



Training kit

For supporting the continuous professional development of staff and students involved in internal and external quality assurance of higher education, including cross-border higher education and transnational education arrangements

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List of abbreviations

AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
AMBA	Association of MBAs
ANQA	National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation, Armenia
ATSU	Akaki Tsereteli State University, Georgia
AUA	American University of Armenia, Armenia
BSU	Bath Spa University, the UK
CBHE	cross-border higher education
CU	Caucasus University, Georgia
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EFMD	European Foundation for Management Development, Belgium
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQA	external quality assurance
EQUIS	European Quality Improvement System by EFMD
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines by ENQA
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
HEI	higher education institution
HER	Higher Education Review by QAA
ICT	Information Computer Technology
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning, France
IQA	internal quality assurance
JML	University Jean Moulin Lyon 3, France
LEPL	Legal Entity of Public Law (Georgia)
NCEQE	National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, Georgia
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBHE	Observatory on Borderless Higher Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QA	quality assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the United Kingdom
Quality Code	UK Quality Code for Higher Education
RAU	Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University, Armenia
TEMPUS	Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Studies
TLI	tertiary education institution
TNE	transnational education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VLE	virtual learning environment
WSCUC	WASC Senior College and University Commission, the USA

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Introduction

The current training kit (the kit) has been developed as part of the TEMPUS (Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Studies) project Promoting Quality and Recognition of Transnational Education in Armenia and Georgia (TNE-QA). It has been derived from the activities conducted under Workpackage 1, Capacity Building and the training sessions delivered using a blended learning approach during its implementation in the course of 2014.

The kit incorporates a series of five online quality assurance (QA) modules available in English and French languages, prepared by the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and specifically updated for the training sessions. These modules are used to allow participants to acquaint themselves prior to the face to face training sessions with concepts, options and international good practice in the QA of higher education, in general, and that of transnational education, in particular.

The kit also proposes a number of working sessions with content specifically derived from the two workshops conducted in Lyon and Gloucester under Workpackage 1. These sessions are recommended to be completed at higher education institutions (HEIs), and/or QA organisations/authorities, to further support the professional development of staff and students involved in internal and external QA systems.

The kit is structured to give the opportunity for analysis and discussion related to processes and arrangements in place with a focus on quality assurance/enhancement and internationalisation, including current cross-border higher education/transnational education arrangements. It also considers what needs to be developed in relation to quality assurance of transnational education, and what steps could be taken to achieve this.

Who can use this training kit?

The kit contains activities suitable for higher education institutions and quality assurance organisations/authorities. Throughout the kit, there is a double focus, in the tasks proposed, on internal quality assurance (IQA) arrangements and external quality assurance (EQA) systems. The organisers of the training may wish to be selective in regards to the activities proposed for their institution/organisation.

How to use this training kit

The kit can be used individually or collectively by staff and students of the same organisation/institution or different organisations/institutions. Group engagement may prove more effective as it allows for sharing of perspectives and practices, which can result in a more robust team understanding of the procedures and processes, and in effective adjustments at the level of specific institutional/departmental practices.

Each section: highlights questions, which can be considered initially in relation to the main topic; proposes various tasks, which are suitable for group discussions and focus groups; and outlines case studies collected from various project partners, which provide examples of different arrangements relevant for various national/regional contexts. The tasks may be used with group participants from the same organisation/institution or different organisations/institutions, in the latter case with a focus on a comparative approach. The sections also provide links to further information related to the topics under discussion. The annex gives examples of responses to the tasks, as collected during TNE-QA TEMPUS project activities completed under Workpackage 1.

Use by individual staff and students

Staff and students engaged in quality assurance structures by the nature of the role and responsibilities they hold can make individual use of the kit to enhance their own knowledge and understanding of QA. This may be done by: completing the online modules; by considering the topic questions in relation to their own role and experiences; by engaging with the case studies and taking a comparative view to their own institution; and by undertaking activities highlighted in the tasks proposed.

