

Internal Quality Assurance & External Quality Assurance: what comes first, with which indicators and how do we involve stakeholders?

*Lithuanian experience in Internal Quality Assurance*

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## The Baltic Sea Area



Lithuania is an East European country (Baltic state) with population of 3.2 million

83.7 % Lithuanians

6.6% Poles

5.3% Russians

1.3% Belarusians

3.1% others / unspecified

# SYSTEM of HE in Lithuania

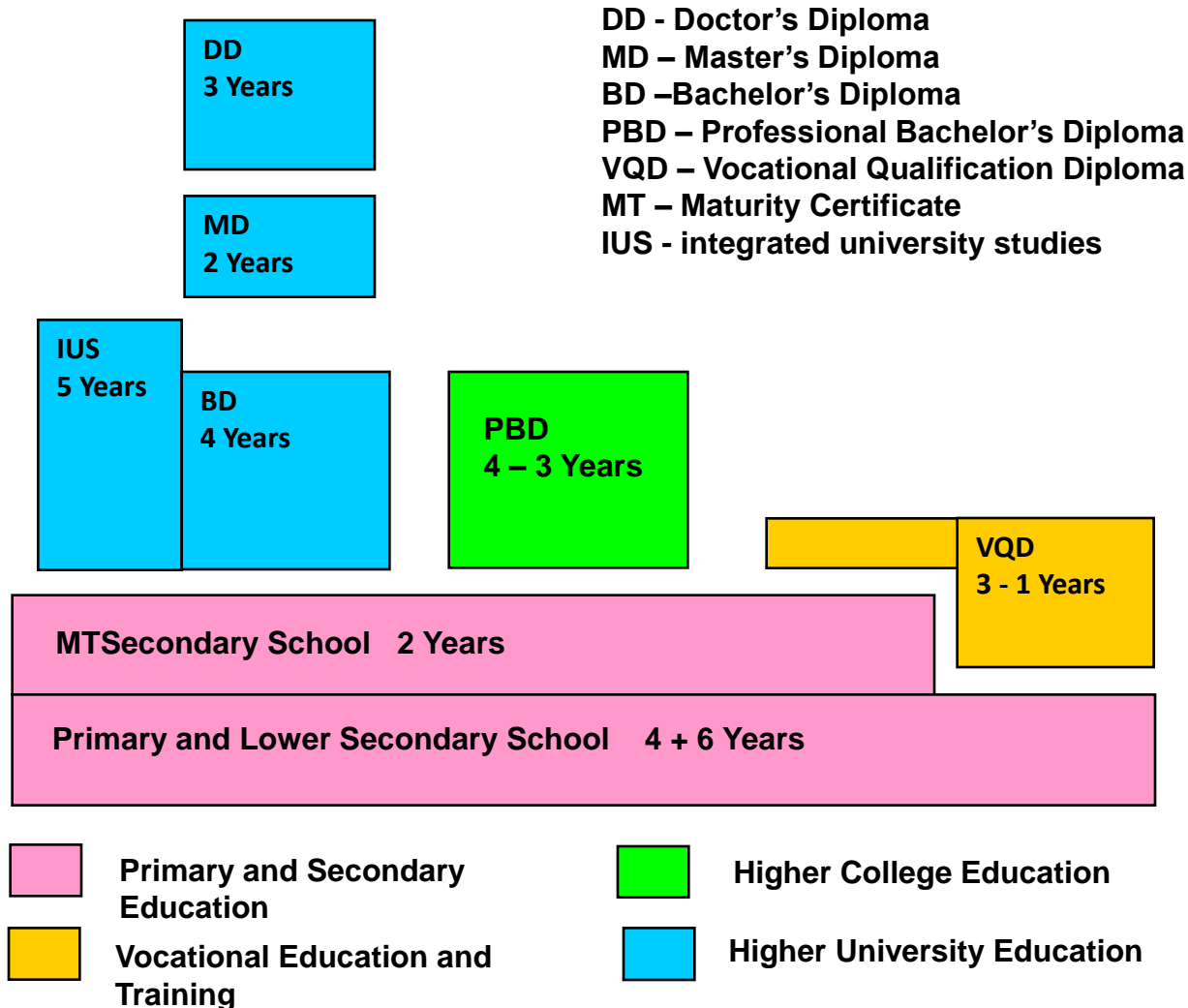
## *HE sector*

- 24 Universities
- 24 Applied Science Universities (colegia's)  
10 200 researchers (5 000 PhD)

## *Research sector*

- 17 State Research Institutes (subordinated to MES)
- 18 University Research Institutes
- 7 State Research Establishments (subordinated to other ministries)  
1 700 researchers (1 000 PhD)

# Scheme of the system of education in Lithuania





# Lithuanian Maritime Academy

- 1500 students in 5 study lines (professional bachelor degree)
- Since 2001 LMA has ISO 9000 series (industrial standard) based Quality Management system, certified by Lloyd's Register

# Topics to observe in the presentation:

- Lithuanian legislative requirements for QA in HE
- Internal QA & External QA
- Definition of Stakeholder in HE
- Quality Assurance &/or Quality Management?
- Some aspects of ISO 9000 series industrial standards application in HE

# Mission of HE

“The mission of higher education and research is to help ensure the country’s public, cultural and economic prosperity, provide support and impetus for a full life of every citizen, and satisfy the natural thirst for knowledge.”

