CEENQA

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NETWORK
OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

April 2018
Volume 7 No. 1

Newsletter

Contents

https://www.ascal.al/en/ceenqa-workshop-ga-2018

CEENQA News

The annual workshop and General Assembly of CEENQA will be held this year on 11-12 May 2018 in **Tirana**, generously hosted by the **Albanian Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (ASCAL)**.

The information on the events are available on https://www.ascal.al/en/ceenqa-workshop-ga-2018.

The workshop on 11 May 2018 will discuss **Views, Experiences and Good Practices implementing ESG 2015**. CEENQA is pleased to welcome the president of EQAR Karl Dittrich presenting on the one hand the view of EQAR on the evaluation of QAAs according to ESG-2015. Christina Rozsnyai as member of the ENQA board will represent ENQAs view on the topic. CEENQAs president Nora Skarburskiene will interpret ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis in Agencies work and peer review before members of CEENQA will present their good practice of the ESG criteria.

Following the CEENQA General Assembly on 12 May 2018, a social programme will be organized by ASCAL. Participants are asked to register for the events by **13th April, 2018**.

Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends of CEENQA,

The first issue of the newsletter in 2018 brings several updates. Currently, the Board of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education **(ENQA) is represented by three members of CEENQA** (Christina Rozsnyai from the Hungarian Accreditation Committee, Sofija Pekić Quarrie from the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance, Serbia and Nora Skaburskienė from Centre for Quality Assessment in HE, Lithuania). These nominations show that counties from Central and Eastern Europe are treated as equal partners in the Bologna process.

CEENQA membership composition is widening and I am pleased to inform you that the **Center for Professional Public Accreditation of Study Programs and Carrier Development – Agency of Employers and Students in the sphere of Agriculture (ARSA) from Russia** and the **Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of programs in Faculties of Science, Arts, Arts and Science, Letter and History-Geography (FEDEK) from Turkey** became CEENQA members.

We are approaching the date of our **2018 General Assembly and Workshop** which, as you know, will be hosted by the **Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education from Albania (ASCAL)**. I hope to see many of you there, and have the opportunity to share your views and have discussions on the themes of the workshop: **Evaluation of QAAs according to ESG-2015** and **Thematic analysis in Agencies work and peer review**.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage our members to send **examples of good practices of thematic analysis** from their Agencies perspective. The selected examples will be presented during the workshop. The topic has been chosen after analysing the evaluation reports of CEENQA Agencies against ESG-2015 and after learning that thematic analysis is the standard which is interpreted in a different way by the Agencies and peers.

It was an agreed practice to present recent changes in the national higher education landscapes during General Assembly. I would like to ask members to make **short presentations of 3-4 slides introducing most important changes in the systems** and to send them few days before the event in Albania. It will be then possible to gather all information into one presentation and to share this very important material on CEENQA webpage. Sharing information is one of the values of the Network.

Wishing you a fruitful Spring,

Nora Skaburskienė

President of CEENQA

Upcoming Events

May 2018: Piloting visits in Ukrainian universities in the framework of the QUAERE project

11 May 2018: CEENQA Workshop: Implementing ESG 2015: Views, Experiences and Good Practices (Tirana, Albania)

12 May 2018: CEENQA General Assembly (Tirana, Albania)

News from Members and Partners

EKKA News

Assessing Continuous Education in Tajikistan

ESTONIAN QUALITY AGENCY
FOR HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION

For the first time in the history of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA), the Agency is assessing a continuous education study programme. Moreover, this is done in Tajikistan and not in Estonia.

The study programme under assessment is a one year blended learning program at the **OSCE Border Management Staff College'i (BMSC)**. The majority of this study programme is conducted online, supplemented by contact learning sessions.

The programme is called **Border Security and Management for Senior Leadership** Course and is designed for 25 current and future mid to senior level officers of border, customs, immigration, police, drug control, phyto-sanitary, and trade/transport services and agencies of 57 OSCE participating States and 11 Partners for Co-operation.

BMSC is located in the capital city of Tajikistan – Dushanbe. The assessment visit took place 23 -24 October.

