

QA fundamentals workshop: The Context of Quality Assurance

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Higher education governance systems shape direction, policies, and functioning of higher education institutions worldwide.

This morning's workshop provides an introduction to key concepts and factors that create the ecosystem in which quality assurance operates

Workshop Learning Outcomes

At the end of this workshop participants will be able to:

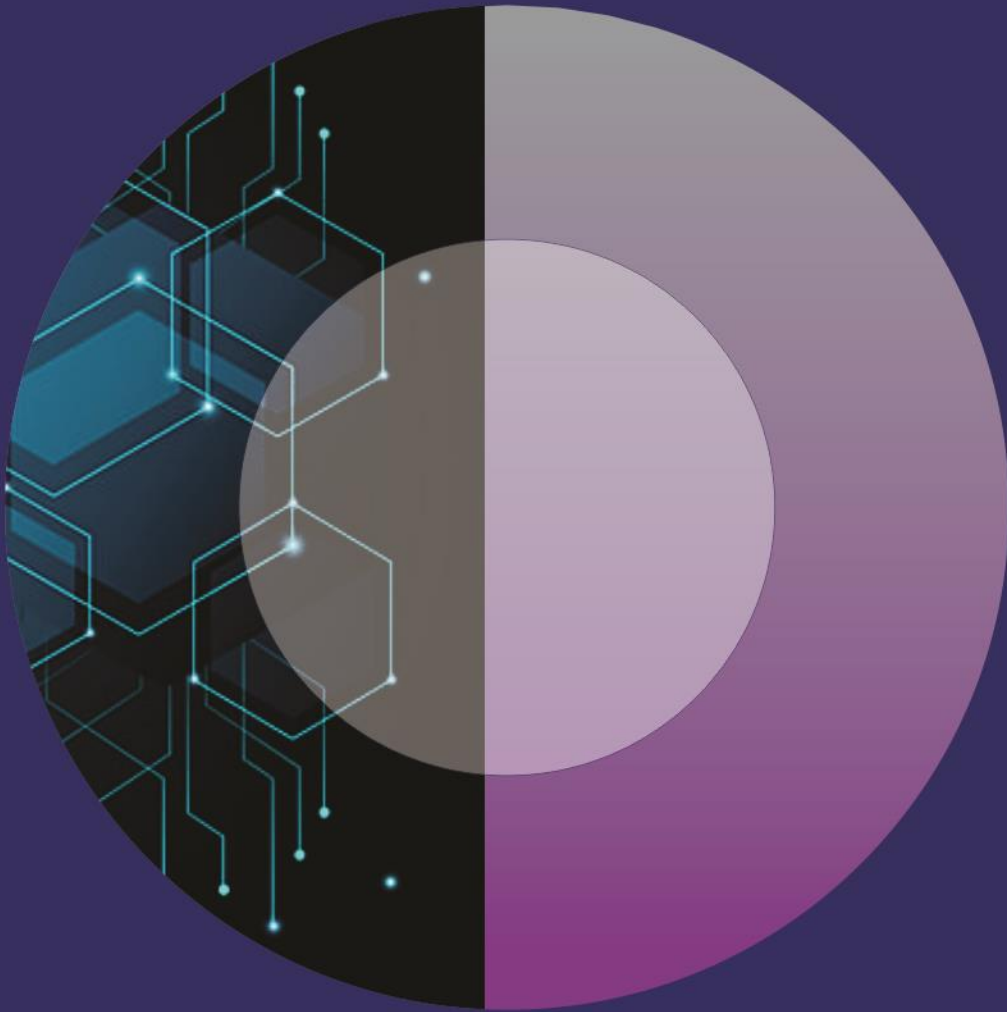
- Articulate the forces shaping higher education regulatory frameworks
- Describe the purpose of a qualifications framework and its role in their jurisdictions
- Articulate the role of quality assurance practices in local and global ecosystems
- Identify the influence of global coordination and recognition activities
- Develop a strategy to enhance profile of QA in their jurisdiction

What is Higher Education Governance?

Higher education governance refers to the organizational structures and processes through which colleges and universities are managed.

Key elements include government, external agencies, governing boards, administrative leadership, faculty governance, and external stakeholders.

Effective governance balances shared governance, transparency, accountability, and the institution's mission.



Key Stakeholders

- **International bodies**

The global or regional bodies that coordinate and shape both external and internal governance trends

- **Government**

The government provides funding and sets policies that impact the university.

- **Quality Assurance Bodies**

Accreditors ensure the university meets certain standards of quality.

Governing boards

The governing boards oversee the university's operations and set policies.

Faculty/Senate

The faculty are responsible for academic elements in the institutions

Administration

The administration manages the day-to-day operations of the university.

Students

The students are the core stakeholders who receive education from the university.

Shared Governance Models

Definition

Shared governance models integrate elements of state regulation and academic self-governance.

University Autonomy

Shared governance allows universities some autonomy while still being regulated by the state.

Stakeholder Involvement

Shared governance models involve multiple internal and external stakeholders in university governance.

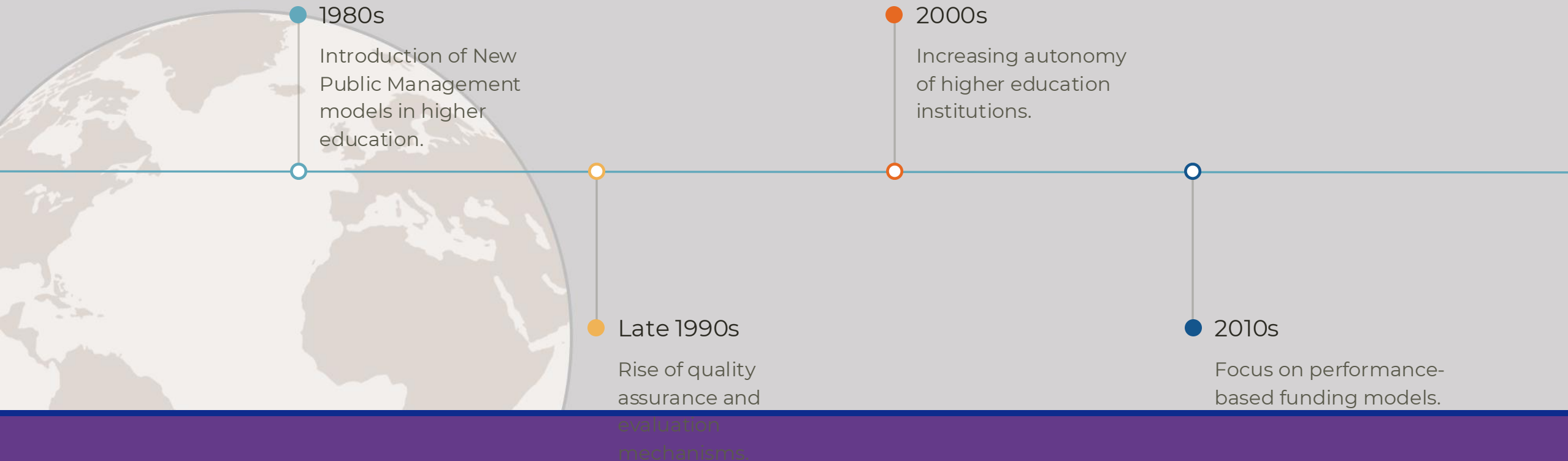
Accountability

Shared governance models balance accountability to the state with accountability to academic norms and values.

Funding

Shared governance models utilize both state funding and private funding sources.