Source: Law on higher education and research of Republic of Lithuania

... policy on higher education and research guarantees the quality of higher education and research.

# Responsibility for QA

Higher education and research institutions shall be responsible for the quality of research (artistic) activities, studies and other activities

Source: Law on higher education and research of Republic of Lithuania



# Means for QA

The quality of research (artistic) activities and studies shall be ensured through the

- **internal systems** of quality assurance of higher education and research institutions,
- **external evaluation and accreditation** of study programmes,
- external evaluation of research activities and **external evaluation and/or accreditation** of higher education and research institutions.

Source: Law on higher education and research of Republic of Lithuania

# Main requirement for Internal QA

Centre for Quality Assessment of Higher Education raises the requirement:

Internal quality assurance system within higher education institutions should be created using basic principles of European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)

# Rhetorical question

in the name of the section:

Internal Quality Assurance & External Quality Assurance: what comes first?

The stronger is Internal QA, the less need is for External QA.

# Stakeholders

- Definition: Stakeholder is a group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of a *higher education institution* (source: Freeman)
- Stakeholders are very important players in internal and external quality assurance
- Depending on their position or involvement stage, stakeholders could be also either internal or external to institution

# Internal stakeholders for HE institutions

- students
- teaching staff
- academic managers
- non-academic staff
- researchers

- Student has many roles (will be discussed later), he/she is main customer of HE institution and “employer” of teaching staff and academic managers
- Teachers are the single most important learning resource available to most students and one of the main assessors

# Externals stakeholders for HE institutions

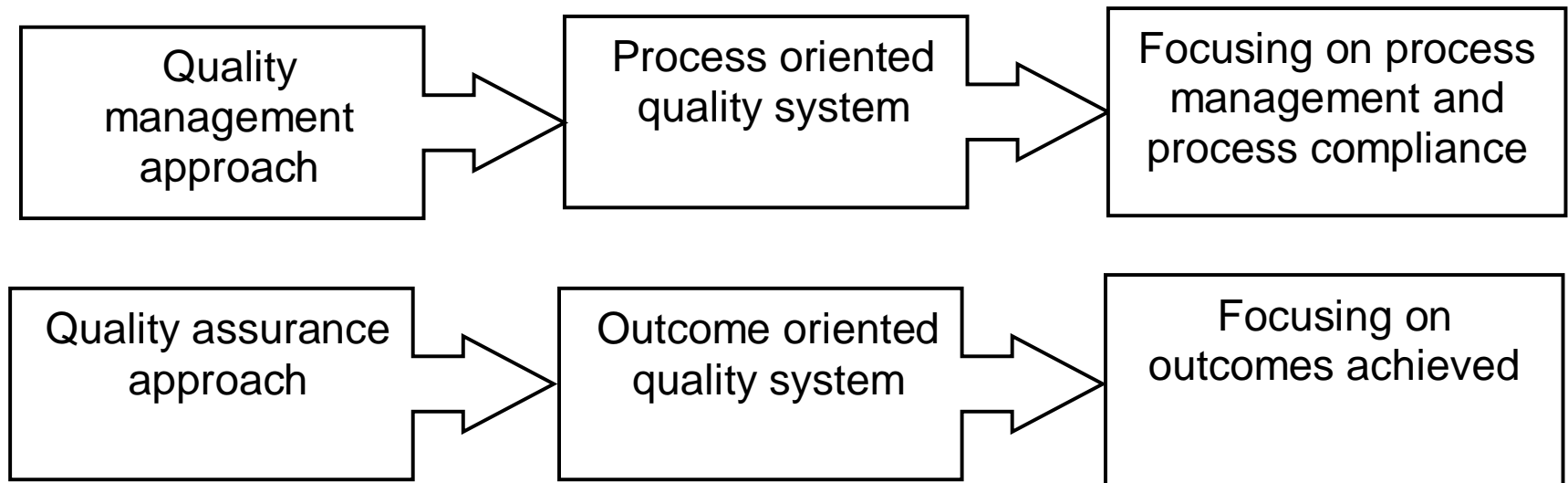
- governments
- employers
- professionals
- graduates
- potential students and their families
- QA agencies
- mass media

# One more Rhetorical question

Quality Assurance & Quality Management:  
what comes first?



