



Greetings to Members of INQAAHE

A major task that has been taking place since I last reported to you in September is a re-design of the INQAAHE website. Although we had it rebuilt last year, we found that it was not robust enough to support the many new services we are providing to members. I apologise that the current site has often been down, and when up has not been particularly easy to navigate. We hope that the new site will be operative very soon and will solve these problems.

During the past three months, work has proceeded very actively on several of the projects on which I reported then, primarily the **Professional Qualifications in QA**. An international survey and a US survey have been completed, and the writers are hard at work. This work is being supported by a World Bank grant.

The **Query Service** is running but has not yet had much traffic. This could be because of website difficulties. We'll give it a three-month run after the new site is operative, and then ask you for your opinion.

Good Practices in QA

The good practices in QA (GPQA) database should also be in place as soon as the website is rebuilt. To date, 11 submissions to the Database have been received, and these are currently being screened. We would welcome further submissions, by 31 January 2009, in the first instance.

Clearinghouse

CONEAU did a lot of work in designing the Clearinghouse (QAHEC) of policies, procedures and practices of quality agencies. This is being built at the same time as the main INQAAHE website is being re-built. We hoped to have 20 agencies catalogued by the end of 2008 and 50 by the time of the 2009 conference, but we now hope for 20 by the time of the conference. This work is being supported by a World Bank grant.

Professional Accreditors

Carol Bobby has taken on the task of developing INQAAHE's relations with professional accreditors. Carol and two other people from that constituency will be leading a workshop for professional accreditors in Washington DC in January before the CHEA conference.

Memoranda of Co-operation

I have reported previously on MoCs signed between INQAAHE and ANQAHE, APQN, EAQAN and ENQA.. The signing of new MoCs with the networks CEEN and ECA is under way. One of the topics on the regions meeting agenda in Washington DC in January will be how we ensure these MoCs are live documents.

Conferences and other international interaction

I represented INQAAHE at the OECD IMHE Conference in Paris in September (see report elsewhere in the Bulletin). As a result, INQAAHE is represented on the AHELO Project Group, looking at output standards in higher education. Marie-Odile Ottenwaelter is our representative. I also represented INQAAHE at a workshop in Cairo for the Arab Network (ANQAHE) to develop common structures for QA agencies.



European Quality Assurance Register

Many congratulations to NVAO, the host of the INQAAHE Secretariat, on being one of the first three QA agencies to be accepted for inclusion on the EQAR.

Other Matters

Other matters, such as the progress of the 2009 INQAAHE Conference are described elsewhere in this Bulletin.

David Woodhouse
President

UPDATE FROM SECRETARIAT

New members

The following organisations applied successfully for INQAAHE membership:

- Qatar University, Qatar: institution member
- Accreditation Council for Practical Abilities (ACPA), Japan: full member
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), India: full member
- Independent Kazakhstan Quality Assurance Agency in Education, Kazakhstan: full member

Membership fees

Invoices for 2008 (and if needed reminders for 2007 and 2008) were sent to members. If you have not done so then please pay your membership fee soon.

Board elections

Call for nominations were sent to members on December 1. Nominations have to be made by January 1. Reminders for nominations were sent on December 19. The electronic voting will commence on January 8 and last for 6 weeks. On March 10 the election results will be announced, after the vote counting and certification of the results by an impartial officer.

INQAAHE Forum 2010

The INQAAHE Board received and reviewed a bid from the Namibia Qualifications Authority to host the INQAAHE Forum 2010. The Board will propose to the General Assembly in Abu Dhabi to approve the bid of Namibia Qualifications Authority. The event in Windhoek, Namibia is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, 5th May to Friday, 7th May 2010.

Regional networks meeting

The next meeting between INQAAHE and the regional networks will be held after the CHEA annual conference in Washington on January 28.

Best Wishes!

The INQAAHE Secretariat wishes you all the best for 2009!

Leendert Klaassen
Mark Frederiks
Esther van den Heuvel



Secretariat closed

Please note that from December 24 till January 5 the INQAAHE Secretariat will be closed.



INQAAHE biennial conference



From 30th March to 2 April 2009 the 9th biennial INQAAHE conference will be held in Abu Dhabi, the national capital of the United Arab Emirates. A lot of INQAAHE members already registered for the conference with the theme: **New Approaches to Quality Assurance in the Changing World of Higher Education.**

The Conference Organizing Committee received more than fifty paper proposals that are addressing one of the four sub-themes:

1. Quality Assurance for enhancement
2. Different approaches to QA and their impact on efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability
3. A quality culture – embedding QA into the life of an institution
4. Quality Assurance at a distance

For more information and registration you can visit the conference website

<http://www.caa.ae/conference/DesktopDefault.aspx>

Please note that early registrants will pay USD 450. Late registrations, payments made after February 15, 2009 will pay USD 500.



