Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Arab Region

Prof. Nadia Badrawi

President of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE)
Scoping Study conducted by The Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE)

Participants

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The Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE)

ANQAHE is a regional network that operate as an independent, non-profit nongovernmental organization

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Goals of ANQAHE

- To support and enhance quality assurance organizations in the Arab region;
- To develop capable human resources and establish a mechanism of cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education in the Arab region;
- To sustain regional and international cooperation in quality assurance in higher education;
- To exchange information on quality assurance in higher education in the Arab region.

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Members of ANQAHE

The Arab World

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Scoping Study

Needs assessment in the form of survey to map out the situation of the individual EQAAs in the Arab region against international good practices to achieve ANQAHE goals.

Scoping study was initiated with support from a World Bank /UNESCO development Grant (GIQAC)

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Objectives of the scoping study

1. Assess the situation of each Quality Assurance organization in the Arab Region;
2. Identify gaps and areas in the QA system in the Arab States that needs enhancement;
3. Prepare short-term and long term strategies on the specific activities to be undertaken to support the establishment of QA system in Arab States;
4. Support Arab States agencies to plan for their activities;
5. Construct framework guidelines for QA in Higher Education in the Arab States

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Survey Design

• Development of Survey questionnaire by a core group from ANQAHE board to include both quantitative and qualitative questions
• Reviewing of the survey to ensure that it is comprehensive and clear;
• Validation of the Survey questionnaire;
• Intended sample size was 22 Arab countries;

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Survey Design (cont.)

• The survey covered many areas such as legal basis and governance of the QA body, its objectives, selection and training of reviewers, site visits, and coordination among the various QA players in the country and the good practices.

• The survey included a glossary and instructions for selection of the alternatives.
Survey Design (cont.)

The survey comprised three sections:
1. closed-end questions,
2. list of documents that could be attached
3. an open-end questions
Implementation

• Search the proper contact personnel
• Distribution of the survey by both post-mail and email to 22 Arab Countries
• Follow up by telephone conference
• Personal interview to complete the survey during QA conference in Cairo
Results

- 16 QA organizations from the Arab countries responded
- 13 surveys were analyzed
- A descriptive statistics analysis using SPSS V-11 program was done
- The results were presented in the form of frequency tables, histograms and pie charts
# Arab Countries

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Algeria</th>
<th>Bahrain</th>
<th>Comoros</th>
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<tr>
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Analysis of the results

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Frequency distribution of the year of establishment
Governance: The agency is considered as:

- Agency/Instance (autonome)
- Authority
- Commission
- Department in Higher Education Institution
- Unit in Higher Education Institution
- Center in Higher Education Institution
- Not response
Who appoints the members of the EQAA governing body?

- King/President of the country
- Prime Minister
- Government
- Elections
- Minister of Higher Education
- Not response

[Bar chart showing frequency and percentage for each category]
Financial resources

- Government
- Donor agencies
- Fees from institutions of higher education
The legal status of the EQAA is:
A clear policy on conflicts of interest
Reporting

![Graph showing reporting by various entities]

- King/President/Prime Minister
- Minister of Higher Education
- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- Parliament

Legend:
- Frequency
- Percentage
Most significant activities of the EQAA
Type of institutions covered by the EQAA

- Public funded HEIs only
- Private funded HEIs only
- Both Public and Private HEIs
- Post-secondary level HEIs only (Tertiary Education)
- Post secondary education including (VET)
- All HEIs including non-university levels HEIs

Legend:
- Frequency
- Percentage
The processes of the EQAA for HEIs are:

- Mandatory for the evaluation
- Voluntary for accreditation
- Do not know

Graph showing the frequency and percentage of responses.
EQAA developed explicit qualitative standards/ criteria for quality assessment.
EQAA developed explicit **quantitative** standards/ criteria for quality assessment.
Participated in the Development of Standards/ Criteria

- National experts
- Non-national Arab experts
- Other Foreign experts
- The HEIs
- Professional Organization and syndicates
- Local community

Frequency and Percentage chart
Publication and implementation of standards
The process of EQA requires a Self–Assessment Report by HEIs
The EQAA helps HEIs to prepare the Self-Evaluation Report

- Provide brief guidelines
- Provide training
- Provide detailed guidelines about content and structure
- Provide a template that has to be filled out by the HEI
The EQAA involve international experts
The main areas of experts’ involvement

![Bar chart showing the frequency and percentage of involvement in developing standards, as review team members, and seminars & workshops on QA and accreditation.](chart.png)
The composition of the review panels

- Subject experts
- Experts in general higher education
- International members
- Students
- Employers/industry representative
- Graduate/Alumni
- Staff of the quality assurance agency
- Representatives of professional organizations

