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HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM EXPERTS

Quality Assurance in Higher Education

- Latest Developments and Trends in Europe -

By

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Agenda

- Quality Assurance and Bologna
- ESG
- EQAR
- Questions

Quality Assurance and Bologna

Quality Assurance means the procedures, processes and systems used by the higher education institutions and organizations to safeguard and improve the quality of its education and other activities.

- Two levels:
 - Internal within institutions
 - External for accreditation, audit and assessment
- Within Bologna
 - 1999: Developing comparable criteria and methodologies in QA
 - 2000: European Network for QA in HE
 - 2001: Prague: collaboration in creating a common framework
 - 2003: Berlin: agreed on set of standards, procedures and guidelines
 - 2004: European Network for QA in HE transformed into European Association for QA (ENQA)
 - 2005: Bergen: Adoption of European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)
 - 2007: London: Model for a European register of QA agencies
 - 2008: EQAR established
 - 2009: Leuven: EQAR encouraged to pursue its activities



Quality Assurance and Bologna



- Growth of external Quality Assurance one of the notable features of Bologna decade
- Major achievements:
 - 22 countries establishing new quality assurance agencies
 - European Association for QA in Higher Education (ENQA)
 - European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)
 - European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)
 - 17 agencies

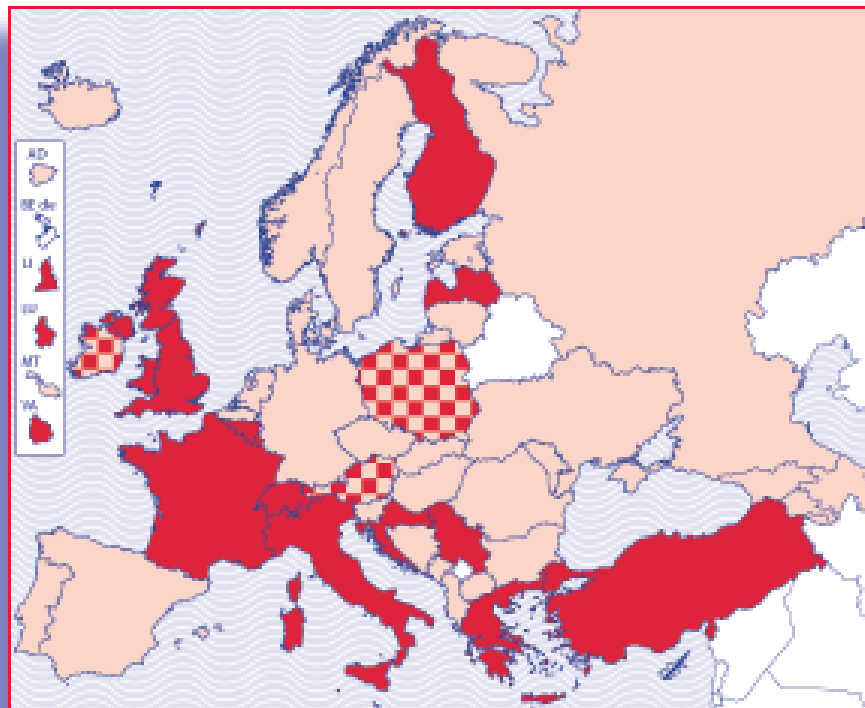
Quality Assurance and Bologna







- QA is concerned with granting permission to institutions or programmes to operate on the basis of threshold quality standards in a majority of EHEA countries
- Minority of countries exclusively follows an improvement-oriented approach
- Impact on governance structures and system relies more on external quality assurance

