ANQA Stakeholder Workshop

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“The Bologna process and QA developments in Europe“
Rolf Heusser, Switzerland
Presentation Rolf Heusser:

1. International dimension of Quality Assurance (QA)
2. Bologna process in Europe: goals and current results
3. Challenges for external QA and future perspectives
Economic and social developments

- Globalisation
- Liberalisation of markets, GATS
- Economic shift towards US and Asia
- Brain drain from Europe
- Towards knowledge based societies
Developments in higher education

- Internationalisation of education and research
- Growing autonomy of HEI’s
- Increasing number of providers in HE
- Stakeholders want proven quality
- Call for accountability/QA
International dimension of quality assurance

- International recognition of qualifications
- Access to labour market
- Cross-border education
- Common HE-areas Bologna process

Quality Assurance Accreditation
Europe’s answer: Lisbon agenda 2000

- EU most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010
- Development of a European research area
- Single labour market
- Mobility of labour force, students and teachers
Sorbonne Declaration 1998

- Wake of Euro(pean) optimism
- Joint declaration on harmonisation of European higher education system
- Ministers from France, Italy, UK and Germany
Bologna Declaration 1999 (29 signatories)

- Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles
- Adoption of a system of comparable degrees
- Introduction of a system of credits
- Promotion of European dimension in HE
- Promotion of mobility
- Promotion of European cooperation in QA
Berlin Communiqué 2003 (40 signatories)

- Much attention for QA
- All countries should have an external QA-system by 2005
- A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedure
- Clear responsibilities for all actors
- Evaluations of programs or institutions
- International participation, cooperation and networking
Bergen Communiqué 2005 (45 signatories)

- Adopt European standards, procedures and guidelines for internal and external QA
- Establish an European register of QA-agencies
- Adopt European Qualifications Framework
- Build up National Qualification Frameworks
- Urge HE institutions to establish internal mechanisms of QA
Results thus far of Bologna process

- 45 signatories adopted Bologna principles
- Bachelor-Master systems established
- ECTS generally introduced
- Agreement on generic indicators for levels Bachelor and Master
- European Register for validated QAA’s established
An enormous boost for external QA

- Almost all countries introduced system of external QA
- Mix of methods for external QA, accreditations and audits most dominant methods
- Standard procedure:
  - Self evaluation by HE institutions/programs
  - External evaluation by peers
  - Decisions by independent QA-organisation
Cooperation in QA

- ENQA: European standards/guidelines, reviews of agencies
- ECA: mutual recognition of accreditation decisions
- CEEN: regional coordination in Eastern Europe
- Nordic Network: regional cooperation in Northern Europe
- INQAAHE: “world organisation” for QA in HE
Consequences for internal QA at HEI’s

- Emphasis on system of internal QA
- Involvement of stakeholders
- Outcomes are getting more important
- Overall: “Does a HE-institution prove what it promises?”
Challenges for QA in Europe

- Implementation of European Standards and Guidelines for HEI’s and QAA’s
- Coherence of internal and external QA
- Shift of QA focus: from inputs to learning outcomes
- Market orientation vs national sovereignty in external QA
- Debate about institutional vs programme approach
- Etc.
Program approach to external QA

Pros

▪ Focus on education and learning outcomes
▪ Information useful for students and employers
▪ Involvement of staff at all levels
▪ Comparison between programs possible

Cons

▪ Very expensive
▪ Very bureaucratic
▪ Needs frequent updates
▪ Easily subverted
Institutional approach to external QA

Pros

- Focus on the management of quality => Q-culture
- Economical and unbureaucratic
- Respects institutional autonomy
- Effect at level of institutional management

Cons

- Limited information about quality of education/results
- Limited interest of public
- Use for transnational recognition purposes: only indirect use
Programme vs institutional assessments in Europe
A Survey on current practices – 2008

[Map of Europe with color-coded areas indicating assessments at institutional, coexistence, and programme levels]
Changes in external QA-systems, 2010

- From institutional to program approaches
  Examples: Sweden, Danemark, UK (?)
- From program to institutional approaches
  Examples: Netherlands, Germany, Spain

=> Change of systems might be necessary in order to avoid automatisms and to adopt to new national HE-priorities/laws
Predictions for Future

„Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future“

Niels Bohr
EU-Commission - Progress report 09 on QA

- Diagnosis: still limited European dimension in QA
- Good practices mentioned: ECA, NVAO, ÖAR, OAQ, etc.
- Agenda: joint programme assessments; revision of ESG; support of rankings, QA of LLL and of prior learning, etc.
Future scenarios for universities and HE

OECD Report 2004:

- Internationalisation of education will continue
- Increasing autonomy of HEIs
- New providers and new emerging institutions
- Increased private activities/private funding of HEIs
- Increased activities in LLL and in use of IT
- Important role in transfer of knowledge and innovation to society
Future scenarios in HE – Open questions for QAAs

- How to assure internationalisation of agencies?
- Diversification of activities or staying focused?
- What new methodologies are needed to cope with new trends?
- How to increase flexibility of the external QA-system?
- What is the adequate balance between internal and external quality assurance?
Requirements for future work of QAA‘s

QA-agencies should have the following characteristics:

- They are living systems
- They need capacity for dynamic change
- They need to have self-regulatory power and means to maintain their organisation
- They have to exchange with environment
- They may produce some heat
Conclusions

- Quality assurance and accreditation are key elements in the international higher education area
- Some progress has been made in the implementation of the Bologna process, but important challenges for external QA-systems are still ahead
- Higher education is moving in Europe and QAAs have to move with it
- Independence, capacities for adoption, mutual trust building with national partners and international networking are essential elements for future work of agencies
Conclusions about the Future

„The future ain’t what it used to be“

Yogi Berra