Transnational Education of Australia

- international face of Australian education
- international opinions matter
- ‘actual’ quality and ‘perceived’ quality

Highly visible attention to the EQA regime helps to ensure that the public perceptions come closer to the 'actual'.
Quality of TNE

- Reports on overseas problems
- General status or isolated cases?
- How do we know?
- What public assurance can we provide?
- How robust is Australia’s QA framework?

What is a good QA framework? What characteristics can we expect in an ideal QA framework?

Notable developments…

- Guidelines of Good Practice (GGP) of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)
- UNESCO-OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education
2. INQAAHE GGP

INQAAHE

- Founded in 1991 in Hong Kong
- Biggest network of QA agencies in HE
- 189 member agencies spread in around 80 countries
- Developed Guidelines of Good Practice in 2003 in consultation with its members from 65 countries
- Revised in 2007 - www.inqaahe.org
Agencies reviewed against GGP

- AUQA (Australia)
- National Commission for Accreditation (CNAP, Chile)
- Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC, Ireland)

AUQA's alignment with GGP

- External Review in 2006
- Review against objectives and INQAAHE GGP
- Review panel affirmed AUQA’s compliance with GGP

Well established QA frameworks will be able to demonstrate alignment with GGP
A mapping done by AUQA, QAA and NZUA demonstrated this alignment
INQAAHE GGP 1: Governance

Clarity in objectives, Systematic approach to achieving them, Ownership and governance structure appropriate for the objectives

- Independence of the body from any particular influence
- Governing Body with representation from various stakeholder groups

INQAAHE GGP 2: Resources

Adequate resources, both human and financial

- Funding from government sources (directly or indirectly)
- AUQA and NZUAAU charge audit fees
- External trained auditors
INQAAHE GGP 3: Quality of QA

Ensuring continuous quality assurance of the activities of the agency itself through internal self review and external reviews at regular intervals

- Accountability and monitoring embedded in governance and reporting mechanisms
- Feedback from stakeholders
- Internal monitoring
- AUQA & NZUA AU – External reviews

GGP 4: Reporting Public Information

Informing and responding to the public; demonstrating public accountability by reporting openly on review decisions; and reporting on its own performance.

- Policies, procedures, audit reports, review (or consultation) reports and annual reports in public domain
- Manuals, Handbooks and workshops
GGP 5: Role of HEIs

Respecting the autonomy, identity and integrity of HEIs; Applying standards, which have been subject to consultation with stakeholders and contributing to both quality improvement and accountability.

- QA process is developed by the HE sector
- Significant place to institutional objectives
- Consultation with the sector
- Quality enhancement as a major theme

GGP 6: Requirements

Documenting clearly what the agency expects of the institution

- Manuals, Handbooks, website, workshops, training programs…
GGP 7: Requirement for self-evaluation

Documenting clearly guidelines for the self evaluation process

• Manuals, Handbooks, website, workshops,…

GGP 8: Evaluation process

Constituting review committees in accordance with the guidelines of the agency, and including at least one external reviewer from another country or jurisdiction

• Clear policies on identification, selection and training of reviewers
• AUQA and NZUAAU – regularly use international reviewers
GGP 9: Decisions
Evincing independent, impartial, rigorous, thorough, fair and consistent decision-making, and making consistent decisions

- Reviewers are selected avoiding conflict of interest
- Quality controls to ensure consistency
- Role of QA agency in major stages of the process
- Independent Board (AUQA & NZUAAU) that signs off the report
- Public nature of the reports

GGP 10: Appeals
Providing an appropriate method for appeals against its decisions

- AUQA and QAA – mechanism in place
- NZUAAU – An alternative way of achieving the purpose – Institutional comments on disagreement are also published.
GGP 11: Collaboration

Collaborating with other agencies

- Examples of MoUs for QA of CBHE and for other specific aspects such as sharing of good practices

GGP 12: QA of CBHE

Establishing policies relating to both imported and exported higher education that are the same as those for domestic providers and domestic provision; Considering relevant guidelines issued by international agencies and other associations on CBHE; Consulting appropriate local agencies in the exporting or importing countries

- AUQA and QAA – Well in place – same standards for onshore and offshore
- NZUAAU – CBHE activity in the sector is not significant
3. ESG

ESG

Drafted by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) in consultation and co-operation with a few other stakeholders of Europe

The Standards for EQA agencies:
- taking into account the presence and effectiveness of other external QA processes
- formal recognition of the QA agency
ESG...