Historical Trajectories





The Influence of Neoliberalism

Marketization of higher education

Accountability and efficiency

Performance-
based funding

Student as customer

Marketization of Higher Education



More corporate influence

University leadership seeking corporate partnerships and donations



Tuition increases outpacing inflation

Students taking on more debt as public funding declines



Budget cuts and austerity measures

Less funding for academic programs and student services

Market-based governance has shifted universities to prioritize revenue generation over public good.

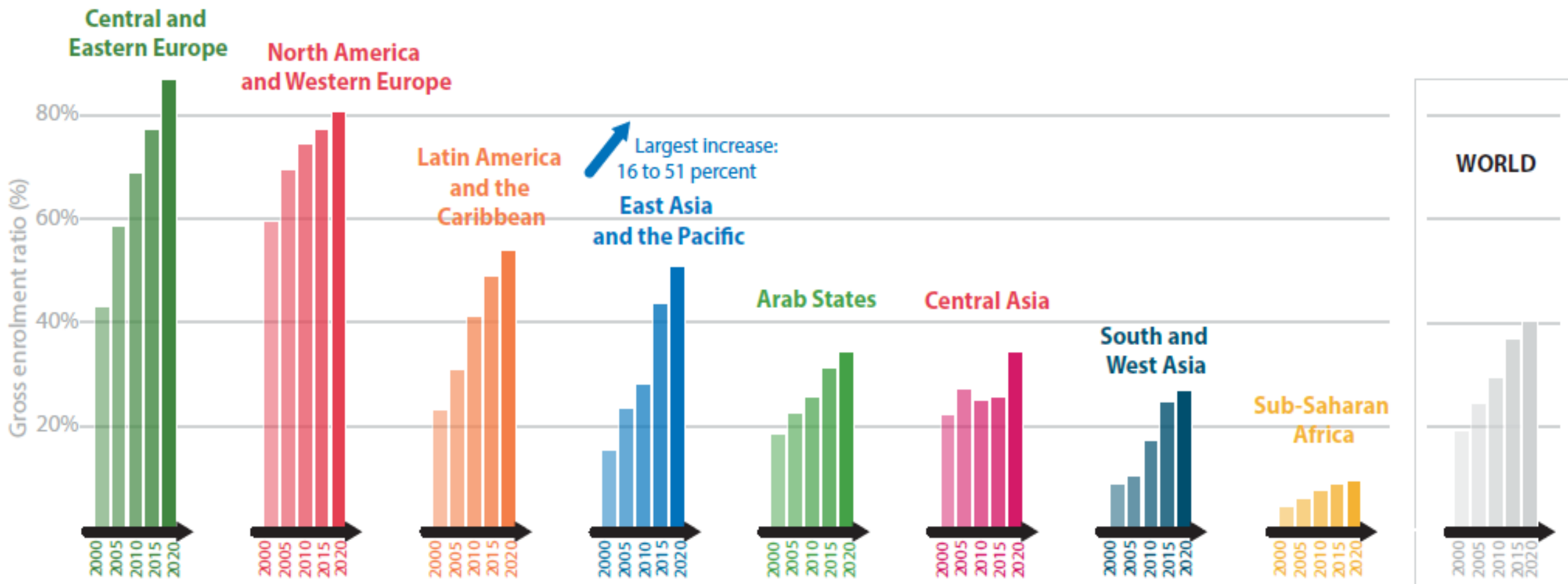
Academic Capitalism

Academic capitalism refers to faculty and academic departments generating revenue through patents, grants, and other market-oriented activities. As state funding for higher education has declined, public universities have increasingly pursued entrepreneurial activities to supplement their budgets.

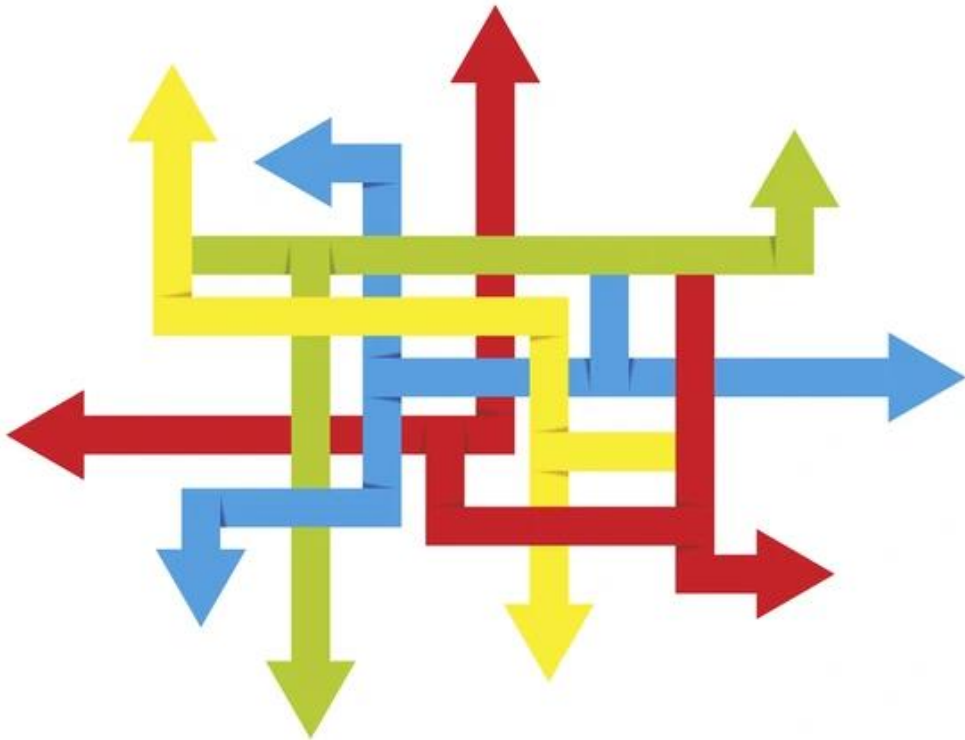


Massification of higher education

Gross enrolment ratio (GER) in tertiary education by region, 2000–2020



Diversity and differentiation in offerings



Horizontal and vertical of institutional growth

New program types

Transnational offerings

Lifelong learning

Socio-political dynamics

Marginson's Status matrix

	STUDENTS (CONSUMERS)	UNIVERSITIES (PRODUCERS)
HIGH STATUS INSTITUTIONS	<p><i>Intense competition for status</i> Have high motivation to co-produce status, hence high willingness to invest</p>	<p><i>Intense competition for status</i> Need high value consumers to reproduce institutional status. Constraints on size, real price</p>
LOW STATUS INSTITUTIONS	<p><i>Little competition for status</i> Want to acquire base-level status goods at lowest possible time and cost</p>	<p><i>Weak status but intense revenue competition.</i> Need any consumers, to maximise revenues (but may have unfulfilled status aspirations)</p>

New Public Management

Performance-Based Funding

Allocate state funding based on specific performance metrics like graduation rates.

Corporate-Style Governance

Adopt corporate governance models with greater power concentrated at the top.

Cost Cutting

Reduce costs through measures like increasing class sizes, hiring more adjunct faculty.

Revenue Generation

Generate new revenue streams through patents, corporate partnerships, out-of-state tuition.

Tuition Hikes

Significantly increase tuition to compensate for reduced state funding.

Vocational Focus

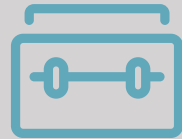
Emphasize majors and programs that directly serve the job market.

