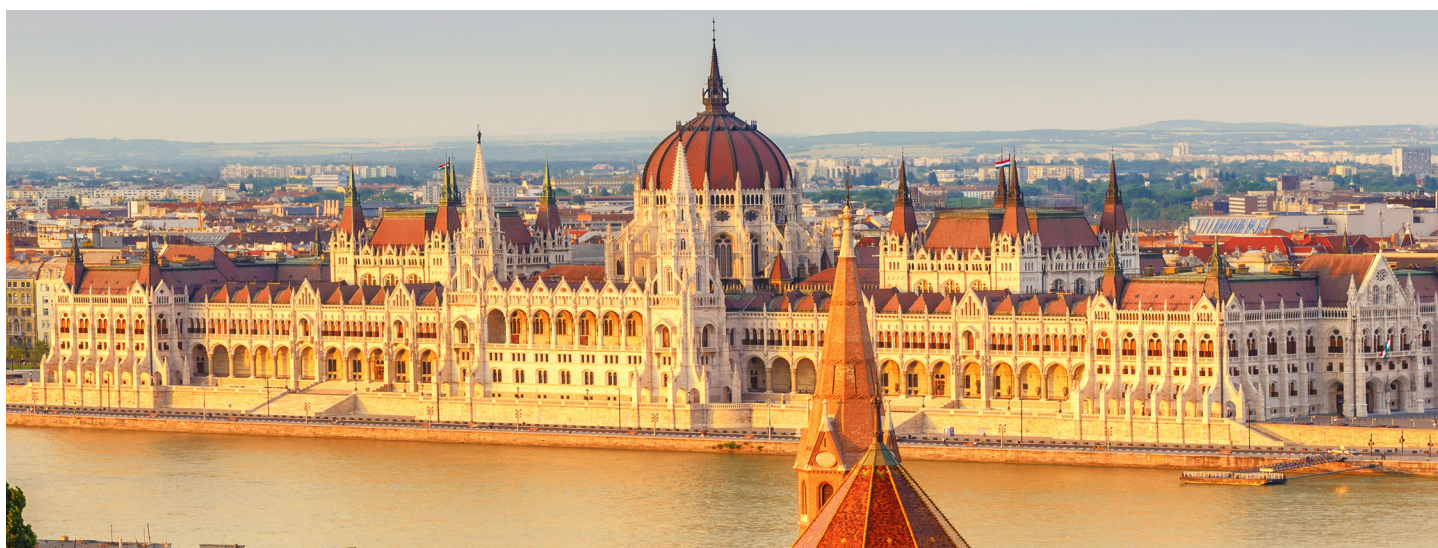


QUALITY INTERNATIONAL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP



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INTERVIEW WITH LIVIU MATEI, PROVOST, CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY



Liviu Matei is Provost of Central European University (CEU) and a Professor of Higher Education Policy at the School of Public Policy. He taught at universities in Romania, Hungary and the United States, consulted extensively in the area of higher education policy and conducted applied policy research projects for the World Bank, UNESCO, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, the European Commission and other international organizations (intergovernmental and non-governmental), national authorities and universities from Europe and Asia.

1. Based on your experience, does accreditation in higher education still build trust and confidence in higher education in these changing times?

Accreditation remains a very important, indeed privileged, tool for building trust and confidence in higher education. Different types of accreditation, i.e. institutional, program or professional, play a variety of different but related functions with respect to various stakeholders. Accreditation helps higher education institutions build trust vis-à-vis politicians and public authorities, public and private funders, employers, prospective, current and former students and even the general public.

INTERVIEW WITH LIVIU MATEI, PROVOST, CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

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2. What are the challenges that international universities face, in particular the CEU, in accreditation and trust building?

One of the main challenges faced by international universities has to do with the fact that institutional and program accreditations remain fundamentally national exercises. This is the case even when accreditation visiting teams include members from other countries or internationalization aspects are explicitly included in the scope of the self-studies or external reviews for accreditation. This is also the case of standards and guidelines for accreditation that have been developed and adopted through international cooperation, such as the [*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*](#) (ESG). Program and institutional accreditations are never just an exercise in quality assessment and improvement, but also, more or less directly, exercises of certification with legal elements, relevant for the issuing of diploma, funding, hiring and promotion of academic staff, etc. Those legal-recognition elements are always nationally based and they provide little or no room for the specificities of international universities. Professional accreditation, on the other side, is often eminently international in character, in terms of formal standards and also substantive focus, but it most frequently does not contribute much, if anything at all, in terms of legal recognition at the national level. In short, current accreditation models and practices are rarely or not at all adapted to the specificities of international universities.