Quality Assurance and Bologna

Main approach to Quality Assurance, 2009/10



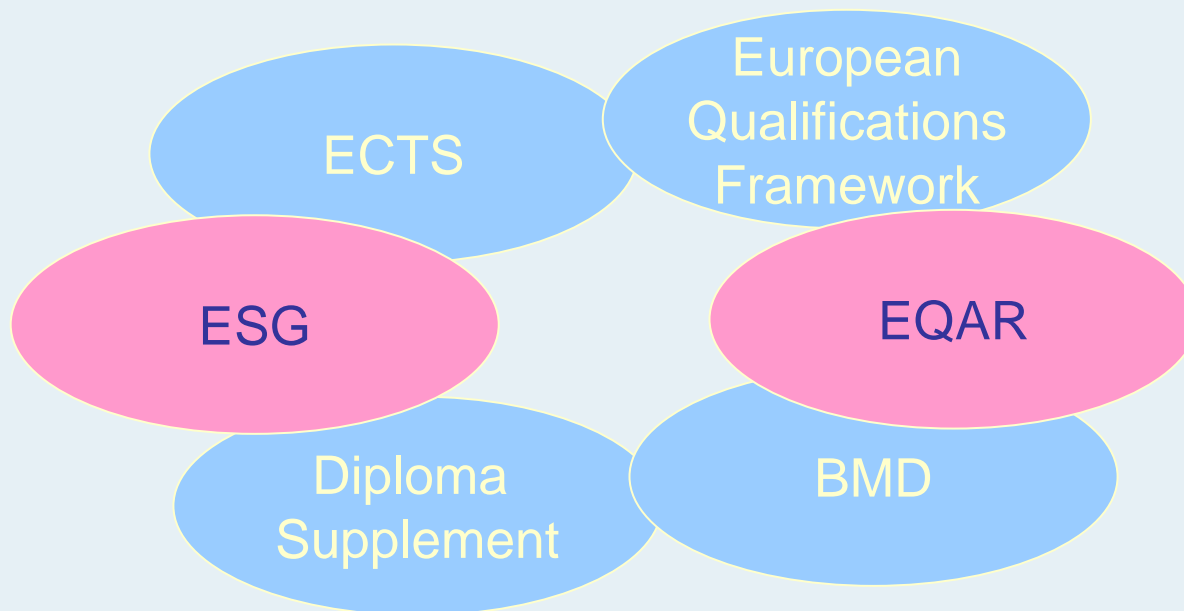
-  Advisory: improvement oriented
-  Supervisory: granting permission to higher education institutions and/or programmes
-  Quality Assurance agency established, but not yet operating
-  No Quality Assurance agency

Source: Eurydice.



Quality Assurance and Bologna


- Key quality-related instruments in EHEA



- The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education was commissioned by the Ministers in Berlin (2003)
- ESG drafted by ENQA in consultation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB (now ESU)
- Approved in Bologna Ministerial Conference (Bergen 2005)

- Standards are short and general statements of basic good practices
- Guidelines are illustrations of standards in action

- Standards and Guidelines
 - Internal Quality Assurance
 - Policy and procedures
 - Approval, monitoring, periodic review
 - Assessment of students
 - Information systems
 - External Quality Assurance
 - Use of Internal QA procedures
 - QA processes
 - Reporting
 - Follow up
 - System wide analysis
 - External Quality Assurance Agencies
 - Use of external QA procedures
 - Activities
 - Accountability



Standards and Guidelines for
Quality Assurance in the European
Higher Education Area

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance

Standard:

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.

The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

Guidelines:

Formal policies and procedures provide a framework within which higher education institutions can develop and monitor the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems. They also help to provide public confidence in institutional autonomy. Policies contain the statements of intentions and the principal means by which these will be achieved. Procedural guidance can give more detailed information about the ways in which the policy is implemented and provides a useful reference point for those who need to know about the practical aspects of carrying out the procedures.

The policy statement is expected to include:

- the relationship between teaching and research in the institution;
- the institution's strategy for quality and standards;
- the organisation of the quality assurance system;
- the responsibilities of departments, schools, faculties and other organisational units and individuals for the assurance of quality;
- the involvement of students in quality assurance;
- the ways in which the policy is implemented, monitored and revised.

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards

Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

1.3 Assessment of students

Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff

Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

1.5 Learning resources and student support

Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

1.6 Information systems

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities.