Burton Clark's Triangle of Coordination



Burton Clark's triangle of coordination involves state authority, market forces, and academic oligarchy

These three forces interact to influence decision making and governance in higher education



State authority refers to government and public policy direction

Government funding, regulations, and oversight shape governance



Market forces involve student demand and competition

Institutions respond to student interests, parents, rankings, and the market

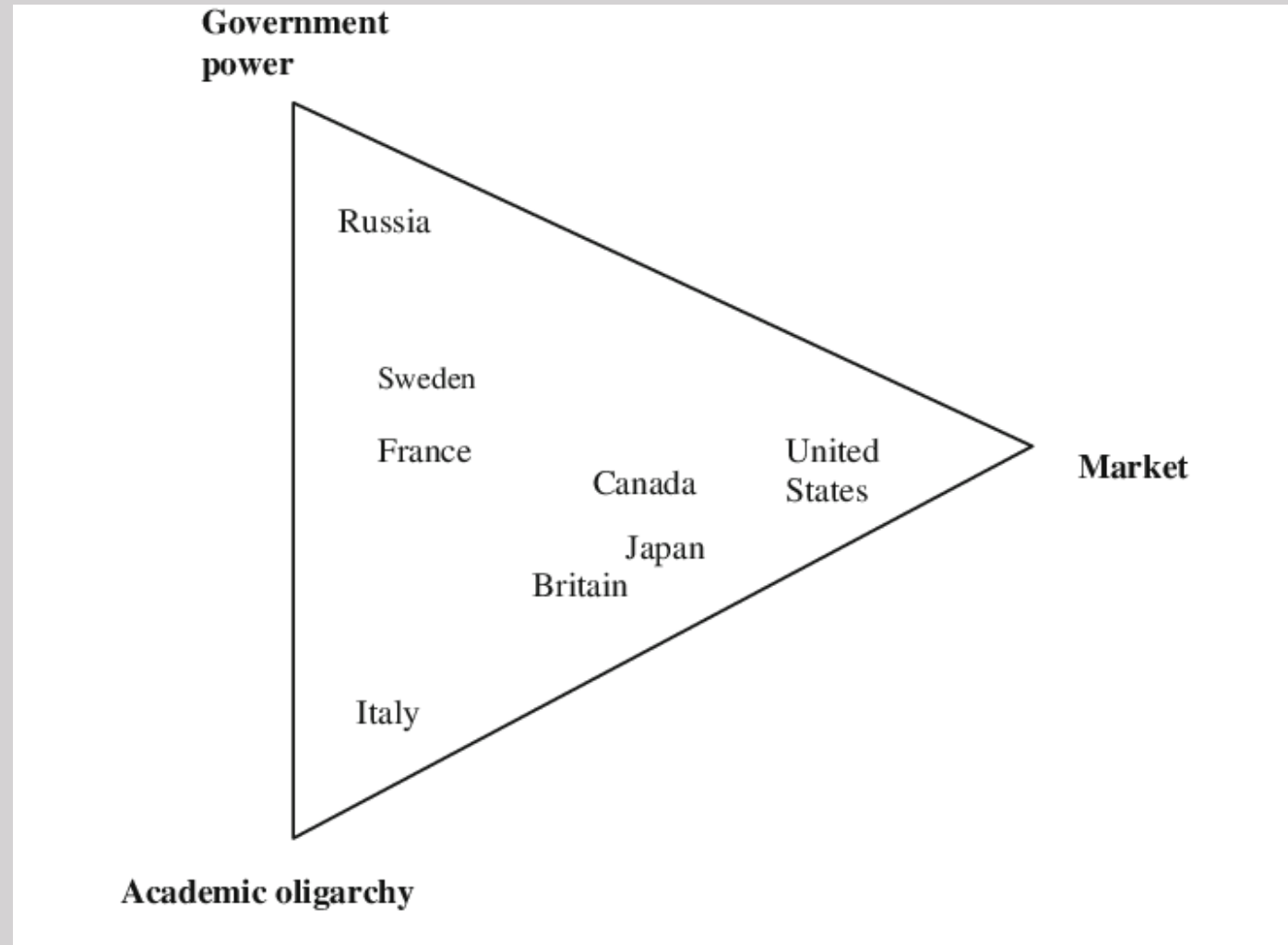


Academic oligarchy means faculty influence

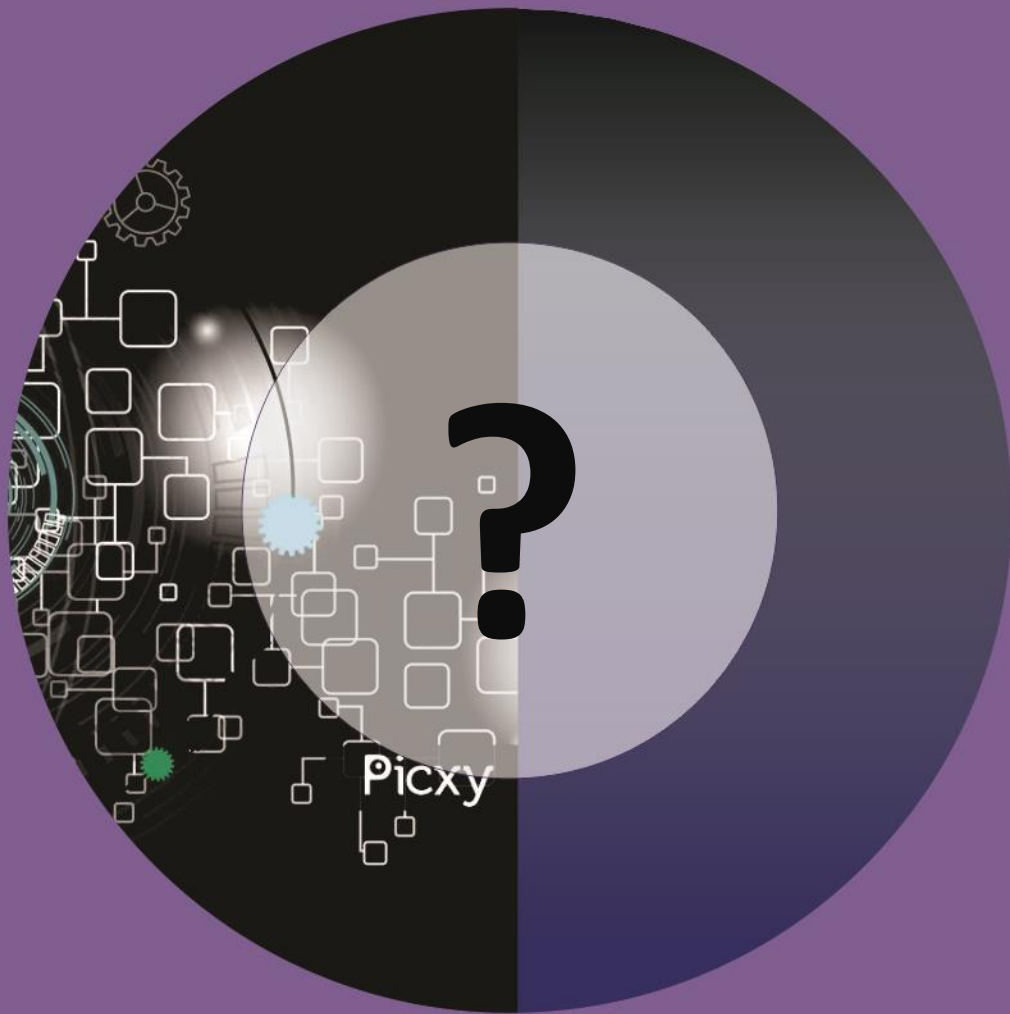
Shared governance gives professors a strong voice in institutional policies

Clark's model highlights key internal and external forces that shape higher education governance

Burton Clark's Triangle of Coordination Applied



Clark's model highlights key internal and external forces that shape higher education governance



**What model of
governance fits your
experience or the
system you operate in?**



“Access without quality is a cruel deception”

National Governors Union, 1991: 10

“education is a process pretending to have an outcome”

Trow (1996: 321)

What is quality in education?



