



Seminar on the implementation of Internal (and External) Quality Assurance and of the ESG in HEIs

(in line with the priority areas of the Bologna Process)

An event organised in cooperation with the European University Cyprus, and the Open University of Cyprus

Under the Auspices of the Cyprus Presidency of the European Union

Nicosia (Cyprus) – 27 & 28 September 2012

Hosted by

European University Cyprus

Draft RATIONALE of the SEMINAR

Background and Purpose of the seminar:

The European dimension of Quality Assurance starts from a guaranteed flexibility for governments to choose their system or 'model' of Quality Assurance, while observing the generic Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, which are universally used in all European institutions of higher education conducting their own internal Quality Assurance and/or being subjected to external Quality Assurance by agencies, next to the latter's use for their own quality purposes.

With the targeted attendants (from our members institutions, but also from a wider background of policy makers and Quality Assurance practitioners) we want to bring together a 'community of practice', which will be guided through the proceedings on the basis of a guide which has been developed by practitioners and policymakers, on the basis of their own expertise and relying on the feedback received through the extensive consultation among our membership and beyond this.

The ultimate objective with this hands-on seminar is to train individuals who are responsible for the management or coordination of internal Quality Assurance at institutions (e.g. Quality Assurance managers, Quality Assurance coordinators, Quality Assurance administrators, etc.), so that after the completion of the seminar they will have acquired the foundation for organizing and implement fully, efficiently and effectively internal Quality Assurance based on the ESG, preparing them in this way also for the external Quality Assurance evaluation of their institution.

Proceedings of the Seminar:

EURASHE as a European members' organisation with a broad representation in the majority of countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has committed itself to provide hands-on support to its member institutions and other interested parties in the priority areas of the Bologna reform process.

This was the logical consequence of the creation of the EHEA in 2010, where the focus has shifted to implementation of the 'Bologna achievements' on the institutional level.

In spite of (and we would even say, also because of) the economic crisis more expert hands-on support is needed for institutions for implementing Bologna tools such as quality assurance proceedings, learning outcomes, qualifications frameworks, etc. Secondly, a general need is felt for a forum for practitioners on the institutional level, where expertise and experience on those tools and instruments is shared and exchanged, with practitioners from Higher Education institutions.

This first of a series of seminars, focusing on internal and external quality assurance could thus be considered as a useful addition of the annual gathering of policymakers and QA assurance coordinators at the European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF, of which EURASHE is a co-organiser with its 'E4' partners), and the training seminars for participants in external review teams.

Quality Assurance has always been and remains a major interest for EURASHE, given our prominent role in the development of the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG), and secondly given our role in the establishment of the European Register for Quality Assurance agencies (EQAR), always in close cooperation with the other E4 partners, namely ENQA, EUA and ESU.

These seminars are intended for institutions and programmes for whom review exercises do not provide the exchange of experience with colleagues in similar contexts. The workshops will therefore evolve around tools that may guide institutions in developing their own internal Quality Assurance proceedings (including the PROSE initiative: www.prose.eu) and secondly the ESG for Quality Assurance as a generic set of guidelines for Quality Assurance, which provide the broader background and link internal Quality Assurance to external Quality Assurance and to the work of the Quality Assurance agencies.

The **first day** of the seminar starts with a plenary session, in which keynote speakers will introduce the overall theme by presenting briefly the most striking conclusions of the EURASHE survey on the implementation of the ESG for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education Institutions and programmes with a 'professional orientation', and the joint E4 report with shared conclusions and recommendations to policymakers and stakeholders, following the separate consultations with their respective constituencies.

We will in a logical sequence of events then group attendants in workshops that will either focus on practical issues related to the *Implementation of Internal Quality Assurance, based on the ESG; the relevance and applicability of the ESG for institutions with a professional orientation* and an address to the general public not aware of the ESG (intermediate level).

On the **second day**, in the plenary session the 'research aspect' of QA in institutions will be dealt with (as part of the overall mission of a HEI), next to the presentation of a Tool for institutions implementing QA, the PROSE initiative for IQA (www.prose.eu) before breaking out again for hands-on workshops. These workshops will focus on *how to implement the PROSE tool*, while adapting it to the needs of individual practitioners in the institutions; on *the complementarity of (international or domain-specific) professional labels with the ESG*; and on *how to move forward with the ESG, after consulting with the institutions*.

The workshops will be conducted and/or chaired by experienced members of EURASHE's working group for Quality Assurance, who provided the necessary input for our Quality Assurance policymaking and implementation.