

## **INQAAHE Bulletin June 2014**

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## News from the Secretariat

### INQAAHE Forum 2014

As many readers know, this year's INQAAHE Forum was held in Tallinn (Estonia) on 26-28 May. More than 130 participants from nearly 60 countries were represented at the Forum entitled "Partnerships in Quality Assurance in Higher Education". The Forum was hosted by the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (EKKA).

On the pre-forum day, a special workshop on the implementation of INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practices (GGP) was facilitated by Professor Gemma Rauret, Mrs Maria Jose Lemaitre and Mr Tim Klassen. The workshop attracted about 90 % of all Forum participants. The INQAAHE-EASPA Global Networking Conference that was held on the same day proved to be equally popular.

The main programme included two keynote speeches, one by Professor Jaak Aaviksoo (Estonia) about dilemmas between partners' expectations and provision of QA agencies, and the other by Professor Maria João Rosa (Portugal) about the results of a research on quality improvement as well as presentations of several surveys conducted by INQAAHE (internationalisation of QA agencies; QA of diverse QA networks) and ENQA (stakeholders' involvement). The sub-topics – Engagement of Stakeholders in QA Processes, The Rise of International Accrediting Agencies, and QA of Diverse Modes of Acquired Learning – provided an opportunity to present and discuss good practices and experiences of different countries in smaller break-out groups.

The last session was dedicated to Professor David Woodhouse – an initiator of INQAAHE and a legendary promoter of QA – who announced his retirement.





One of the highlights of the Forum was certainly the Forum dinner held in the unique Seaplane Harbour where networking reached a new level, accompanied by singing and dancing in the atmosphere of joy.

All presentations of the Forum can be found at <http://archimedes.ee/inqaah/program/presentations/> and a picture gallery at <http://archimedes.ee/inqaah/gallery-2/>.

### **INQAAHE Forum 2016**

The Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC) has immense pleasure in hosting the prestigious International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education's (INQAAHE) biennial members' Forum in 2016. The event is to take place on the tropical paradise in the South Pacific, Fiji – at the InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa.



Fiji comprises of an archipelago of more than 300 islands, of which slightly over 110 are inhabited. Fiji is almost at a distance of two-thirds from Hawaii to New Zealand and has two main islands, known as Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The FHEC is located in Suva; capital of Fiji which is on the main island of Viti Levu.

The FHEC is a body corporate headed by a Commission (or a Board) and its secretariat by a Director and an Executive Chairman. It was first established in 2010 and to date has a total of 32 employees. Most of these employees are graduates from universities and a few have had a wealth of experience from different work backgrounds.

The establishment of the FHEC was the first major step towards the development and promotion of Fiji's higher education sector; correlating with the Fiji government's priorities of achieving higher economic growth and making Fiji a knowledge-based society. The FHEC's core function is to assure the quality of Fiji's higher education and training through the accreditation of institutions and their programmes.

All institutions that provide higher education in Fiji must have a satisfactory internal quality assurance (IQA) system. The standard for quality assurance systems in institutions has been set in three policies issued by the Commission. One of these policies covers all of the FHEC's activities and ensures that the agency's tasks are performed efficiently, with the highest quality.

For further information: [www.fhec.gov.fj](http://www.fhec.gov.fj)



## Membership mutations

INQAAHE welcomes the following new members:

- [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education](#) (Full Member)
- [University of the Punjab, Lahore](#) (Associate Member)
- Grace Wee (Affiliate Member)
- Bassam Alhamad (Affiliate Member)
- Alima Bekenova (Affiliate Member)
- [Council for Interior Design Accreditation](#) (Full Member)
- [Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association](#) (Full Member)
- [JAZAN University](#) (Associate Member)
- Sharon Thomas-Alleyne (Affiliate Member)
- [Finance Accreditation Agency](#) (Associate Member)
- [China Education Association for International Exchange](#) (Associate Member)
- [Korean Council For University College Education](#) (Full Member)
- Abdul Wahid Ibrahim (Affiliate Member)
- Diana Ismailova (Affiliate Member)
- [Uluslararası Kıbrıs Üniversitesini](#) (Associate Member)
- [Macao Polytechnic Institute](#) (Associate Member)
- [Institute for Academic Development, Villa College](#) (Associate Member)
- [Peregrine Academic Services](#) (Associate Member)
- [Akredita Quality Assessment](#) (Associate Member)

## GGP Aligned Agencies

INQAAHE is delighted to inform you that the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#), UK, is comprehensively adhering to the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice. They will be added soon to the GGP database.

QAA: Congratulations!



## President's message

### INQAAHE and COCA-COLA – More in Common than You Think!

INQAAHE and Coca-Cola have a lot in common. Both have a global vision. Both aim to satisfy the needs of a diverse set of stakeholders. Both focus on quality. After all, one of Coca-Cola's early slogans referred to it as "the drink of quality."