3. How do you see the relationship between accreditation and university autonomy?

Accreditation can be seen as a necessary complement to university autonomy. If autonomy is about the freedom of the institution to decide on how to run its own affairs, accreditation is in part about the obligation to comply with certain standards, some of which can be externally imposed. A particular expression of university autonomy, and a manifestation of good governance at the system level, should be considered the capacity of the university to participate – through a regular, organized process – in the very definition of the standards and guidelines for accreditation. While autonomy belongs fundamentally to the freedoms of the university, accreditation speaks more to the obligation for transparency and, more generally, accountability. They are both necessary facets of the work of higher education institutions.

Other aspects of this relationship are no less important. Accreditation is about quality. Universities cannot achieve quality in their operations without a sufficient degree of autonomy and a good configuration of autonomy arrangements on various dimensions (academic, administrative, financial, etc.). Autonomy is a necessary, although not sufficient condition for quality in higher education. Considering the important regulatory force of accreditation and its focus on quality, it would be important for any accreditation exercise to consider matters of autonomy – and also academic freedom – in and around any institution or program that is under review for accreditation, for the purpose of promoting quality improvement. Accreditation must include a scrutiny of governance structures and practices, of which academic freedom and university autonomy are part, and must also strive to improve them.

4. What do you consider is the value of European accreditation?

We need first to define “European accreditation.” This is a relatively complex concept, in particular considering that there is no European accreditation undertaken or granted by a single European accreditation agency. There is no “European accreditation” in this regard, only “accreditation in Europe.” The developments in accreditation made possible in Europe by the Bologna Process, however, are remarkable

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and unprecedented. Accreditation is possibly the most significant area of development in the entire European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In spite of their tremendous differences in all areas of higher education, the 48 countries of the EHEA have adopted a common set of standards and guidelines for accreditation. Also very important, they have built a common institutional structure of accreditation agencies that are certified at the European level. In this regard, considering the European common framework of reference, we can indeed speak of some form of “European accreditation.”

The ESG and the [*European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education*](#) (EQAR) are extraordinary developments in Europe. They have contributed very significantly to the achievement of key objectives of the Bologna Process, such as intra-European comparability of degrees and qualifications, student mobility, and development of an integrated labor market. European accreditation, through the creation of supranational standards, guidelines and institutions, has also contributed to increasing university autonomy by freeing universities from their traditional “captivity” in the hands of national states. It can be stated, although more evidence is needed for this, that they have also contributed to improvement of quality in higher education.

SAVE THE DATE



**Capital Hilton Hotel
Washington, DC**



2020 CHEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
January 27 – January 29

**2020 CHEA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP
ANNUAL MEETING**
January 29 – January 30

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD LEWIS



The Opening of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the CHEA's International Quality Group on January 30, 2019, began by paying tribute to Richard Lewis, who passed away on December 17, 2018, through brief statements made by Judith Eaton, CHEA President and colleagues Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, Carolyn Campbell and Nadia Badrawi.

Richard Lewis had a varied career in higher education. Following a period as Professor of Accountancy at the University of Wales, he occupied senior management positions in a number of institutions during which time the focus of his interest moved to quality assurance. He was the Deputy Chief Executive of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), the degree-awarding and quality assurance body for the Polytechnic and College sector of UK Higher Education. With the demise of CNAA in 1992, he joined the UK Open University (OU) – the country's leading distance learning provider. He served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor with special responsibility for services, both academic and administrative, provided to students. Following his retirement from the OU, he was actively engaged as a higher education consultant. He had extensive international experience and served as a consultant in over 20 countries. He also worked with a number of international agencies, including the World Bank and UNESCO. He was closely involved with the work of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) since its establishment in 1991; he served as its President from 2003 to 2007 and remained one of its Directors.

CHEA received the following written tributes to Richard on behalf of various organizations:

“On behalf of ANQAHE Members and with deep sorrow, we extend our sincere condolences to the family of Prof Richard Lewis who passed in December. Prof. Richard worked with ANQAHE in organizing and conduction capacity building workshops.”

