



# INQAAHE

*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*

## **INQAAHE Bulletin December 2009**

### **Table of Contents**

#### News

- Registration for INQAAHE Forum now open!
- President's Report
- Membership Mutations
- Quality Assurance in HE in Small States
- Annual CANQATE Conference
- ECA-NVAO Seminar on Changing Systems and Internationalisation and Accreditation
- APQN Conference and Annual General Meeting
- Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance
- Quality Assurance in Colombia
- In Memoriam: Iván Lavados Montes

#### Upcoming Events

- AEC Conference 'After Tuning there is Articulation
- EUR-ACE Spread Project Mid Term Conference
- The European Higher Education Area: Achievements and future challenges



# INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

## Best Wishes!

The INQAAHE Secretariat wishes you all the best for 2010!

Leendert Klaassen  
Mark Frederiks  
Esther van den Heuvel



## Secretariat Closed

Please note that from December 23rd till January 4th the INQAAHE Secretariat will be closed.



## NEWS



### Registration for INQAAHE Forum now open!

We are pleased to inform you that the registration website for the upcoming INQAAHE Members' Forum is now online. The 6<sup>th</sup> biennial forum is hosted by the Namibian Qualifications Authority (NQA) and will be held in Windhoek, Namibia on Wednesday 5 and Thursday 6 May, 2010. The forum theme will be the responsiveness of External Quality Assurance Agencies.

On Tuesday, May 4th two pre-forum workshops will be organised. The subject of the first workshop will be QA mechanisms for QA agencies. The second workshop will address the training of reviewers.

For more details about the programme, the conference host and to register yourself please visit

<http://www.inqaahe.org/forum-2010>

### Add [www.inqaahe.org](http://www.inqaahe.org) to your website!

INQAAHE would like to ask its members to put a link to the INQAAHE website

<http://www.inqaahe.org>

on their own website.

If you want to use the INQAAHE logo

contact the secretariat at:

[inqaahe@nvaio.net](mailto:inqaahe@nvaio.net)



# INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

## President's Report on INQAAHE Project Working Groups

The work of INQAAHE is carried out mainly through voluntary contributions by members of their time and effort. It is directed through a number of project Working Groups.

The Board of directors holds a monthly e-meeting, and the subject of the October meeting was a roundup of progress in the working groups.

We always need more people to assist in these project groups, so any reader who would be interested in helping should contact the Secretariat.

### **1. Professional Qualification in QA**

About 20 people have written a course / program in quality assurance, designed for all who need a high level of competence in this field. The program is equivalent to a one-year full time graduate qualification, and is available as open-source material on the INQAAHE website. The creation of the material has benefited from support from the World Bank and UNESCO.

The program is split into modules, and those in turn into units, and those wishing to use it may use all or parts. The full program is being offered by distance methods by two universities, The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development in cooperation with the School of Continuing and Professional Studies of New York University and the LHMartin Institute of the University of Melbourne

The program was launched in Copenhagen in November at the fourth European Quality Assurance Forum. More information can be found [here](#)

### **2. Good Practice in QA (GPQA)**

As workers in QA, we often want to introduce or revise a procedure, and wonder if anyone has any good ideas about it, whether it is arranging site visits, making decisions, or training reviewers. INQAAHE is creating a database of good practices by QA agencies so members can see what other agencies have done. Not everything works in every situation, so a good practice for one user may be less helpful for another, but often one gets ideas from other people that can be adapted, even if not used directly.

At present, we have only a few entries in the database, and members are encouraged to go to the website and submit practices of their own that they have reason to think might be helpful to other agencies.

The Board did consider whether the present submission requirements are too complicated, so we'd be happy to hear from you on that aspect, also.

### **3. QA in HE Clearinghouse (QAHEC)**

This is a long-standing project to index the websites of a number (currently 50) of QA agencies, so that INQAAHE members may more easily locate the policies, procedures and practices of other agencies.

The Clearinghouse has been designed and the initial cataloguing should be completed by the end of January. In February, those member agencies that have been catalogued will be asked to check their entries.



# INQAAHE

*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*

The Clearinghouse should be publicly available in March, and formally launched at the Namibia Forum in May. The creation of the material has benefited from support from the World Bank and UNESCO.