Use by participants within the same organisation/institution

If the main purpose is to develop quality assurance teams in one organisation/institution, then participants will be selected depending on their role within the organisation/institution and their potential contribution to group/team sessions. Participants should be encouraged to complete the online modules individually, as preliminary work, before group work commences. Once the online modules are completed, the organisers of the training will initiate group sessions where the topic questions are highlighted, the case studies presented, and the tasks proposed in the kit can serve as prompts for activities to be conducted. The aim is to reach a common understanding of where the organisation/institution is (also in relation to organisations/institutions described through the case studies) and what objectives it can feasibly set for the future. The current kit supports organisations/institutions to take a more strategic approach to QA and enhancement, and to prioritise directions which can be particularly relevant for institutional planning and development. The activities proposed allow for effective team building to ensure that, on completion of activities, staff and students engaged in QA operate as teams, with common understanding and shared goals. The opportunities for interaction facilitated by the kit enable teams to engage in constructive debate and critical thinking about arrangements in place, and possibilities for improvement and development. At the end of the training, teams should have become more aware of higher education QA realities; more confident in their understanding of QA requirements; more open to communication and collaboration for analysis and sharing of QA practices; and more knowledgeable in planning for developments at the level of the units they operate in, in particular with regard to the quality assurance of transnational education, which is the main objective of the project and thus this training kit.

Use by participants from different organisations/institutions

If the main purpose is to share and compare practices amongst institutions/organisations, then participants may be selected from different organisations/institutions. This facilitates a strong comparative approach and contributes to a broader understanding of the whole QA context beyond institutional borders. As with participants from the same organisation/institution, participants should be encouraged to complete the online modules individually, as preliminary work, before group work commences. Once the online modules are completed, the organisers of the training will initiate group sessions where the topic questions are highlighted, the case studies presented, and the tasks proposed in the kit can serve as prompts for activities to be conducted. In this situation, organisers should be aware of the need to build in more time for discussions relating to contextual specificities, details of particular approaches and the background underpinning practices in the various organisations/institutions which are being represented by the participants. The aim is to share realities, and to become more receptive to different approaches and more analytical in relation to diverse solutions and their level of applicability in the contexts being represented. This allows for adjustments and improvements to be drawn from the discussions and to be taken back for testing/piloting and implementation in participants' own organisations/institutions. It also creates the opportunity for inter-institutional cooperation, where organisations/institutions find themselves highly compatible or complementary. At the end of the training, participants: should have a better understanding of how their institutional

practices compare within a broader national/international context; should be enriched with ideas and solutions that can be adopted from others; and should be able to identify the level of adaptability necessary for these solutions to become operational in their own contexts; they should also be equipped with knowledge to better mitigate QA risk and to effectively respond to external requirements.

Under the TEMPUS project, we used the kit for workshops with participants from different institutions/organisations internationally i.e. HEIs in Armenia, Georgia, Germany, France and the UK, and organisations with a QA focus in higher education in Armenia, Georgia, France, Belgium and the UK. The Annex at the end of the kit will reflect outcomes derived from this cross-sharing of practices.

Whether you choose to use the kit individually or as part of team/group sessions, we hope you find the information and suggested activities useful in developing awareness and furthering the body of institutional knowledge relating to QA and enhancement systems.

The coordinators

Online modules

Staff and students at higher education institutions (HEIs) and quality assurance organisations who are involved in both internal quality assurance (IQA) and external quality assurance (EQA), and willing to engage with the training offer proposed in this kit, should start by completing the following IIEP training modules on *External quality assurance: options for higher education managers*. These have been prepared in both English and French languages and were specially updated for the project by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in France as part of this training kit.

The online modules allow for familiarisation with international quality assurance realities and propose a platform for further analysis of individual national contexts. Completing the online modules prior to the group sessions enables participants to develop a common understanding of issues relevant for debate, and facilitates the development of a coherent framework making discussions more compatible amongst participants.

About the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), France

IIEP aims to strengthen the capacity of countries to plan and manage their education systems. It was created by UNESCO in 1963 in Paris, France. It is an integral part of UNESCO, yet it enjoys a large amount of autonomy.

IIEP is a centre for training and research, specialising in educational planning and management. It does this by meeting the needs of countries in the development of their education systems. More than 5,000 experts and education officers have been trained by IIEP to date.

IIEP has developed online modules to support those developing QA systems, including those considering transnational education. These modules provide a starting point for those looking to develop a QA framework for transnational education. The modules provide extensive material that supplements this kit. The main aim is to support institutions and QA agencies in the development of education systems, with a focus on educational planning and management.