But most importantly, both INQAAHE and Coca-Cola understand the reality that how quality is perceived rests in the "eye of the beholder." In other words, how something gets defined as a quality product or a quality service will differ significantly depending upon what the consumers' needs and tastes desire. That is why there are over 400 different formulas for producing Coke around the world. That is also why different nations, cultures, and regions of the world may define quality in higher education somewhat differently.

The INQAAHE Forum held in Tallinn last month focused on how QA in higher education is defined differently dependent upon the needs of various stakeholder groups. The stakeholder groups included national and regional governments, students and families, faculty and higher education administrators, employers and professions. The keynote speakers made it clear that each stakeholder group had different ideas about what it means to offer a quality higher education noting that some stakeholders define quality as value for the money or time to graduation while others look at whether the graduate can contribute to the local or national economy.

When external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs) are forced to acknowledge that there is no single definition of quality for higher education it creates cognitive dissonance around everything we do and everything we say about ourselves. We are forced to ask if we are looking at the right measures of quality. We are forced to ask if we are providing useful information to our stakeholder groups. In short, we are forced to consider how we might change our processes and procedures to adapt to new needs and the ever changing landscape of higher education.

But recognizing there are multiple ways to view quality in higher education can also be freeing. If EQAAs can embrace the idea that different stakeholder groups ask different questions related to quality, then we can begin to challenge the status quo and creatively address each set of questions. Responding to these differing needs will undoubtedly make EQAAs even more valuable to our respective countries and regions, students and families, employers and professions, and the higher education institutions which we serve.



So let's examine some of the different stakeholders' questions. The list I have developed follows.

- Institutions: *Will the QA review process help us improve how we deliver education to our students? Will completion of the QA process provide us with external recognition for our accomplishments? Does the QA process help us understand how we might gather and examine information about whether our students are learning what we think they should learn?*
- Students / Parents: *Can I complete my degree program in three to four years? Will my child get a good education for a reasonable price? Is this institution a good value for the money?*
- Employers: *If I hire graduates from this institution, will they know what they need to know and be able to do the tasks assigned to them? Or will I have to retrain them?*
- Professions: *Does the QA process insure that the institutions prepare ethical and competent practitioners? Can they pass the licensing exam?*
- Nations: *How can our citizens contribute to our global success in the marketplace? Are the higher education institutions in our country preparing individuals to meet the health care and marketplace needs of our citizens?*

If you have reviewed this list and you feel that EQA processes already address these questions, then challenge yourself with two additional questions: *Why is EQA criticized by each of these different stakeholder groups for not providing good information about the quality of higher education institutions? And, what can we do to address the stakeholders' concerns?*

INQAAHE is the right organization to address these questions, because its member organizations and institutions already represent, understand, and respect the importance of diversity in higher education systems around the world. As per the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, one of INQAAHE's key values considered fundamental to supporting the work of the Network and good practice in quality assurance is the following:

Recognition of the value of the collective wisdom gathered from the practices of a diverse set of members, and their ability to address the challenges of the educational and social structures in which they operate. INQAAHE celebrates this diversity, which has also made it possible to identify and highlight commonalities and fundamental principles that underpin good practice and guide the operation of Quality Assurance (QA) agencies.



This is why INQAAHE was created. This is why INQAAHE offers annual opportunities through the forum or conference for members to get together. This is why INQAAHE offers a query function on its website. This is why INQAAHE supports regional and other quality network meetings held in conjunction with INQAAHE. This is why INQAAHE created a database of good practices. And this is why INQAAHE needs all of its members to be stay involved. It is through our sharing that we can ask the hard questions. It is through our sharing that we can creatively address the concerns expressed by the different stakeholder groups. It is through our sharing that we can find new ways to address quality in higher education as alternative approaches to delivering education develop, as new degree models are offered, and as new financial challenges face institutions.

It is through our thoughtful discussions that we can make a difference in the lives of the students, who are ultimately at the core of why we, as members of INQAAHE, do what we do. I look forward to more discussions like the ones we had in Tallinn. Thank you to everyone who participated! As one of the Coca-Cola once described itself... "It's the Real Thing!"



Carol Bobby, INQAAHE President 2013-2015



## News from networks

### The 3rd CeQuInt steering group meeting in Helsinki

*The project Pilot Procedures are currently being realised. The consortium is about to start the evaluation of methodology and the preparation of the Good Practices workshop.*

The 3rd CeQuInt [steering group](#) meeting took place hosted by [FINHEEC](#) took place in Helsinki on 23 April 2014. The participants discussed the execution of the project [pilot procedures](#) the draft of the project progress report (by now submitted to the European Commission), the organisation of the [Good Practices](#) Workshop and Dissemination Conference.

