INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

INQAAHE Strategic Plan

2013–2017

Global network of quality assurance agencies in higher education

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Foreword

This Strategic Plan draws on an in-depth analysis of the INQAAHE functioning and achievements in the period of 2007-2012. It is intended to provide an overview of the strategic priorities over 2013-2017 within the framework of the INQAAHE mission. The Strategic Plan is organized around the INQAAHE's goals for 2013-2017, for each of which specific objectives are illustrated. These will be further developed into discrete activities in the operational and yearly plans.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed periodically, and detailed arrangements for taking forward the work of INQAAHE will be made, supported by the necessary financial allocations.

Carol Bobby

President

Carol L. Bobby, PhD, LPC, NCC

I. INQAAHE MISSION AND VALUES

MISSION

The central purpose and role of INQAAHE is to promote and advance excellence in higher education through the support of an active international community of quality assurance agencies. In order to achieve this goal, the network focuses on the development of the theory and practice of quality assurance, the exchange and understanding of the policies and actions of its members, and the promotion of quality assurance for the benefit of higher education, institutions, students and society at large.

INQAAHE VALUES

Fundamental to the work of the Network are the key values that support the policy and practice of quality assurance:

- 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.

- Belief in the primacy of academic freedom and institutional integrity, and a commitment to the idea that quality and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of higher education institutions themselves.

- A fundamental understanding of the importance of working in partnership – among members, with higher education institutions, regional, international government and non-government organizations as well as the business sector – in order to provide member support, guidance, information and advocacy for quality assurance.

Diversity   Academic   Partnership

II. STRATEGIC GOALS 2013 – 2017

The strategic goals of INQAAHE for 2013-2017 are as follows:

1. To maintain and enhance INQAAHE's role as world leader in quality assurance and umbrella organization for quality assurance agencies

2. To develop a global quality assurance community

3. To advance the body of knowledge in, and ensure continued effectiveness of, quality assurance

4. To advocate and promote the concept of quality assurance as the driving force for continuous improvement of tertiary education.

Strategic Goal 1: To maintain and enhance INQAAHE's role as world leader in quality assurance

The objectives under this goal evolve around the following four major areas:

Objective 1.1

Ensuring worldwide visibility of INQAAHE's role as the leading organization for quality assurance agencies
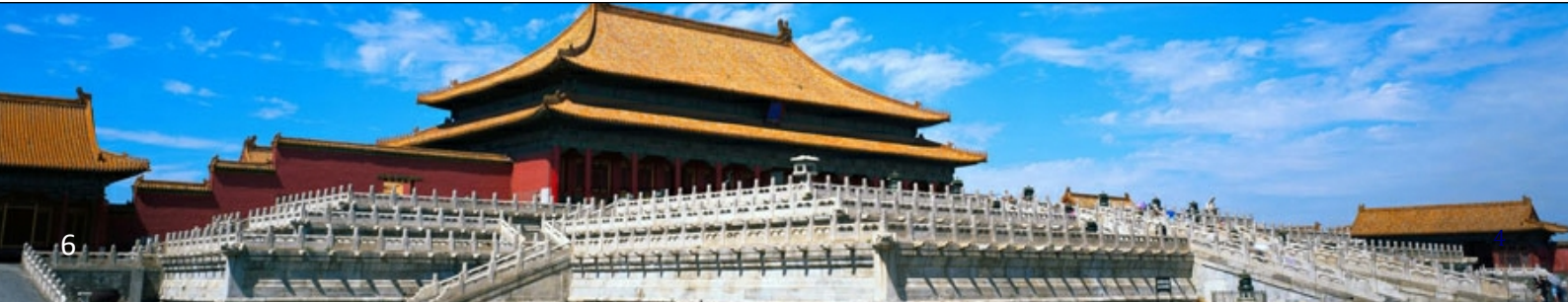
Objective 1.2

Promoting the interests of its members at different levels and through diversity of approaches

Objective 1.3

Promoting leadership development through continued commitment of members to the Network

Objective 1.4

Ensuring financial stability to enable carrying out its activities

Objective 1.1: Ensuring worldwide visibility of INQAAHE's role as the leading organization for quality assurance agencies

INQAAHE will strive to improve its worldwide visibility in the wider field of tertiary education through active promotion of its mission and values. A significant part of this goal will be met through the organization of events promoting INQAAHE's visibility and the application of such promotion and dissemination channels as: biennial conferences and fora; publication of the journal, bulletins and papers and documents generated by the conferences and developed by the members. Apart from the conventional channels, new ones will be sought, including:

- Presentation of INQAAHE at major events related to tertiary education worldwide;

- Expansion of the INQAAHE presence through organization of joint events with other organizations beyond the INQAAHE conferences and forums.