The Board intends gradually to increase the number of sites catalogued.

#### **4. Consultants Database**

INQAAHE and ANQAHE have assisted APQN in creating a database of consultants in QA. The consultants are drawn from around the world, and are included in the database only after consideration of their applications by a team of experienced QA reviewers. It is expected that the Database will go online at the beginning of 2010. The Secretariat will inform you about this.

#### **5. Query Service**

INQAAHE provides a rapid answer query service to members, through a team of about 15 people world-wide. Members simply submit queries through the relevant link in the Member Services area of the website. A few queries go unanswered if no team member feels they have expertise or experience relevant to the question, but most receive several helpful responses.

#### **6. Small States**

INQAAHE has long been aware of the need to assist small states in their special needs in QA procedures and systems. In this, INQAAHE has collaborated with UNESCO. An extensive survey has been undertaken and an options paper produced. This month, INQAAHE is beginning to arrange some internships for members of QA agencies in small states for professional development with other experienced agencies. This work has benefited from support from the World Bank and UNESCO. More information about the Small States project can be found on page 6.

#### **7. Other networks**

For several years, INQAAHE has been actively working with regional and other networks of QA agencies. During the quarter, the President spoke at the ECA conference, and sent messages of support to the CANQATE conference and the AfriQAN meeting. INQAAHE has two Board members whose task is to liaise with the other networks, and there is an area of the INQAAHE website to facilitate communication between networks. Representatives of the networks can access the website [here](#)

#### **8. Professional accreditors**

In January 2009, INQAAHE convened its first special meeting for professional accreditors. This was in Washington DC and attracted primarily US participants. During the year, contact has been made with professional accreditors in the UK and Australia, and there is the beginning of a special area on the INQAAHE website. Professional accreditor members are asked to tell the Board what particular services they would find useful. INQAAHE's second special interest meeting for professional and specialized QA agencies can be used for this. The meeting will take place on Monday, January 25, 2010 from 2.00 PM – 3.30 PM in Washington, DC prior to the start of the annual CHEA conference.

For more information contact the INQAAHE Secretariat at: [inqaahe@nvaio.net](mailto:inqaahe@nvaio.net)



# INQAAHE

*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*

## **9. Madrid Conference 2011**

The theme and subthemes for the 2011 Conference have been chosen. The conference theme is Quality Assurance: Foundation for the Future. There are four sub-themes:

- Effective QA processes for diversity, development, and sustainability
- Globalizing forces and national / regional goals in higher education: emerging issues
- Professionalization of quality assurance
- Independence of QA vis a vis different stakeholders

## **10. Accreditation Mills**

INQAAHE is establishing a project group to address the matter of identifying accreditation mills. The World Bank and UNESCO are supporting this project. Any members interested in joining this project would be most welcome, and should contact the Secretariat immediately.

## **11. Mutual recognition**

INQAAHE is establishing a project group on the mutual recognition of QA agencies.

## **12. ALFA and AHELO**

INQAAHE is represented on working groups of the ALFA Project (on the impact of QA agencies) and the AHELO Project (on measuring learning outcomes of undergraduate degrees).



## **Membership Mutations**

Since October 2009 INQAAHE has welcomed the following new members:

- Accreditation Agency for Study Programmes in Health and and Social Sciences (AHPGS), Full Member, Germany
- European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education (ENAE), Full Member, Europe
- Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Full Member, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Dr. Srinivasa Dharmarathnam, Affiliate, India
- Felix Kayman, Affiliate, Nigeria
- Julius Bertillo, Affiliate, Bahrain
- Mia Matisse , Affiliate, United States
- Abeer Hallak, Affiliate, United Arab Emirates





# INQAAHE

*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*

## Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Small States

**Dr Antony Stella, Audit Director**

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Small states is a term applied to a diverse group of sovereign countries — many with populations of 1.5 million or less, some very poor; some developing or belong to the group of the least developed countries; some islands or groups of islands; some land locked; some wealthy ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)). Most of the small states share the common challenges of remoteness and/or isolation, susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental changes, limited diversification in their economic activities, and limited capacity to respond to the challenges and opportunities of globalisation. These common challenges require a different way of thinking about the strategies that would work well in the small states. Acknowledging the special conditions of the small states, in 2008, INQAAHE established a project to explore different models of quality assurance suitable for small states.

