-ESG recommendation

- Conclusion:

“ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE recommend that ministers of the EHEA countries mandate the E4 organisations to carry out, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, notably Education International, Business Europe, the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) and EQAR, a careful revision of the ESG in order to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness. This work would be carried out in the understanding that the current principles would be maintained. The report, with the revised document, would be referred to the BFUG.”

Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué (1)

The Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué April 2012:

- QA “is essential for building trust and to reinforce the attractiveness of the EHEA’s offerings, including in the provision of cross-border education.”
- “We will revise the ESG to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness, including their scope. The revision will be based upon an initial proposal to be prepared by the E4 in cooperation with Education International, BUSINESSEUROPE and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), which will be submitted to the Bologna Follow-Up Group.”

Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué (2)

- Strengthen the links between Bologna action lines such as QA, QFs and recognition
- “We will allow EQAR-registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA, while complying with national requirements. In particular, we will aim to recognise quality assurance decisions of EQAR-registered agencies on joint and double degree programmes.”

Bucharest Bologna Policy Forum statement

- **International co-operation in QA**
 - Dialogue between agencies and systems
 - QA agencies operating across the borders

Next steps: policy discussions (1)

- The ***revision of the ESG*** is now taking place
- Clarification and simplification of the document
- Updating to correspond to the current situation
- Looking ahead to the next decade
- ... without jeopardising progress made
- An initial text will be submitted to the November 2013 Bologna Follow-up Group for discussion 2014
- Adoption of the revised ESG in 2014/2015

Next steps: policy discussions (2)

- New “Structural Reforms” working group within BFUG, covers QA, QF, recognition and transparency tools
- Recognition of QA agency decisions of EQAR listed agencies: discussion continues
- European-wide and global dialogue through various projects and events

Next steps: policy discussions (3)

- EQAR strategic plan implementation – 2 goals: 1) international trust and recognition of registered agencies 2) enhanced transparency and information provision
- To meet these goals – project launched, looking at: existing legal provisions, if & how countries recognise foreign QAAs and their evaluations; the rationale of countries that do not do this; the extent to which HEIs make use of opportunities where they exist

Thank you for your attention