Making Quality VISIBLE

A National Framework for Quality Assurance of Further and Higher Education in Malta

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Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the
European Union European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds
Investing in your future
Education Act (since 2012)

Art 65:
“The Commission shall:
(c) act as the competent authority for licensing, accreditation, quality assurance and recognition of providers and programmes as provided by this Act or any regulation made under this Act”
The Quality Cycle

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Enhanced quality, numbers, personal and national well-being

Quality Assurance

Licensing

Accreditation
Quality Assurance

1. **safeguards the quality** of further and higher education within the economic, social and cultural context, on a **national, European and international level**;

2. ensures the use of appropriate measures as a means of **improving the quality of teaching, learning, training and research**; and

3. communicates the outcome of such findings within an **internal and external framework of accountability**
Internal Quality Assurance

Art. 36:
Providers shall have **the primary responsibility** for the quality of their provision and its quality assurance.

Providers seeking any type of accreditation **shall have in place an internal quality assurance system** which shall be designed specifically to ensure the fitness and properness for purpose of the providers and their programmes, to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.
IQAs and EQAs

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A National Quality Culture

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Aims of a QA F&H Framework

We therefore need to develop a national QA framework for F&H education that:

- **Fosters** enhanced quality cultures in providers
- **Increases** the agency, satisfaction and numbers of users
- **Enhances** the international profile and credibility of F&H providers in Malta
- **Contributes** towards Malta becoming a regional provider of excellence in F&H education
ESG at the Core of Framework

- In 2003 EU higher education Ministers requested stakeholders to develop “an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies”
- First version in 2005, revised in 2009, due to be revised in 2014.
- ESG is increasing in importance and scope. Now used as yardstick
  - for membership in ENQA and EQAR
  - To partly gauge fulfillment of Bologna Process
  - For cross-border audits
  - as a short cut to automatic recognition of qualifications (by Flanders)
- Since 2012 NCFHE has been using ESG for the IQA requirement for licensing, for BOTH Further and Higher Institutions
The ESG Components

1. Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance
2. Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes and Awards
3. Assessment of Students
4. Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff
5. Learning Resources and Student Support
6. Information Systems
7. Public Information
Many Roads to Rome..

EQAVET
CAF
TQM
Col RIM
Bureau Veritas
ISO 9001
An Organic Approach to Framework Development
Some Framework Issues

- What should we focus on in the first round of EQA?
- What should be the nature of IQA and EQA of local franchise holders/representatives?
- Who shall audit? What quality of stakeholder participation, including students?
- Shall be allow cross-border audits? At programme level or also institution level?
- What types of e-based programmes can be accredited, and how shall they be audited?
How Shall We Achieve This?

• Setting up of Net-QAPE
• Strengthening IQA
• Developing together the EQA objectives, procedures and tools
• Piloting the IQA and EQA in three state institutions
Project Partners

• NCFHE – lead partner
• University of Malta
• MCAST
• Institute of Tourism Studies
• Directorate for Lifelong Learning
• ACQUIN – consulting partner
Net-QAPE: a Key Partner

• Network of Quality Assurance Professionals in Further and Higher Education (Net-QAPE) led by the NCFHE and open to representatives of all licensed F&HE providers in Malta.

• initial scoping of present IQA elements within entities *(appointments for January 2014 can be made today)*

• Net-QAPE shall be the main forum to discuss all IQA and EQA issues

• Net-QAPE shall be a key partner of NCFHE in reviewing all procedures and consider new directions

• Net-QAPE members offered free training for the development of a quality culture in their institutions and the development of ESG-compliant IQA.

• To include a number of seminars (and a study visit) by Net-QAPE members to examples of good practice in IQA and EQA in F&HE.

• Training will constitute an accredited Continuous Professional Development Award
Other Project Deliverables

- Training for persons in Malta wishing to become accredited auditors of home-grown distance learning programmes and courses.
- Training of selected staff in the three Maltese partner institutions that will pilot IQA and EQA
- Develop procedures and tools for EQA, including for accreditation and QA of distance learning programmes
- Developing of software that shall assist F&HE Institutions to keep constant track of their licensing and accreditation status
- Pilot Internal and external audits at UoM, MCAST and ITS
- Developing a roadmap for the future of EQA and Net-QAPE
- Work towards membership of NCFHE in ENQA and EQAR
Suggested Timeline

• Dec 2013 – Aug 2014: Training and development

• Sept 2014 – June 2015: Piloting, reviewing and roadmap
The Role of Compliance

- EQA also includes compliance checks and, where necessary, spot-checks and investigations, but these are separate from the EQA process.
- General regulations e.g. On advertising and use of NCFHE logo
- Investigations driven by complaints
- Collaboration with UK-based parent entities, OfQual and QAA
THANK YOU