1.7 Public information

Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures

External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes

The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

2.3 Criteria for decisions

Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

2.4 Processes fit for purpose

All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

2.5 Reporting

Reports should be published and should be written in a style which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

2.6 Follow-up procedures

Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

2.7 Periodic reviews

External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

2.8 System-wide analyses

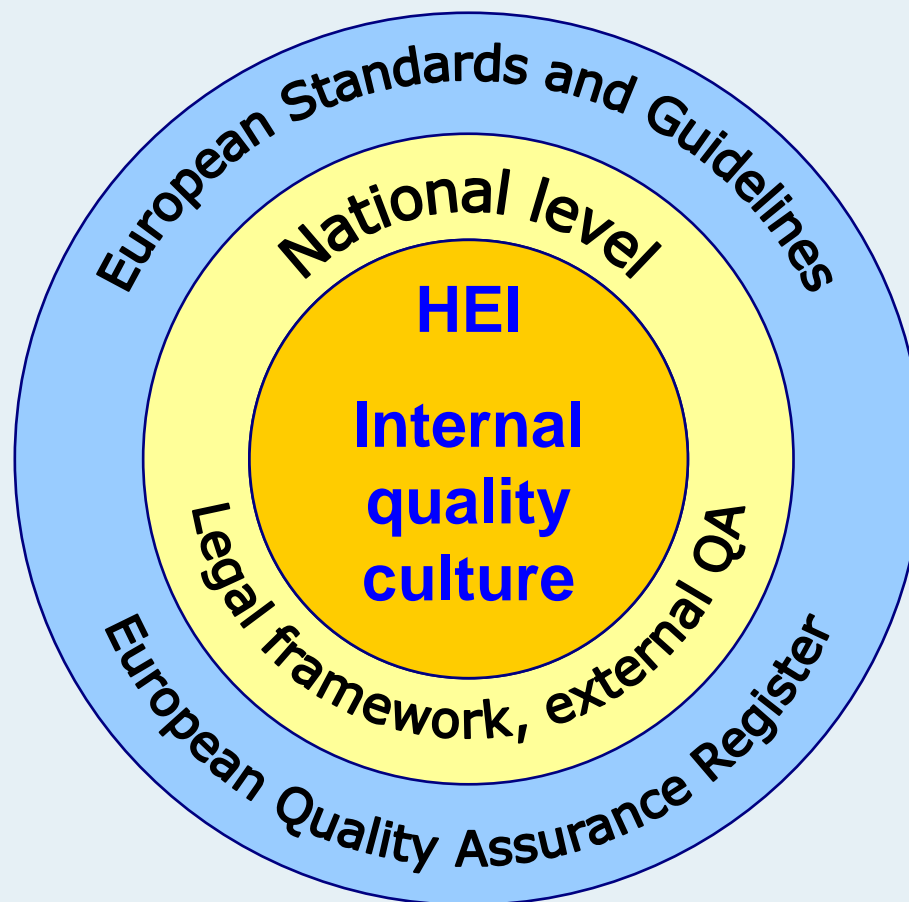
Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments etc.



- List (web-based) of credible and reliable quality assurance agencies
 - Compliance with ESG
 - Evidenced through an external review by independent experts:
 - QA experts, academic staff, students
- Objectives
 - Enhance trust and confidence
 - Improve recognition
 - Support mobility
 - Allow HEIs to make better use of the diversity

