Quality Assurance of Cross-Border Higher Education (QACHE) – moving towards strengthened cooperation

Dr. Fabrizio Trifiro', Manager International, QAA

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Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education

Overview

Introduce the project, its aims and activities

Present its findings and outcomes

Outline the QACHE Toolkit

Cross-Border Higher Education (CBHE):

'education in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based'

(UNESCO/Council of Europe 2001 *Code of Good Practice in the provision of transnational education*)

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The QACHE project (2013-15)

- Co-Financing: Erasmus Mundus Programme of the European Union

- Undertaken by a project consortium led by ENQA:
  - ❑ ANECA (Spain), GAC (Germany), HCERES (France), QAA (UK), TEQSA (Australia)
  - ❑ APQN and ANQAHE

- Main aims:
  - ❑ enhance international practice in the QA of CBHE
  - ❑ develop an European approach to the QA of CBHE

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QACHE's three phases

Phase 1 – Information gathering

Regional networks surveys (ENQA, APQN, ANQAHE)

European providers survey (SP, DE, FR, UK)

Country reports (ANECA, GAC, HCERES, QAA, TEQSA)

Phase 2 – Regional expert forums

Europe (UK), Gulf (Bahrain), Asia (Macao)

Phase 3 – Deliverables

Toolkit and Guidelines

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Phase 1: information gathering

- Regulation of and information about CBHE is patchy
  - ❑ Absence of a common approach to, developed QA systems for, comprehensive information about CBHE

- Strengthening inter-agency cooperation as a way to
  - ❑ promote mutual understanding
  - ❑ share information and good practice
  - ❑ build mutual trust
  - ❑ facilitate the QA of CBHE

- Regional networks seen as playing a key role in facilitating information sharing and cooperation

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Phase 2: regional expert forums

- Facilitated policy dialogue between sending and receiving countries of CBHE

- Informed the development of the Toolkit highlighting the need to
    - ❑ consolidate existing international guidelines
    - ❑ provide new and useful guidance
    - ❑ address the 'trust gap' between sending and receiving countries about the quality of CBHE

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Phase 3: the Toolkit

- Complement the UNESCO/APQN Toolkit's effort to support the implementation of the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines

- Offers guidance on how agencies can realise that mutual understanding, trust and cooperation required to 'share the responsibility of quality assuring CBHE' (UNESCO/OECD)

- Respects the autonomy of different national systems

- Organised in 3 sections: information, cooperation, networks

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The Toolkit: Information

With a view to facilitating mutual understanding and building mutual trust, QA agencies should:

- *have clear and accessible policies about their approach to CBHE*

- *make easily accessible a list of those institutions they have quality assured or accredited, including any eventual list of quality assured or accredited CBHE provision and associated reports*

- *seek to establish regular channels of communication to facilitate information sharing and strengthen mutual understanding*

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The Toolkit: Cooperation

With a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and lessen the regulatory burden on providers, QA agencies should:

- *liaise whenever undertaking review of CBHE*

- *consider whether they would be able to make use of each other collected information or quality assurance/accreditation decisions*

- *consider ways in which review activity of CBHE could be undertaken jointly*

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The Toolkit: Networks

With a view to facilitating inter-agency cooperation and the implementation of the Toolkit, networks of QA agencies should:

- *consider ways in which they could serve as first point of contact for obtaining information about QA and HE systems and recognised providers in their member agencies' countries*

- *strengthen cooperation with other networks to promote policy dialogue, information sharing, and dissemination of good practice*

- *consider ways to align regional standards and guidelines to facilitate cooperation between agencies from different regions*

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Conclusions

- The project has highlighted the need to:

  ❑ enhance the national and international oversight of CBHE
  ❑ address the lack of information about CBHE and different national regulatory approaches to CBHE
  ❑ strengthen cooperation to facilitate information exchange, policy dialogue and the regulation of CBHE

- A Toolkit for enhanced inter-agency cooperation fills a gap in current international guidance

- Work together to harness the opportunities posed by CBHE, in the interest of students and societies

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Thank you

www qaa.ac.uk

@ enquiries@qaa.ac.uk

☎ +44 (0) 1452 557000

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