- ‘fitness for and fitness of purpose’, ‘value for money’ and ‘achieving excellence’
- “[Higher Education] quality is conformance to mission specification and goal achievement – within publicly accepted standards of accountability and integrity”. Bogue (2003: 14)

How is it measured?



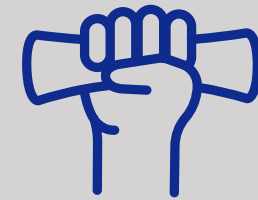
- Inputs, throughputs and outputs
- Labour market outcomes
- Proxies
- Learning outcomes

Higher education evaluation activities

- Accountability Schemes
- Rankings
- Accreditation
- Quality Assurance
 - Assessments
 - Audits
 - Enhancement



Quality Frameworks



Qualifications Framework

Provides transparent parameters of credential expectations

Quality Assurance

Monitors programming through External Quality Assurance Processes (EQAP) of Internal Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP)

Recognition

Demonstrates and legitimizes achievements

Fair and transparent expectations

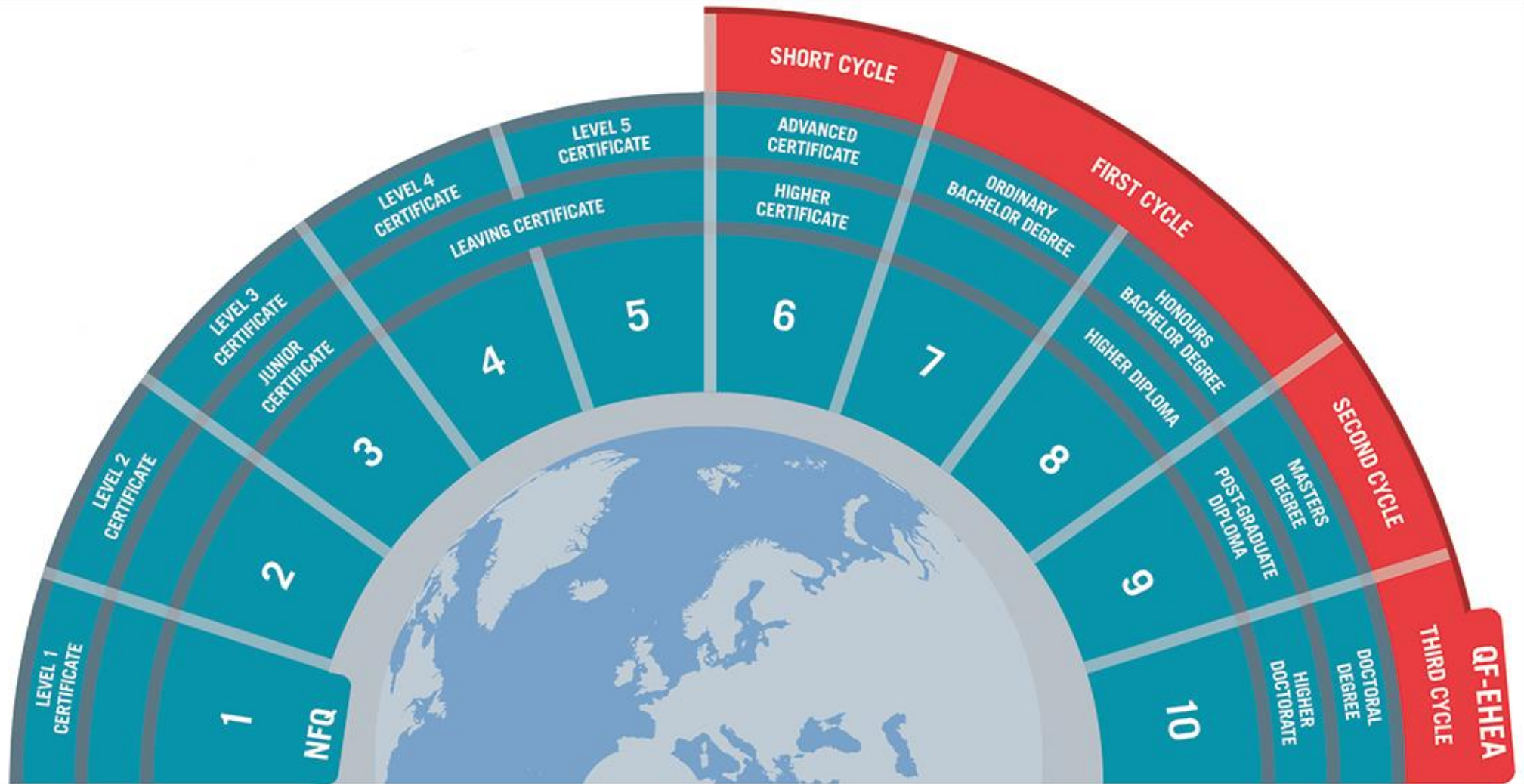
- National Qualifications frameworks
- Quality frameworks with standards and benchmarks
- Referenced to international best practice

- Serve as an instrument for the development, classification, and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies along a continuum of agreed levels.
- Indicate the comparability of different qualification and, in some cases, can show how one can progress from one level to another.
- Demonstrate if a system is tracked, linked or unified, tight or loose.
- Can be a tool for communication, reform or transformation.

Typology of Qualifications Frameworks

Type of NQF	Communications	Reforming	Transformational
Starting Point	Existing ET ^a System	Existing ET System	Future ET System
Purpose	To increase transparency; to provide a tool for rationalizing system, increasing coherence, and facilitating access, transfer, and progression	To achieve specific reforms, e.g., fill gaps, enhance quality, extend access transfer and progression; to provide a tool for rationalizing system and increasing coherence	To transform ET and lead development of a new system
Design	Loose, varies across sub-frameworks; outcomes used as a common reference point	Tighter, but varies across sub-frameworks; outcomes used as a common reference point	Tight, central specification imposed more uniformly; outcomes used to drive change
Leadership and Control	Voluntary “bottom-up”; ET institutions share leadership; substantial decision-making at the level of sub-framework	Compulsory “top-down”; led by central agency/government ET institutions as key partners; control may vary across sub-frameworks	Compulsory “top-down”; led by central agency/government ET institutions among partners; centralized control
Expected Role in Change	Tool for change; requires complementary drivers to ensure the tool is used	Drives specific changes; requires complementary drivers for other impacts	Expected to drive the transformation of the system

Note: Raffe, D. (2011).



