
The Internationalization of Higher Education and Cross-border Quality Assurance

Key Findings and Recommendations that emerged from the Istanbul workshop

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THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF CROSS-BORDER QUALITY ASSURANCE

This workshop focused on:

- international education as cross-border educational offerings (defined as when student, teacher, or course materials cross national borders) and
- the processes to assure and improve the quality of educational offerings through national, regional, and international QA constructs.

KEY FINDINGS

- ❖ A 2016 study by Kevin Kinser and Jason E. Lane estimated that branch campuses alone have increased 44 percent in seven years.
- ❖ Modalities of cross-border education now include not only branch campuses, virtual campuses, and joint degrees, but also blended degrees, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), nanodegrees, and badges.
- ❖ The workshop referenced many articles by Jane Knight of the University of Toronto, providing a baseline for QA organizations as they seek to sort the terminology in order to, at minimum, give structure to data collection and analysis.

KEY FINDINGS

- in 2000, 97 million students were enrolled in higher education worldwide;
 - by 2015 enrollments had reached 213 million;
 - by 2030 estimates project 412 million enrollments
 - by 2035 estimates 522 million enrollments
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- Global student mobility also increased rapidly from the 1970s and 1980s when the numbers hovered around a million, until now, when nearly five million students are enrolled in tertiary education outside their home country.
 - (OECD, 2017)

HIGHER EDUCATION IN OMAN

- Sultan Qaboos University first and only public HE in 1986.
- Quickly followed by the establishment of 28 new private higher education institutions.
- Today, that total has grown to 69 institutions.
- By law, the private institutions are affiliated with overseas higher educational institutions. Some public institutions also seek affiliation.
- In 2015 -2016 in Oman, enrollment in the private sector, at roughly 70,000 students, slightly outnumbered the level in the public sector, at 65,000.

■ Khalid Al Muharrami presentation, Hollings Workshop, September 2018, Istanbul.

IMPORT/EXPORT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- ❖ The import/export of higher education is widespread and not confined to any one region of the world.
- ❖ In 2016, 32 countries exported higher education to 75 other countries;
- ❖ **Russia and France are among the biggest exporters, and China and the Gulf States are among the largest importers.**

IMPORT/EXPORT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- UAE has 74 institutions of higher education, including 39 that are branches of foreign universities, marking the largest number of branches in the Arab region.
- Qatar has a higher percentage, but fewer in absolute numbers, with 15 of its 20 licensed institutions classified as branch campuses
- Egypt developed a law to regulate branch campuses in 2018
- Oman, in contrast, has only one registered branch campus.
- Most of the South Mediterranean Arab region has joint degrees

CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT ISSUES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION GREW,

Key challenges included

- Accountability
- Student achievement
- Transparency
- Governance.

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL: QUALITY STANDARDS

- ❖ In 2005, UNESCO and OECD issued the “Guidelines on Quality Provision of Cross-border Higher Education”
- ❖ In 2007–2011 the World Bank sponsored the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity in Developing and Transition Countries (GIQAC).
- ❖ In 2012 CHEA, created its new entity, the CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG), with an international advisory group of 17 members from ten countries

as well as UNESCO, OECD, and the World Bank, CIQG was created to provide thought leadership, build partnerships, and serve as a convener to bring together QA colleagues from around the world.

REGIONAL LEVEL: QUALITY STANDARDS

- Regional QA networks were also needed to establish solid foundations among institutions across national borders so they could communicate about quality initiatives.
- ANQAHE
- ASEAN
- APQN
- AQAN
- ENQA
- AfriQAN

REGIONAL NETWORKS: QUALITY STANDARDS

- ❖ Most of the Arab region's cross-border higher education work with foreign institutions had been with US and French institutions, followed by Germany and the United Kingdom. In recent years, advances have been made in the progress of mutual understanding and in assessing foreign providers.
- ❖ This progress has been facilitated by participation in QUACHE, a QA project of the European Union (Erasmus Mundus) that operated between October 2013 and March 2016, formed to appraise the activities of European universities offering higher education beyond their borders.

NATIONAL LEVEL: QUALITY STANDARDS

- National quality measures needed to be stated and met.
- It also was necessary to create convergence and agreement across borders about what indicates high quality.
- Consensus was needed to strengthen understanding and trust within and among institutions and countries and their higher education organizations— governmental, educational, or otherwise.

NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS: MALAYSIA

- The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) has been a standout for being the first AQAN country to create an articulated quality framework in 1997
- Cross-border education has a long history in Malaysia, which has 12 foreign branch campuses,

NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS: OMAN

- ❖ Oman, by contrast, is more open to international accreditation and collaboration, evidenced in part by it requiring all national institutions to have accredited international partners
- ❖ Oman also created procedures for recognizing foreign higher education programs, together with mutual agreements concerning QA with relevant authorities in other counties.

NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS: EGYPT

- ❖ One of the largest country using joint degree as a form of CBHE
- ❖ Develop a mutual agreement with Germany for accreditation of joint and dual degree
- ❖ Working with UK to have a mutual agreement on QA of CBHE
- ❖ Develop a new law to regulate branch campuses

DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED RELATIONS AMONG US AND MUSLIM-MAJORITY NATIONS' HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- ❖ The US institutions that were discussed are represented by the CIC
- ❖ The workshop's advice was to contact applicable regional network, and/or the national ministry, and the intended university if known, to build a productive and lasting relationship.
- ❖ CIC might lead in these new paths of study/introduction tours for CIC presidents to the Muslim regions that were represented in the Hollings workshop.

CREATING CROSS-BORDER COMMON PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY

- ❖ Challenge is the need for broader international agreements.
- ❖ How can national accreditation and QA, the essential building blocks, become the foundation for or integrated with, parallel international principles of cross-border QA?
- ❖ How can common principles and agreements become so widespread as to create adherence in the absence of enforcement mechanisms?
- ❖ Can regional and international voluntary networks work together with national agencies to adopt principles and bring about educational quality enhancement?
- ❖ The flourishing of activity on the quality agenda during the last two decades shows that progress is indeed underway.

ROLE OF REGIONAL NETWORKS

- ❖ Successful efforts within the many regional QA organizations can continue to advance and expand its work as well as its reach.
- ❖ More regions, both smaller and larger, can create growing networks of understanding and cooperation.
- ❖ Success will require greater knowledge and active collaboration in implementing the work that has been accomplished so far.
- ❖ ANQAHE found, for example, in a study it did with the ten founding ANQAHE nations in northern Africa that many were not aware of the 2005 UNESCO/OECD principles for QA in cross-border higher education,
- ❖ ANQAHE itself worked in collaboration with other networks like ENQA to develop regional cross-border standards.

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- ❖ Participants in the workshop expressed the view that CHEA and CIC may have significant roles to play, especially in the United States, to help spread understanding and advancement of international QA issues
- ❖ Non Governmental
- ❖ Independent,
- ❖ mission-driven nonprofit organizations

CHEA/CIQG

- ❖ CHEA, through CIQG, works with colleagues worldwide to focus attention on advancing shared thinking about quality through,
- ❖ “International Quality Principles” (2015).
- ❖ CHEA provides a vital service to international higher education and QA through its “Database of Institutions and Programs Accredited by Recognized US Accrediting Organizations,” the single most comprehensive source of information about US institutions, and programs and their accredited status.

CHEA-CIQG

- ❖ CHEA, through its recognition activity, has also addressed US accrediting organizations operating outside the United States, with expectations that the accreditors' review of institutions and programs reflect several areas of good practice:
- ❖ Communicate and consult with appropriate in-country governmental accreditation or QA entities regarding the accrediting organization's current and proposed activities;
- ❖ Provide evidence of the accrediting organization's capacity and competence to engage in international accreditation activities, considering language and cultural difference, ongoing QA activities in the country, local factors that would affect the accreditation process, and attention to the safety of all those involved;

OBSERVATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

- ❖ Workshop participants made the fruitful observation that there were “shared challenges but no shared language” among college and university presidents and accreditors.
- ❖ This pointed to a role for CIC, or CIC and CHEA, or perhaps collaborations with other organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- 1- Promote and disseminate existing materials more broadly to create greater understanding and impact of QA standards and activities.
- 2- Encourage partnership among UNESCO/OECD, CIQG, and other internationally oriented QA groups to continue to collaborate and help spread cooperation on international QA values.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

3- Support the ongoing efforts of the regional QA networks to expand regional networks through sub-regional partnerships (for example, China, South Korea, and Japan within the Asia-Pacific Network).

CHEA and CIC might facilitate the formation of an Americas sub-region based on other work, such as CIC's work with Mexican universities.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

4- Use the annual meetings of organizations, such as CHEA, CIC, and regional associations such as ANQAHE and AQAN, to expand the scope of the conversation and plan for the future of enhanced cross-border higher education and QA.

5-- Facilitate more international partnerships between CIC colleges and universities and those of Muslim countries represented at the workshop by organizing trips to develop partnerships.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

6- Encourage college and university presidents to undertake efforts to create new cross-border partnerships based on the principles of cross-border educational quality as they have been developed by CHEA and the regional QA agencies and the ministries of the concerned country. Explicit reference to those principles should be included in any agreements that an institution develops with an international partner.

Thank You

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