# Quality International

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP



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#### APRIL IN PARIS.... THE GRONINGEN DECLARATION NETWORK SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Groningen Declaration Network (GDN) held its seventh annual conference in Paris, France on April 18-20, 2018. GDN is an organization headquartered in the Netherlands and provides leadership in developing a global network of student data to enhance student mobility and portability of degrees, credentials and credits, a "Digital Student Data Ecosystem."

Organizations from 23 countries are signatories of the Network, many of which attended the sold-out Paris meeting. The conference program centered on three themes: privacy, trust and learner mobility, with one of each of the three days devoted to each theme. Presentations covered a broad range of topics within the themes, including the challenge and opportunity of digitization in advancing student mobility and credential portability, emerging changes in digital technology and ways in which higher education institutions can work together across borders.

A number of presenters also focused on the growing sector of alternative or non-institutional providers of higher education offerings and how to assure mobility and portability for, e.g., open badges and credentials from massive open online courses.

#### The Groningen Declaration Network Seventh Annual Conference

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Anticipating the Bologna Ministerial Meeting to be held in <u>Paris in May 2018</u>, several speakers addressed the next decade of the *Bologna Declaration* and the importance of digitization to the European Higher Education Area – advancing the theme of "Bologna Digital." Colleagues from South Africa, China and Australia provided insight into challenges in advancing student mobility in the context of various national laws and regulations. The European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was also a focus of attention, with its significant implications for collecting and using data throughout higher education worldwide.

The conference concluded with a powerful address by Sir John Daniel, former president and CEO, Commonwealth of Learning, former Assistant Director-General, UNESCO, and DeTao Master of Education. This address has been published by CHEA/CIQG and is available <u>here</u>.

# Save The Date



CHEA 2019 Annual Conference January 29-30, 2019 CIQG 2019 Annual Meeting January 30-31, 2019 Washington, DC

**Capital Hilton Hotel** 

#### A Conversation with Youhansen Y. Eid, President, National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) \*

#### Interview Conducted by Stamenka Uvalić-Trumblić, Senior Advisor for International Affairs, CHEA/CIQG

A *Memorandum* of *Affiliation* (*MoA*) between NAQAAE and CHEA/CIQG was signed at the fifth international conference of NAQAAE to promote a shared understanding of quality based on the CHEA/CIQG *International Quality Principles*. How do you intend to use the *MoA* in the future? How may we work together?



Most of these *Principles* are already reflected in our standards, policies and processes. Furthermore, we are planning to post the *Principles* and work with other higher education stakeholders to promote a shared understanding of quality and highlight the governmental and societal responsibilities based on the seven *Principles*. We also consider this to be a platform to exchange good practice.

In the future, we are keen to strengthen information exchange with CHEA/ CIQG and engage in joint activities, research, seminars and projects with a view to sharing effective policies and practices related to the *Principles*, including our participation in CHEA/CIQG Annual Meetings.

Professor Dr. Youhansen Eid and CHEA President Judith Eaton at the CHEA/CIQG Memorandum of Affiliation signing ceremony.

After ten years of existence, what do you consider as your main achievements but also your main challenges over time?

NAQAAE has achieved a lot throughout its first decade of existence, both at national and international levels. At national level, I personally most value the development and promotion of a quality culture. Be-fore NAQAAE, only very few higher education institutions were aware of quality assurance (QA) in education and even fewer institutions had a QA unit or system. Now, every higher education institution in Egypt, private or public, has a quality management system with an established QA unit and a qualified QA team. I would definitely consider that the development of the *National Qualifications Framework* is another major achievement.

On the regional/ international front, NAQAAE has played an active role in transnational QA. NAQAAE is a member of several QA networks, including the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), the International Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (INQAAHE), CHEA/ CIQG, the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN), and QA-Islamic. In the case of the last two networks, NAQAAE is a co-founding member. In addition, we are one of the main stakeholders in the Harmonisation of African Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) Initiative, which aims at developing the African Standards and Guidelines (ASG-QA).

<sup>\*</sup>Professor Dr. Youhansen Y. Eid is President of the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQA-AE) and Professor of Urban Planning and Design, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University.

#### A Conversation with Professor Dr. Youhansen Y. Eid

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One of our main challenges is the large number of educational institutions in Egypt which creates the impression that NAQAAE has had no significant impact on the quality of education. Another challenge is the misconception of the role of NAQAAE. We believe and promote the notion that quality assurance is the responsibility of the educational Institutions. Yet NAQAAE is held responsible for the quality of education.