The project aims to develop a [robust framework](#) to assess the quality of internationalisation of higher education. A [certificate](#) will be awarded to programmes and institutions having successfully incorporated international and intercultural dimensions into the purpose, function and delivery of education. The [partnership](#) includes quality assurance agencies and internationalisation organisations from all the geographic regions of Europe operating in different higher education settings and using different methodologies to assess quality. The project [Stakeholders Group](#) is composed of representatives of different European higher education institutions and internationalisation organisations: it has been beneficial in amending the projects approach to system-level peculiarities, cultural sensitivities and terminology. Capitalising on 11 years' experience of the European Consortium for Accreditation, the development of a joint definition of quality in internationalisation and of a shared assessment methodology builds mutual trust and facilitates cross-border cooperation.

The development of an assessment methodology is now finalised: in consultation with the stakeholders the project partnership turned ideas and concepts into methodological and supporting documents necessary for the assessment of internationalisation. The methodology is currently tested in pilot procedures initiated with the selection and training of experts. The partnership now plans to start the overall evaluation of the methodology and the preparation of the Good practices workshop. The project will end with the presentation of the final methodology and the good practices platform at the dissemination conference. By the end of the project the European Consortium for Accreditation will offer services to support the internationalisation of higher education. Certification service for higher education institutions and programmes - the successful assessment of the internationalisation of a programme or an institution will lead to the award of an ECA Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation. The Good Internationalisation Practices Platform will present the good practices in

internationalisation; encourage mutual learning, the sharing of learning and of expertise in internationalisation of Higher Education.

[Subscribe to the CeQuInt project Newsletter](#)

[Project website](#)

### **ECA is now an association**

*On 15th April 2014 ECA has become an association. The incorporation took place in The Hague at the notary's office BarentsKrans. The member agencies [ANECA](#) (Spain) and [AHPGS](#) (Germany) acted as incorporators.*

[Thirteen agencies](#) have already signed up as first members of the association. ECA is now able to participate fully in international projects and to offer its services like the [internationalisation certificate](#), [joint programmes accreditation](#), [etc.](#)

The association will strengthen ECA's membership base while retaining its project orientation that forms the core of ECA's [strategy](#). The first meeting of the association ECA will take place in [Porto on 17-18 June 2014](#).

Please see [ECA Association statutes](#) (English version).



[View more pictures](#)

### **NUST wins international quality award**

Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) comprising quality assurance agencies of the entire Asia – Pacific Region has given APQN's Best / Model Internal Quality Assurance Award for 2014 to National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) during an impressive ceremony held at Hanoi, Vietnam on 7th March, 2014. It is a matter of great honour for the Nation and the University as well as

its parent Ministry (Ministry of Science & Technology) and Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan.



The award has been given in recognition of the strict enforcement of quality assurance regime by the University, spanning selection of quality people, development and implementation of best practices and application of technology, in all its activities, as specified by HEC.

The credit for this honour goes to the faculty, staff and the students of the university and relentless support provided by MoST and HEC in developing and maintaining a culture of quality at NUST. It goes without saying that the emphasis by HEC on quality through the quality assurance mechanism is now bearing fruit and Pakistani Universities are gaining prominence at the international level.

### **CANQATE Conference 2014 – Belize, 11-13 November 2014**

The need for the Caribbean region to be aligned with international developments in higher education and to demonstrate a firm commitment to quality and standards is critical to safeguard confidence in the quality of tertiary education offered in the region. The 11th Annual Conference of CANQATE, to be held under the theme, "Quality Assurance as a Regional Priority - Partnering to Improve Educational Outcomes across the Caribbean", will provide a forum for participants to explore opportunities for accrediting agencies and tertiary institutions to cooperate with each other, build on existing strengths and establish alignment to international quality assurance practices. The conference which will be held at the Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina, Belize City, will see feature addresses on the theme, the presentation of papers, and plenary sessions for discussion and exchange of ideas. The conference will also provide an opportunity for participants from across the region to discuss the issues of harmonisation of standards and processes, the assessment of learning outcomes,



and the strengthening of student support systems in workshops for accrediting agencies and tertiary institutions.

### **CANQATE Webinar on Quality Assurance in the Caribbean**

A webinar was held on 6 June 2014 to discuss the findings of the Scoping Study on Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education in the Caribbean which was completed in December 2013. The scoping study, conducted with funding from UNESCO, focused on the current status of accrediting agencies in the region and their impact on the activities of tertiary education institutions. Over 50 quality assurance professionals, educators, industry personnel, and policy makers from 12 Caribbean countries—Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Lucia, Suriname, St Vincent and the Grenadines, The Bahamas and Trinidad & Tobago—participated in the webinar.

### **CANQATE Strategic Planning Session**

The Board of Management of CANQATE will meet in Belize from July 28-30 2014 to develop the Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2018 and a Financial Plan to ensure the sustainability of the Network into the future. The new Strategic Plan will present strategic priorities for the Network and draw on the findings of the recently conducted scoping study on quality assurance in the Caribbean. Feedback from members and other stakeholders, and a review and evaluation of the Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2014 will also be utilised. The draft Plan will be placed on the Network's website and circulated to the membership for comment and feedback before approval is sought from the general assembly in November 2014.