Nadia Badrawi, Vice-President,
Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher
Education (ANQAHE)

“Richard was one of my very favourite colleagues. I loved his brilliance, sense of humour and big heart.”

Andrée Sursock, European University Association

“Richard Lewis taught me the basics of quality assurance. He was a great asset to UNESCO's work in quality assurance and an active contributor to CIQG. He will be missed by the international QA community both as an expert and as a person.”

Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić,
Former Chief of Higher Education, UNESCO
Senior Advisor, CHEA/CIQG



THE ASIA-PACIFIC QUALITY ASSURANCE NETWORK (APQN): A NEW QUALITY ASSURANCE TOOL FOR ASSESSING INTERNATIONALIZATION

By Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić



Acknowledging the significant increase of student and staff mobility and the focus higher education institutions are placing on internationalization, the Asia-Pacific Quality Assurance Network (APQN) has developed a new quality assurance tool taking internationalization at the institutional level as its main focus, the APQN Quality Label (APQL).

“The overall objective of the APQN Quality Label initiative is to support, develop, improve and enhance international excellence in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and programs in this region. It aims

to achieve this by designing and testing an [*APQN Quality Label*](#) accompanied by a methodology to assess the internationalization of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region.”

APQL is based on an external review and preceded by a self-evaluation report by the institution. The review consists of five criteria: international mission and policy; organization and administration; international mobility; student support; and student learning outcomes (SLO) with a number of indicators.

The APQL was successfully pilot-tested at the Symbiosis International (Deemed University), SIU, in the first week of April 2019. Symbiosis International University, in Pune, India, was established in 1971 for the welfare of international students studying in Pune city. Pune, a university town, with numerous universities, institutes and colleges, is known as the “Oxford of the East” and attracts a high number of international students.

Ever since its establishment, SIU has had internationalization as part of its vision and mission, embedded in its motto “The World is One Family.” SIU gives a high priority to international mobility as part of its mission “to promote international understanding through quality education.” SIU is a private, family-managed university, established by a humanist, Dr. S.B. Mujumdar, academic and professor of botany, and managed by his daughter Dr. Vidya Yeradvekar, Pro Vice-Chancellor. It consists of 32 institutions with programs in Management, Law, Health and Biological Sciences, Information Technology, Engineering, Design, Media, Telecommunications, Languages and Liberal Arts, among others.

SIU’s primary orientation has been to provide good student opportunities to African students for whom there is a certain quota of scholarships available, as well as for Asian students. In 2017, 7.5 percent of the student body was international, from over 85 countries (2,254 students). English is the language



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of study for all programs taught at SIU.

Efforts are being made through existing partnerships with universities abroad to develop joint programs that lead to dual degrees. This is facilitated through an existing credit transfer system and a staff and student mobility scheme supported by a Global Immersion Program (GIP).

A Scholars-in-Residence policy is in place that is appreciated and enriches the teaching and learning process at SIU. Incoming faculty percentages in the year 2018-2019 were highest from Europe (37 percent) and North America (33 percent) and lowest from Asia (14 percent). Research collaboration with foreign partners and institutions is in place (e.g., through Erasmus+). Partnerships with a number of universities (64) have been signed, some more effective than others. The practice of organizing an International Higher Education Conference is also one of the means to foster partnerships between Indian universities more broadly and foreign participants representing universities from around the world. These lead to new partnerships and staff and student mobility.

The external review panel, led by APQN President, Dr Jianxin Zhang, former member of the CHEA/CIQG Advisory Council, granted SIU the APQN Quality Label based on the examination of the Self-Evaluation Report by the institution, and a comprehensive site visit of the University which highlighted the major internationalization elements described above.

UNESCO MEMBER STATES ADOPT THE TEXT OF THE GLOBAL CONVENTION ON THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION (UNESCO, PARIS, MARCH 2019)

Following two Intergovernmental Meetings on the *Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education*, held in December 2018 and March 2019 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the draft texts of the Convention in English and French were approved unanimously on 22 March 2019 by the Second Intergovernmental Meeting.

CHEA President Judith Eaton and CHEA Adviser on International Affairs and Former Head of Higher Education at UNESCO Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić attended the Intergovernmental Meeting as observers.