Module 1: Making Basic Choices for External Quality Assurance Systems

In Module 1, the reader is exposed to the international forces driving national governments (in both the developed and developing world) to establish QA systems for their HEIs and programmes. The reader will also be presented with key decisions that will have to be made in relation to the scope and the basic functioning of an EQA system.

Module 2: Understanding and Assessing Quality

Module 2 introduces the reader to the heart of the EQA question: how to measure quality. In this module, the module discusses basic approaches to quality measurement, such as the qualitative and quantitative approaches, with a particular focus on indicators for quality assessment.

Module 3: Conducting the Process of External Quality Assurance

Module 3 sets out options in the organisation of the QA process. While there is consensus on key elements, each stage of the process carries many different options, with major implications.

Module 4: Setting Up and Developing the Quality Assurance Agency

Module 4 exposes the reader to different ways of conceiving the role and functioning of the support structure, or agency, for EQA. Differences relate to administrative affiliation, governance and organisation, as well as to ways and means of ensuring the agency's accountability.

Module 5: Regulating and Assuring the Quality of Cross-Border Providers of Higher Education

Finally, Module 5 focuses on issues related to regulation and QA of cross-border providers. It presents the different options for designing regulatory and QA systems. It draws from country experiences and diverse national policy objectives such as increasing access, diversifying training opportunities, enhancing privatisation and stimulating competition between the public and private sectors within higher education.

The IIEP modules can be consulted in English and French at the links below, respectively:

English

www.iiep.unesco.org/en/promoting-quality-and-recognition-transnational-education-armenia-and-georgia-2663

French

www.iiep.unesco.org/fr/promouvoir-la-qualite-et-la-reconnaissance-de-leducation-transfrontaliere-en-armenie-et-en-georgie

Questions for reflection

Once the training modules are completed, participants are encouraged to reflect on the following questions.

- What additional knowledge and understanding have you derived?
- What aspects could you adapt to the context you operate in to allow for further development? Explain why this would be appropriate.
- What restrictions do you have in your context? How do these reflect on the potential for development?

Chapter 1 - Quality in Higher Education: Sharing Concepts and Terms

This section provides an introduction to the concepts of quality and quality assurance (QA). The purpose is to share views/opinions regarding quality in higher education and to agree on a language of QA which participants can relate to during their discussions. This provides preparation for the rest of the kit, as shared understanding is further used to discuss, design, plan, develop and implement QA processes throughout the practical activities proposed within.

The section starts by asking what makes a good institution, and what measures or plans are in place to improve the quality of teaching. The section builds on the preliminary work completed by engaging with the IIEP modules.

When developing a QA process, it is important to develop a list of common terms with definitions that can be understood by relevant stakeholders. The activity provides a suggested list of terms, and invites participants to agree on suitable definitions that are appropriate both for their own institution and within the national context in which they are working. These focus on QA in broader terms.

Definitions and terminology related specifically to transnational education is outlined in Chapter 4.

Questions for reflection

Participants are encouraged to answer the questions below individually and record the answers in the space provided. This gives the participants the opportunity to pinpoint individual views regarding quality assurance in higher education and will allow for a platform of initial debate once group work is initiated.

Name three characteristics, which, in your opinion, make a good quality institution:

1
2
3

Name three characteristics, which, in your opinion, make a good quality study programme:

1
2
3

Name three characteristics, which, in your opinion, make your institution distinctive/special/attractive to students and other stakeholders:

1

2

3

If you could change one thing at your institution or organisation to promote quality, what would that be? Can this be immediately changed? If not, what prevents it?

What plans does your institution/organisation have for the future regarding quality enhancement?

In order to implement these plans, what further information/knowledge/experience would your institution/organisation benefit from? You may wish to distinguish between information/knowledge/experience related to the following broader topics:

- internal quality assurance,
- external quality assurance,
- internationalisation of higher education
- cross-border activities or transnational higher education
- any other topic (please specify).

Information/knowledge/ experience about...	Topic it relates to	How would it benefit your institution?

For you to be able to better support your institution/organisation to implement these plans, what further information/knowledge/experience would you benefit from? You may wish to distinguish between information/knowledge/experience related to the following broader topics:

- internal quality assurance,
- external quality assurance,
- internationalisation of higher education
- cross-border activities or transnational higher education
- any other topic (please specify).

You may wish to return to this list once the training is completed to record your learning points.