- Promotion of INQAAHE's activities, achievements, benefits and values among the members and the global society at large through the usage of social and professional online networks; increasing accessibility to the INQAAHE's publications through the usage of modern technology and media;

- Recognition of membership and of active participation in INQAAHE activities through certification and authorization to use the INQAAHE logo[1]

- Exploration of venues for broader expansion of INQAAHE through investigation of the main interests, needs and demands of the members.

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[1] *Criteria and specification will be developed both for certification and for the use of the INQAAHE logo*

Objective 1.2: Promoting the interests of its members at different levels and through diversity of approaches

INQAAHE considers one of its major functions to be promotion of the quality assurance agencies in general and its members in particular at different levels. This will be done by employing diverse approaches such as:

- Being recognized as the professional association for QA agencies;

- Representing the voice of its members and a broader QA community at different levels.

Objective 1.3: Leadership development

- To enable development of leadership potential within the network, INQAAHE considers professionalization of all its members, including the Board members, to be crucial. Thus, serious steps will be undertaken to broaden involvement of all its members in the activities undertaken by INQAAHE. INQAAHE will broaden involvement in its activities through identifying and inviting individuals with appropriate potential to take a stronger leadership role in matters related to the network.

- To effectively contribute to the Board's activities, serious attention will be paid to the Board's culture. This will include revising the induction package for new Board members, as well as assigning a mentor to each new board member;.

Objective 1.4: Financial stability

To ensure the strategies for 2013-2017 are smoothly implemented INQAAHE will strive to maintain financial stability and growth through the following:

- Review and revisit the current INQAAHE fee service to determine if fees are adequate to cover the costs of the services being offered. This is envisaged through consultancy provisions, review visits for GGP alignment, fees for pre-conference workshops, fees from other services;

- Revising policies for the members' fees and contribution from forums and conferences; developing policies for donations;

Strategic Goal 2: To develop and support a global QA community

An important initiative for the planned period will be a broader outreach of INQAAHE to the global QA community to further develop and enhance that community. The objectives within this goal fall into three major areas:
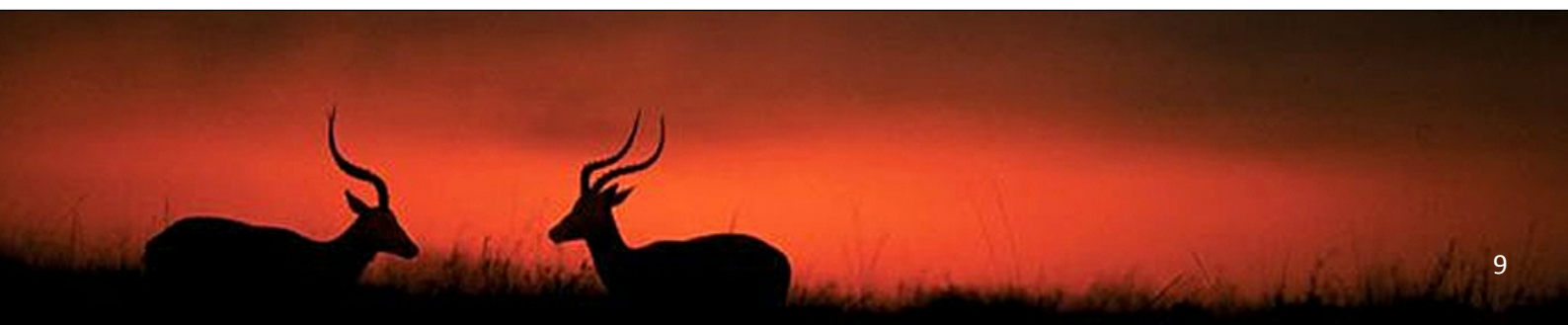
Objective 2.1

Encouragement of INQAAHE members' involvement in specific activities and expansion of the links between INQAAHE and other stakeholders