### **CEENQA Workshop and General Assembly in Pristina**



The Kosovo Accreditation Agency KAA has very kindly hosted this year's [CEENQA events in Pristina](#). A wonderful trip to the snowy caps of Šar Mountain and the Dinarides range, culminating in a delicious dinner in the historic town of Prizren, was heartily appreciated by all participants. To everyone's regret, President Iring Wasser had to cancel his participation at the last minute for health reasons. Vice-President Alexander Kohler took over as chair with assistance from Board member and host Ferdije Zhushi Etemi.

The workshop on May 23 sought to explore "What Makes a Successful Quality Assurance Agency?". Minister of Education, Science and Technology Rame Buja welcomed the participants, including guests Steve Bristow, a member of the KAA



Board, the speakers Lukas Bischof of CHE Consult, Germany and André Govaert from KU Leuven, Belgium as well as CEENQA project manager Mila Zarkh, for whom this was the first CEENQA meeting. Mila Zarkh presented the procedure and preliminary results of the UNESCO/INQAAHE survey adapted to CEENQA on "Practices in External Quality Assurance". She was followed by the presentations of Lukas Bischof, André Govaert and Ferdije Etemi.

On May 24, the General Assembly discussed progress in the EU projects BIHTEK, on benchmarking in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and ALIGN, on aligning study programmes with qualification frameworks, in which CEENQA is a partner. The Romanian Agency ARACIS had also organised an EU-funded project hosting staff visits from two CEENQA agencies to study review methodology and accompany site visits for one week.

Four Board members had left their agencies and hence the CEENQA Board, so that new members, including the Vice-President and Treasurer, had to be elected at the General Assembly. The new Board members with two-year terms are

- Dhurata Bozo, APAAL Albania
- Cristina Ghitulica, ARACIS Romania
- Nora Skaburskiene, SKVC Lithuania
- Izabella Kwiatkowska-Sujka, PKA Poland - Treasurer

Continuing Board member Ivan Leban was elected Vice- President.

The 2015 meetings will be hosted by SQAA Slovenia, and in 2016 the two Polish CEENQA members would organize the event jointly, taking the occasion to celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formal founding of the CEE Network in Krakow in 2001.

The presentations are accessible on the CEE Network website at [www.ceenetwork.hu](http://www.ceenetwork.hu). The presentation by Lukas Bischof will be uploaded at a later date.

### **EQArep project final outcomes to be presented at its final conference in Brussels**

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education was granted EU funding to carry out the "[Transparency of European higher education through public quality assurance \(EQArep\)](#)" project over a span of two years. The project will come to an end on 30 September 2014. The final conference of the project



will take place on **23 September** in **Brussels, Belgium** on the premises of the **University Foundation**.

The final conference is expected to gather around 60 participants from among QA agencies and other stakeholder representatives such as higher education institutions, students, employer representatives, European and national policymakers.

In addition to the dissemination of the project results and future perspectives, the discussions will focus on **stakeholders' perspectives on the use and usefulness of QA reports, QA agencies' perspective on the features of good QA reports** and a panel discussion on **expectations of different target /user groups of QA reports**.

The registrations will open soon and can be accessed on the [ENQA website](#).

### **ENQA-led project "Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education" (QACHE)**

For the period of 10/2013-12/2015, ENQA has been granted funding for a European project entitled ["Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education" \(QACHE\)](#). The project is carried out in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus programme.

The project will look into different ways in which European QA agencies and higher education institutions address the accreditation and quality assurance of the programmes delivered outside of their countries.

It primarily targets **quality assurance agencies within and outside of Europe** and the **European providers of cross-border higher education**. Students, national and European policy makers and the higher education sector will benefit from the project outcomes.

The partnership of the QACHE project involves the two main host regions of European cross-border education (Asia-Pacific and Gulf regions), QA agencies from four significant European provider countries (France, Germany, Spain and the UK) and the main provider country outside Europe (Australia).

During May-July 2014, a collection of good practices and information is carried out through three online surveys addressed to:

- QA agencies in the field of cross-border higher education in Europe.
- a sample of institutions known to be active in CBHE in the core provider countries in Europe (UK, Spain, France and Germany).



- QA agencies and authorities across the 22 states of the Arab region and the 53 states in Asia-Pacific in the field of cross-border higher education.

Phase 2 of the project will include a preparation of **country reports** and identification of case examples and good practice based on desk research and phone interviews in four European core provider countries (France, Germany, Spain, the UK), as well as Australia.