Pictures and Presentations of the INQAAHE Members Forum 2008

Presentations that were held during the forum in Buenos Aires can be found at: <http://www.coneau.gov.ar/MemberForum2008/?option=15>

Pictures of the forum can be found at: <http://www.coneau.gov.ar/MemberForum2008/?option=6>

UNESCO GIQAC Steering Committee, Paris, 10 December 2008

The GIQAC Steering Committee meeting took place in the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. INQAAHE was represented by its Secretary, Leendert Klaassen. The aim of the meeting was to get an impression of what has happened in the GIQAC projects of the different networks, to exchange good practices and developments, to address obstacles and propose solutions. The discussions were primarily based on supervision reports by the World Bank and UNESCO. One of the conclusions was that the networks experience a bureaucratic burden in coping with the strict regulations connected to these projects. A format will be prepared to facilitate simple progress reports. Regarding the INQAAHE projects the Steering Committee emphasised the need to focus on what is specific for the needs of developing countries and regions. Attention was given to the fact that the fiscal year for the GIQAC-grants is 1 Jan - 30 June (18 months - The World Bank has extended the usual one year period with 6 months.) This is a strict deadline. All the money that is not spent for the GIQAC projects at that moment will have to go back to the World Bank. Preparations for the next period (2009 – mid 2010) have started. EOI's from the participating networks were received by UNESCO until 10th December 2008. Request for proposals will follow soon, which gives the participating networks some weeks to prepare their plans for the next funding period .



UNESCO PARIS – 61st United Nations NGO Conference, 3 – 5 September 2008

In the first week of September representatives of hundreds of NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations) gathered in the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris for their annual meeting. INQAAHE was represented by its Secretary, Leendert Klaassen. Special significance was given to this meeting because of the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. During this conference various aspects of human rights development were discussed. One part of the program was focused on partnership between NGO's and Universities to advance human rights learning. What is the point of education of human rights? People that most need the protection of the human rights are usually not aware of these rights. Absence of awareness is one of the biggest problems. A lot of attention was given to the exchange of methods for "educating human rights" in all kinds of situations and circumstances. The conference was concluded with an impressive speech by Ingrid Betancourt. From her own recent experience she emphasised the need to sustain the effort for human rights by organizations and individuals.

International Workshop in Almaty, Kazakhstan

An international workshop was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, 29 and 30 October 2008, on the topic "Quality Assurance in Higher Education: a National Context and International Paradigms". Some 200 participants of Kazakh institutions for Higher Education were present. The goal of the workshop was to discuss QA strategies in Kazakhstan, harmonization of the national QA standards with international standards for QA, and to introduce international QA agencies to the Kazakh Universities. Secretary Leendert Klaassen introduced INQAAHE as a network, its mission, goals, activities and plans. Speakers from various international organizations and agencies gave their presentations: Russia, USA, Germany, and the UK were represented.

For the international representatives it was striking how Kazakhstan recently is focusing on the development and implementation of an internationally recognized QA system. Both the government and the universities have addressed QA in Higher Education as an important priority to which additional resources are allocated. Much interest exists in foreign accreditation organizations who could become active in Kazakhstan on a short notice. The workshop was an initiative of the National Accreditation Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan, with its director Nurilya Shakanova.



Regional Networks



New ENQA Board

On 25 and 26 September the ENQA General Assembly took place in Vienna. Bruno Curvale (France) was elected as the new ENQA President. Also two new Vice-Presidents were elected: Tibor Szanto (HAC, Hungary) and Achim Hopbach (AR, Germany) will fulfill these positions. Fiona Crozier (QAA, UK), Joseph Grifoll (AQU, Spain) and Milan Sojka (Accreditation Commission, Czech Republic) were elected as new Board members. The mandate of Tine Holm (EVA, Denmark) was renewed. In addition Helka Kekalainen, director of the Finish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC) was co-opted as a Board member. Other current Board members are Guy Aelterman (NVAO, Netherlands and Flanders) and Kurt Sohm (FHR, Austria). The ENQA Board is the executive body of ENQA and convenes at least quarterly to discuss current issues.



Annual EAQAN Meeting



The annual meeting of the Eurasian Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) was held on 13 and 14 November, in Tallin, Estonia. A report about what EAQAN has done was presented as well as the general perspective for the network. Members of the network discussed the future of EAQAN and the activities that need to be undertaken. Members agreed that EAQAN needs to further strengthen its work and do more, in order to fulfill its role as a regional network. Also the election of a new president took place. Mr. Gennadii Ovchinnikov, director of the department of government control of the Ministry of Education in Belarus, was selected as new president of EAQAN. Mr. Hillar Bauman, director of the Estonian Accreditation Center was selected vice-president of EAQAN. In the next months, an electronic election will be held in order to find a new secretary general for the network.