#### What are NAQAAE's major projects underway related to international QA?

NAQAAE is engaged in several very important projects related to regional/international QA. At the continental level, NAQAAE is part of the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF) project and its two main subprojects, namely Tuning Africa and HAQAA. Through the HAQAA initiative, we established the African *Standards and Guidelines* for QA and pilot implementation of those standards for assessment of the European Quality Assurance Agency (EQAA) that is planned to occur during the next few months. NAQAAE will be peer-reviewed along with another four agencies based on these standards.

NAQAAE's vision involves being an internationally recognized external quality assurance body and we have been working hard on the achievement of this vision. NAQAAE applied for evaluation for recognition by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and we are expecting a site visit next October.

Another important project is the partnership with the Agency for Quality Assurance (AQAS) from Germany for joint accreditation of double programs. The project was a little delayed by the changes that took place in the accreditation law in Germany, but we are back on track exploring how to adapt to these changes.

#### How has the Fifth International Conference of NAQAAE contributed to your future work?

NAQAAE's previous conferences have always had strong impact on NAQAAE's activities as they implement rigorously the conference recommendations. However, our 5th International Conference was very special, since it marked NAQAAE 10th anniversary. We had the largest number of international speakers, widened our international network and, of course, signed the MoA between NAQAAE and CHEA/CIQG at the Conference.

The conference covered several important subjects that contribute to NAQAAE future work, including the focus on student-centered learning and competency-based education and standards, which will be the main pillars in NAQAAE's planned review of National Academic Standards (subjects benchmarks). Also, the recent trends for higher education quality assurance in Europe, Africa and the Gulf area were presented by speakers from the respective regions and several good practices were shared that will affect our processes and procedures.

## The <u>CIQG Website</u> provides an outstanding resource for information about quality assurance internationally.

- CIQG Policy Briefs
- The CHEA-CIQG Publication Series
- Issues of *Quality International*, the CIQG Newsletter
- Translations of the CIQG International Quality Principles and other publications
- CIQG Annual Meeting presentations

### **IREG-9** Conference

#### IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence at Hasselt University

#### Rankings and Accreditation–Two Roads to the Same Goal? May 23-25, 2018–Hasselt, Belgium

The ninth conference of the International Rankings Experts Group (IREG) was held in Hasselt, Belgium on May 23-25, 2018 at Hasselt University. This year's meeting focused on the theme of ranking and accreditation, exploring the relationship in various regions and countries around the world.

Colleagues from more than 30 countries participated in the conference. Specific topics addressed by participants included recent developments in both accreditation and rankings, the respective roles of accreditation and rankings in strategic management in universities as well as government policy development and building bridges between accreditation and rankings.

The various presentations reflected several key themes about the 40-45 global and 70 national active rankings around the world. Both accreditation and rankings were characterized as part of the ongoing drive for quality in higher education. Acknowledging that accreditation and rankings were quite different modes of inquiry, both are viewed as important and influential, nationally, regionally and internationally. A number of presenters pointed to an evolution of acceptance that rankings and accreditation need not be viewed as in competition, but are complementary to each other. They noted that neither rankings nor accreditation exists in order for one to address any perceived limitations of the other.

Several speakers pointed out that accreditation and ranking both rely on self-report from colleges and



CHEA President Judith Eaton attended and spoke at the IREG-9 conference in Brussels, Belgium.

universities and are dependent on the quality of the data received. This was a key point, given that governments and the public around the world rely on information from rankings in making judgments about future investment in higher education and on accreditation in sustaining public confidence in higher education institutions. The robust discussion throughout the conference did not lead to a single response to the conference theme of "...two roads to the same goal?" It did reflect that both efforts to focus on quality will remain strong as higher education addresses its major challenges going forward.





### Academic Freedom, University Autonomy and Social Responsibility--Core Values to be Protected

Hilligje van't Land- Secretary General, International Association of Universities

Academic freedom, university autonomy and social responsibility are among the core values that the International Association of Universities (IAU) promotes amongst its members and in higher education globally.

Back in 1950, when the IAU constitution was adopted, universities of the world agreed to the following basic inseparable principles upon which to build strong quality higher education systems, namely: "the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake and to follow wherever the search for truth may lead; the tolerance of divergent opinion and freedom from political interference; the obligation as social institutions to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and solidarity; and to mutually develop material and moral aid on an international level."