# Different approach to the concept of quality



Different approach to the concept of quality reflects different viewpoint to the object of quality management

# Application of QA approach

- In higher education outcomes oriented concept of quality assurance is more frequently using comparing with QM concept
- Usually during **external quality assessment**, providing by national Centers for Quality Assessment of Higher Education, attention is **focused on outcomes** achieved by higher education institutions

# Limitations of QA approach

- External QA doesn't produce quality
- External QA mostly is control oriented, saying, that HE institution is “good enough”, doesn't provoke excellence
- HE institutions orient their internal QA to follow External QA

# Technological differences between QA & QM (ISO 9000)

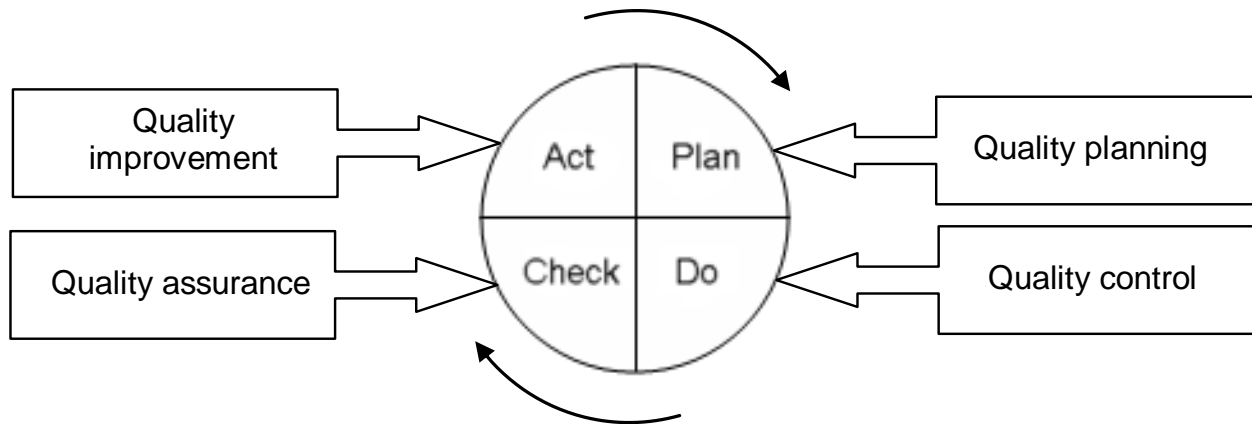
**Quality assurance** – part of quality management focused on providing confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled.

**Quality management** – coordinated activities to direct and control activities of an organization with regard to quality.

Generally QM includes 5 main elements:

- establishment of the quality policy and quality objectives,
- quality planning
- quality control
- quality assurance
- quality improvement

# SHEWHART-DEMING PDCA-CYCLE COMBINED WITH ISO 9000 SERIES QMS ELEMENTS



Check – implement processes monitoring and product and measuring, regarding to the policy, objectives and requirements raised for a product and inform about the results