In order to validate the previous findings, to collect further perspectives and support the development of the final project outcomes, **three regional events** will be organised:

- **European Expert Forum** representing relevant stakeholders from a range of European countries, 5-6 November 2014 in London, UK
- **Gulf Regional Seminar**, 19-20 November 2014 in Bahrain
- **Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar**, January 2015 (date and place to be confirmed)

The project outcomes will be disseminated at a final conference in November 2015.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> survey on quality procedures in European higher education: "Cooperation and competition in the provision of quality assurance services"**

During 2014, ENQA carries out the fourth edition of the Survey "Quality Procedures in European Higher Education", entitled "**Cooperation and competition in the provision of quality assurance services**". The main objective of the project is to document and analyse the current methodological state-of-the-art and strategies in terms of **internationalisation of QA in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)**. In addition, it looks into the terms of QA as a contributor to the internationalisation of higher education. It aims to provide information regarding the existing internationalisation policies at national level, as well as strategies and tools implemented by QA agencies across the EHEA. In June 2014, the survey was sent to ENQA full members and affiliates. The results will be published in a report towards the end of year 2014.

## News from members

### Quality and Qualifications Ireland Review of Reviews Report 2014

The [Review of Reviews Report](#) is the outcome of a unique and innovative system review commissioned by [QQI](#) and carried out by an expert independent review team. It sets national and international precedents in this domain, both in terms of good practice in agency amalgamation and in applying the same high standards of transparency, accountability and self-evaluation to the agency as to the sector that it regulates.



Following the merger of the three external QA agencies for higher education into QQI in November 2012, in preparation for the forthcoming development of QQI quality assurance and review policies, and as a direct response to a call from the sector, QQI decided to undertake of review of the legacy agency review models. The Terms of Reference for the review set out two meta-objectives to: (i) to evaluate the effectiveness of each institutional review model; (ii) to identify the combined impact of institutional reviews across the sector. In the Terms of Reference these were further subdivided into six key objectives.

A Review Team was appointed in July 2013, consisting of three high-profile international experts: Peter Williams (Chair, a former Chief Executive of the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and President of the European Network for Quality Assurance); Judith Eaton (President of CHEA); Pedro Teixeira (Associate Professor at the Department of Economics, University of Porto and Director of the Centre of Research on Higher Education Policy). A series of meetings for the visit of the Team took place from November 11 to 15. The Team met a wide range of higher education institutions, representative bodies, student representatives, experts and former reviewers. The Review Team agreed five key questions to be posed at the meetings. These questions were also published in a Consultation Form on the QQI website.

The key findings set out in the report are that:

- The Team identified a major concern regarding the potential tension between quality assurance's role as a regulatory force and its equal importance as an agent for improving and developing the core teaching, learning and research activities of higher education institutions. An equilibrium will need to be established which will hold both roles in a more stable relationship. The

developmental role of reviews needs to be more greatly emphasised in future review policy and practices.

- On a related note, QQI needs to clarify its own distinct mission and approach in the higher education QA space. The potential link between QQI reviews and the funding of institutions and programmes by the Irish Higher Education Authority needs to be approached with care to ensure that QQI's endeavours remain focused on improvement in a culture of quality.
- There was a general view among the various stakeholders that the legacy agencies had performed a very valuable role in emphasising the importance of external and internal quality assessment in Irish higher education. Nevertheless, they also pointed out the need for improvement and that QQI could benefit from learning from the achievements and shortcomings of those earlier experiences.
- A major question underlying many of the concerns expressed in the consultation process referred to the need for both review teams and institutions to place more emphasis on the effectiveness of the quality assurance processes and structures in place within institutions, rather than simply asserting or demonstrating their existence. This would suggest that future reviews should focus more on analysis and evidenced judgments and recommendations and commendations, than on description.
- In developing the model for its forthcoming reviews, QQI is advised to take care to balance carefully the amount of effort required both from itself and from the HEIs, and identify more clearly the intended benefits of the reviews for both parties. A common complaint related to the limited return that institutions thought they had received for the considerable effort spent on the reviews.

The report also sets out four proposed models or options for future institutional reviews. It also signals a range of desirable and undesirable characteristics for future review policy and practices. Furthermore, the report details some system findings for higher education institutions from the reviews grouped into nine key areas.

QQI is currently implementing a comprehensive policy development programme. The development of quality assurance guidelines and institutional review policy and processes for HEIs will be strongly informed by the findings of this report. The analysis of outcomes of previous review will serve as a useful reference to inform a quality assurance enhancement agenda between QQI and the institutions that it serves.

## **Successful re-accreditation of the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS)**

*The German Accreditation Council (GAC) once again accredited the AHPGS for the period of five years – currently until March 2019.*

The assessment of the Accreditation Council states: "Overall, the assessment group got a differentiated and positive impression of the agency, the basis of the submitted documents and particularly within the framework of the on-site inspection. The experts were particularly impressed by the great commitment of committee members, experts and the agency to the quality development of the study programmes to be accredited. At the same time, the assessors got the impression that the high qualification of all of those involved and the professional procedures established in the agency guarantee accreditation procedures according to the criteria of the Accreditation Council."