NZQF		EQF	
Doctoral Degrees	10	8	Third cycle degrees (Doctorate) Higher professional qualifications EE: occ. qual. 'chartered engineer'
Master's Degrees	9	7	Second cycle degrees (Master's) Higher professional qualifications CZ: 'Chemical engineer product manager'
Bachelor Honours Degrees* Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates	8		
Bachelor's Degrees	7	6	First cycle degrees (Bachelor's) IE: Ordinary Bachelor's degree, Honours Bachelor Degree Higher professional qualifications DE: 'Master Craftsman (certified)'
Diploma Qualifications	6	5	SCHE qualifications Higher professional qualifications
Diploma Qualifications	5		
Certificate level 4 Trade qualifications	4	4	Upper secondary general school-leaving certificates Upper secondary VET school leaving certificates
Certificate level 3 NCEA (secondary school - leaving certificate)	3		
Certificate level 2	2	3	VET qualifications Secondary education certificates
Certificate level 1 NCEA	1	2	Lower-secondary education Basic VET qualifications
		1	Primary education Basic VET qualifications

Quality Assurance Frameworks

There are two primary components of the quality assurance processes:

I. External Quality Assurance (EQA)

II. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

External Quality Assurance reviews of Internal Quality review processes of institutional academic policies, practices, student learning outcomes, etc, assures the quality of educational programming is in line with qualifications frameworks

It is this synchronization that provides autonomy and flexibility to the institutions while maintaining a coordinated and transparent system.

A classification scheme for quality assurance

ENHANCEMENT	PUBLIC REGULATION		CONTROL
	A	B	
	C	D	
	MARKET EMBEDDING		

Gaining trust

For quality assurance activities to have value there needs to be trust that the standards and expectations are both reasonable and fair, that the processes are transparent, and the judgements are independent of influence.



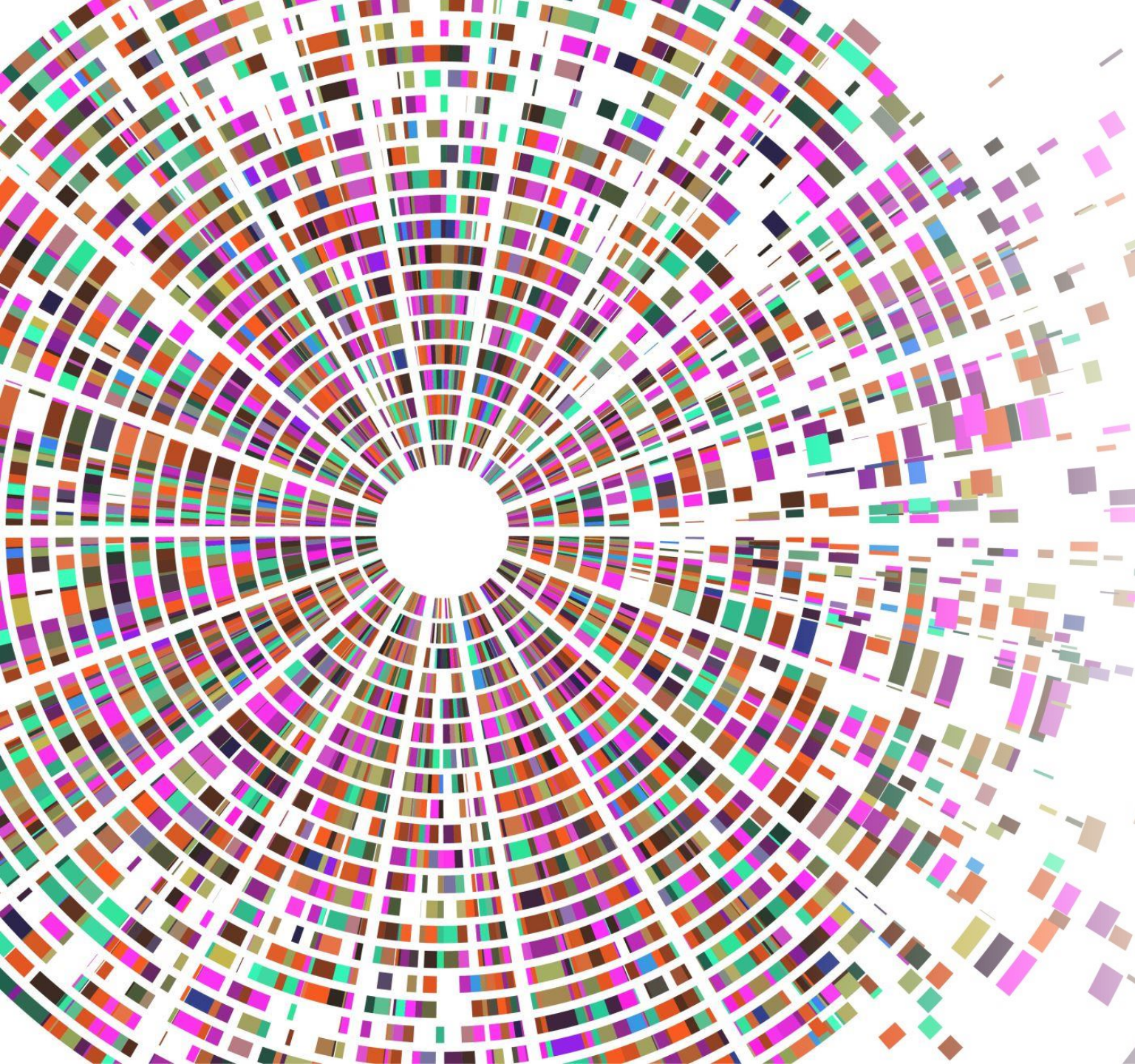
Capacity building within the academic community

At the centre of the review processes are the individual reviewers – the experts - who are asked to make judgements on how well a program or institution aligns with the expectations established by the quality assurance framework.



Professionalizing Quality Assurance

- Formal education
graduate degree/diploma programs
- Academic activities
 - Research, journal publications
- Informal training
Conferences, workshops, INQAAHE courses, micro-credentials
- Building communities of practice
 - Regional networks, related fields (i.e. teaching and learning, student assessment), bilateral relationships of QAA's



Local benefits of a trusted and valued QA system

- Safe space to move towards quality enhancement activities
- QA can advocate for the program or institution
- Legitimizes innovative and progressive programming
- Supports students and cohesive system design

Global benefits of a trusted and valued QA system

- Protects students
- Validates institutions internationally
- Supports global understanding and mutual respect





**What is the perception of
quality assurance in your
jurisdiction?**

How can you change it?

Global Governance

It refers to the coordination and regulation of actors and processes at the international level to address common challenges and achieve shared goals.