The project was steered by a Task Force convened by Dr Antony Stella of the Australian Universities Quality Agency. The membership of the Task Force was diverse and it brought together valuable expertise from the backgrounds of small states, quality assurance, and partners who have been working on issues of small states regionally and internationally. The project received some funding from the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity-Building (GIQAC).

Considering the lack of information on quality assurance developments in small states, the Task Force identified the survey method as the way forward to carry out a situational analysis. The survey was administered in 45 small states (population of less than 1.5 million as the criterion, including the developed countries) and

four other states (Botswana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia) that are usually invited to the Small States Forum by the World Bank due to the common challenges they face. UNESCO includes Rwanda and Bosnia in its small states discussions and the case studies of these two countries were also included in the situational analysis. In all, the target group had 51 countries and three regional universities. The response rate was 56%. Wherever possible, inputs obtained from the online forum on QA for small states conducted by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) (2009) and the case studies commissioned by UNESCO (2007) were incorporated.

The situational analysis revealed that the quality assurance landscape in small states is marked by certain significant features and trends. It highlighted a number of challenges to the full implementation of the quality assurance mechanisms with the top four being: lack of breadth of experience in the system, lack of 'spare' capacity in the system to implement quality assurance, scarcity of financial resources devoted to quality assurance arrangements within the higher education budget, and small size of the system and the consequent lack of objectivity (everyone knowing everyone else).

With this information on the salient features, trends and challenges, the INQAAHE project identified various QA options for categories of small states. Although the options are many, one model that calls for a regional approach stands out as the desirable model. How well that option will be able to fulfill the expectations of the individual small states and what the underpinning principles are need a lot of reflection. The summary of the report that highlights these QA options, points for reflection, and the advocacy role for INQAAHE in promoting the regional approach to QA in small states has been posted on the [INQAAHE website](#).



# INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education



Caribbean Area Network for  
Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education

## 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE CARIBBEAN AREA NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TERTIARY EDUCATION (CANQATE) – 6 – 8 October, 2009, BARBADOS

The Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC), under the auspices of the Government of Barbados, was pleased to host the 6<sup>th</sup> annual CANQATE Conference from October 6 to 8, 2009 at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre. The theme of the Conference was **“Balancing Quality and Quantity: The Global Challenge for Tertiary Education”** and attracted approximately one hundred and thirty persons not only from the Caribbean but also from countries such as the United States of America, Saudi Arabia and Ghana. The Conference was preceded by an interactive workshop which focused on **“Preparing an Effective Self Study Report”**, ably facilitated by Prof. Donald Hanna, Educational Communications (Distance Education), University of Wisconsin-Extension, USA. During the Conference, dynamic keynote presentations were delivered by Dr. Richard Lewis, immediate Past President of the INQAAHE; Prof. Vivienne Roberts, Deputy Principal of the University of the West Indies Open Campus, Barbados; Dr. Ethley London, President of CANQATE and; Ms. Valda Alleyne and Mrs. Sharon Thomas-Alleyne, Executive Director and Accreditation Officer, BAC.

In his Feature Address delivered at the Open Ceremony, the acting Prime Minister, the Hon. Freundel Stuart, Q.C. M.P. reiterated the need to keep quality assurance alive in order to avoid comprising the quality of education in the Caribbean. Brief remarks were also delivered by the acting Minister of Education, the Hon. Patrick Todd, M.P.

### New CANQATE Board of Management

The Annual General Meeting was held during the three-day period at which the following persons were elected to the Board of Management for the term 2009-2011:

- Ms. Valda Alleyne – **President** (Executive Director, Barbados Accreditation Council)
- Mr. Michael Bradshaw – **Vice President** (Acting Executive Director, Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago)
- Dr. Dawn Barrett-Adams – **Secretary** (Accreditation Officer, University Council of Jamaica)
- Mr. Mervyn Extavour – **Treasurer** (President, National Association of Technical Tertiary and Professional Educators of Trinidad & Tobago)
- Ms. Esther Brathwaite, **Floor Member** (Permanent Secretary (Special Initiatives), Office of the Prime Minister, St. Lucia)
- Mrs. Lorna Parkins, **Floor Member** (Executive Director, Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions), Jamaica

As the former President, Dr. Ethley London will serve on the new Board in an Ex Officio capacity.



# INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

## ECA-NVAO Seminar on Changing Systems and Internationalisation and Accreditation



The European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA) and the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) organised two seminars on December 9 and 10.

During the seminar on “Changing Systems” the ECA member organisations informed each other on the changes taking place in their accreditation systems. Case studies for Germany, Netherlands and Flanders, Norway and Spain were presented. In two cases the changes relate to introducing institutional reviews in combination with a (more limited) system of programme accreditation. The experiences with these new approaches are still limited to a few institutions (Germany) or to pilot projects (Netherlands and Flanders). In Norway the changes include a new organisation model and revised mandate of NOKUT, and more emphasis on development and quality enhancement. For Spain the new legal framework and the resulting accreditation procedures as well as the introduction of institutional audits were highlighted. Representatives of accreditation agencies from Austria, Denmark, France, Poland, Slovenia, and Switzerland gave short updates on developments in accreditation systems in their countries. INQAAHE President David Woodhouse presented several examples of changes taking place in QA systems world-wide, and related this to the global agenda of INQAAHE. He also highlighted the recent debates on developing a new QA system in Australia.

On 10 December at the seminar on “Internationalisation and Accreditation” an overview of international initiatives on measuring the quality of internationalisation was given. This was followed by presentations of the OECD feasibility study on assessing learning outcomes (AHELO); and by presentations of Flemish, Dutch (MINT), and European (IMPI) projects on designing indicators for internationalisation. Finally, the NVAO proposal to assess internationalisation as a distinctive feature (in connection with the national accreditation) was presented. The aim to develop a European certificate on internationalisation was supported by the Chairperson of ECA. Several institutions indicated their willingness to participate in pilot projects. You will be able to read more on the further development of this certificate for internationalisation in the next Bulletin.







# INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

## Enhancing Quality of Higher Education in the Developing World:



## APQN Conference and Annual General Meeting

3-5 March 2010, Bangkok, Thailand

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Conference and AGM is the main annual event for discussing and advancing quality assurance in higher education throughout Asia and the Pacific region. This year the conference theme is enhancing quality of higher education in the developing world.

The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA), Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), the Regional centre for Higher Education development (RIHED) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHE), Thailand are hosting this event.

Information about the programme and registration can be found at:

<http://www.onesqa.or.th/register/apqn2010/home/index.php>



## Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance

The LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management is pleased to offer a new award program in 2010, the Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance (GCQA).

The GCQA is a one year part-time, on-line, professionally oriented graduate program. It has been developed in close consultation with INQAAHE, the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education. It is aimed at professionals working in both national quality assurance agencies and those involved in quality assurance and management at the institutional level. The GCQA is awarded by the University of Melbourne.

As a fully on-line program, it offers maximum flexibility. Participants study two compulsory modules, then choose one of two electives. Program staff are drawn from the international field of experts in quality assurance and higher education policy and management.

Please visit our website

[http://www.mihelm.unimelb.edu.au/award\\_programs/2009/grad\\_cert/index.html](http://www.mihelm.unimelb.edu.au/award_programs/2009/grad_cert/index.html) to find out more. The GCQA commences in March 2010, and applications close on 31 January 2010.

For further information, contact Associate Professor Leo Goedegebuure, Deputy Director, at [leo.g@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:leo.g@unimelb.edu.au) or + 61 3 8344 0756.



# INQAAHE

*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*

## Quality Assurance in Colombia

"The assessment of higher education quality is a theme of growing social and economic importance in all societies. How is the quality of education measured? Through indicators of academic productivity of faculty? Or assessing the quality of graduates and/or the quality of the pedagogical relationship? Or through indicators of homogenization of academic conditions in universities? Or competing for positions in international rankings of universities?"

These themes are analyzed by Víctor Manuel Gómez Campo and Jorge Enrique Celis Giraldo resulted in the article 'Sistema de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior: Consideraciones sobre la Acreditación en Colombia'. They have studied the Colombian accreditation system and the accompanying requirements for the official approval of higher education programs. This study reveals a high degree of redundancy in both systems and the absence of direct measurements of the quality of education. As an alternative to these indirect measures of quality of education, a different set of criteria and strategies of direct assessment of the quality of education received by the students are analyzed in this article.