The AHPGS – Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences – has now existed for over 10 years. Officially founded on 6 April 2001, the AHPGS was first officially accredited for three years by the Accreditation Council in the same year. Three years later the first re-accreditation was approved without conditions for the period of five years until the year 2009. The accreditation by the Accreditation Council began with these findings:

'The AHPGS has developed positively in every respect since its accreditation. This applies to both the number of procedures carried out as well as the consolidation and work of its committees.'

In addition to the successful accreditations by the Accreditation Council, the milestones in the development of the AHPGS particularly include its approval for system accreditation in 2008, its approval to carry out accreditation procedures in Swiss universities of applied sciences as well as the continuous increase of accreditation procedures for study programmes and universities abroad in Europe and outside of Europe.

The positive development can be explained in particular by the number of accreditations carried out by the AHPGS. From three study programme accreditation procedures successfully carried out in 2002 to 48 procedures carried out in 2005, the number of accredited study programmes per year currently amounts to more than 120. The AHPGS has accredited more than 800 study programmes overall. The increasing number of international accreditations is also to be emphasised. The approval to carry out accreditations at universities in Switzerland and the acceptance into the European Quality Assurance Register



(EQAR) are causing an increase in the inquiries from abroad. In addition to carrying out accreditation procedures in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia, the AHPGS has also successfully concluded various procedures for the accreditation of health sciences programmes in Saudi Arabia.

One significant reason for the increasing number of international accreditations is the fact that AHPGS is the only accreditation agency worldwide with explicit expertise in the areas of health and social sciences.

The AHPGS is represented in the relevant international accreditation networks. In addition to membership in the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the AHPGS was accepted into the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) in 2009. The AHPGS has also been a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) since 2009 and a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies (CEENQA) since 2012.

In addition to carrying out procedures for study programme and system accreditation as well as institutional audits, the significant fields of work of the AHPGS increasingly involve the supervision of universities during their foundation and development phases in the dynamic field of health and social sciences. Members and employees of the AHPGS are involved in the field in many ways and thereby make a significant contribution to academisation, education and quality development in accordance with the mission statement of the AHPGS. Further information as well as contact details can be found on: [www.ahpgs.de](http://www.ahpgs.de)

### **Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education: Workshop and study on recognition of informal and non-formal learning**



agency for science and higher education croatia

Within the EU IPA-funded project [Competitive Croatian Higher Education for Better](#)

[Employment](#), the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education organised a two-day workshop connecting the national stakeholders in order to help prepare the legal framework for recognition of informal and non-formal learning in Croatia. The project activities also included a study visit to Scotland and the publication of [a study](#) on best practices in this field in the EU and globally.

The Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education published its Annual Report describing the activities carried out in 2013 and providing an outline of the activities planned for 2014 – you can download the English version [here](#).

### **Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) at SMBBMUL Conducts a Workshop on "How to write Criteria 3, 4 & 5 of Self-Assessment Report (SAR)"**

Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) @ Shaheed Mohterma Benazir Bhutto Medical University, Larkana. Pakistan, working day and night to enhance the qualitative education of Doctors so that after graduating in their discipline they can work for the betterment of humanity in every nook and corner of the world.

Moreover, QEC @ SMBBMUL have successfully completed 1st and 2nd phase of Self-Assessment of different departments within the SMBBMUL and further enthusiastically working for result oriented progress.

In this regard QEC conducted 2nd workshop of 3rd phase on Tuesday 27th May, 2014 at SMBB Medical University Larkana, for which Prof. Dr. Khurshid Ahmed Abbasi Principal CMC & Chairman Paediatric Medicine Unit-II SMBBMU Larkana was requested to conduct the said workshop. More than 20 program team (P.T) members participated from Departments of Surgery (MBBS), General Medicine (MBBS), Gynae/ Obst: (MBBS), ENT (MBBS), Ophthalmology (MBBS) & Paeds Medicine (MBBS) CMC, SMBB Medical University Larkana.





## **CONAET: Initiatives for mutual recognition of accreditation in the area of tourism, hospitality and gastronomy**

*The International Alliance of Accreditation in Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy, for having been carried out in the city of Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, the capital of the Mayan world, ended up by being named ALIANZA UXMAL ALLIANCE, for Uxmal one of the archaeological areas nearby to the above mentioned city, together with Chichen Itza.*



In the north of the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, the Puuc zone covers an area of 4687 miles, it is the largest number of archaeological constructions with the stylistic attributes of the Puuc area that include architecture, construction and decoration.

One of the most important sites of the Puuc zone is Uxmal, 49 miles southeast of Merida, where was carried out the VIII CONAET International and National Conference of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy Higher Education CONAET 2014 last march.

The meaning of Uxmal comes from "Ox", which means three and "mal", which refers to the number of times that a certain job is repeated, and Uxmal is "three times built or inhabited", another interpretation comes from "Ux" that means harvest and "mal", that represents the above.

In accordance with the Chilam Balam, sacred book of the Mayas, Uxmal was inhabited in the year Katun 2 Ahau, 1007 B.C.