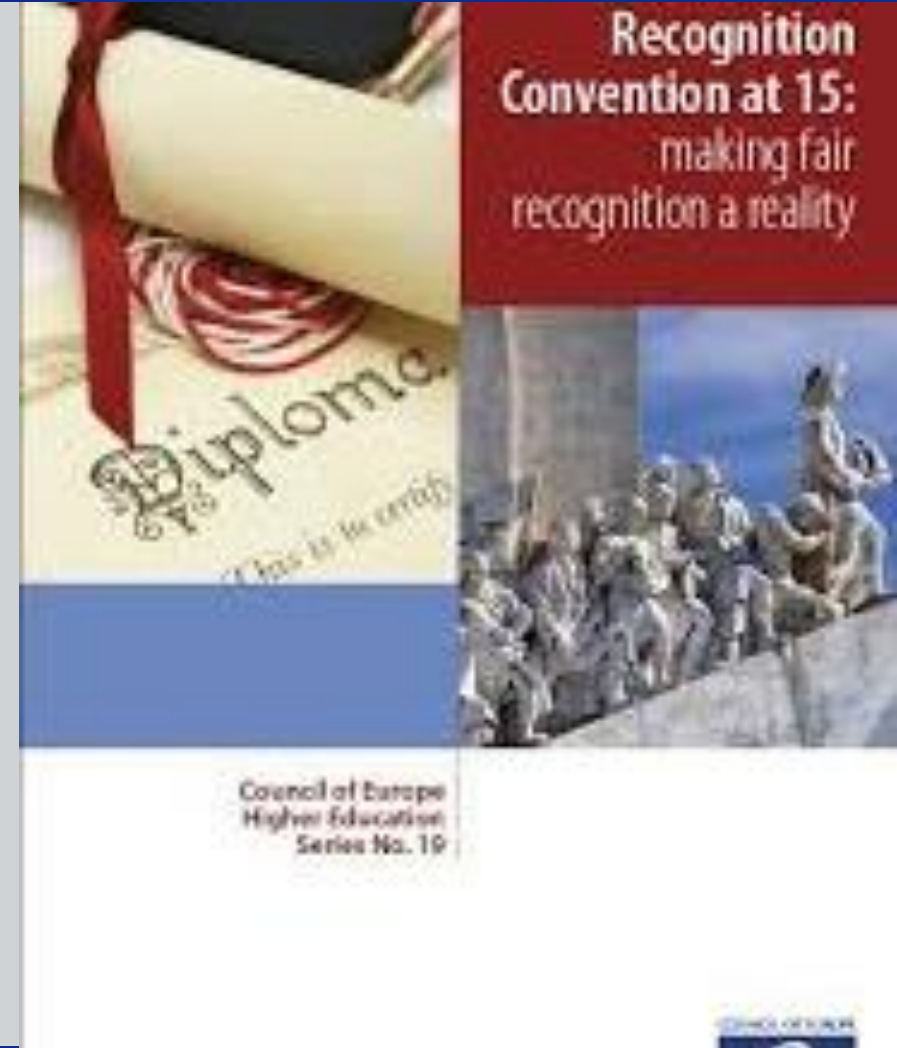
In the context of higher education, global governance encompasses the policies, agreements, and institutions that influence how universities and colleges operate, collaborate, and compete on a global scale.

- Lisbon Convention (1997): [56 state parties from the UNESCO Europe region, including North America] ENIC-NARIC network, ENQA (European Association for QA in HE), EQAR (European QA Register), EQF (European Qualifications Framework) + QF-EHEA, ECTS (European Credit Transfer System)
- Tokyo Convention (2011): [12 state parties] APNNIC (the Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres), APQN, AQAN (ASEAN QA Network)
- Addis Convention (2022): [14 state parties], AfriQAN (African QA Network)
- Arab States Convention (2022): [2 state parties] ANQAHE (Arab Network for QA in HE)
- Buenos Aires Convention (2019): [6 state parties] Latin American National Information Centres (LANIC), CANQATE (Caribbean Area Network for QA in Tertiary Education), EQUAL-LA (Latin American Higher Education Space)

Lisbon Convention

The Lisbon Convention is the key legal instrument regulating recognition of higher education qualifications from abroad across Europe and North American regions.

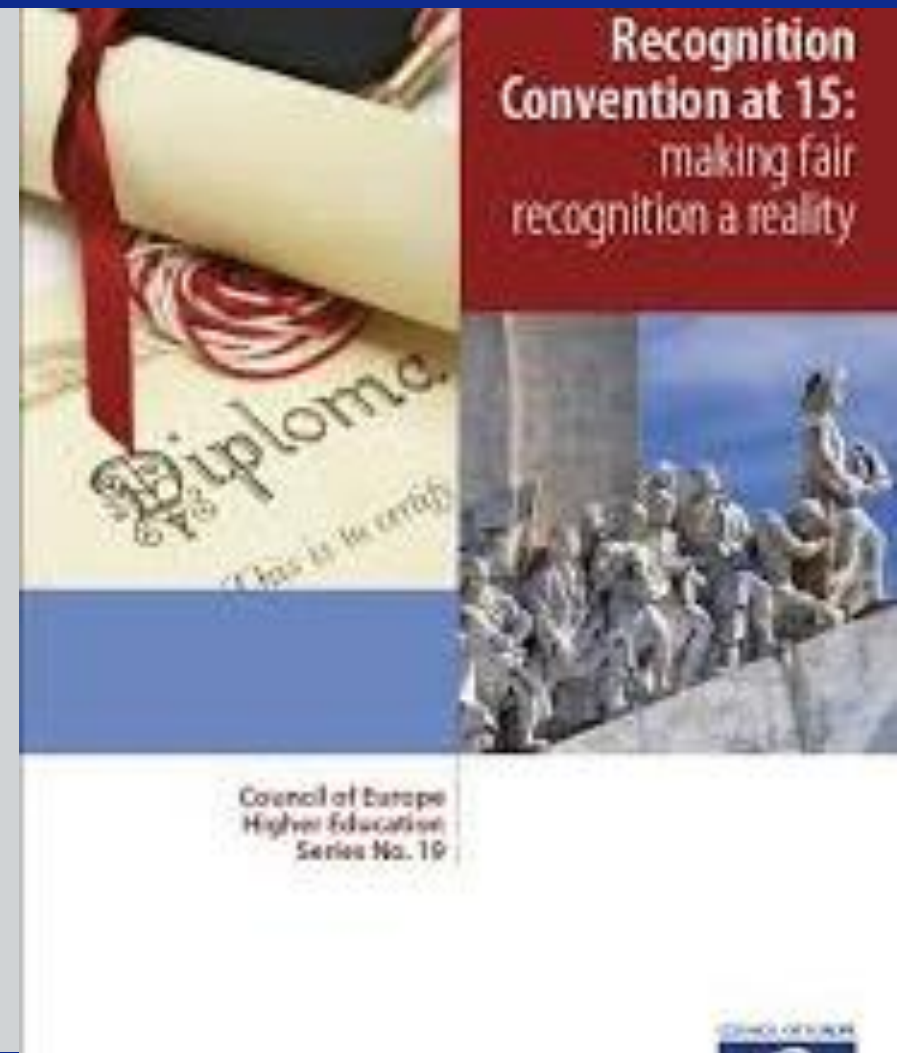
It aims to ensure that holders of a qualification from a signatory country can have adequate access to an assessment of the qualification in another country in a fair, flexible, and transparent way.



Lisbon Convention Key Principle

A foreign qualification must be recognised unless the recognising authority (in most cases a HEI) can demonstrate that the foreign qualification is **substantially different** from a national qualification that would grant access to the desired learning activity

Focusing on the five key elements that together make up a qualification: **level, workload, quality, profile** and **learning outcomes**



Substantial difference

Substantial differences are differences between the foreign and national qualification that are so significant, that they would most likely prevent the applicant from ***succeeding in the desired activity*** such as further study, research activities or employment.

The burden of proof of a substantial difference lies with the competent recognition authority of the host country (or the body undertaking the assessment)

Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions



Practical guidelines for credential
evaluator and admissions officers to
provide fair and flexible recognition of
foreign degrees and studies abroad

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The European Higher Education Area

Harmonization of degree programs

Standardization of bachelor's and master's degree programs across Europe to facilitate mobility and hiring.

Credit system

Implementation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) to quantify and transfer credits.

Quality assurance

Development of standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education.

Qualifications framework
Adoption of the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA).

Promotion of mobility

Programs like Erasmus+ to promote student and staff mobility between institutions.

Social dimension

Efforts to make higher education more inclusive and representative of diverse populations.

Lisbon Accord Key Principles

Equity

The convention emphasizes the principle of non-discrimination, ensuring that qualifications are recognized regardless of the country in which they were obtained.

Transparency

It promotes transparency in recognition procedures, ensuring that decisions are based on clear criteria and information.