Information/knowledge/experience about...	Topic it relates to	How would it support your role?	Learning points (to be completed after training)

Activity: Reaching common understanding, agreeing common terminology

Scope of session

To discuss in-depth some of the quality assurance terms related to QA mechanisms and intended processes which the project will be working with. To decide the terminology that will be applicable for the development, implementation and enhancement of QA systems.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

Pick one of the cluster areas. Agree a definition for the terms in that area (also by comparison to other terms in the cluster, if possible). The terms provided here are suggested. It may be more appropriate to use other terms and this will become apparent as the task is completed.

Use the table below to record your discussions and decisions.

Cluster 1	Definition
Quality assurance	
Quality enhancement	
Quality culture	
Internal quality assurance	
External quality assurance	

Cluster 2	Definition
Accreditation Evaluation Review/Peer review Audit	
Cluster 3	Definition
Quality model (system of standards) Reference points Standards Guidelines Benchmark Criteria Expectation Indicator Threshold/minimal standard	
Cluster 4	Definition
Higher education framework Student engagement (representation) Employer involvement (work-based learning) Staff development Innovative teaching methods	

Task 2

Compare your definitions with the ones presented in the Annex, page 83. Highlight any major differences in understanding. Revisit your definitions, if necessary.

Task 3

Refine your definitions by making reference to the following publications.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

Terminology of Quality Assurance: Towards Shared European Values?

www.engq.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/occasional-papers/terminology_v01.pdf

Harvey, L., 2004-14, *Analytic Quality Glossary*, Quality Research International

<http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/>

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Glossary of terms

www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary

UNESCO-CEPES

Quality Assurance and Accreditation: A Glossary of Basic Terms and Definitions

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001346/134621e.pdf>

Chapter 2 - Internal and External Quality Assurance Processes

This section considers the development of quality assurance systems, both at institutional level and at national level. The purpose is to ensure that there are suitable internal and external quality assurance systems in place prior to considering the quality assurance of cross-border higher education/transnational higher education.

The section starts by asking what the different roles are within an institution in relation to quality assurance. It also asks what quality assurance systems participants currently have in place at both an institutional and national level.

It is important that quality assurance systems are developed that meet the requirements of the country in which participants are operating. The first two case studies provide examples of internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions in Armenia and Georgia, what their characteristics are and how they operate.

The activities guide participants to consider good practice and areas for improvement within an institution's own QA system, but also in relation to national systems in place. The first activity provides the opportunity to share and learn from other's good practice by direct discussions and/or by deriving conclusions from the case studies presented. It also encourages the participants to prioritise those areas identified as good practice or for improvement, and consider plans for institutions to improve in these areas.

The development of an external QA system has an obvious impact on processes within an institution. The last three case studies in this section focus on national QA systems in Georgia, Armenia and the UK, and exemplify the contexts in which the QA authorities work, the specificities of their individual systems and methodologies, and the responsibilities they assume at national level. Hence, the second activity in this section asks participants to consider the national QA systems in their own countries and how they impact on institutions, both in terms of benefits to the institutions and challenges.

The case studies and the activities proposed encourage reflection on the potential to develop recommendations for the improvement of internal and external QA systems following group/team discussions.

Questions for reflection

Participants may consider these questions individually or they may be used by session facilitators as an icebreaker for group discussion. The session facilitator will select those questions for discussion which are most pertinent for the group.

- 1 How are you involved in quality structures at your institution?
- 2 In what formal contexts/structures are quality matters discussed in your institution?
Are you directly involved?
- 3 In what informal contexts are quality matters discussed in your institution?
Are you directly involved?
- 4 What external quality assurance mechanisms are in place in your country?
- 5 In your opinion, how does the external quality assurance system impact on the internal quality assurance system at your institution?

- 6 In your opinion, how could external quality assurance mechanisms be further improved to better support institutions in your country with the quality agenda?
- 7 What are the compulsory quality assurance mechanisms that you are required to put in place in your institution? At which level do they apply i.e. institutional, programme level? Are they discipline-specific? Which organisation is in charge of control/supervision?
- 8 What are the optional/voluntary quality assurance mechanisms that you can decide to put in place in your institution? At which level do they apply i.e. institutional, programme level? Are they discipline-specific? Which organisation is in charge of control/supervision?
- 9 Does your institution follow the external quality assurance mechanisms of your host country? If not, what criteria do you apply?