It is for the previous thing that taking the meaning of UXMAL, the international alliance of accreditation needs to work the triple to achieve that the academic rigor of our area of the knowledge in tourism, hospitality and gastronomy to be recognized by their results.

CONAET (Consejo Nacional para la Calidad de la Educacion Turistica, Mexico) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization, founded in 2002 and has obtained the recognition of COPAES in 2004 as the only accrediting agency in the academic area of the tourism, hospitality and gastronomy. This recognition was endorsed in 2009 and 2014 for five more years on each occasion.

COPAES (Council for higher education accreditation) is member of INQAAHE and which recognizes 28 quality assurance agencies and accreditation in all areas, sciences, disciplines and fields of knowledge; COPAES was founded as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement NAFTA, composed by Canada, Mexico



and the United States, the only ones three countries that shape the above mentioned geographical area of the "new" continent.

The ALIANZA-Uxmal- ALLIANCE was formed on March 29 in Merida Mexico, with the participation - in alphabetical order - "ACREDITACIÓN" (Chile), DEVA (Andalusia, Spain) and THE-ICE (with head office in Australia). This way, four continents are represented in the Alliance.

The main objectives of the ALIANZA-UXMAL-ALLIANCE for the educational programs with current accreditation for some of the belonging quality agencies to the Alliance are:

1. International mobility of students (exchange and achievement of professional practices)
2. International teachers mobility (academic teaching stays and in the tourist plant, production and exchange of materials for learning)
3. International researchers' mobility (sabbatical, summers of investigation, shared or parallel investigation)
4. To realize a study for the mutual recognition of the accreditations of each of the members of the Alliance.
5. Invite Pairs evaluators of the other members to participate in the accreditation process.
6. To create a database of the state (condition) of the art of the higher educational quality in tourism, hospitality and gastronomy, on a global scale.
7. To prepare a strategic plan that contemplates the mutual recognition of qualifications, double qualifications, between others.

This is what looks for the ALIANZA UXMAL ALLIANCE, because we believe that the internationalization is not an end (purpose) but a way for the continuous progress of the formation of the human factor of one of the main economic activities on a global scale: the TOURISM, of which anyone believes that knows until they travel, sleep and eat and something is wrong, there they can appreciate than in hospitality activities professionals are needed.

### **The United Kingdom's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education delivers its second International Quality Assurance Programme**

The United Kingdom's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk), delivered its second International Quality Assurance Programme (IQAP) in London on 19-23 May 2014. The five-day training programme is aimed at quality assurance professionals from non-UK institutions and agencies. This year QAA was pleased to welcome 25 delegates from the following countries:

Barbados, China, Denmark, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Maldives, Malaysia, Namibia, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Arab Emirates.

The programme offered delegates the chance to learn about the UK higher education quality assurance system and to visit UK higher education providers. It also served as a forum to discuss key international issues about quality assurance, including the development of collaborative partnerships.

A range of internal and external speakers, group work, and visits to UK institutions provided a platform for stimulating discussions and networking opportunities. Delegates also complete pre-course work online and become part of an alumni LinkedIn group for post-course support and networking.



The IQAP aims:

- to provide an opportunity for delegates to reflect on their own roles and practice within the wider context of contemporary thinking about higher education and quality assurance
- to provide an opportunity for delegates to learn about current issues in the strategic management of higher education quality assurance and to create an environment for delegates to learn from other colleagues from around the world who are working in similar roles but different contexts
- to provide the opportunity for delegates to develop new skills relevant to the improvement of quality assurance processes and practice in their own context and to identify areas for further development
- to enable delegates to understand quality assurance within a peer review context.

The next IQAP will be held on 6-10 October 2014. Further information about the programme and other developmental and consultancy services offered by QAA can be found at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/International/Pages/international-services.aspx>.



## **TEMPUS IV: Promoting quality and recognition of transnational education (TNE) in Armenia and Georgia**

A consortium of 18 organisations from six countries (Armenia, Georgia, Belgium, France, Germany and the UK) has embarked on a three year EU-funded project. The project will build on the capacity of the Armenian and Georgian higher education institutions and external quality assurance agencies/authorities (EQAAs) to effectively manage the quality assurance of transnational education hosted by the two countries, with a view to ensuring better regulation and recognition of such higher education provision in Armenia and Georgia.

The first year of the project is being jointly managed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), UK and the International Institute for Educational Planning, France. In the first year (that is 2014) the project is building the capacity of the partner higher education institutions and EQAAs in Armenia and Georgia, prior to them developing, in the following years, a comprehensive methodology for quality assuring transnational education.

Two workshops were recently held to bring together the relevant partners. The first was organised in April 2014 at Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3, France and the second in June 2014 at the QAA offices in Gloucester, UK. The workshops provided the higher education institutions and EQAAs with the opportunity to share experiences and best practice, and to set up plans for the enhancement of internal and external quality assurance arrangements to allow them to subsequently implement a system for quality assuring transnational education.