The assessment panel included **Helen Thomas** from the UK, **Krista Haak** from Estonia and **Sergiu Vasile** from Romania as experts and **Maiki Udam** from EKKA (Estonia) as the coordinator.

The assessment is based on Requirements and procedure for accreditation of study programmes in continuing education adopted by the EKKA Assessment Council on 11 April 2017.

The assessment process follows the traditional logic: the educational institution first prepares a self-assessment report for the study programme under assessment, followed by an assessment visit giving the expert panel an opportunity to interview representatives of all major stakeholders and the drawing up of the assessment report on the basis of those interviews and the information provided in the self-assessment report.

BMSC has applied for accreditation of the study programme in compliance with level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (in higher education level 7 corresponds to Master's level study programmes). A positive result in the accreditation would give graduates of the programme the opportunity to transfer the credit points earned to equivalent level of academic studies or to be treated similarly to alumni of Master's programs in professional situations.

SKVC News

LITHUANIA: from study programme to study field evaluation and accreditation

Lithuania is changing its Quality Assurance system - moving away from evaluation of a single study programme to evaluation of study field. For that purpose interim accreditation took place in March of 2018. Three criteria were used for temporary accreditation of university level studies:
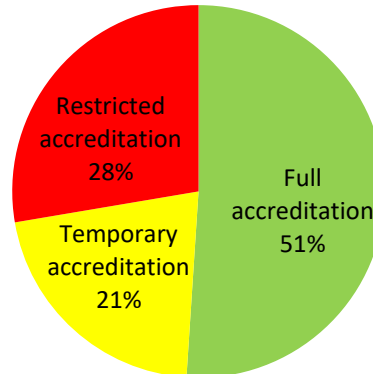
1. **Level of research activities** (the data from research evaluation conducted by Lithuanian Research Council). The passing level was 1,5 out of 5 (scores based on peer evaluation results of the best 5 research publication in a certain field).
2. **Percentage of programmes** in study field accredited for 6 years. Passing level - more than 50% study programmes in certain field accredited for 6 years period.
3. **Number of programmes** that were accredited for 3 years period two time in a row. Passing level – no such king study programmes in certain field.

For college level studies only two indicators were used (No. 2 and 3). Interim evaluation was based on numeric data only.

Before temporary accreditation has started universities and colleges were asked to present the list of study programmes that are not going to involve students in 2018 and will be closed. In this ways HEIs declared closer of 263 study programmes.

Each study field in the institution (Bachelor and Master studies were evaluated separately) got **full**, **temporary** of **restricted accreditation**. Temporary accreditation means that if higher education institution in the field that was accredited temporary wants to start a new programme, it has to undergo external peer review. In case of restricted accreditation, higher education institution cannot involve new students and after graduation of the last students has to close down the programmes of that study field.

After processing of the data the following results of accreditation of study fields were published:

The next step is development of methodology for Regular evaluation of study fields and beginning of the process in 2019.

ENQA News

ENQA General Assembly elects new Board

Members present at the General Assembly in October 2017 have elected ENQA's **newest Board members**, **Sofija Pekic Quarrie** from the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA, Serbia) and **François Pernot** from the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCERES, France). Christoph Grolimund was re-elected for his second full term on the Board. **Christoph Grolimund was also elected as ENQA President, Caty Duykaerts and Nora Skaburskienė were elected as Vice Presidents, and Anne Flierman was appointed as Treasurer.**

Members attending October's General Assembly endorsed the Board's decisions to **renew the memberships** of the following seven agencies: the Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (**ACQUIN**, Germany), the Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes (**AQAS**, Germany), the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (**AQU Catalunya**, Spain), the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (**FIBAA**, Germany), the National Accreditation Agency of the Russian Federation (**NAA**, Russia), the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (**NVAO**, the Netherlands), and the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (**SKVC**, Lithuania). The reports and other materials relating to the reviews are available on the Review Reports and Decisions page of the ENQA website.

The General Assembly endorsed the Board's decision to **grant affiliate status** to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (**HEFCE**, United Kingdom).

