



# Strengthening Developments in TNE through Inter-agency Cooperation

Dr. Fabrizio Trifiro', Manager International, QAA

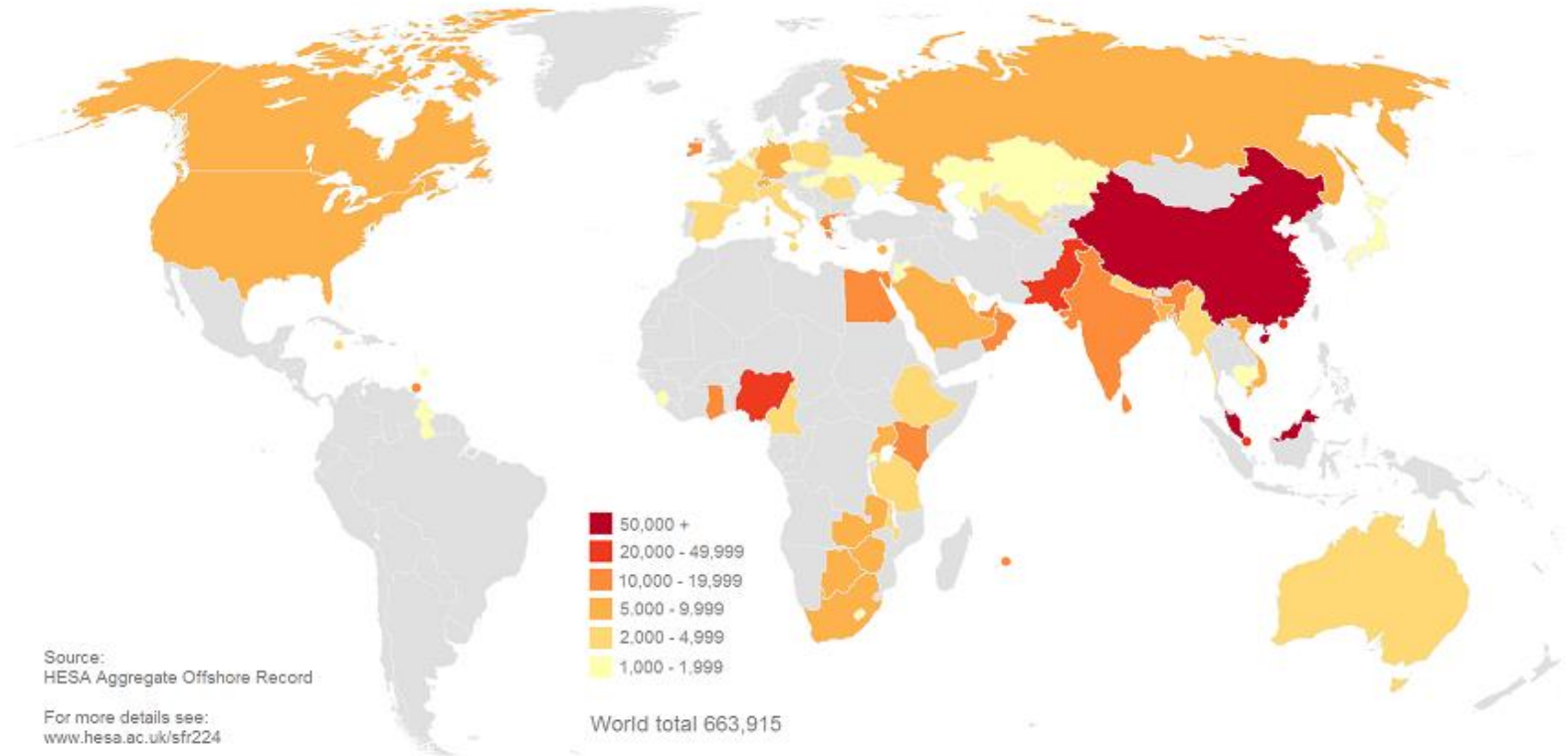
*Delivery Excellence in Higher Education,*  
12 July 2016, Leeds Beckett University

