Quality Assurance: balance between expectations, reality and approaches to quality

The Current Interaction of Politics, Social Justice and Quality: The Role of Multilateralism

CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG)
2018 Annual Meeting, 1st of February, 2018
Washington D.C.

Susanna Karakhanyan, PhD
INQAAHE President
Quality Assurance: expectations, reality and approaches to quality

OUTLINE

Stakeholder expectations

Reality

Approaches of Quality
Global trends and challenges: diversity of expectations

SOCIETY

A major shift in the way individuals learn, work, do business, innovate, and entertain themselves

- Education as a key component to a sustainable foundation for economic recovery and long-term health.
  - A transition from outcome metrics that assess the performance of individual institutions to measuring the efficacy of the entire system in contributing to economic goals.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

- Innovation requires mobilization of an entire ecosystem that includes a solid knowledge infrastructure, a highly skilled labor force, creative workplaces, business models built with both customers and competition in mind, and engagement of global forces.
  - An estimated 75% of the fastest growing occupations will require STEM related skills and knowledge (science, technology, engineering and math). The need for an increased emphasis on computer coding, computational thinking, problem solving and design thinking into all levels of educational institutions is paramount.

GOVERNMENT

- With diversification of economy the demand for diversified workforce is rapidly increasing and acts as a crucial contributor to economic growth.

INDUSTRY

- Education as a key component to a sustainable foundation for economic recovery and long-term health.
  - A transition from outcome metrics that assess the performance of individual institutions to measuring the efficacy of the entire system in contributing to economic goals.

Susanna Karakhanyan, 2018
Global trends and challenges: diversity of expectations (students)

What do the direct consumers of TE want?

- to study and find internships or work placements side by side
- to build relationships with future employers

QS Best Student Cities 2016
As per “Employer activity” index

All three centers have an excellent concentration of national and international companies with strong ties to the university community.
Higher education also forms an important part of other goals related to:
- poverty (SDG1);
- health and well-being (SDG3);
- gender equality (SDG5) governance;
- decent work and economic growth (SDG8);
- responsible consumption and production (SDG12);
- climate change (SDG13);
- and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG16).

“By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.”
Global recognition: challenges and opportunities

Where do we stand in terms of operationalization of the UNESCO Regional Recognition Conventions?

How can EQAAAs be better prepared to face the challenges related to global recognition?

The world is moving toward establishing global recognition of higher education qualifications

UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, 2019
Global recognition: challenges and opportunities

UNESCO Global Recognition Convention to be adopted in 2019

- Open and fair recognition of qualifications as a universal right
- International coherence in recognition processes
- Recognition across regions
- **Recognition as an enabler for quality enhancement of HE**
- Raising the profile and importance of recognition
Reality
INQAAHE Global Study on QA (2017-2018):
in cooperation with regional networks and university associations

- The Arab Region
- Africa
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Western Europe
- Eastern Europe
- Northern America
- Asia-Pacific

- External Quality Assurance Agencies
- Internal Quality Assurance Agencies

Susanna Karakhanyan, 2018
Objectives and methodology

- To understand the trends in external and internal quality assurance globally: all levels and modes
- To identify the major challenges
- To provide recommendations for future investments
- To promote relevance of QA to benefit our members and HE community at large
- To produce a synthesis report to feed into the overall report for the UNESCO/INQAAHE/ICDE/CoL/WB/CIQG/ENQA International Conference in November, 2018. Reflections on the state of affairs in terms of the SDGs

- Literature review
- Review of policy documents
- Surveys of EQAAs and IQAs
- Case studies
NQF as one of the tools promoting recognition

One of the expressions of globalization is in the ever-growing number of international migrants: 150 million in 2000; 214 million in 2010; there could be 405 million in 2050 (IOC of UNESCO).

To facilitate the ever-growing migration, qualifications are still the main currency that are in use and signal both national and international value.

As of now, readability and recognition of qualifications across the border is still a challenge – absence of a global system of qualifications recognition allowing a learner or worker to take his/her qualifications to other countries and have them recognized.

But...
We should be cautious not to exaggerate its potentials (e.g. the QF does not address recognition in the legal meaning of the word).

Quality assurance seen as the main driver for operationalization of the NQFs

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Some Data on Qualifications Frameworks

Over 143 countries all over the world are involved in regional, transnational and national qualifications frameworks.

35 countries in Europe out of 51 are working towards comprehensive NQFs covering all types and levels of qualification;

32 countries in Europe have formally adopted the frameworks;

28 countries in Europe have already undertaken self-certification and/or referencing on their NQFs with the EQF/QF-EHEA.

Context for referencing:
- Need to resolve specific recognition problems
- Stipulated in free trade agreements
- Intergovernmental commitments
- May be part of a broader commercial arrangement
- Interagency (QA) commitments
- Multilateral commitments with international or regional agency funding

Susanna Karakhanyan, 2018
Reactive vs. proactive approach to HE planning

Top 10 skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>in 2020</th>
<th>in 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Complex Problem Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Critical Thinking</td>
<td>2. Coordinating with Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Creativity</td>
<td>3. People Management</td>
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<td>4. People Management</td>
<td>4. Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Coordinating with Others</td>
<td>5. Negotiation</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>6. Quality Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Judgment and Decision Making</td>
<td>7. Service Orientation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum
Reactive vs. proactive approach to HE planning

Half of today’s jobs will not exist by 2025

65% of enrollees in primary schools will have jobs that do not currently exist

75% of professions will be STEM related

10 key skills when recruiting new employees

- Sense-making
- Social intelligence
- Novel & adaptive thinking
- Cross-cultural competency
- Computational thinking
- New media literacy
- Transdisciplinarity
- Design mindset
- Cognitive load management
- Virtual collaboration

Source: The Institute for the Future (IFTF)

* British Council, 2017
Quality assurance: before and after massification

QA is no longer owned by HEIs themselves
Where do we stand in terms of relevance and recognition?

Current approaches to HE quality assurance no longer serve the diversity of needs and are subject to diversification and alignment with the needs to ensure:

- Recognition of qualifications
- Coverage of diversity of higher education providers, profiles, performance
- Measurement of learning outcomes/learning gain
- Links with the labor market and measurement of employability
- Relevance of qualifications
- Knowledge development and transfer
- Societal needs at large
Quality as Recognition: where do we stand?

Does the current QA framework allow the evaluation of:

- Recognition of Qualifications
  - Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education.
  - UNESCO Global Recognition Convention to be adopted in 2019. QA is one of its major components
  - Learning outcome assessment

- Recognition of R&D Outputs and Outcomes
  - Need to emphasize R&D in the QA frameworks
    - Doctoral programmes
    - Research outputs
    - Knowledge transfer (links with the labor market)

- Recognition of Quality Assurance Outcomes
  - Importance to revamp the QA frameworks (IQA and EQA) to promote relevance of the provisions, while taking consideration the international trends and linking the policies to the local needs
  - Importance of international and national recognition of the external quality assurance provisions in the region for enhanced recognition of the HE outputs and outcomes
Approaches of Quality
Defining quality: fluid vs. concrete

All are self-oriented towards HEIs

High time to come up and we must come up with a concrete definition to ensure its relevance
Quality Assurance: definitions, expectations and reality

Stakeholder expectations

vertex point

leg

vertex angle

leg

base angles

Reality

Definitions of and approaches to Quality

Quality as Recognition

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Thank you and Questions

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