Internal quality assurance systems, methods and requirements

In considering the case studies below, participants may wish to think about the following aspects. Further analysis on the case studies is proposed in the tasks which follow.

Case study: Internal quality assurance processes, methods and requirements

presented by

American University of Armenia (AUA), Armenia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the systems in place at AUA similar to those you are familiar with in your own context? Could they be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Are the resources described by AUA similar to those you deploy in your own context? Could they be developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Can you recognise from your own context the challenges identified below? Do you have suggestions for overcoming such challenges?

The **American University of Armenia** presents an outline of the existing QA structures, processes, and policies in place at AUA and some of the challenges associated with implementation.

A Systems in place

- a AUA Mission: <http://aua.am/the-aua-mission/>
- b Guidelines for the Review of Academic Programmes: <http://iro.aua.am/learning-assessment/>
- c Guidelines for the Review of Academic Support Units: <http://iro.aua.am/files/2012/04/Guidelines-for-Review-of-Academic-Support-Units-FINAL.docx>
- d Annual Student Learning Assessment Guidelines
 - i Annual Student Learning Assessment in all academic programmes
 - ii Plans and reports
 - iii Closing the loop
- e Policies - online: <http://aua.am/policies/>
- f Financial audits
- g Annual reports
 - i Accreditation
 - ii Ministry of Education and Science
 - iii Various Associations

B Resources

- a AUA Mission: <http://aua.am/the-aua-mission/>
- b Institutional Research Office: <http://iro.aua.am/>
- c Office of Assessment and Accreditation
- d Workshops, presentations, trainings, support sessions (including online library of materials): <http://iro.aua.am/faculty-workshops/>
- e Accreditation Steering Committee
- f Overall process of accreditation

- i Handbook of Accreditation:
www.wascsenior.org/content/2013-handbook-accreditation
 - ii Standards of Accreditation:
www.wascsenior.org/resources/handbook-accreditation-2013/part-ii-core-commitments-and-standards-accreditation/wasc-standards-accreditation-2013
 - g Deans, Associate Deans, programme Chairs, Unit Heads
 - h Templates and Forms
 - i Syllabus Template:
<http://iro.aua.am/files/2012/04/Course-Syllabus-Template-Final.docx>
 - ii Student Learning Assessment Plan and Report Templates:
<http://iro.aua.am/files/2012/04/SLAP-Template.docx>
 - iii Aligning programme Goals, Program-based Student Learning Outcomes, and Course-Based Student Learning Outcomes - Template (part of syllabus template)
 - iv Survey and Data Report Usage Forms
- C Challenges
 - a Faculty workload related to workload policy
 - i Building capacity
 - ii Administrative Support in the academic programmes (related to budget)
 - iii Availability and ability to serve in audit role
 - b Consistency of implementation across programmes

Case study: Internal quality assurance processes, methods and requirements

presented by

Akaki Tsereteli State University (ATSU), Georgia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the QA roles and responsibilities described at ATSU similar to those you are familiar with in your own context? Could these be further developed? What can you retain for your own context?
- Are you familiar with the practice of self-assessment from your own context? If yes, is it used to similar aims? Can the practice described at ATSU be developed? What can you retain for your own context?

The Akaki Tsereteli State University (ATSU)

was founded eight decades ago to promote:

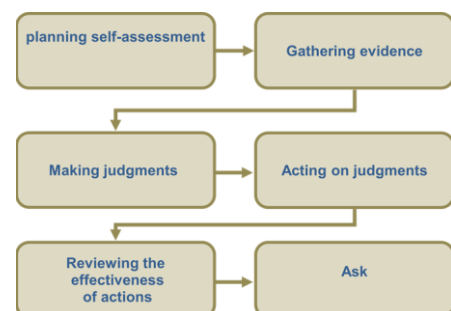
- good governance and rule of law
- innovative and interdisciplinary research
- academic and vocational programmes
- establishment of humanistic, democratic, national and international values
- preserving the past and promoting innovations.

QA at ATSU plans and manages the process of:

- preparing Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programmes for accreditation
- promoting the internal and external assessment of the programmes
- preparing the annual self-assessment report to the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement
- promoting the integration of ATSU into international education space
- introducing European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
- improving the quality of teaching, learning, managing and research by making enquiries, analysing data, and giving the correspondent recommendations
- organising training for personal and professional development of ATSU staff and establishing contacts with other educational institutions and stakeholders
- internationalisation.