By the end of the first year of the project a training kit will have been developed for the higher education institutions and EQAAs. In turn, the Armenian and Georgian higher education institutions will agree on and start to operationalise an institutional action plan for the development of their quality assurance units.

At the end of the first year of the project the management will be passed to the European Foundation for Management Development, Belgium who will lead the project as it formulates the standards and procedures for the quality assurance of transnational education in Armenia and Georgia. The project is being managed centrally by the French University in Armenia.

For pictures from the Gloucester training event please go to: [www.flickr.com/photos/78322307@N08/sets/72157644740506160/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/78322307@N08/sets/72157644740506160/).

### **How should the United Kingdom's transnational education be quality assured in future?**

This was the question posed to UK universities and colleges, students, and government bodies in a consultation earlier this year. The Quality Assurance



Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has now published the findings. 69% of respondents agreed that quality assurance of transnational education (TNE) should be strengthened in the light of the rapid growth in UK higher education delivered overseas. There were requests for QAA to give more guidance to UK providers of TNE, and that TNE review should focus on good practice, excellence and enhancement. A recurring theme was that institutional review should be the process by which TNE is quality assured along with all the other provision of an institution – though there was strong support for overseas visits. QAA has carried out overseas reviews since 1997 in leading UK TNE destinations such as India, China and this year in the United Arab Emirates.

QAA is now working with representatives from universities and colleges, and other stakeholders across the UK to implement an approach to the quality assurance of TNE that is informed by the responses to the consultation. ENQA's survey of Cross-border education will also provide an important contribution to this work.

For further information and to read the consultation report: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/TNE-consultation-report-May14.aspx>

Dr Stephen Jackson, QAA's Director of Quality Assurance, also presented the findings of the consultation to the INQAAHE Forum in Tallinn in May. His presentation can be found on the forum website: [http://adm.archimedes.ee/inqaahe/files/2014/05/Jackson\\_Hall.pdf](http://adm.archimedes.ee/inqaahe/files/2014/05/Jackson_Hall.pdf)

### **The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)**



TEQSA periodically publishes the 'TEQSA Update'. The Update is for higher education and ELICOS providers in Australia and contains information about TEQSA's regulatory framework, policies and processes, as well as upcoming events.

All TEQSA Updates are available on the TEQSA website at <http://teqsa.gov.au/news-publications>.

TEQSA invites you to review the TEQSA Update.



## Upcoming events

### ENQA General Assembly 2014

The ENQA General Assembly 2014 will take place on **16-17 October 2014** and will be hosted by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) in **Zagreb, Croatia**. The first day of the Assembly is open to all interested parties, i.e. both for members and non-members of ENQA. The second day, reserved to members only, will be dedicated to formal organisational and administrative proceedings.



The General Assembly Forum will give an opportunity to the ENQA members and affiliates to discuss **the implementation of the ENQA Strategic Plan 2016-20** and to give **further feedback on the draft version** for the final approval at the Members' Forum 2015.

The second session of the conference will focus on the revised ESG. Group discussions will concentrate more particularly on the support ENQA can provide to the agencies to implement the changes of the new Standards and Guidelines.

Registrations will be open at the end of June.

### THE-ICE 8th International Panel of Experts (IPoE) Forum 2014

*12th to 14th November 2014, Charles Darwin University – Darwin, Australia (preceded by the Pre-Forum Workshop on 11 November 2014)*



The International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education ([THE-ICE](#)) is pleased to invite you to attend THE-ICE 8<sup>th</sup> International Panel of Experts (IPoE) Forum 2014. More information and the [Call for Papers](#) can be found on [THE-ICE website](#).

The IPoE Forum is to be proudly hosted by Charles Darwin University School of Business and School of Service Industries, and will be held from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 in Darwin, Australia. For the first time the event will be preceded by THE-ICE Benchmarking Roundtable Series VIII as a pre-forum workshop on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014.



The theme “**Developing Quality and Value-adding to Partnerships Between Institutions**” will build on past IPoE forum themes, focusing on current strategic issues facing tourism, hospitality, events and culinary arts education (TH&E). Extensive networking opportunities will be provided throughout this event, which is open to members and non-members of THE-ICE.

The IPoE Forum will feature a series of invited Keynote presentations, panel sessions and workshops by leading international TH&E educators and industry experts. The panel sessions and workshops will focus on:

- Creating common Vocational Education and Training (VET) standards in the ASEAN region to allow for workforce mobility
- Educational pathways from VET to Higher Education (HE) – domestic and international
- Linkages and partnerships between institutions

The IPoE Forum will also include a number of referred paper presentation sessions with publication opportunities available for accepted submissions.

More information on the IPoE Forum and online registration is available on [THE-ICE website](#) in the coming days, or email us at [ipoe2014@the-ice.org](mailto:ipoe2014@the-ice.org).