# Structure of the presentation

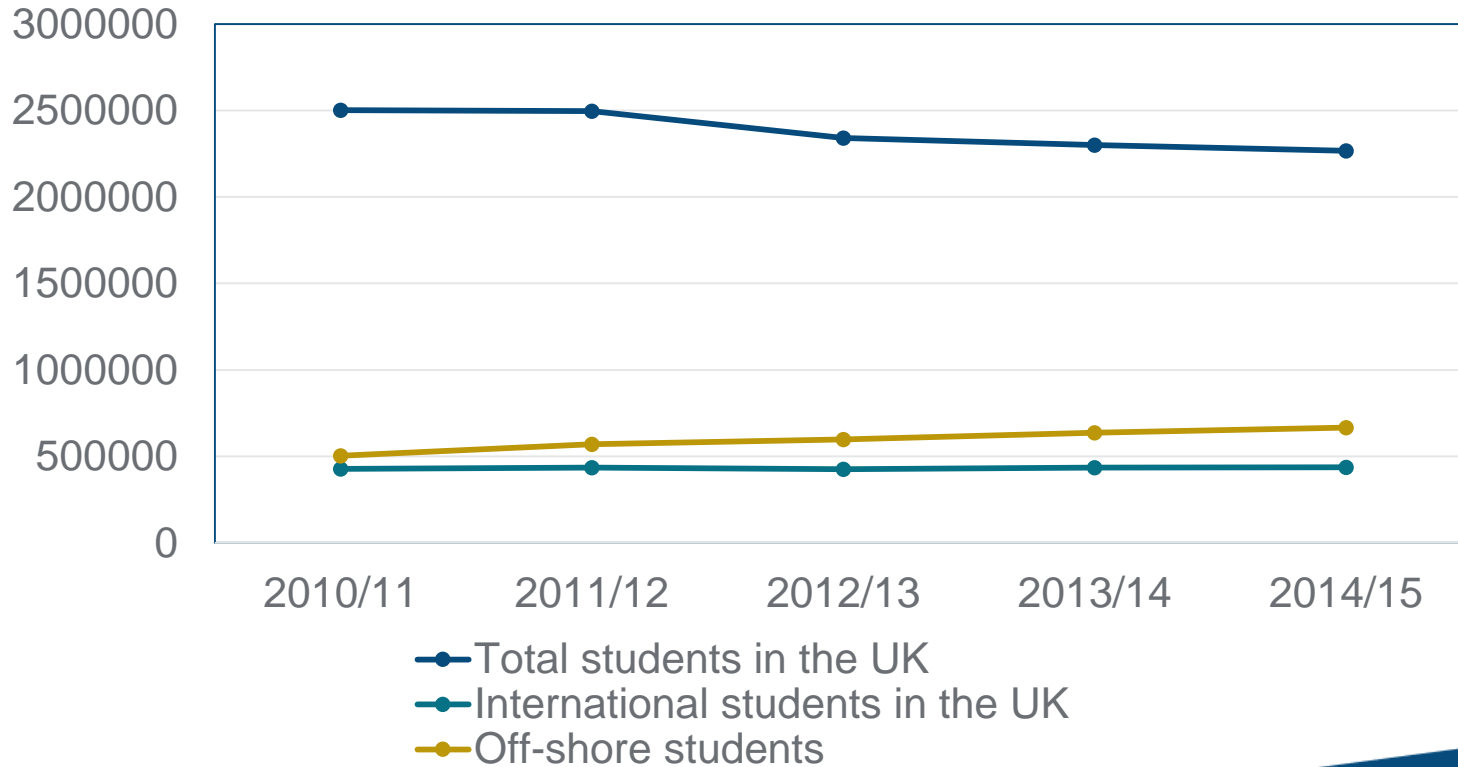
- QAA's approach to TNE
- Strengthening interagency cooperation: QACHE and INQAAHE projects
- Current and planned international engagement activities
- *Discussion*

# Over 80% of UK HEIs are involved in some form of TNE, delivered all over the world

Transnational students studying wholly overseas for a UK HE qualification in 2014/15



# 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

# The quality assurance of TNE

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.



