Strengthening Developments in TNE through Inter-agency Cooperation

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Structure of the presentation

- QAA’s approach to TNE
- Strengthening interagency cooperation: QACHE and INQAAHE projects
- Current and planned international engagement activities
- Discussion
Over 80% of UK HEIs are involved in some form of TNE, delivered all over the world
TNE is the main area of growth
QAA has always reviewed UK TNE

Mission: to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK HE wherever it is delivered

✓ We develop reference points setting out expectations for UK HE providers
✓ We undertake institutional peer-reviews to check HE providers meet those expectations
Institutional review processes in the UK are comprehensive.

A dedicated TNE review process supplements UK reviews.

A country-based approach:
- India (09), Malaysia (10), Singapore (11), China (12), UAE (13),
- Caribbean (14), Greece/Cyprus (15)…16/17 Hong Kong & Ireland?

A partnership approach:
- Liaise with counterpart agencies to facilitate the review of TNE, e.g.
- information sharing and coordination of QA activities.
Consultation on strengthening the quality assurance of TNE – final report

*Developing a Strategic and Coordinated Approach to the External Quality Assurance and Enhancement of UK Transnational Education (QAA 2015)*

- Strengthen links between TNE review and domestic institutional reviews
- Strengthen cooperation with counterpart agencies in key UK TNE host countries
HEFCE’s Tender for International Activities

• Continue to undertake in-country reviews of UK TNE:
  ▪ adopting a risk-based approach and
  ▪ working with host country regulatory bodies / QAAs to reduce unnecessary duplications and hence regulatory burden

• Continue engaging strategically with international partners:
  ▪ to enhance mutual understanding of quality-related developments and approaches with key TNE host countries
  ▪ to work towards reciprocal recognition of quality assessment arrangements, where appropriate.
The QACHE project (2013-15)

• Funded by the European Commission
• Undertaken by a project consortium led by ENQA:
  - ANECA (Spain), GAC (Germany), HCERES (France), QAA (UK), TEQSA (Australia)
  - APQN and ANQAHE
• **Main aim**: Enhance international practice in the QA of TNE / CBHE
• **Main output**: A Toolkit for QAAs to enhance inter-agency cooperation in the QA of TNE / CBHE
Key findings

- Diversity of approaches and regulatory frameworks for CBHE (in/out-bound)
- Lack of information and knowledge of other agencies’ frameworks/approaches
- A ‘trust gap’ between home and host countries about the quality of CBHE
- Lack of cooperation in the QA of CBHE
The QACHE vicious circle

Lack of trust

Lack of cooperation

Lack of information

Sub-optimal QA of CBHE
The QACHE virtuous circle

- Trust
- Cooperation
- Information

= Effective and efficient QA of CBHE

Networks
The Toolkit

Offers practical guidance on:

1. *Information sharing*: how QAAs can improve the sharing of information on TNE

2. *Cooperation in quality assurance*: how QAAs can enhance cooperation in its quality assurance

3. *Networks of agencies*: how networks of QAAs can facilitate information sharing and cooperation
The scope of the Toolkit

- It is directed exclusively at QAAs (and networks)
- It does not issue guidelines for the QA of CBHE
- It is not prescriptive

- It acknowledges that QAAs don’t operate in isolation
- It recognise and respects the diversity of QAAs
INQAAHE / QAA project on the challenges to inter-agency cooperation

Trust building is critical, but takes times & resources
- Adopt a strategic approach and long term commitment to partnership building

Engage with all key stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the QACHE Toolkit
- with governments to enable policy/legislative change
- with institutions to identify areas of synergy and cooperation
- with students to understand their expectations for TNE
TNE UAE 2013-4: cooperation with KHDA

- KHDA briefed the QAA review team
- KHDA shared its annual census data with us
- KHDA engaged in the QAA review visit
- KHDA and QAA coordinated the communication strategy
- KHDA relaxed criteria for programme approval
Current engagement initiatives

- Regular communication with MoU partners – VCs and networks
- *Quality Beyond Borders Group*
  - informal group of agencies aimed at facilitating information sharing (KHDA led, QAA, MQA, CPE, HKCAAVQ, WASC, NEASC)
- Joint guidance on top-up arrangements (CPE, HKCAAVQ, MQA)
- *Focus on China:*
  - Cooperation with CEAIE in screening new applications for UK-China partnerships
  - Can QAA/CDGDC lead by example the new ASEM-ME’s initiative, CBQAN (CDGDC led)?
  - *Beijing statement:* enhancing sector-to-sector cooperation in the QA of TNE (British Council, QAA, IU / MoE, CEAIE, CDGDC)
Forthcoming engagement initiatives

- TNE Ireland: implementing the QACHE Toolkit?
- TNE Hong Kong: exploring joint-review activity leading to recognition of HKCAAVQ accreditation decisions?
- TNE Malta: resuming planned joint-review activity?
- Singapore: can we rely on information collected by CPE on UK providers’ oversight of local TNE?
- Exploring with a larger number of countries the possibility to recognise their QA decisions of hosted UK TNE
- Sector briefings about key country’s operating environments, and in-country briefings about UK QA and TNE
Questions

What types of regulatory challenges have you encountered in delivering TNE provision?

Where could strengthened inter-agency cooperation help TNE providers overcoming these challenges?
  • any specific examples?

What else could QAA do to support UK providers in delivering quality TNE?
Thank you

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