By systematic self-assessment we:

- review how well we are doing and what we need
- compare our performance against that of previous benchmarks
- find out about the needs of our learners and other groups
- bring together all the information we have about
- prepare for annual reviews and for inspection.



While doing self-assessment the focus varies depending on teaching, learning, infrastructure, management and resources.

Relevant questions to be asked during self-assessment stages:

- Have actions been completed?
- What impact have they had?
- What worked?
- What didn't work?
- What changes do we need to make the quality of planning process better?

Activity: Areas of improvement for quality assurance arrangements in institutions/organisations represented

Scope of session

To identify current structures and processes of quality assurance arrangements in organisations/institutions represented and to agree on areas of good practice (what works well) and areas of improvement (what needs attention).

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

Propose a list of five QA areas which are either good practice or in need of improvement (the list should be drawn up by prioritising from amongst the areas identified in the institutions you are representing). Compare your list with the one proposed by TEMPUS project partners in the Annex, page 85.

Priority (indicate a number)	Area	Good practice or to be improved (you may want to differentiate for the institutions represented, if different)

Task 2

Consult the case studies above, and decide what areas of good practice and areas of improvement can be derived. Go back to the priority list at Task 1 and decide if any changes are deemed necessary based on the conclusions of Task 2. Revise the table above accordingly.

Good practice	To be improved

Task 3

Using the list of priorities compiled under Task 1, brainstorm concrete actions for development and record these in the action plan template below.

Action plan template						
Area (indicate priority number)	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes (ensure full QA cycle is considered)	Target date(s)	Action by (a role, not named person)	Reported to	Evidence (how will you demonstrate it is happening)

External quality assurance systems, methods and requirements

In considering the case studies below, participants may wish to think about the following aspects. Further analysis on the case studies is proposed in the tasks which follow.

Case study: External quality assurance processes, methods and requirements

presented by

National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE), Georgia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Which activities by NCEQE do you consider most interesting and which most challenging? Explain your answer.
- Are the developments in QA for higher education described below similar to your own context? What are the differences? What are the similarities?
- Does the EQA authority in your own context cover the same types of responsibilities regarding higher education? What are the differences? What are the similarities?

The **National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE)** has as its declared mission statement to continuously work on the development of the concept of education quality; create and maintain up-to-date standards; and ensure related mechanisms for compliance and continuous improvement in line with the country's overall strategy and collective goals of integration into the international community.

NCEQE supports establishment of the necessary teaching and academic conditions within higher, vocational and general education institutions.

The vision of NCEQE is that educational institutions in Georgia should serve as solid and sustainable knowledge networks dedicated to continuous development in line with the rest of the civilised world; NCEQE will constantly strive for the formation of competent and independent individuals, and contribute to the scientific, cultural, social and economic development of the country.

NCEQE was founded on September 2010 as a legal successor of LEPL, National Center for Educational Accreditation under the law of Georgia on Educational Quality Enhancement.

The main activities of NCEQE are:

- authorisation of educational institutions
- accreditation on a programme level
- recognition of education (foreign education, licensed universities, refugees and IDPs)
- apostille, legalisation
- implementation of the Bologna Process and promoting internationalisation of higher education
- maintaining higher education and VET register
- system and capacity building of vocational education.

Georgian Context

The establishment of NCEQE reflected an increased focus on quality of education and triggered a number of changes on the implementation level as well as to the legislative basis.

As a result of amendments made to the Law of Georgia on Higher Education and Law of Georgia on General Education, September 2010, mandatory licensing and institutional accreditation were substituted by the authorisation procedure.

Authorisation Standards: <http://eqe.ge/res/docs/2014120816204360562.pdf>

Authorisation Procedures: <http://eqe.ge/eng/static/153/accreditation/procedure>

The content of accreditation was also modified - it establishes the compatibility of an educational programme with accreditation standards, and aims at introducing regular self-evaluation for the improvement of education quality and promotion of further development of QA. Authorisation is a mandatory procedure for educational institutions, whilst accreditation is a voluntary one.

