

BFUG9 14d

ENQA update to the Bologna Follow-Up Group, Helsinki, 12-13 October 2006

1. Introduction

The present document updates the BFUG on the current developments in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) since the BFUG meeting in Vienna in April 2006.

2. Stefanie Hofmann In Memoriam

The most difficult moment of this year for the whole Association was the receipt of the sad news of the death of ENQA Vice-President, Dr Stefanie Hofmann. On 15 July Dr Stefanie Hofmann unexpectedly passed away at her home, at the age of 36 years, as a consequence of diabetes. Stefanie had worked in higher education, notably in the field of curricular reforms as part of the Bologna Process, since 1998 and had been an ENQA Board Member from 2004. She devoted much time, effort and energy to ENQA's work and was an outstanding Vice-President, esteemed colleague and friend to many.

3. Activities related to Bologna Process

ENQA has participated actively in the work of the E4 Group (ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE). The E4 meetings since April 2006 have been concerned mostly with the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and with the organisation of the first European Quality Forum in November 2006. In April, a consultant (Bastian Baumann) was appointed to produce a report on the different possibilities for the realisation of the Register. In June he submitted a full and thorough report to be discussed by the E4 Group. ENQA provided, on behalf of the E4 Group, an interim report to the present BFUG meeting on the outcomes of the report and on the results of the discussion in the E4 Group. A final report will be submitted to the BFUG in March 2007.

4. External reviews of ENQA member agencies

ENQA's membership criteria require that its members should undergo an external review on a five-yearly basis. These are normally organised through national arrangements but, if this is not possible or the agency so requests, they can also be co-ordinated by ENQA. In order to clarify the relationship between national reviews and ENQA membership, the Board has agreed on a strategy which will make the recognition of the national reviews easier. As a part of this



strategy, ENQA has developed and adopted a set of National Review Guidelines, which provide guidance on the characteristics of national reviews that will be necessary for acceptance by ENQA for its membership purposes. The Guidelines will be published shortly in a hardcopy.

The first agencies that have had their ENQA membership reconfirmed on the basis of their national reviews were HETAC of Ireland (August 2006), EVA of Denmark (September 2006) and HsV of Sweden (September 2006). These decisions were taken by the ENQA Board on the basis of a rigorous examination of the review reports and, where necessary, of supplementary information.

5. ENQA General Assembly, Brussels, 21-22 September

The 8th ENQA General Assembly took place in Brussels on 21-22 September. The major decisions by the Assembly included:

- introduction of two new forms of formal relationship between ENQA and other bodies: association and affiliation;
- adoption of the National Review Guidelines;
- relocation of ENQA to Brussels by the end of 2009;
- introduction of a new staffing structure for the secretariat and enhancement of the role of the Secretary General;
- increase in the membership fees for the year 2007;
- adoption of a more functional and practical version of the regulations for the Association;
- agreement on the venues of the next two ENQA General Assemblies:
 - o 20-21 September 2007, Oslo, Norway, hosted by NOKUT
 - o 18-19 September 2008, Vienna, Austria, hosted by the Austrian ENQA member agencies and the German Akkreditierungsrat.

Following elections, the composition of the present ENQA Board is now as follows: Peter Williams, QAA, UK (President); Séamus Puirseil, HETAC, Ireland (Vice-President); Bruno Curvale, CNÉ, France (Vice-President); Guy Aelterman, NVAO, Flanders and the Netherlands; Sigbrit Franke, NAHE, Sweden; Tine Holm, EVA, Denmark; Gemma Rauret Dalmau, ANECA, Spain; Hermann Reuke, ZeVA, Germany; Kurt Sohm, FHR, Austria; and Tibor Szanto, HAC, Hungary.

6. Workshops and seminars



On 29-30 June, the QAA (UK) coordinated a two-day ENQA workshop on the 'Language of European Quality Assurance' at the University of Warwick, UK. The goal of this workshop was to improve understanding and communication amongst ENQA members by examining English words and phrases commonly used in quality assurance and to facilitate future attempts to develop glossaries of those words and phrases. A message board has been established on the ENQA website to facilitate exchanges on this topic amongst the members.

As for the future events, ANECA will host an ENQA workshop on student involvement in quality assurance (Madrid, 19-20 October 2006) and the Austrian FH Council will host an ENQA-CEEN seminar on the implementation of the Part 3 of the European Standards and Guidelines (Vienna, 4-5 December 2006).

7. Projects

The Transnational European Evaluation Project II (TEEP II) was concluded with a final conference (4-5 May 2006, Stockholm). TEEP II was a detailed follow-up to the first transnational European pilot project (TEEP I, 2002-2003). The project involved the development of a European-wide transnational quality evaluation scheme, which aspired to identify the means and common elements necessary for the delivery of quality education in Joint Master's Programmes. TEEP II evaluated three Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Programmes in three subject areas: water management; cultural and communication studies; and law and economics. The project was conducted by ENQA and by six of its member agencies, with financial support from the European Commission's SOCRATES programme.

ENQA is participating in the overall assessment and quality review of the Portuguese higher education system, together with OECD, EUA and EURASHE. The project is financed by the Portuguese Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education. ENQA is reviewing the present accreditation and quality assurance practices in the Portuguese higher education. The exercise started in December 2005 and the draft report by the expert team was submitted to the Portuguese authorities on 15 September 2006. The whole project is due to finish by the end of November 2006.

A follow-up project to the Quality Convergence Study (QCS) was launched in March 2006. The first QCS was completed in 2005 and concluded that mutual trust, knowledge and understanding were the key factors in any move towards the convergence of quality assurance processes in Europe and towards the construction of EHEA. The aim of QCS II is to continue further along this path by offering the member agencies of ENQA an opportunity to reflect together on the values that underpin their activities.

8. Publications



In June 2006 ENQA published "Mapping External Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe" in the series of ENQA Occasional Papers. It was a comparative survey by the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEEN), which charted how far the member agencies matched up to the good practice described in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

After the final conference in May of the second Transnational European Evaluation Project (TEEP II), ENQA published on its website three subject-specific reports (Water Management, Cultural and Communication Studies, Law and Economics) and a methodological report. In addition, the methodological report was published in hardcopy in September.

A report on the language of the European QA – a follow-up to the ENQA workshop of Warwick in June – as well as the report of the QCS II are due to be published by the end of the year.

9. ENQA website

As a consequence of taking the opportunity to register a web address under the European domain name, the website address and the e-mail addresses of the Association were changed – amending the endings from "net" to "eu" (www.enqa.eu). Between the end of August and beginning of September 2006 a restricted area was developed on the ENQA website. The purpose of the area is to serve the ENQA membership better and offer an additional information forum which gives the members a wider access to the documents of ENQA. The restricted area can also be used for other purposes, for instance as a discussion platform.

10. European and international collaboration

ENQA has collaborated, through common project planning and attendance at events, with several European and international actors, including:

- the Network of the Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEEN);
- the European University Association;
- the ENIC/NARIC networks;
- Council of Europe;
- INQAAHE;
- OECD.

In addition, CEEN and several other QA organisations from Europe and beyond have expressed their willingness to join ENQA as associates/affiliates now that this formal relationship has been adopted by the General Assembly.