Flexibility

The convention allows for flexible recognition procedures, taking into account the diversity of education systems and qualifications.

Responsibility

It places responsibility on all parties involved in recognition processes to ensure fair and consistent outcomes.

UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals

- End poverty in all its forms

SDG 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce the proportion of people living in poverty by 2030.

- End hunger and achieve food security

SDG 2 focuses on ending hunger and malnutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture.

- Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing

SDG 3 aims to reduce rates of maternal and child mortality and combat communicable diseases.

- Ensure inclusive and equitable education

SDG 4 promotes access to quality education and training for all.

- Achieve gender equality

SDG 5 calls for empowerment of women and girls and elimination of violence and discrimination.

1 NO POVERTY



2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY




6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH




9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE




10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES




11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SDG #4 - Quality Education



Ensure free primary and secondary education

Provide free and compulsory education for all children



Eliminate gender disparities

Ensure equal access to education for girls



Universal access to quality education

Build education facilities and provide resources for all



Increase supply of qualified teachers

Recruit and train teachers, especially in developing countries

Achieving inclusive and quality education for all is key to sustainable development.

Implications for Higher Education

Access to Higher Education

Ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status, have equal access to quality education at all levels.

This includes access to higher education institutions, such as universities and colleges

Quality of Higher Education

Ensuring that higher education institutions provide quality education that meets the needs of students and society.

This includes ensuring that curricula are relevant, teachers are qualified, and facilities are adequate.

Relevance of Higher Education

Higher education plays a crucial role in preparing individuals for the workforce and promoting economic growth and development.

and it prepares individuals for meaningful employment and lifelong learning.

Equity in Higher Education

SDG 4 aims to ensure that higher education is accessible to all individuals, including those from marginalized and disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes ensuring that scholarships and financial aid are available to students who need them, and that barriers to access, such as discrimination and inequality, are addressed.

Lifelong Learning

SDG 4 recognizes the importance of lifelong learning and the role that higher education plays in providing opportunities for individuals to continue learning throughout their lives. This includes providing adult education programs and continuing education opportunities for individuals who may not have had access to higher education earlier in life.

UNESCO Global Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning Higher Education

The Global Convention (GRC) is the first legally binding UN instrument on HE.

- Adopted on 25 November 2019, it entered into force on 5 March 2023 with the 20th ratification
- Currently 28 States are parties to the Convention.

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Cabo Verde, Cote D'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Estonia, Finland, France, Guinea, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, Nicaragua, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Senegal, Slovakia, State of Palestine, Sweden, Tunisia, UK, Uruguay, Yemen



UNESCO's convention aims to make qualification recognition more transparent, equitable and efficient for greater mobility.

UNESCO Education 2030 Agenda

A vision for the future of education captured by SDG 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

UNESCO Roadmap to 2030, a shift in mindsets to

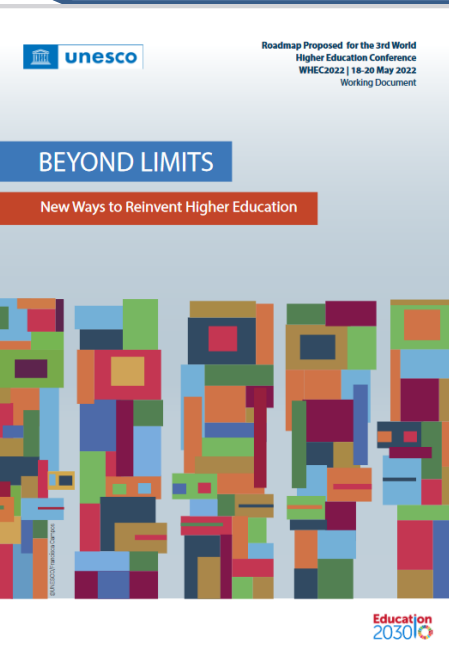
privilege cooperation over competition; diversity over uniformity; flexible learning pathways over traditionally structured ones; openness over more elitist viewpoints



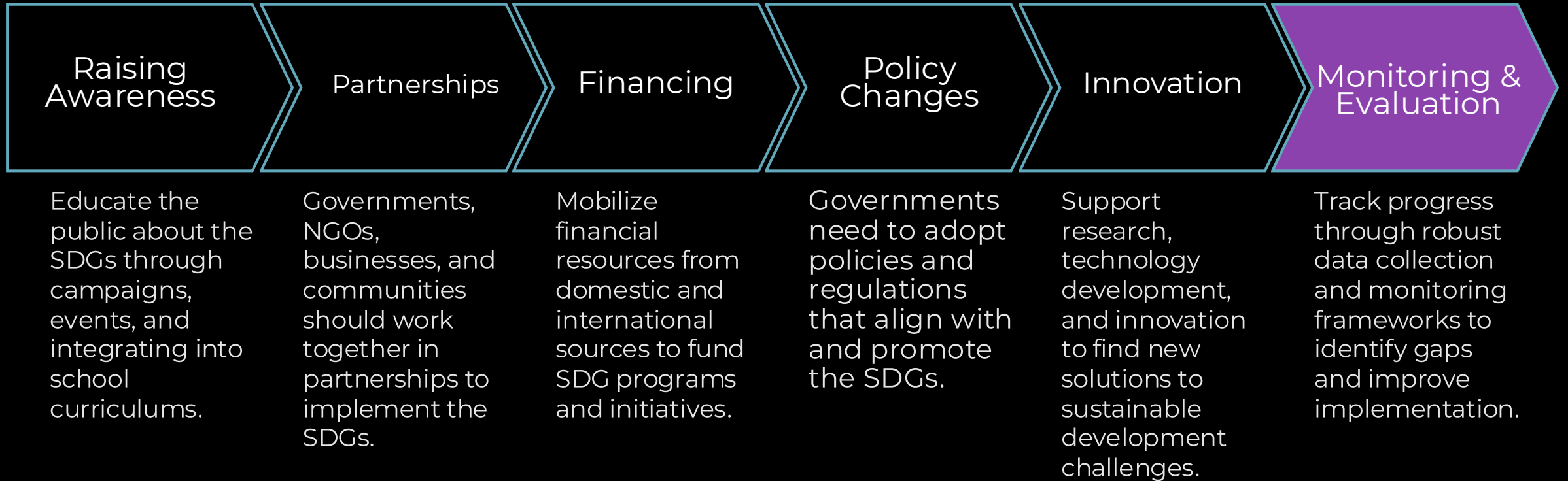
Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action

for the implementation of
Sustainable Development Goal 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable
quality education and promote lifelong
learning opportunities for all



Achieving the SDGs



UNESCO Global convention for credential recognition



Support member states to develop policies on qualifications recognition

Provide policy guidance and tools for developing regional conventions on qualifications recognition



Build capacity for credential evaluators

Train evaluators on good practices and standards for assessing foreign qualifications



Promote transparency of qualifications systems

Encourage member states to participate in regional databases and qualification frameworks

UNESCO's convention aims to make qualification recognition more transparent, equitable and efficient for greater mobility.

Global Convention Key features

Scope

The convention covers all levels of higher education qualifications, including degrees, diplomas, and certificates.

Recognition Criteria

It establishes common criteria for the recognition of qualifications, focusing on quality assurance, learning outcomes, and relevance to the labor market.

Mutual Recognition

The convention encourages mutual recognition agreements between countries to facilitate the recognition of qualifications across borders.