Frequency vs. Percentage
Potential reviewers identified

- Nominations from HEIs: 61.5%
- Nominations from the government: 7.7%
- Identified by QAA: 23.1%
- Through advertisements and calling for applications: 7.7%
Role of the HEIs in appointing the review panel

- The HEIs has no say in the panel’s memberships
- The HEIs can record reservation to any member of the panel
- The HEIs is consulted on the panel’s membership
- Not response
The typical size of the review panel

- Frequency
- Percentage
Does the quality assurance / accreditation process include a site visit to the HEI by a review panel?
Duration of the site visit

- 1-2 days: Frequency, Percentage
- 3-4 days: Frequency, Percentage
- 5-6 days: Frequency, Percentage
- If more than 6 days: Frequency, Percentage
Activities conducted by the review panel during the site visit include:

- Meetings / interviews with various constituents of the institution: 100%
- Classroom observation: Approximately 60%
- Visiting the facilities: Approximately 80%
- Examining documentary evidence: Approximately 90%
Do EQAAs staffs join the site visit if the review panel comprises external members?
The role of the agency staff member

- Coordinator/facilitator
- Report writing
- Full member of review panel
- Chair
- Observer

[Bar chart showing frequency and percentage of roles]
Dissemination of QA Policies and Procedures to reviewers and HEIs

- Printed publication
- Publication on its Website

Frequency
Percentage
Responsibility for writing the report

The Chair of the review panel
The agency staff
All the review panel members
Not response

Frequency
Percentage
The conclusions in the report include
The outcome of the site visit is given to the institution
The part of the outcome is made public

- Formal status/final decision
- Full report
- Summary of the report
- None
- Not response
Implications of these outcomes

- Linked to formal status or approval
- Linked to direct funding
- Linked to student admission
- Linked to incentives
- Linked to levels of autonomy
- Provides prestige only
- There are no formal consequences, for the moment

Frequency
Percentage
Period of validity of the external quality assurance outcome
HEIs have access to an appeals mechanism if it does not agree with the EQAA outcomes.
Quality assurance process include a requirement for HEIs to submit a follow up reports.

![Bar chart showing frequency and percentage of response (Yes or No).]
Mandatory programs review in all the country’s for public HEIs
Mandatory programs review in all the country’s for private HEIs
Frequency of the program review

- 3-5 Years: 4 years
- 5-7 Years
- 7-10 Years
- More than 10 Years

Frequency vs. Percentage

Legend:
- Frequency
- Percentage
Quality Assurance of EQAAs

The graph shows the frequency and percentage distribution of EQAAs with internal, external, both internal and external, or no response. The data indicates a significant number of responses fall under the 'Not response' category, suggesting a need for improved engagement or feedback mechanisms in the quality assurance process.
Changes in Policies & procedures significantly changed on the basis of the review results.

![Graph showing the results of changes in policies and procedures. The categories are 'Yes', 'No', 'In process', and 'Not response'. The 'Yes' category shows the highest frequency and percentage, followed by 'In process', 'No', and 'Not response'.]
Is there more than EQAAs in your country?
Collaboration with other EQAAs in other countries
Challenges

• Ensuring the delivery of the survey to the proper person or issued governmental office able and allowed to complete the survey;
• Motivation to complete the survey within timeline;
• Break the fear of comparison between the countries;

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Challenges

• Taking the permission of the Ministry of Higher Education in the participated countries to complete the survey;

• Some of the completed survey was not following the designed format and numbering of the questions;

• Variability of quality assurance system in different Arab Countries, and lacking of a formal body for quality assurance.

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Conclusions

Similarities
Dissimilarities
Review the results against the guideline of good practice in QA

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Recommendations

1. Develop a glossary in Arabic, English and French using the good practice quality Assurance data base of INQAAHE(Japanese /English glossary)

2. Develop a regional and international data base for consultants and peer reviewers

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Recommendations (cont.)

3. Construct and conduct training materials for workshops on establishing new Quality Assurance Agencies in French, English and Arabic for the North Africa region, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria and for Libya, Syria and Yemen

4. Conduct workshops for training external peer reviewers
Recommendations (cont.)

5. Awareness for the role of students in the EQAA system

6. Develop guideline framework for QA system in higher education in Arab States (in process)

7. Develop core institutional standards (in process) for Arab Region

8. Develop core standards for Academic reference standards (DAAD and British Council)
9. Motivate the Arab EQAAs to use regional reviewers in their panel of site visits

10. Develop a perception of internal quality assurance system for the EQAAs

11. Introduce the concept of external review for EQAAs in the region
Thank you

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