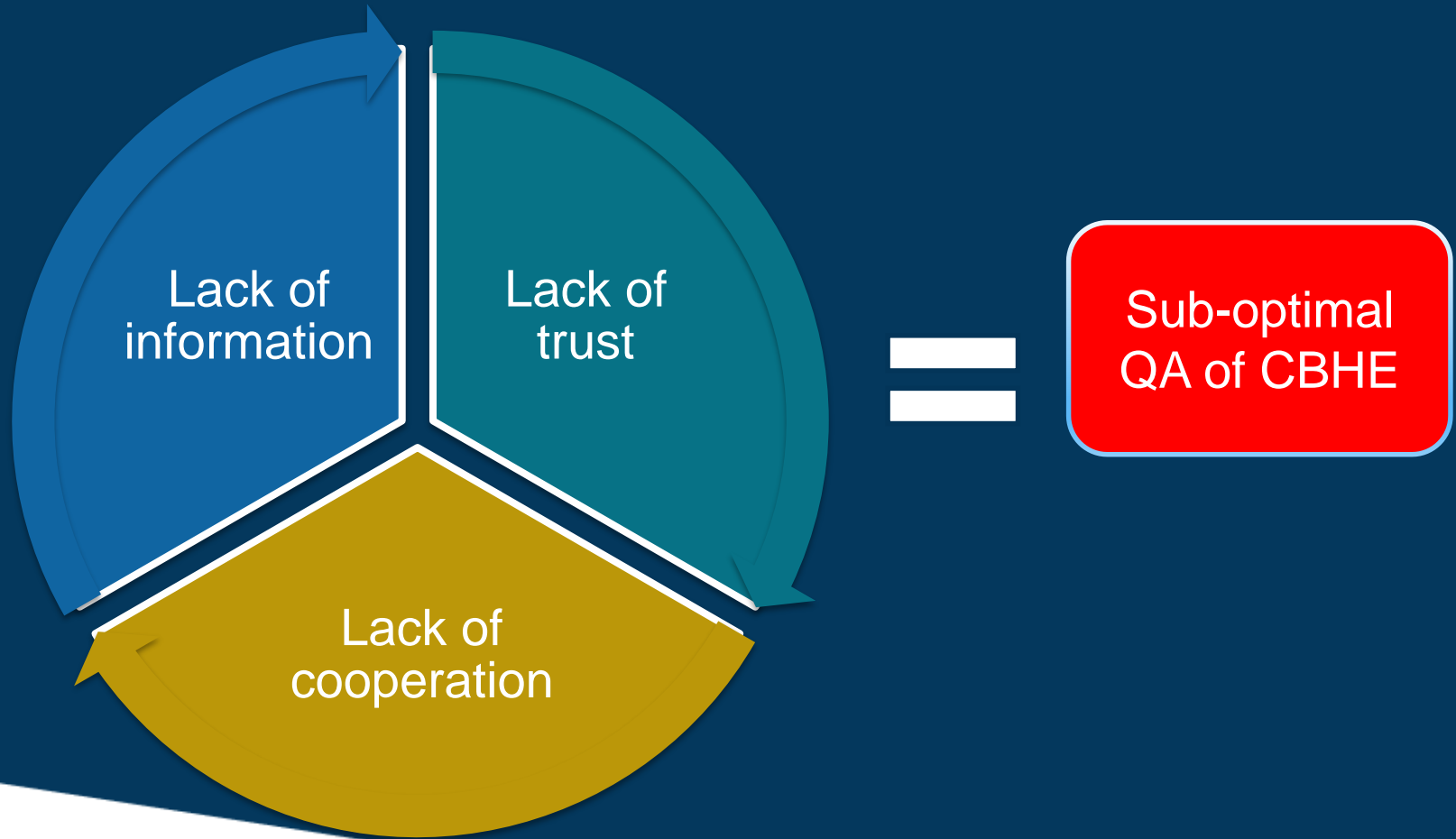
# The QACHE project (2013-15)