This [draft text](#), as approved, will be presented for adoption to the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference, to be held from 12 to 27 November, 2019. If formally adopted, the Convention will take effect after the 20th ratification instrument is deposited with UNESCO's Secretariat. (See more in *University World News*, 8 May 2019, [article](#) by Stig Arne Skjerven and Einar Meier.

U.S. ACCREDITATION: THE CHALLENGE OF THE UNKNOWNNS

Judith S. Eaton, President, Council for Higher Education Accreditation



U.S. accrediting organizations are in a period of significant unknowns, especially as this relates to the role of the federal government in accreditation practice and judgment. While the more than 85 institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations are nongovernmental or private bodies, many are subject to significant screening at the federal level, given that these organizations have agreed to provide scrutiny of the quality of institutions and programs seeking to use federal funds for, e.g., student aid. A college, university or program cannot be eligible for federal funds absent having achieved accredited status.

The first unknown is how future U.S. law will treat accreditation. The federal law that includes oversight of accreditation, the Higher Education Act, is past due for its reauthorization. The U.S. Congress has been discussing reauthorization for several years, but bills to achieve this have yet to be passed by either the U.S. House of Representatives or the U.S. Senate. At the same time, lawmakers are suggesting a variety of changes that would have a profound impact on accreditation, e.g., setting specific government quality standards for student achievement, increasing accreditation's responsibilities for the financial behavior of institutions and programs as this affects access and affordability and expanding the availability of federal student aid to include alternative providers without, at this point, any clear indication of whether accreditors' oversight of quality would be expanded to address these providers.

“Lawmakers are suggesting a variety of changes that would have a profound impact on accreditation.”

The second unknown is how the U.S. Department of Education, the federal agency charged with responsibility for carrying out regulation of accreditation that is required in the law, will proceed. The Department is also the federal agency that scrutinizes and judges the work of accreditation, a process known as “recognition” required of

“Much of the discussion around the unknowns reflects hope that changes produce an even stronger and more effective accreditation enterprise.”

accreditors that provide oversight of quality for the purpose of obtaining federal funds.* The Department has been engaged in a review of its regulations, a process known as “negotiated rulemaking,” that began in 2019. At present, these regulations are not finalized and, if they are, they will mean some significant changes for accreditation practice as this relates to accredited status and federal student aid, opportunity for innovation in accreditation, expectations of student achievement and how to deal with school closures and protecting students.

The third unknown for accreditation is current public perception. Although separate from the role of the federal government, this perception – and its volatility – affects federal policy and accreditation. Both accreditation, as well as higher education, have been subject to unprecedented attention and criticism over the past five years. Right now, public confidence, as measured by organizations such as Gallup Inc. and the Pew Research Center, has diminished. Print and video news outlets,

Washington think tanks and social media have been, for several years, very critical of accreditation. They view accreditation as not adequately rigorous, accrediting some institutions and programs that sustain poor quality offerings, that fail to graduate enough students and that fail to prepare students for the workforce. They claim that accreditation needs to do more to protect students through more transparency when institutions are of poor quality and through doing more to identify when institutions are in financial trouble and thus may experience unanticipated closure, harming students who cannot complete their study.

Whatever the fate of accreditation in the face of the three unknowns – the Higher Education Act not reauthorized, change in federal regulation of accreditation not finalized and future public perception – it is clear that accreditation will change. Much of the discussion around the unknowns reflects hope that the changes produce an even stronger and more effective accreditation enterprise. At the same time, the conversation reflects concern that the longstanding benefits of accreditation will be diminished. The unknowns, the hopes and the concerns are all likely to be with us for some time to come.

**The Council for Higher Education Accreditation, a national nongovernmental body, also conducts recognition of accrediting organizations. However, the two processes are separate, with different purposes, standards and practices.*

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 [membership application](#) and join us in the international conversation on quality assurance.