Hilligje van't Land

Almost 50 years later, in 1998, a first UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) took place. It led to the adoption of a new social contract calling for mutual responsibilities, rights and obligations between university and society so that they may together meet the challenges of the new millennium. The higher education community represented by the IAU used the opportunity offered by the new framework to draft and adopt a statement on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy and Social Responsibility<sup>1</sup>, shared it at the WCHE and contributed to a much-needed debate leading to the reaffirmation of the fundamental values upon which quality higher education for better societies needs is to be developed.

This year, IAU celebrates the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the policy statement. The above still stands. However, the statement could be revisited as the world calls for increased understanding about how higher education today contributes to help address the grand challenges we face. Since 2015, these grand challenges are identified in *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which calls for the generation of new knowledge through transdisciplinary and international collaborative work. No challenge pertains to one part of the world, one region, one country. On the contrary. The different increasingly interconnected challenges call for increased concerted efforts. Higher education institutions are key actors who agree to work across boundaries whether disciplinary, political, economic, environmental or cultural.

To this end, academic freedom and university autonomy are crucial. They are not a "privilege." They are essential social preconditions that allow those in academia to engage freely in debates that will allow to "think through thorny issues that go to the heart of what a nation wants of its universities"<sup>2</sup> in service of its societies.

The contemporary political economic and ideological contexts too often counter these dynamics. Instead of opening up, freeing speech, connecting worlds, we witness isolationism and populism. The "authoritarian turn in higher education"<sup>3</sup> affects many higher education systems, which it challenges and pressures. Academic freedom and university autonomy are under threat in a growing number of countries.

#### Academic Freedom, University Autonomy and Social Responsibility

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The global rise of anti-democratic attacks against higher educations identified by colleagues from Africa, Europe, North America, Asia and Middle East in a recent issue of IAU *Horizons*<sup>4</sup> is worrying. Different organizations and associations, including the IAU, call for care and protection of these fundamental values.<sup>5</sup>

We know what we have. We still believe peace and open space for critical thinking and innovation can be taken for granted, but let us wake up and act together against the undermining and fragilizing powers attacking societies around the world: Without strong and independent higher education, societies cannot develop as they should.

UNESCO is organizing a series of world events in the next two years. One is on quality assurance and how it can contribute to the SDGs; CHEA/CIQG has been an active partner in the pre-conference regional consultations. The other events deal with the adoption of a global convention on the mutual recognition of qualifications and higher education. Let the higher education community around the world use these opportunities to mutualize efforts to reaffirm the values we wish to uphold and share to revitalize multi-stakeholder higher education partnerships for the public common good.

- <sup>2</sup> Academic Freedom in the World's Largest Democracy, by William G. Tierney and Nidhi S. Sabharwal, International higher education, Number 86: Summer 2016, p 15-16
- <sup>3</sup> Michael Ignatieff, President Central European University (CEU), Centre for Global Higher Education (CGHE) Conference, London, 2018 see UTube, accessed in June 2018
- <sup>4</sup> available online at https://www.iau-aiu.net/IAU-Horizons-vol-22-2
- <sup>5</sup> Academic Freedom & Institutional Autonomy in the United States: Balancing Rights and Responsibilities, Molly Corbett Broad, Former President, American Council on Education, Council of Europe, on November 8, 2010



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Available online : https://www.iau-aiu.net/IMG/pdf/academic\_freedom\_policy\_statement.pdf

#### Council of Europe Seminar on the Role of Quality Assurance in Fostering Academic Integrity

Kolašin, Montenagro, 27-28 June, 2018



As part of the Council of Europe's Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED),<sup>1</sup> a Seminar on the *Role of Quality Assurance in Fostering Academic Integrity* was organized in Kolašin, Montenegro, on 27-28 June, 2018. The Seminar was of particular significance for two reasons. First, because the Quality Assurance Agency in Montenegro was in the process of being created thus devolving the quality assurance responsibility from a Quality Council in the Ministry of Education to an independent organization. Second, because a Law on Academic Integrity in Higher Education was being drafted.

In addition to the organizer—the Council of Europe's Office in Podgorica—the audience consisted of representatives (faculty, students and administrative staff) of all three universities: the University of Montenegro, a public university, and two private universities. The Director for Studies and Quality Assurance at the University of Montenegro and the new Director of the Quality Assurance Agency were among the participants.

