Making Quality VISIBLE

ESF Project 1.227
First Net-QAPE Meeting

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21st March 2014
Waterfront Hotel, Malta
WELCOME to SPRING

and

WELCOME to Net-QAPE!

Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
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Organigram

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Education Act

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

Quality Assurance

Licensing

Enhanced quality, numbers, personal and national well-being

Accreditation

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Objectives of Net-QAPE

• Feedback forum for the development of MQV deliverables
• Discussion forum for any F/HE issues raised by members
• Privileged training possibilities
Net-QAPE membership

- Accredited F/HE institutions

- Reps involved in QA or planning to
MQV Main Deliverables

- National QA F/HE Framework
- IQA tools
- Revised accreditation process, including for e-learning based distance learning courses
- EQA tools and Operating Procedure
- Software to facilitate accreditation, application tracking and public access
- Net-QAPE
- Trained QA officers in accredited entities
- CPD Award in F/HE QA
- Training in auditing of e-learning based distance learning courses
MQV Main Timeline

- July 2014 – draft QA F/HE Framework
- Oct 2014 – finalised Framework
- Nov 2014 – IQA in UoM, MCAST, ITS
- Dec 2014 – scoping be EQA reviewers
- Mar 2015 – EQA in UoM, MCAST, ITS
- Jun 2015 – dissemination of finalised OP
- Sep 2015 – start of audits
Scoping Exercise – Interim Report

- Entities with provisional licence: 34
- Entities with full licence (with state and self-accrediting entities): 31
- Provisional licence entities visited: 74%
- Full licence entities visited: 39%
General Impression

- Scoping visits welcomed
- IQA-EQA connection and audit philosophy welcomed
- With very few and partial exceptions, providers are serious and well-meaning
- All have a measure of explicit or implicit IQA, and were releaved to realise this
- All accepted NCFHE EQA role
Categories of providers: by clients

• Full-time ‘local’ students in full courses
• International residential students
• Students attending short courses
• Pre- and post-16 yrs in the same entity
• Students with vulnerable backgrounds
Categories of providers: by courses

- Self-accrediting institutional providers (UoM, MCAST, ITS)
- Develop courses, outsource provision, undertake QA on process and outcomes (ETC and MTA)
- Local administrators of foreign accredited courses
- Local EFL courses for foreign clients
- Home-grown courses
- Distance learning courses
Local administrators of foreign courses

A wide spectrum of contractual relationship:

• **FROM** full control and QA by parent entity:
  student selection, sent trainers, sent resources and exam papers,
  exam corrected abroad, results and certificate sent by parent entity

• **TO** delegated control and QA by parent entity:
  students selected locally, local trainers, paper corrected locally,
  certificate generated locally, QA through spot-checks to ensure
  compliance to regulations and sample verification of results
Home Grown Courses

- QA Committee has been set up within NCFHE
- Chaired by Prof. John Portelli
- QA Committee remit is to implement QA. Highlights include:
  - review of home-grown applications at MQF Levels 7 and 8
  - licences for universities
  - Compliance with regulations

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Audit Report Review Process

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Distance Learning Providers

- A Service Provider Feedback Committee has been set up
- Prof. Matthew Montebello engaged as external expert to propose accreditation and QA mechanism
- MQV to provide training to elearning evaluators
The F/HE Quality Assurance Framework
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
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Einstein Commission for Further and Higher Education
Malta

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
Guiding principles for the ESG revision

• Keep the strengths: integrated concept and understanding of QA, broad applicability, broad ownership
• Overcome the weaknesses: vagueness, redundancies, inconsistencies
• Update: ESG as part of the ‘Bologna-Infrastructure’, taking into account recent developments in QA and HE
• Guarantee adaptability to future developments
• Keep a balance between changing as much as possible and as little as possible
Many Roads to Rome...

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An Organic Approach to Framework Development

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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?