6th Central American Forum for Accreditation in Higher Education

On 17 and 18 September 2008 the 6th Central American Forum for Accreditation in Higher Education was organized in Heredia, Costa Rica. During the forum various themes were discussed in the plenary sessions and subgroups such as “The challenges of the Higher Education Institutions and the Accreditation Agencies in front of the regionalization and integration of Central America”, “The expectations of the Higher Education and accreditation in Latin America within the framework of the Regional Conference about Higher Education (CRES 2008).”

Also the regionalization and experiences of ARCU SUR-MEXA were discussed. Recent developments and future prospective of the Central American Accreditation Council (CCA) were also presented. The discussion about the current position of the Central American and Caribbean Network for Quality Assurance and Cooperation in Higher Education (RECCACCES) and the relation with it's individual member agencies was one of the most important issues. Initiatives for cooperation and development were discussed.

Finally a tribute was paid to Carlos Tünnerman Bernheim, the first president of the CCA. He was praised for his contribution to the implementation of an accreditation system.

The presentations of international experts and other relevant documents of the forum can be find at:

http://www.cca.ucr.ac.cr/foro_site



The European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)

The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands & Flanders (NVAO), and ANEQA and AQU from Spain have been included as the first European quality assurance agencies in the independent European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) that at the beginning of this year was set up: <http://www.eqar.eu/register.html> The admission shows the substantial compliance of a quality assurance agency with a common set of principles for quality assurance in Europe. These principles are laid down in the “European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance”.

EQAR is an information tool supporting the establishment of a European Higher Education Area by offering clear and reliable information on quality assurance agencies and thus enhancing confidence and trust in these quality assurance agencies. The NVAO is included in the register, because it's method of working complies with the European Standards and guidelines of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). This was proved in the final report of the international evaluation commission which has reviewed the NVAO in 2007.



Regional medicine and agronomy accreditation project

The Iberoamerican Network for the Accreditation and Assessment on Higher Education of Quality (RIACES) is developing with several universities from Latin America and different QA agencies a regional experimental accreditation process on undergraduate medicine and agronomy programs. Stakeholders from different countries are participating in the project, including Colombia, Paraguay, Ecuador, Argentina and Uruguay for the agronomy programs and Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay, Cuba, Chile and Costa Rica for the medicine programs. The participating QA agencies are SINAES-Costa Rica, JAN-Cuba, CONEA-Ecuador, CNA-Colombia and CONEAU-Perú. The participating universities in the agronomy experience are the Universidad Earth-Costa Rica, Universidad Central de Las Villas de Cuba, Universidad Agraria del Ecuador-Milagro, Universidad Nacional de Colombia and Universidad Agraria de la Selva del Perú. The participating universities for Medicine are Universidad de Costa Rica, Universidad Católica Santiago de Guayaquil-Ecuador, Universidad Nacional de Antioquía Medellín-Colombia, and Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia-Perú. For more information you can contact Adriana Caillon: acaillon@coneau.gov.ar



Project CINTAS

From 10 to 13 November a workshop was organized in Madrid to help the agencies that participate in the CINTAS guidelines. The workshop addressed the issues related to the QA agencies' role in the higher education system and the development of internal quality assessment procedures for QA agencies. This workshop was organized by ANECA-Spain. Several Latin American countries participated in the activity.

Paraguayan Universities' Presidents accreditation study visit

16 Paraguayan vice-chancellors from both public and private universities have visited Argentina last November as a part of RIACES 2008 activities to learn on assessment and accreditation processes and also on the regional accreditation processes such as the MERCOSUR and RIACES ones.

This study visit was organized on four topics, daily delivered. The first two days took place at the Interuniversity National Council, located at Buenos Aires City. The third day the Paraguayan Universities authorities were received at the CEMIC University Institute. In the afternoon they visited the Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina. During the fourth and last day they visited the Universidad Nacional de Lanús, at Lanús, Buenos Aires Province.

This visit was aimed at the enhancement of the assessment culture and the fostering of the international cooperation.



ERI SEE

EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVE
OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

ERI SEE Work programme 2008-2010 and report 2007

The Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) is a regional platform for co-operation in the field of education.

ERI SEE supports national reforms in education through regional capacity building and transfer of know-how, linking these efforts also to the EU and international educational dialogue such as the EU Work Programme “Education and Training 2010”, and the Bologna and Copenhagen Processes. Promoting cooperation between the education and research sectors in South Eastern Europe (SEE) is a priority as well. Cooperation of the SEE countries in the implementation of the Education for All and of the education objectives of the Millennium Development Goals is a common commitment of ERI SEE.