Recognition working group's report includes findings and recommendations

ENQA's Working Group VII on Quality Assurance and Recognition **published its final report**, entitled **Current practices on external quality assurance of academic recognition among QA agencies**. The report presents the findings of the group's research into determining the state of the art where QA agencies and issues of academic recognition are concerned, a topic of importance since the adoption of the ESG 2015.

The report reveals that 60 percent of the surveyed agencies have only occasional or no contact whatsoever with their relevant ENIC-NARIC centre. Concerning the agencies' external quality assurance methodologies, 23 percent have an explicit focus on recognition, 12 percent focus on outcomes and metrics, and 65 percent have no explicit focus or are in transition. The working group's survey and subsequent interviews have revealed that **recognition is not currently a priority for most QA agencies** – and in cases where it is – there are integration challenges. The report includes some final recommendations, with further work on the topic being taken up by the EU-funded LIREQA project.

Facilitating implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes – ImpEA

The European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes was adopted at the Bologna Process Ministerial Conference in Yerevan in May 2015. The European Approach is a step towards minimising barriers in external quality assurance of joint programmes. However, to date, **only a few countries have fully integrated the European Approach** into their accreditation procedures, and several difficulties in implementing the Approach persist.

Within the framework of the "Facilitating implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (ImpEA)" project, ENQA, ECA, EQAR, and PKA hopes to address this issue by exploring the existing challenges in the use of the European Approach and sharing some of the success stories and good practices that can be used to support the further use of the European Approach in different contexts.

EQAR News

Database of External Quality Assurance Results – DEQAR

An application based on the Report and Operational Model for a Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR), was **selected for EU co-funding for a period of two years**. The project is coordinated by EQAR and includes among its project partners 28 QA agencies, a number of which a number are also members of CEENQA. In addition, European stakeholder organisations (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, Education International), one ENIC-NARIC centre and the University of Gent are partners of the project in different capacities.

Once set up, the Database will allow users to identify whether a higher education institution or its programmes have been subjected to external quality assurance in line with the ESG, by an EQAR-registered agency. The database would also provide users with **easy access** the corresponding **quality assurance reports**. While all EQAR-registered agencies publish reports and decisions on their own websites, users frequently face difficulties accessing such information, especially from other countries than the ones they are familiar with.

On 15 December 2017, a **webinar** took place dedicated to the technical personnel of quality assurance agencies, EQAR staff and the database developers subcontracted by EQAR. During the webinar, the operational model prepared by EQAR in 2016 was presented, followed by **the draft data schema, technical specifications for the database as well as the possible methods for data delivery**. Participants discussed the preferred data delivery methods and project workflow.

EQAR was very satisfied with the active participation and interest shown to the webinar. The materials from the DEQAR webinar can be found here.

As a next steps in the project, by mid February 2018, DEQAR partner and other registered QA agencies can start experimenting with initial data submission to the database, as the bulk data submission possibilities (via an API as a JSON, or by upload as CSV files) will be made available. A further workshop for DEQAR partner and other interested agencies will be organised in late March 2018. The public preview of the database is expected by May 2018.

Learn more about the DEQAR project at: https://eqar.eu/topics/deqar.html

CEENQA Projects

News on CEENQA Projects

The **ALIGN project (Achieving and checking the alignment between academic programs and qualification frameworks)** came to an end on 30 November 2017. CEENQA were in particular involved in the development of EQAs policies, procedures standards and evaluation approaches for checking the alignment. In-house training of EQA staff as well as piloting reviews were conducted in the partner countries Armenia, Russia and Ukraine. CEENQA wants to thank the participating agencies ASHE (Croatia), ASIIN (Germany) and SKVC (Lithuania) for their contributions to the project.

Regarding the project **QUAERE (Quality Assurance System in Ukraine: Development on the base of ENQA standards and guidelines),** the development of criteria for reviewing degree programmes and development of a template for the Self-Assessment-Report (SAR) has been completed. A training workshop was organised in Greece in May 2017 in order to prepare eight Ukrainian universities to develop their Self-Assessment-Reports based on the criteria for selected degree programmes. The CEENQA members ACQUIN (Germany), AIKA (Latvia), ANQA (Armenia) and ASIIN (Germany) will **in the course of May 2018 conduct the piloting visits**.