Accreditation Standards: <http://eqe.ge/res/docs/2014120816393520902.pdf>

Accreditation Procedures: <http://eqe.ge/eng/static/153/accreditation/procedure>

The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia launched institutional accreditation in 2004, and on 27 March 2006 the National Center for Educational Accreditation was founded. The Center was authorised to carry out institutional accreditation in higher, vocational and general education institutions of Georgia.

The procedures for authorisation of educational institutions and programme accreditation are similar, though standards differ. The overall procedure entails:

- submission of the application, which is preceded by self-evaluation
- setting-up the peer commission
- site visit
- preparation of the peer report and familiarisation of it to the interested parties
- holding hearing by the council
- making and publishing a decision.

The legislative changes that took place with a leading role of NCEQE since its establishment were as follows.

- Adoption of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) by the decree No. 120 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia on 10 December 2010. The document includes all the qualifications and different levels of general, vocational and higher education competences that exist in Georgia. The NQF defines what type of knowledge, skills and values an individual should have in order to receive a certifying document of completion at a corresponding level - School Certificate (Attestat), Vocational Diploma and Diploma (National Qualifications Framework: http://eqe.ge/eng/education/national_qualifications_framework).
- Law on Educational Quality Enhancement, which defines legal mechanisms (internal and external) for enhancement of educational quality.

- Amendments to the Law on higher education in order to establish authorisation of educational institutions and programme accreditation. This led to the adoption of regulations for authorisation and programme accreditation.
- The adoption of NQF and defining the list of qualifications paved the ground for developing sector benchmarks. So far, sector benchmarks in three regulated professions have been adopted: Law, Medicine and Teacher Education.

Case study: External quality assurance processes, methods and requirements

presented by

National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA), Armenia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Which part of the EQA system described by ANQA do you consider most interesting and which most challenging? Explain your answer.
- How does the EQA procedure below compare with the one applied in your own system? Could the ANQA procedure be further developed? What can you retain as good practice for your own systems?
- What is your experience of peer review processes? How does it compare with the system described below?

The National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA)

is a QA agency independent of the Republic Act Government and Tertiary Level Institutions. ANQA strives to promote public trust, social cohesion, equity, responsibility and competitiveness through systematic enhancement of tertiary level education provisions.

ANQA has adopted a quality definition, which characterises quality as fitness for purpose. According to this concept, external evaluation has to decide to what extent the service or product meets the goals set.

The IQA of tertiary level institutions (TLIs) is a fundamental element of the Armenian QA framework. It is a process through which a TLI assures itself and its stakeholders that it consistently reaches the highest standards possible in all aspects of its activities. In the context of accountability, IQA is used as a mechanism to monitor performance. IQA is a tool to ensure that TLIs fulfil the demands and needs of society. It also allows for the maintenance of an essential level of TLI autonomy.

It indicates that the TLIs' social responsibility, accountability, transparency and external verification of the IQA policy and procedures is required. QA criteria, standards and processes have been developed to monitor this.

Armenian EQA entails two types of accreditation. Institutional accreditation is a mandatory process for both private and public institutions. It allows for periodic evaluation of how well an institution is operating and whether it serves the mission for which it was established. Academic programme accreditation is a voluntary process undertaken by TLIs, although it is mandatory for medical science programmes, both at public and private institutions.

Academic programme accreditation provides recognition of the qualifications awards at both national and international levels, including the accumulation and transfer of valid credits. It also enables financial allocation on the part of the Armenian Government. Thus, programme accreditation is a necessary condition for financing. It does not imply, however, that the finances will be allocated automatically once programme accreditation is granted. Institutional accreditation is a prerequisite for academic programme accreditation.

ANQA is the only organisation authorised by the Republic Act Government to take care of the EQA provisions.

Accreditation, both institutional and academic programme, is carried out in three consecutive phases:

First phase	self-assessment conducted by the educational institution
Second phase	site visit carried out by an independent external expert panel
Third phase	production of the final report by expert panel and decision making by ANQA Accreditation Committee.

A self-analysis is a process in which the TLI and the academic programme are to be engaged annually. There are a number of phases to accreditation, starting with self-assessment. The TLI carries out an internal evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of its strategies, and to detect the problems and areas in need of improvement. The self-assessment considers the past five years according to the criteria and standards for institutional or programme accreditation. The university considers:

- what the university has planned/or wants and tries to do within the frames of the standard
- what processes are actually implemented in the university
- how the university ensures that the set mechanisms are effective, how the university evaluates these mechanisms, what data has been gathered, what analysis has been carried out and further developments based on the outcomes
- what changes have been made in the university for the improvement of processes.