The publication “*ERI SEE Work programme 2008-2010 and ERI SEE Report 2007*” provides a brief insight to ERI SEE, followed by an outline of the ERI SEE Work Programme 2008-2010 thus offering an opportunity for insight to the ERI SEE plans for the future, and it concludes with highlights of the ERI SEE work in the year 2007.

The publication can be found at:

ftp://axis/7874a7056d78856bb51a7df682ffdacef67a6af4d53c81271a9c7e3ab2624056ce549b87a46fb14a/ERI_SEE_publication_za_web.pdf

IMHE/OECD Conference “The Quality, relevance and impact of Higher Education”

From 8-10 September INQAAHE president, David Woodhouse attended the IMHE/OECD Conference “Outcomes of Higher Education” on the topical theme: “The Quality, relevance and impact of Higher Education. Special attention was given at this conference “to identifying new approaches of evaluating and assessing higher education in terms of its outcomes, for example in learning or employment”. The conference organisers saw this focus as important for improving accountability, employability and the quality of teaching.

The conference program had five major streams:

- Institutional measures to assess and improve quality
- Reputation and ranking – the impact on institutional strategy and behaviour of international ranking tables
- Assessing learning and employment outcomes
- Balancing the needs and expectations of society with the autonomy of institutions.
- Value for money and efficiency in higher education

The major value for INQAAHE in the President’s attending this Conference was in discussions with OECD. The OECD is exploring possibilities for assessing higher education learning outcomes on an international comparative perspective (‘AHELO’). Were this to be achieved it would provide internationally comparative information about the performance of different national higher education systems, which will be of interest to both AUQA and INQAAHE. Following the discussions with OECD, INQAAHE is now represented (by Marie-Odile Ottenwaelter) on the AHELO working group.



CHEA Annual Conference and INQAAHE Special interest meeting

From 26 till 29 January the CHEA Annual Conference and national accreditation forum will take place in the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington DC. More information about this conference can be found at:

<http://www.chea.org>

Prior to the start of this conference INQAAHE will host its first special interest meeting for the worldwide community of specialized and professional quality assurance agencies. The meeting will be held on January 26, 2009 from 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM EST in Washington, DC. This special interest forum is intended solely for those QA organizations that review professional or specialized preparation programs.

There is no registration fee and you do not have to be a member of INQAAHE to attend. We ask only that you let us know if you are coming by sending your name and organizational affiliation to:

m.frederiks@nvaio.net



**MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION
ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Fostering a Campus Culture of Assessment: A Retreat for Campus Leaders Monday February 2, 2009

- How can you create a thriving culture of assessment?
- How can you get faculty, administrators, and staff "on board" with assessment?
- How can you foster a climate in which assessment is an ongoing part of campus life?

Research and experience show that assessment happens only with the active commitment, involvement, and tangible support of campus leaders.

This retreat is designed to help campus leaders identify practical steps they can take to foster a culture of assessment on their campuses.

The retreat will be held at the Marriott Downtown Hotel
Philadelphia, PA

Please visit the following site for more information:

<http://www.msche.org/?Nav1=EVENTS&Nav2=2009.05.01>



Seminar: Centres of Excellence in University Education, Helsinki, Finland, 24-25 February

The event is jointly organised by FINHEEC and ENQA.

The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC) will complete the evaluation of centres of excellence in Finnish university education for the fifth time by the end of November 2008. Designation of centres functions as a basis for the allocation of performance-based funding by the Ministry of Education. Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has its own process for the selection of Centres of Excellent Quality in Higher Education.

By introducing two national models for awarding excellence in education and some of the awarded units the seminar aims to disseminate information on good practice of enhancing education. Likewise, the seminar strives to bring new ideas and perspectives to continual development of curricula, programme and course design and to provide solutions and new viewpoints to teaching, assessment and learning methods.

The seminar will gather participants from HEIs, quality assurance agencies, ministries and other European actors to discuss and share new information. The conference language is English.

The programme and registration form will be published by the end of December. The programme will include keynote addresses, plenary sessions, case studies and discussions.

For further information, please contact Kirsi Hiltunen kirsi.hiltunen@minedu.fi
<http://www.enqa.eu/eventitem.lasso?id=220&cont=eventDetail>

The 5th EUA Convention of European Higher Education Institutions: Facing Global Challenges: European strategies for Europe's universities

EUA's 2009 Convention, hosted by Charles University Prague, takes place just before the formal launch of the European Higher Education Area in 2010 and at a time of reflection on the shape of the European Research Area in the next decade. It therefore presents a major opportunity for universities to contribute to the debate by outlining their common vision of how best to promote a coherent, transparent and attractive university sector in Europe.

The convention will take place from 18-21 March 2009 in Prague, Czech Republic. More information can be found at the EUA website: <http://www.eua.be>