



Recent European policy developments in quality assurance

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Structure of the presentation

- Short overview on the development of European quality assurance (QA) framework
- MAP-ESG project and its recommendation
- Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué and Bologna Policy Forum Statement
- Next steps

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 does not exist one European QA, but the ESG provide framework for good practice share by the whole 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

- 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

- The revision of the ESG has begun
- A proposal expected to be submitted to Bologna Follow-up Group beginning of 2014
- Adoption of the revised ESG in the Ministerial Meeting in spring 2015?
- 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: Trends in External QA

- ENQA 2012 survey
 - Promoting institutional QA systems -> trend towards institutional review/audit/accreditation
 - Comparability of external QA results
 - Excellence in higher education
 - Discussion on the impact of QA (institutional follow-up)

Thank you for your attention