Objective 2.2

Further growth of the Network

Objective 2.3

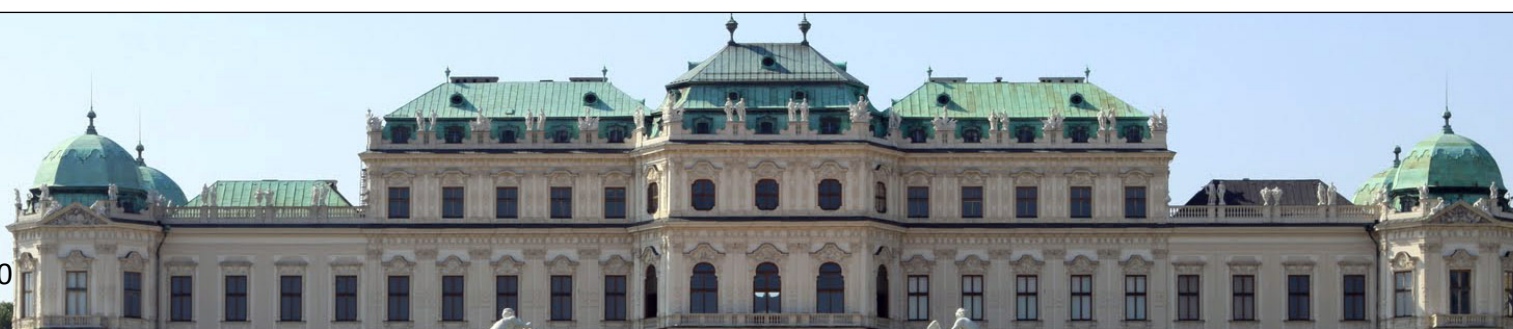Professionalization of quality assurance

Objective 2.1: Encouragement of INQAAHE members' involvement in specific activities and expansion of the links between INQAAHE and other stakeholders

- The Board will encourage the participation of INQAAHE members in the different activities of the Network, particularly by inviting them to take part in the working groups (WG) organized to promote the different lines of INQAAHE's strategic priorities; WGs will be chaired by a Board member but peopled by members, expected to prepare an action plan and their results and membership will be recognized and disseminated.

- INQAAHE will encourage involvement of members in the activities of other QA organisations and networks. Such additional networking opportunities will be explored and disseminated through surveys and other social networks.

Objective 2.2: Further growth of the Network

Adequate geographical coverage has been one of the main foci of INQAAHE stemming from its mission. Further potential will be explored to increase membership through a revised definition of the field covered by the network to include tertiary education, and to work towards greater inclusion of subject-specific accreditors. In particular,

- A systematic effort will be made to organize and publish comprehensive information on the membership: who we are, what we do, where we are located. Further, a report outlining the state of quality assurance around the world will be published, initially referring to INQAAHE membership and to the members of the associated quality assurance networks. The report will be made public through different dissemination channels to reach non-members, both for their information and development, and to encourage their involvement in INQAAHE.

- INQAAHE will engage associated quality assurance networks in a global perspective by allocating responsibilities to specified Board members for the latter to represent INQAAHE in all associated network activities.

- The tradition of having meetings of the associated quality assurance networks during the INQAAHE conferences and forums as well as having meetings of the subject specific agencies will be continued.

Objective 2.3: Professionalization of quality assurance

Professionalization of INQAAHE members is at the heart of its activities. Thus, the following lines of activities will be pursued:

- Professionalization of INQAAHE's members will be undertaken through promoting the Guidelines for Good Practices (GGP) to extend and ensure their actual implementation. Members will be encouraged to undergo an external review against GGP alignment and be advised on the developments in the **Quality Assurance** profession.

- INQAAHE will develop and implement a policy on ensuring that advisory services and consultations on different topics are available, both for its members and beyond.

- A series of workshops and trainings will be developed, drawing on the needs analysis of the member agencies. A plan of activities for providing the trainings will put in place to ensure successful achievement of the objective.

Strategic Goal 3: To advance the body of knowledge in, and to ensure continued effectiveness of quality assurance

Developing the body of knowledge and understanding of quality assurance and its potential is an essential component of INQAAHE's activities. In order to achieve this goal, the objectives are specified in the following major areas:
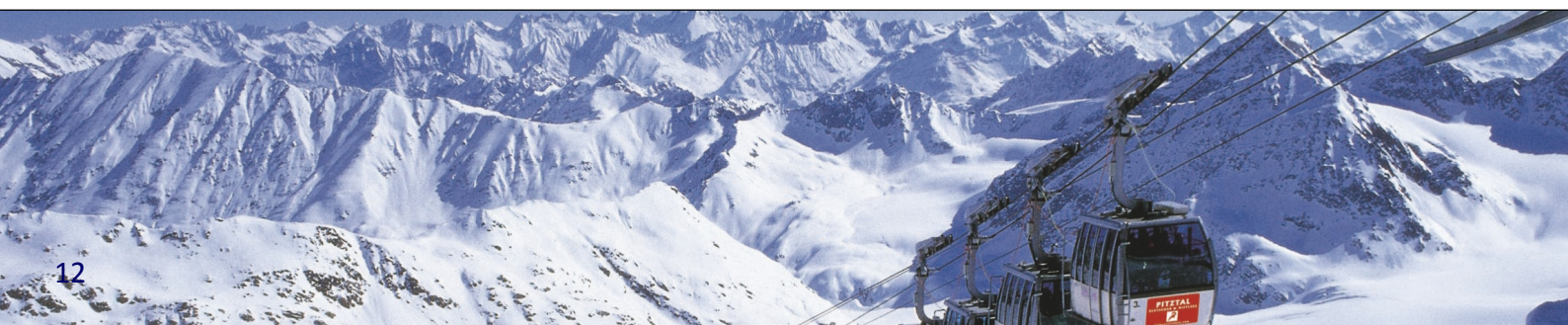
Objective 3.1