Four international experts were the main speakers at the Seminar, Tim Burton, former member of the UK Quality Assurance Agency, from the University of Hull; Fenneke Blom, Coordinator of the Netherlands Research Integrity Network (NRIN); Dominik Shuh, coordinator of the Academic Integrity Project at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz and Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, Senior Advisor, CHEA/CIQG.

Each expert made two presentations, one on each day, followed by a closing panel which allowed for more interaction with a very engaged audience. The four presentations, each from different perspectives, were complementary and provided a wealth of information about ongoing activities. They consisted of two case studies from universities in the Netherlands (Research Integrity) and Germany (Academic Integrity), one from the Quality Assurance Agency from the UK (QAA), presenting the relevant parts of the QAA's Quality Code, and the fourth reviewing global trends in QA and the two *Statements* prepared by CHEA and UNESCO, *Towards Effective Practice: Discouraging Degree Mills in Higher Education* (2009) and the *Advisory Statement for Effective International Practice, Combatting Corruption and Enhancing Integrity: A Contemporary Challenge for the Quality and Integrity of Higher Education* (2016). Whilst the first day focused more on quality assurance and academic integrity, the second day explored academic corruption. The panel focused particularly on legislation and what quality indicators to use at the university level to create a robust internal quality assurance framework. The issue of motivating both staff and students at institutional level to engage more on QA issues, in particular those related to protecting and strengthening the academic integrity of their institution, was one of the problems addressed.

The Seminar offered a wealth of information, both on research integrity and academic corruption, highlighting to what extent there was a flurry of activity related to these issues on one side, and the inability to find adequate solutions on the other.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>https://www.coe.int/en/web/ethics-transparency-integrity-in-education/home?desktop=true

#### **European Higher Education Area Ministerial Conference**

(Paris, 24-25 May, 2018) 2018 Paris Communiqué

Ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) met in Paris on 24-25 May 2018, marking twenty years since the adoption of the Sorbonne Declaration,<sup>1</sup> in which four European Ministers from France, Italy, Germany and the UK committed to fostering the harmonization of European higher education systems, thus creating a "Europe of knowledge". This led to the launch of the Bologna Process in 1999, now consisting of 48 Member States from Europe, a unique example of a regional higher education reform. Although the European Higher Education Area was constituted in 2010, celebrated by a joint Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference, subsequent Ministerial Conferences each issuing its *Communiqué*, continue to monitor the implementation of EHEA and to provide new directions in its activities.

The *2018 Paris Communiqué* begins by highlighting the core values of European higher education, academic freedom and integrity and institutional autonomy, but also calls for greater social responsibility of higher education institutions in promoting a more cohesive and inclusive society. This implies responding to broader societal and political challenges, such as unemployment, migration, radicalization, and extremism, among others.

Promoting quality assurance remains one of the key objectives of the EHEA through the adequate implementation of the 2015 European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance<sup>2</sup> in a greater number of countries. New quality assurance tools, however, are supported, examples being the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes<sup>3</sup> and the Database of External Quality Assurance Results.

Automatic recognition of qualifications both for further academic study and for access to the labour market based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention is another new feature highlighted in the *Communiqué*. The recognition of qualifications held by refugees, prior learning and shorter cycles are also mentioned as increasingly significant in the coming period.

Peer review support seems to be a new mode of promoting the three main EHEA commitments: a three-cycle system compatible with the European Qualifications Framework, compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and promotion of quality assurance based on compliance with the ESG.

A major shift of focus to innovation in learning and teaching is discernible. Emphasis is placed on digitalization of higher education, student-centered



**EUROPEAN** Higher Education Area

learning and open education, with appropriate quality assurance for more flexible pathways for postsecondary education. In this context, the quality of teaching and professional development are more prominent than before.

Among the more ambitious directions for a way forward are the EU European Universities Initiative based on networking between universities, on the one hand, and a more global outlook, on the other, underscoring a greater dialogue with other regions and international organizations, *inter alia* by encouraging the UNESCO global convention and the U.N. Sustainable Developmental Goals, supported by the European Higher Education Area Policy Forum, which adopted its own statement.

#### **European Higher Education Area Ministerial Conference**

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While the European Universities initiative, based on French President Macron's vision, is already creating a flurry of networking among elite universities in Europe, the global dimension is supported by a number of tools and financial incentives such as Erasmus +, with a doubling of its budget in the period 2021-2027.