EQAR

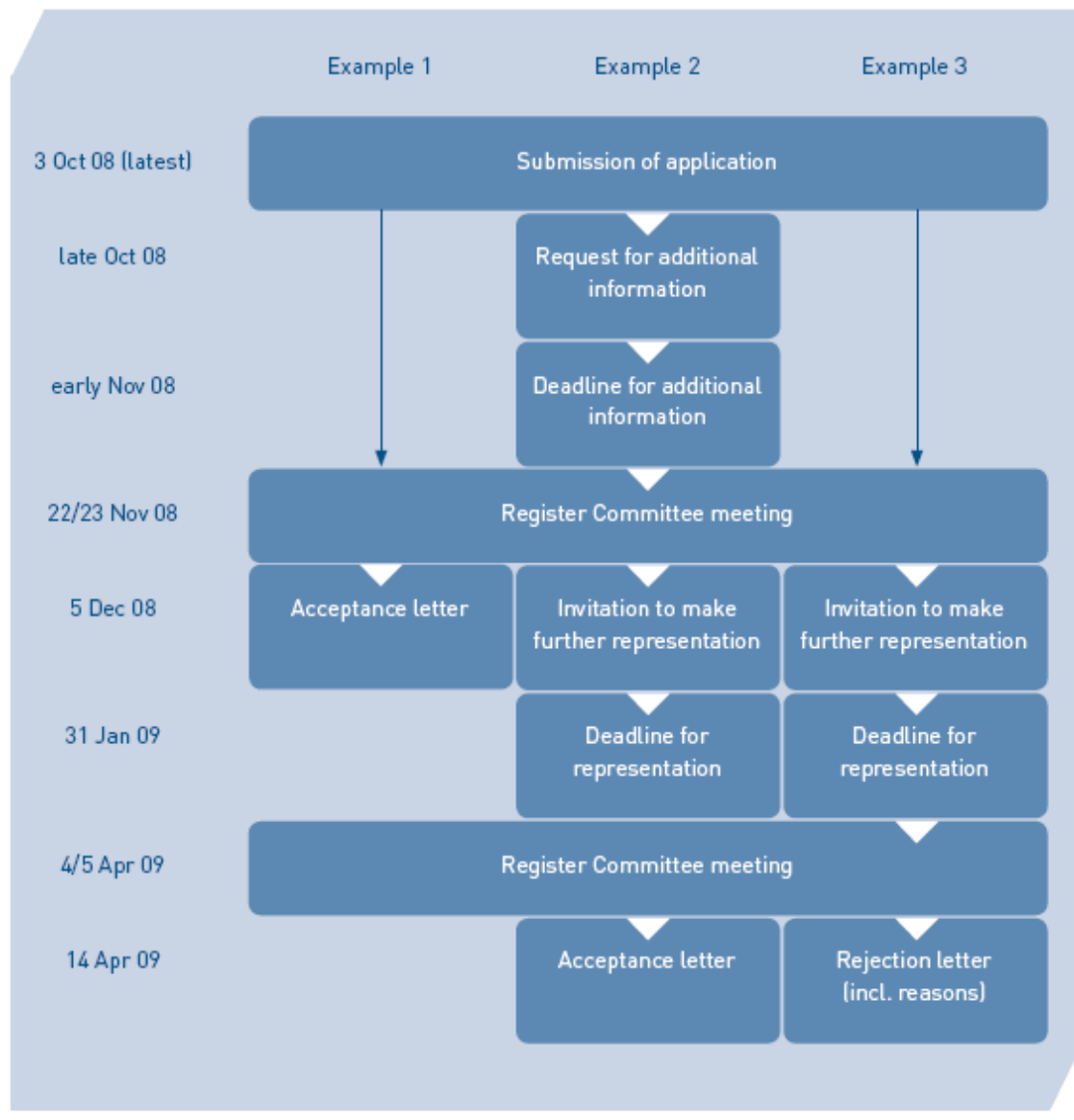
- Different levels of QA



EQAR



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Others

- Regional networks:
 - ENQA Europe
 - CEEN Central & E Europe
 - EAQAN E Europe & Central Asia
 - APQN Asia Pacific
 - AAAC Canada
 - RIACES South America
 - CANQATE Caribbean
 - AfriQAN Africa
 - ANQAHE Arab countries
- INQAAHE: Guidelines of Good Practice
- OECD/UNESCO: Guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education

Questions

- Guide of Good Practices for internal QA in LHEI?
- External QA: who and how?
- Governance and QA?
- Conformity with European ESG?

References

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- Report on progress in quality assurance in higher education, 2009
- Focus on Higher Education in Europe 2010, the Impact of the Bologna Process, Eurydice
- EQAR, Annual report 2009