- 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

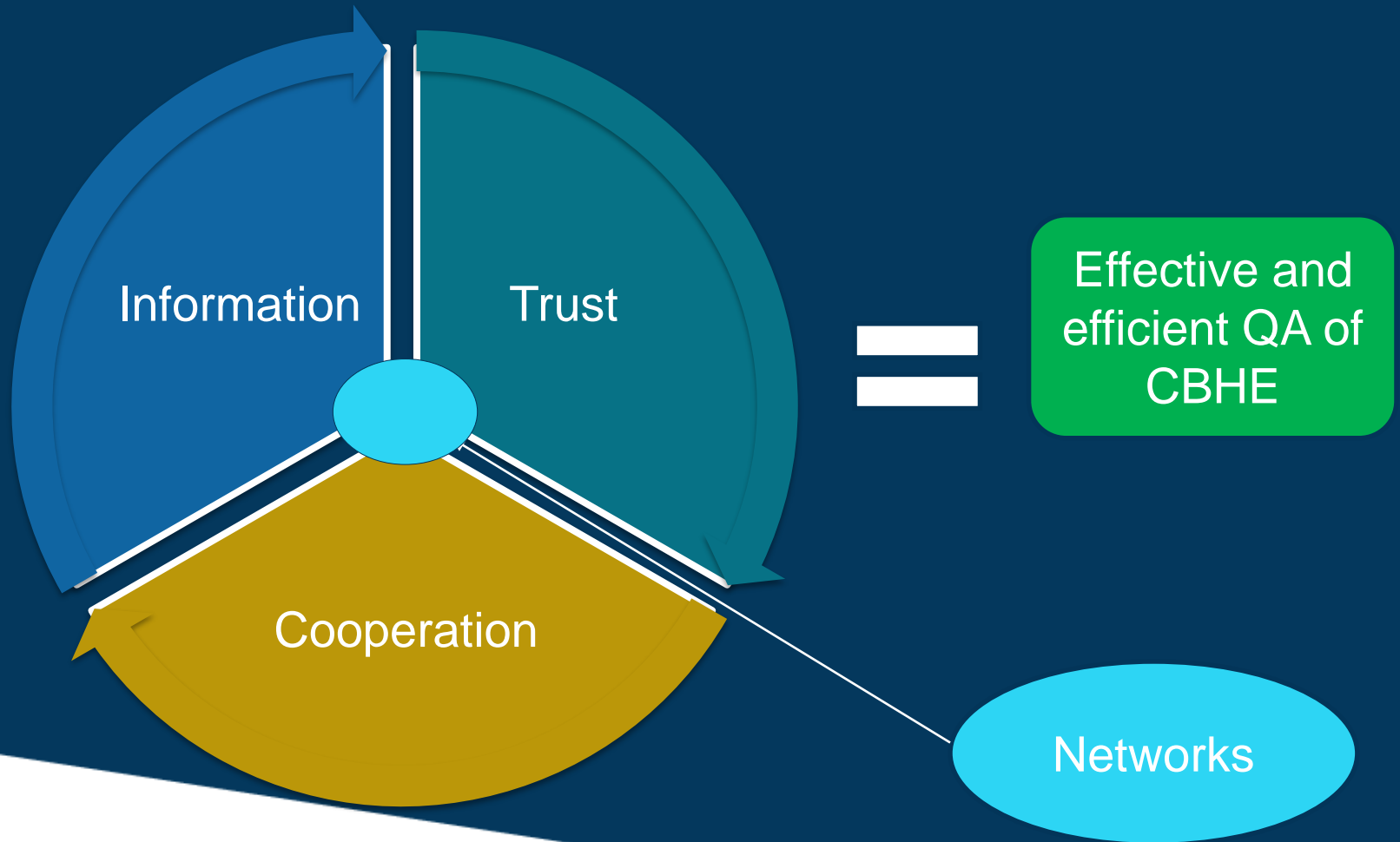
# Key findings

- 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



# The QACHE virtuous circle



# 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

[f.trifiro@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:f.trifiro@qaa.ac.uk)



[qaa.ac.uk](http://qaa.ac.uk)



[enquiries@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@qaa.ac.uk)



+44 (0) 1452 557000

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2014

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786



QAA