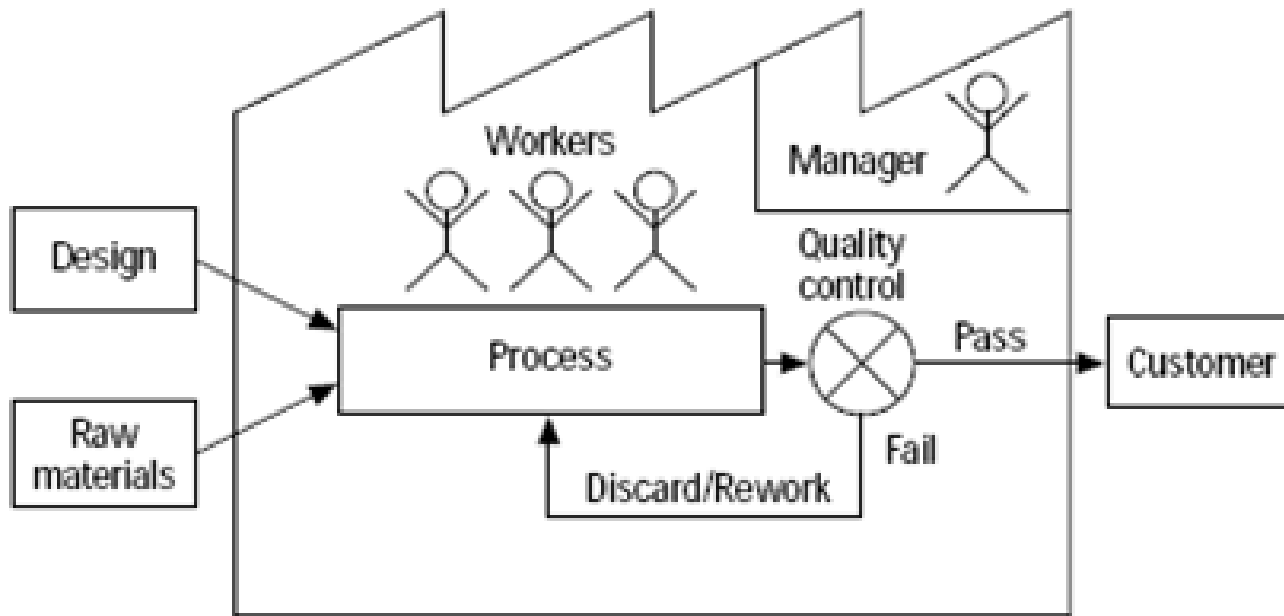
Source: ISO 9001

*V.Senčila, 24/25 .10.2013*

# Quality management approach

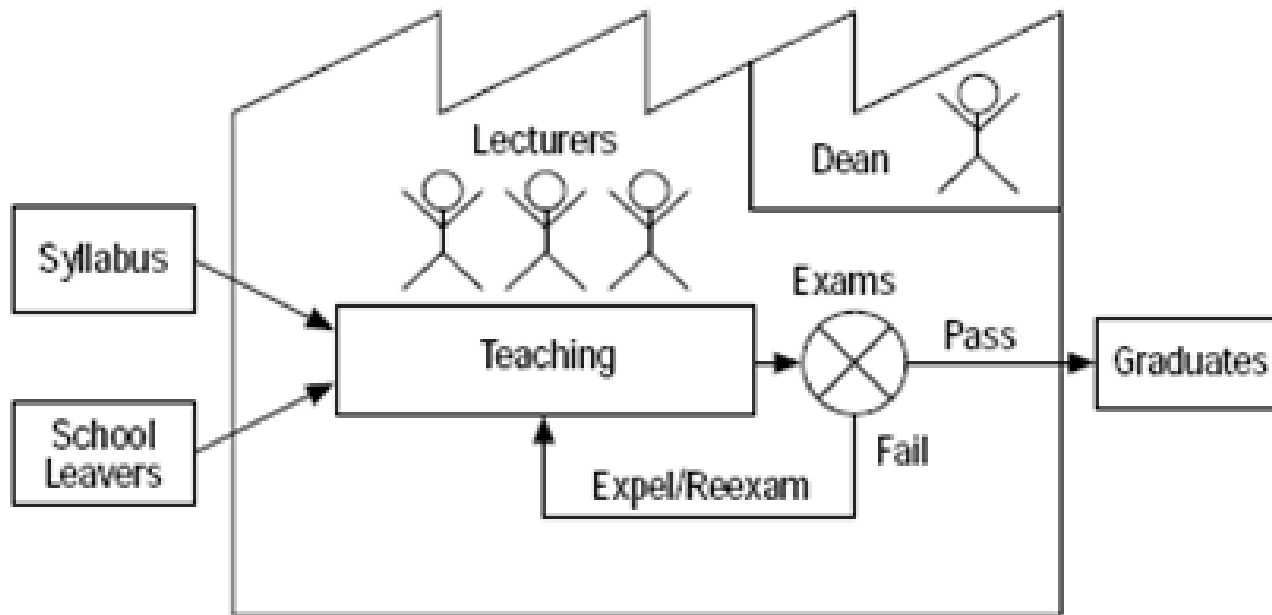
Quality management approach differs from quality assurance approach, is **processes oriented** and therefore could be more applicable to use for inside institution activities

# Factory simplified model (industrial approach)



Source: Shutler, Crawford

# Higher education institution simplified model (industrial approach)



Source: Shutler, Crawford



# To guarantee graduates' quality should be:

- incoming secondary school leavers should satisfy appropriate entry requirements
- study process documentation (study plans, syllabi, timetables, etc.) should be of a certain quality
- sufficiently qualified teaching staff
- study process of an appropriate technical and methodical level
- reliable students' knowledge and skills control
- clearly defined management responsibility and sufficient competence for implementation of necessary changes

# Students roles (based on ISO 9000 standards definitions )

- students who enter a HE institution are its “inputs”
- students are clients of a HE institution and consumers (clients) of its services
- students are active study process stakeholders
- students are assessors of obtained service quality (by choosing a HE institution and participating in surveys and etc.)
- after completion of a HE institution they are considered to be HE institution “products” (outputs)

# Industrial QMS advantages

- Process oriented, highlights all functions in an organization
- Applies statistical process control, use clear selected indicators
- Customer oriented
- Could be certified and then maintained from inside and supervised from outside

# Industrial QMS limitations

- Has tendency to become a well documented bureaucratic and costly structure
- “Easy”/wrong quality objectives could bring to “system for system” situation, when QMS is properly working, inducing hypnotic sleep, no improvement effect
- Concept “quality is degree of the requirements fulfilling” could do not stimulate to strive for excellence