Internationalisation of (External) Quality Assurance – setting the scene

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ENQA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Internationalisation in EQA - History

- The first recognisable EQA agencies were established in the 1990s

- They were essentially national in character, such as QAA (UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) established in 1997

- National agencies reviewed the universities in their home countries using national experts and nationally-developed procedures

- With the signing of the Bologna declaration in 1999, European QA agencies began to establish networks
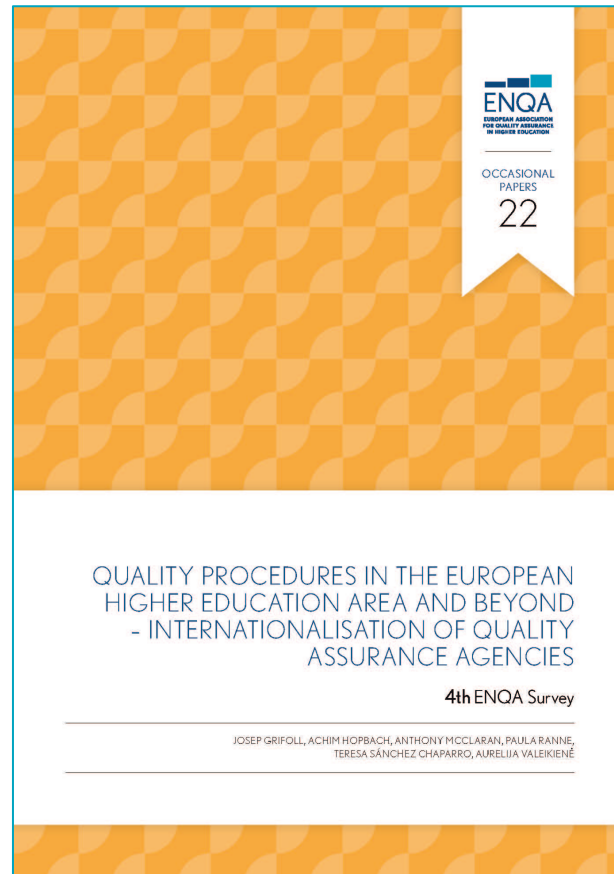
Internationalisation in EQA - History

By 2008 we had:

- QAAs operating a common QA framework (ESG 2005)

- ENQA using ESG as the basis for membership

- The establishment of EQAR, a European list of agencies operating in accord with ESG, as evidenced by an external review

4th ENQA Quality Procedures Project
internationalisation of QAAs - (QPP 4) published 2015

4th ENQA QPP – some findings

- The diversity of activities undertaken by agencies suggests that there is not yet a single, shared definition or profile for the internationalisation of quality assurance

- Most common activities include agency participation in international networks and inclusion of foreign experts in review panels

- The report concluded that '*while exporting quality assurance services is an aspiration for many governments, it is not yet a common form of internationalisation of quality assurance and not a strong focus, for many QA agencies*'

4th ENQA QPP - main findings

- Exchanging staff with other QA agencies is not a common practice

- The most significant limitation when developing international activities seems to be the lack of financial resources

- A significant number of international QA services that are requested by higher education institutions are not brought to the immediate or direct attention of their national agencies

- Agencies consider there is often better recognition of QA outcomes in cases of imported QA services

- There are situations in which national QA agencies maintain certain privileges when competing with foreign agencies, which may lead to an uneven playing field

Internationalisation in EQA
trends in 2016

- Increased adoption of ESG – 28 of the 49 countries have satisfactorily adopted that key commitment (BFUG AG3)

- Increased use of international members in expert panels

- Increased use of international members in governing bodies of QAAs

- Increased mobility of QAAs performing QA outside national borders

EQAF and Internationalisation

- In addition to the adoption of ESG, the 2005 report of the Ministers noted that E4 agreed to establish a 'European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education'

- This forum, initially funded by the European Commission, but now sustained on a self-funding basis by the E4 Group, held its first forum (termed EQAF, the European Quality Assurance Forum) in Munich in 2006

- The forum has meet annually since and is now the largest event that brings together staff from EQA agencies and staff and students from higher education institutions. EQAF 11 will be held this month in Ljubjana in Slovenia and is expected to attract over 500 participants

Agency reviews and Internationalisation

- The 2005 report to Ministers recommended that the role of the external review group evaluating an agency against ESG 2005 should include '*criteria for the use of international experts*'

- Furthermore, the expert panel (of 5-6 members) should contain '*one or two (international) quality assurance experts*'

- The 2005 report recommended that the task of appointing the expert panel '*be given to a third party outside the agency involved*'. This third party '*could be ENQA or an agency not involved in the process*'

First Reviews for ENQA membership and EQAR listing - Internationalisation in 2007

Agency	Third Party
HETAC (Ireland)	NQAI (Irish State Agency)
EVA (Denmark)	HSV (Swedish QA Agency)
ANECA (Spain)	ENQA
AQU (Spain)	ENQA
NVAO (Netherlands, Flanders)	Ministers for HE in Netherlands and Flanders
AAC & FHR (Austria)	Federal Ministry for Science and Research, Austria
AQA (Austria)	ENQA
NQAI (Ireland)	Department of Education and Science, Ireland

BFUG WG2 Meeting, 9-10 November 2016, Nice

Last reviews for ENQA membership and EQAR listing in 2015 under ESG 2005

- ENQA membership (initial or renewal)
  - 11 reviews co-ordinated by ENQA
  - 1 review co-ordinated by GAC

- EQAR listing (initial or renewal)
  - 9 reviews co-ordinated by ENQA
  - 1 review co-ordinated by GAC

Increasing convergence: 10 of the agencies are ENQA members and are also listed on EQAR

ENQA co-ordinated reviews of agencies 2006-16

- Between 2006-16, ENQA has co-ordinated almost 50 reviews of membership (initial, renewal or partial)

- All reviews have involved teams of international experts outside the country under review. This has contributed significantly to the internationalisation of quality assurance in higher education

- In 2016, ENQA has members (following a review against ESG) in 26 countries

Where are we in 2016 with Internationalisation of QA?

- Since 2005, agencies increasingly base their activities and operations on a set of international standards (ESG)

- Using the same shared framework has increased the importance of sharing good practice between agencies

- The different international networks: ENQA, regional, methodology-based (audit and accreditation networks), have become the primary forum for internationalisation by most QAAs

- Increased involvement in networks has permitted increased involvement of agencies in different (often EU-funded) international and European projects on specific issues and themes related to QA of higher education

- Agencies are increasingly carrying out EQA abroad, either in partnership or alone

3 dimensions of Internationalisation of QA

- 1. Cross-border quality assurance (mobile agencies)

- 2. Quality assurance of cross-border higher education / transnational education (mobile institutions)

- 3. Quality assurance of joint programmes (mobile students)

- There is no single model for the quality assurance of any of these dimensions, as we will find out

Thank You!