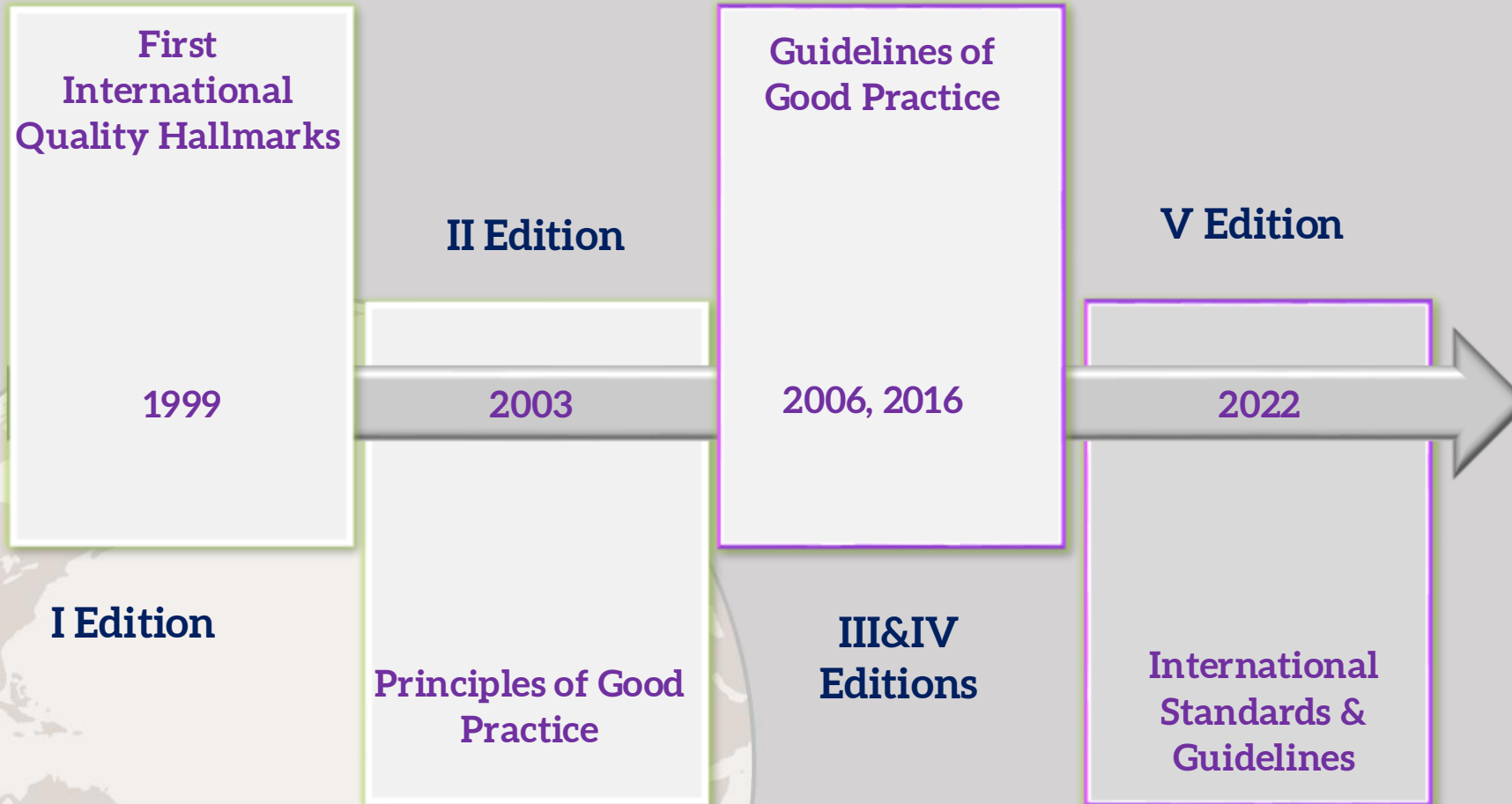
Promotion of Mobility

By facilitating the recognition of qualifications, the convention aims to promote student and academic mobility, as well as the internationalization of higher education.



INQAAHE's International Standards and Guidelines

The INQAAHE External Review of External Quality Assurance Providers



The INQAAHE ISG Logo embodies INQAAHE's values of inclusiveness and integrity.



It represents unity and holisticness of approaches to QA aimed at safeguarding and continuous enhancement of quality through international quality hallmarks.

Developed by a student intern at Bahraini QA body - BQA.

Why the change?

Diversification of tertiary education provisions

Institutional & program diversification: vertical, horizontal
Expansion of alternative education
Diversification of delivery modalities

Diversification of QA providers

- Expansion of/change in the EQAP mandates: functions, areas of expertise, geographical coverage
- Expansion of cross-border QA
- Diversification of external quality assurance providers and mission
- Massification of QA: more than 500 QA bodies exist today, with diverse levels of maturity depending on the years of operations, accumulated expertise, and impact levels.

Affirmation of Quality Globally

- Governments, TEIs, students, and societies at large have a critical need for data-informed guidance in terms of the reliability, credibility and relevance of QA providers.
- A growing need to signal quality globally through shared standards and guidelines.
- An instrument to promote fair and transparent recognition of qualifications regionally and globally.

UN Regional Conventions

Global Convention 2020



Inclusive & equitable education

Life-long learning

Relevance & Quality

Quality and Quality Assurance is at the Heart

From Guidelines of Good Practice

- Guidelines of good practice for INQAAHE members
- Support enhancement of INQAAHE members through strengthening internal quality assurance systems
- Promote underlying principles of QA promoting trust and credibility
- Promoting internationalization of QA
- All the guidelines were equally applied to all types of QA providers regardless of profile and maturity levels

To International Standards & Guidelines

- Open to QA providers beyond INQAAHE membership
- A modular approach to embrace diversity of providers
- An emphasis on measuring outcomes and impact on HE system
- New, value-driven evaluation: relevance, recognition, integrity, higher education core values (e.g., inclusion, access, equity, integrity, academic freedom)
- Evaluation of EQA providers per enhancement guidelines

From being Exclusive

- Eligibility only to INQAAHE members
- Decision-making power exclusive to the INQAAHE Board

To being Inclusive

- Eligibility to EQAPs beyond INQAAHE members
- Inclusion of key global stakeholders in decision-making
- Supporting UN strategies

Enhanced independence in decision-making, hence, enhanced impact

- An independent decision-making body, affiliate to INQAAHE
- Representation of key stakeholders: regional QA networks, TE associations, International Association of Universities, Global Student Forum, UNESCO, lead tertiary education experts



From Guidelines of Good Practice

To International Standards & Guidelines

- 1 The External QA Agency
- 2 Accountability of EQAA
- 3 The EQAA Framework for external review of quality in HEIs
- 4 The EQAA and its relationship to the public
- 5 Decision-making
- 6 The QA of cross-border HE

Module I (mandatory)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The External Quality Assurance Provider - The EQAP's framework for external review of quality of TEPs - EQAP's Review of TE Providers: Evaluation, Decision Making and Appeals - Internationalization and External Relations - Integrity, Disclosure and Transparency - Stakeholder role and engagement
Module II (cross border)	<p>Module 2.1: Cross-border tertiary education Module 2.2: Cross-border quality assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mandate - Policies and procedures
Module III (short learning program)	<p>QA providers that accredit short learning programs offered by formal and non-formal providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevance of standards - Resources
Module IV (online/blended)	<p>QA providers that accredit online and blended HE provisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition



How are these global activities enacted in your system?

How can QA practices support the goals?

INQAAHE
Since 1991

Thank you!