The complete article (in Spanish) can be found at the [INQAAHE website](#).

## In Memoriam: Iván Lavados Montes

**1941-2009**

Iván Lavados died unexpectedly on October 31, 2009. Iván created and was the Executive Director of CINDA, a network of highly prestigious universities in Latin America and Europe, established for the purpose of sharing good practices and contributing to the quality of university offerings, in teaching, research and community services.

His professional life was focused on the need to develop policies and mechanisms for the creation and transfer of knowledge, for the improvement of institutions and countries. He did this through a wide range of activities: he chaired Fundación Chile, a non profit organization dedicated to the introduction of innovation and the development of human capital for the Chilean economy's key clusters; he also chaired the Consejo Superior de Educación, and later, the Comisión Nacional de Acreditación in Chile, where he made significant contributions to the establishment of quality assurance processes in the country.

His capacity for building bridges, getting people to work together and anticipating the issues of tomorrow were outstanding.

Iván will be missed by his wife, children and grandchildren, as well as by his staff in CINDA, who saw in him not only a leader, but also a friend and a mentor.





# INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education



## Upcoming Events

### **After Tuning There Is Articulation Towards a stronger subject-specific dimension of the Bologna process after 2010, with music as an example**

**12-13 February 2010, Ghent, Belgium**

The European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) is organizing a conference in the framework of its ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia'. Within the 'Polifonia' second project phase (2007-2010). In the music field, an initial step for a performance consists in tuning the instrument; a further step in articulating the piece, i.e. to join the notes using various performance techniques. The same could apply for the implementation of the Bologna process: the first step is to tune the higher education structures; the second is to articulate the various elements which have resulted from the Bologna Declaration principles using practical tools.

The conference 'After Tuning there is articulation', organized jointly by the Bologna and Accreditation Working Groups of the 'Polifonia' second project phase (2007-2010) will deal with articulation in different aspects. The articulation of policy developments and the articulation of a curriculum will be addressed.

More information about the conference can be found at: <http://www.polifonia-tn.org/ghentconference2010>



### **EUR-ACE Spread Project Mid Term Conference**

**1 March 2010, Istanbul, Turkey**

The EUR-ACE Framework Standards, maintained by the European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education (ENAAE), provide the basis for the award of a common quality label (EURACE<sup>®</sup> label) to accredited engineering programmes. Accrediting Agencies with accreditation criteria and procedures which comply with the EUR-ACE Standards (that include strict Quality Assurance rules) are authorized by ENAAE to award the EUR-ACE label to First and/or Second Cycle engineering programmes.

Initially, six accreditation agencies in six countries (France, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Russia, UK) were authorized and started awarding EUR-ACE<sup>®</sup> labels in 2007. The EUR-ACE SPREAD project (2008-2010) is aimed at spreading the EUR-ACE system into other EHEA countries: its first success has been the addition of Turkey into the system in January 2009. The project's further efforts will be directed in particular towards Italy, Lithuania, Romania, and Switzerland, but not excluding other countries.

In the Mid Term Conference, which is open to all interested persons, the results so far obtained by the project and the envisaged future developments of the EUR-ACE system will be presented.

More information about the project and the conference can be found at:

[http://www.feani.org/webenaae/projects/eur-ace\\_spread/eur-ace\\_spread\\_home.html](http://www.feani.org/webenaae/projects/eur-ace_spread/eur-ace_spread_home.html)



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*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*

## **The European Higher Education Area – Achievements and future challenges**

### **Trends 2010**

**11 March 2010, University of Vienna, Austria**



This event provides a unique opportunity to witness the first presentation of the Trends 2010 report that will analyse and draw conclusions on the implementation of the Bologna process reforms in Europe's universities over the last decade.

Trends 2010 will both look at the considerable achievements of 10 years of higher education reforms and identify the challenges facing universities as the European Higher Education Area is established and all partners in the process seek to define priorities for the next decade.

More information can be found at: <http://www.eua.be/events/presentation-of-trends-2010/home/>