The *2018 Paris Communiqué*, as a policy document covering a wide range of themes, is already providing legitimacy and inspiration to multiple organisations and institutions across Europe in the pursuit of their objectives. However, one wonders, will there be an in-depth analysis and evaluation of the results of the EHEA reforms leading up to the next Ministerial Conference, to be hosted by Italy in 2020, marking ten years of the establishment of the European Higher Education Area?

The *EHEA 2018 Paris Communiqué* can be accessed at: http://media.ehea.info/file/2018\_Paris/77/1/EHEAParis2018\_Communique\_final\_952771.pdf

The *Bologna 2018 Policy Forum Statement* can be accessed at: http://www.ehea2018.paris/Data/ElFinder/s2/Communique/BPFStatement-with-Annex.pdf

<sup>1</sup> https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/imperia/md/content/io/cop034\_sorbonne\_declaration.pdf

<sup>2</sup> http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\_2015.pdf

 $\label{eq:linear} {}^{3} https://www.eqar.eu/assets/uploads/2018/04/02\_European\_Approach\_QA\_of\_Joint\_Programmes\_v1\_0.pdf$ 

## Are You a CIQG Member?

The CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) plays an essential role in advancing international quality assurance, whether as a thought leader, as a convener of colleagues to address higher education quality or as a reliable partner committed to working with organizations and individuals from all parts of the world to respond to the many challenges we all face.

CIQG addresses critical quality assurance issues such as the challenge of combatting academic corruption, to further our shared understanding of quality. CIQG's focus is on strengthening international understanding and cooperation through sharing of international experiences.

If you are not already a CIQG member and supporting CIQG's important work, please complete and submit the CIQG <u>membership application</u> and join us in the international conversation on quality assurance.



## DeTao Masters' Academy Applies for a Second Round of CHEA/CIQG Quality Platform Review

The Shanghai-based DeTao Masters' Academy (DTMA) from China was the first alternative provider not belonging to the Chinese traditional higher education system to receive the status of CHEA/CIQG's *Qual-ity Platform* Provider in January 2016, based on a self-evaluation report and an external review by a team of foreign experts using the four Quality Platform standards focused on learning outcomes.<sup>1</sup>



DTMA was launched in 2010 with the aim of fostering leading-edge developments by having aspiring Chinese innovators work with top experts in the creative industries from all over the world. At the heart of the DTMA model are some 500 experts, designated as "Masters," who are recruited globally from universities and industry and invited to make regular visits to China. DTMA works in partner-

ship with the Shanghai Institute of Visual Arts (SIVA). Whereas SIVA is an integral part of China's national higher education system, DTMA is a commercial company set up to work in synergy with Chinese higher education institutions to raise the quality and relevance of their programmes. Not being subject to China's national quality assurance system for higher education, DTMA sought another route for quality recognition and has achieved this through the *Quality Platform* developed by CHEA/CIQG.

The *Quality Platform* process, carried out in the second half of 2015, introduced the new concept of learning outcomes to China and provided this alternative provider with a quality label that enhanced its legitimacy within the Chinese higher education system.

CHEA grants the *Quality Platform* status for a period of three years. Since 2016, other alternative providers have applied for this innovative approach to quality, both in the United States and abroad. Since DTMA's *Quality Platform* status expires in January 2019, this provider has applied for a second round of the review. In the meantime, the DTMA model has matured and its student body has grown.

CHEA/CIQG has given coverage of the *Quality Platform* and DTMA through its publications and papers. They are available at the CHEA Website.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://www.chea.org/research-assessment-student-learning-outcomes-practical-exploration-review-cheaciqg-quality



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.chea.org/userfiles/uploads/Quality%20Platform%20-%20Summary%20Doc.pdf

## **CHEA/CIQG** Publication Series

- <u>Advisory Statement for Effective</u> <u>International Practice – Combatting</u> <u>Corruption and Enhancing Integrity: A</u> <u>Contemporary Challenge for the Quality</u> <u>and Credibility of Higher Education</u> (published in cooperation with UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning)
- <u>A Board Member's Guide to</u>
  <u>Accreditation: The Basics, The Issues,</u>
  <u>The Challenges</u>
- <u>CIQG International Quality Principles:</u> <u>Toward a Shared Understanding of</u> <u>Quality</u>
- <u>The Internationalization of Chinese</u> <u>Higher Education</u>
- <u>Is Big Brother Watching You? The</u> <u>Evolving Role of the State in Regulating</u> <u>and Conducting Quality Assurance</u>
- <u>The DNA of a Converging Diversity:</u> <u>Regional Approaches to Quality</u> <u>Assurance in Higher Education</u>



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