Research on quality and quality assurance

Objective 3.2

Publication of occasional papers

Objective 3.3

Maintenance and expansion of the Database of Good Practice

Objective 3.1: Research on quality and quality assurance

- One of the central missions of INQAAHE is to contribute to the body of knowledge on quality assurance in general. In pursuit of this aim, it will commission research on quality and quality assurance in tertiary education to ensure such contribution. Further, INQAAHE will promote innovation in quality assurance to ensure its impact and relevance in a changing context. To disseminate the results, use of such channels as conferences, the INQAAHE Journal (Quality in Higher Education), the Bulletin and the website will be made.

Objective 3.2: Publication of occasional papers

- INQAAHE considers it crucial for quality assurance to respond to the goals and practices of tertiary education. Further, changes in tertiary education must inform the policies and activities in quality assurance. To this end, INQAAHE will monitor relevant social changes and new practices in higher education and quality assurance, identify and publish occasional papers on relevant issues and make them available on the web-site.

Objective 3.3: Maintenance and expansion of the Database of Good Practice

- To make the achievements in quality and quality assurance in tertiary education accessible for its members INQAAHE will maintain and expand the Good Practice Database and encourage member agencies to submit their practices for them to be considered.

Strategic Goal 4: To advocate and promote the concept of QA as the driving force for continuous improvement of tertiary education

INQAAHE will use the different means available for the advocacy of quality assurance, and strive to reach a wide range of stakeholders (such as governmental agencies, associations of higher education institutions, institutional leaders, quality assurance networks). Thus, the following major objectives will be pursued:

Objective 4.1	Objective 4.2
Policy recommendations to tertiary education institutions and QA agencies	Consultancy provisions

Objective 4.3	Objective 4.4
Maintenance of the existing and expansion of relationships with other organization related to tertiary education and development	Promoting the role of quality assurance in the recognition of learning outcomes and qualifications

Objective 4.1: Policy recommendations to tertiary education institutions and quality assurance agencies

- INQAAHE will use the results of research, studies, conferences and other available sources to prepare policy papers and recommendations to tertiary education institutions and quality assurance agencies to support their further development and enhancement.
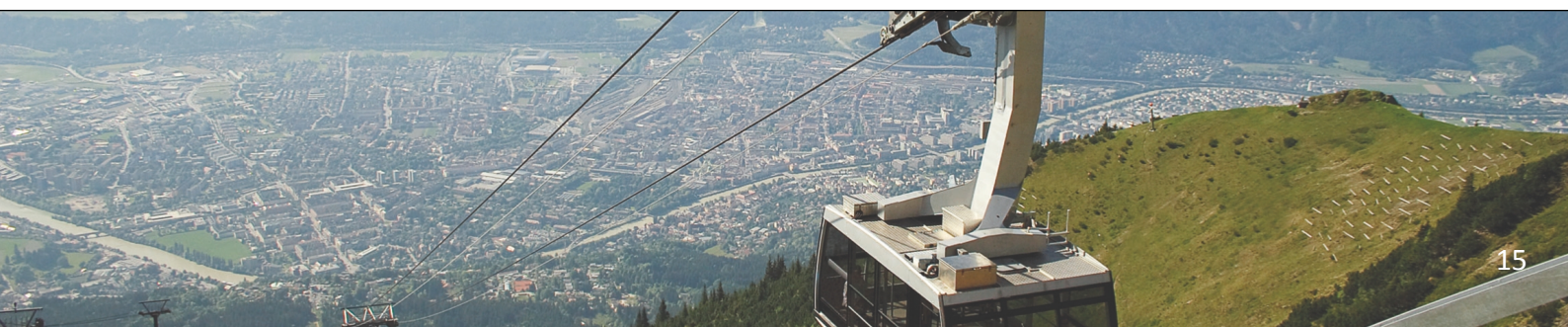
Objective 4.2: Consultancy provisions

- INQAAHE will provide consultancy services to agencies, governments or international stakeholders. In order to be able to do this, it will set up a database of well-qualified consultants to action on behalf of the Network.

Objective 4.3: Maintaining and expanding relationships with other organization related to tertiary education

- INQAAHE will maintain and enhance relationships with the existing partners and develop contacts with external organizations that have interests in tertiary education in general and quality assurance in particular, such as UNESCO, World Bank, WTO, European Commission and others.

Objective 4.4: Maintenance and expansion of the Database of Good Practice

- INQAAHE will strive to promote global recognition of qualifications, and of the role that quality assurance plays in this recognition. This, in turn, will stimulate alignment of national and regional qualifications frameworks to further recognition of qualifications as well as promote student and graduate mobility throughout the world.