BOOK REVIEW

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA VIDYA YERADVEKAR

By Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić



Dr. Vidya Yeradvekar

This book is authored by Dr. Vidya Yeradvekar who, in her own words, has “been born into the academic life” as daughter of Dr. S.B. Mujumdar, a professor of botany, and her mother, a postgraduate in zoology. In 1971, her parents established an organization called Symbiosis International University, a family owned and managed institution for the welfare of international students, especially from Africa and South Asia, coming to study in Pune, India, also known as the “Oxford of the East,” as the city hosts a great number of prestigious universities. The author is presently Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University. The book begins by giving an insight into the Indian

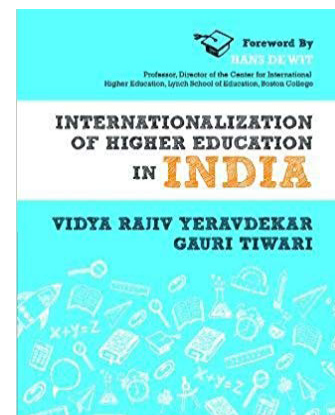
higher education system, reminding of its significant milestones in the ancient universities in Taxila (5th century B.C.) and Nalanda (in 5th century A.D). It then offers an overview of growing internationalization of higher education (HE) in an era of the knowledge economy through a comprehensive, thorough and well-documented presentation and analysis.

A prominent part of the publication is devoted to cross-border higher education and the influence of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), under the World Trade Organization on the evolving international student market. Within this context, it gives a good overview of the contribution of international organizations to the internationalization of quality assurance such as the UNESCO/OECD *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education* and the emergence and growth of international and regional quality assurance networks. The recognition of higher education qualifications and the existing international conventions regulating this domain are also highlighted as contributing to higher education internationalization.

The description of these activities is linked to the complex system of regulation of higher education in India through the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and their different roles in the highly diverse higher education system in India.

The author reminds that the Indian higher education system is the third largest system in the world and growing, that it has a good reputation in the world in terms of the internationalization of higher education and highlights the government’s support of this trend within its broader internationalization policies. She concludes that Indian higher education can contribute to capacity-building in South Asia and Africa, particularly as part of the South-South cooperation concept in which India already plays a leadership role.

Yeradvekar, V. and Tiwari, G. (2017), SAGE Publications Pvt Ltd., New Delhi.



What is the *Quality Platform*?

The *Quality Platform* is an innovative form of external quality review of the performance and effectiveness of non-institutional (alternative) providers of higher education offerings. It is focused on assuring quality as this emerging sector attracts students around the world.

What are innovative providers?

Innovative or non-institutional providers offer higher education experiences and include companies that provide Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), bootcamps and companies that provide online courses in a variety of areas, such as hospitality, engineering, nursing and general education.

Why is it important to be a *Quality Platform Provider*?

CHEA/CIQG QUALITY PLATFORM

The emerging non-institutional sector is becoming an attractive option by which a growing number of students undertake education. Traditional colleges and universities are developing partnerships with non-institutional providers to offer continuing education offerings. As this trend is becoming part of an already diverse education system, the alternative provider will be required to show expected and actual learning outcomes.

The *Quality Platform* can prove beneficial to the provider, the student, and other stakeholders that seek quality and transparency.

Who does the *Quality Platform* review?

The review is conducted by a team of experts, including professors and other persons with significant academic faculty or administrative experience or both in traditional and non-

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PROVIDER

traditional higher education. Individuals from business, government, accreditors and employers who have significant experience or interest in higher education will serve as team members as well.

What is the process of becoming a *Quality Platform Provider*?

Providers complete a *Quality Platform* Application, supply and certify background information, submit evidence that the four *Quality Platform* standards are met (self-review) and engage with a *Quality Platform* Team for an external review. If the non-institutional provider meets the the *Platform* standards and expectations, it would achieve “*Quality Platform Provider*” status for a three-year period. The review typically takes three to six months from the date of receipt of an application.

Is the *Quality Platform* suited to meet your needs as an innovative provider that seeks public affirmation of quality?

Are you an innovative provider? Are you seeking to get ahead of your competition? Are your students expressing the need for these offerings to further education or employment? If you have answered “Yes” to any of these questions, then you may want to become a *Quality Platform* Provider.

To learn more about the *Quality Platform* and how your organization can benefit, please contact us at CIQG@chea.org.



CHEA/CIQG Publication Series

- *Accreditation and Student Learning Outcomes: Perspectives from Accrediting Organizations (2019)*
- *Quality Assurance and Public Accountability (2019)*
- *Policy Brief #13: Is Free Tuition the Panacea to Improve Equity in Higher Education? (2019)*
- *Policies and Actions of Accreditation and Quality Assurance Bodies to Counter Corruption in Higher Education (2019)*
- *Innovating In an Age of Uncertainty (2018)*
- *New Approaches to Judging Quality in Higher Education: Profiles of Emerging Methods Apart from Traditional Accreditation (2018)*



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