- undertaking external QA activities regularly
- adequate and proportional resources
- clarity in goals and objectives
- independence of the agency
- publicly available criteria of EQA
- accountability procedures

ESG

Impact of European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)
First deadline for applications - 3 October 2008

Australia is a Signatory State of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the Europe Region
AUQA’s alignment with ESG

• AUQA’s benchmarking project with two European QA agencies embarked in 2006
• ACQUIN (Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute)
• HETAC (Higher Education and Training Awards Council)
• ACQUIN and HETAC have been reviewed against ESG
• Mapping of GGP on ESG

4. UNESCO-OECD Guidelines
UNESCO-OECD Guidelines

• Developed involving all UNESCO and OECD Member States
• Address six stakeholders in HE
• governments, higher education institutions / providers including academic staff, student bodies, quality assurance and accreditation bodies, academic recognition bodies, and professional bodies

Ensure that the QA arrangements include CBHE provision in its various modes….

• AUQA’s audit scope includes all academic activities carried out in an institution’s name wherever they are offered.
• For each audit, a delegation of the audit panel visits select offshore locations and programs as a part of the audit.
UNESCO-OECD Guidelines…
Sustain and strengthen the existing regional and international networks ….

AUQA plays an active role in INQAAHE and APQN.
AUQA houses the Secretariat of the Asia Pacific Quality Network.
Staff volunteer time for various network activities.

UNESCO-OECD Guidelines…
Establish links to strengthen the collaboration between the bodies of the sending country and the receiving country...

‘country specialist’ responsibility of AUQA staff
UNESCO-OECD Guidelines…
Provide accurate and easily accessible information

Audit manual and other publications
Information in the AUQA website
Training programs, workshops and conferences
Audit reports and other analyses of the audit reports
Good Practice Database (GPDB)

UNESCO-OECD Guidelines…
Apply the principles reflected in current international documents on CBHE….

External Review of AUQA affirmed AUQA’s alignment with GGP
UNESCO-OECD Guidelines...
Reach mutual recognition agreements with other bodies …, develop systems of internal quality assurance and regularly undergo external evaluations, ….

MoU with four sister organisations: Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation and Vocational Qualifications, South Africa’s Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit (NZUAU), and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India.

UNESCO-OECD Guidelines...
… consider undertaking experiments in international evaluation …; Consider … international composition of peer review panels, international benchmarking of standards, … undertake joint assessment projects …

International auditors
Joint audit with the HEQC as part of the audit of Monash University in 2006.
Discussions continuing in Malaysia
Benchmarking project with two European QA agencies
In summary...
AUQA’s QA framework is in alignment with the international guidelines.

Internationally there is recognition that AUQA has a rigorous framework.

This is true for both QA of domestic and TNE operations.

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TNE QA Framework

Part 1: Audit Sampling
Materiality
Strategic Significance
Risk Management
Risk to Students
Host Country Accreditation
Necessity
Practicality
AUQA Visits to Partners & Offshore Campuses
(more than 90 partner/transnational campus visits)

AUQA Audits in
- Australia (10)
- Peoples Republic of China (13)
- Japan (1)
- Fiji (2)
- Hong Kong PRC (1)
- UAE (1)
- Thailand (1)
- Vietnam (3)
- S.Africa (1)
- Malaysia (13)
- Singapore (22)
- Sarawak, Malaysia (2)
- Indonesia (1)
- Partners in Australia (10)
Findings from the Audit Reports

- attention to the quality of TNE has improved
- increase in the committees and structures
- involvement of senior people
- Academic Board / Senate involvement

Need for better coordination

Findings from the Audit Reports

- Variation in partnerships
- Clarity in contracts/agreements
- Accountabilities of partners
- Selection of agents, training and review of agents
- Monitoring of off-shore partners
Findings from the Audit Reports

- Consistency in standards need more attention
- Staff orientation and Student induction need a more coordinated and consistent approach.

- Many exemplar practices
- Potential for cross institutional learning
- Good Practice Database (GPDB)