ANQA decides on the act of acceptance or rejection of the self-assessment, drawing on the procedure set forth in the Accreditation Statute.

A peer review panel then examines the self-evaluation report in order to:

- identify the strengths and weaknesses of TLI/academic programme function, drawing on evidence for each standard, and identify insufficient or missing documentation, as well as extraneous and unorganised evidence
- outline the areas in need for further exploration and evaluation
- outline the scope of activities to be carried out, as well as a set of respective issues/questions to be explored the during the site visit.

During the desk review, the peer review panel endeavors to provide answers to the following questions, which will feed into the draft preliminary report.

- Does the self-assessment report provide an in-depth analysis of the situation, drawing on the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning institutions?
- Does the self-assessment report provide enough evidence for the analysis?
- Does the self-assessment report evolve around and make use of the relevant standards and benchmarks?
- Does the evidence stem from reliable sources?
- Does the self-assessment provide a list of activities aimed at the improvement of the areas in need?

The panel is also guided by the management principle of plan-do-check-act while examining the self-evaluation and relevant documentation. A site visit is then undertaken with the aim of:

- checking the validity of the self-assessment statement
- assessing the facilities
- obtaining additional information through interacting with staff and students
- observing the educational process
- accessing documentation
- scrutinising tangible evidence of students achievements.

The experts' final report consists of a number of sections. The findings are the facts and data identified based on the self-evaluation report and site visit. The facts can also be revealed during the review of the documents attached that will enable the making of judgments for the assessment of the standard. The considerations are the statements based on the findings that lead to the judgment. They note whether the university meets or does not meet the standard, and serve as a basis for the recommendations. In these sections the panel identifies the areas/processes, as well as the issues that need improvement. A judgement identifies if the university meets, or does not meet, the requirements of the individual standards.

Each report contains a section, called peer review, which is done on the basis of international standards, resulting in a number of observations and recommendations related to the ambition of HEIs to enter the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). At first the panels point out some general observation on the university, then put forward some recommendations, which can help the university to move forward into the EHEA. Most of these recommendations are meant to encourage universities to continue the work already done. In general, the panels' recommendations relate to issues as a result of the university's aim to implement changes in accordance with the Bologna process. These issues concern amongst others: a more productive relationship with the external stakeholders; the further modernisation of the educational concept; substantial efforts to increase research volume and quality; and further investment in internationalisation¹.

After submitting the final report, the university writes a follow up plan based on the recommendation. This plan is evaluated by the review panel and sent to the Accreditation Committee. The university writes a follow-up report every six months in the case of conditional accreditation, or two years in the case of full accreditation.²

¹ <http://www.anqa.am/en/Portals/0/ANQA%20Accreditation%20Manual.pdf>

² <http://www.anqa.am/en/Portals/0/STATUTE%20ON%20STATE%20ACCREDITATION.pdf> .

Case study: Higher Education Review (HER)

presented by

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), United Kingdom

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Which part of the system described by QAA do you consider most interesting and which most challenging? Explain your answer.
- How does the methodology compare with the one applied in your own system? Could the QAA methodology be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- What is your experience of peer review processes? How does it compare with the system described below?

The **Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)** conducts all review activity

by consideration of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code).³ This is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education providers as it makes clear what higher education providers are required to do, what they can expect of each other, and what the general public can expect of them. The Quality Code covers all four nations of the UK and all providers of UK higher education operating overseas. It protects the interests of all students, regardless of where they are studying or whether they are full-time, part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate students.

The most recent review method QAA is working with is called Higher Education Review (HER); it composes a number of stages as detailed in the HER Handbook.⁴ These include submission of a self-evaluation document, accompanied by evidence, desk-based analysis conducted by a review team composed of peers (staff and students), a visit at the provider, the production and publication of the report containing the findings, and the development of an action plan based on the report (see timeline provided in number of weeks).

-16	• Preparatory meeting
-12	• Document upload; desk-based analysis begins
-9	• Request for additional evidence
-6	• Provider uploads additional evidence
-4	• First team meeting
0	• Review visit
+2	• Key findings letter
+6	• Draft report
+9	• Provider comments on draft report
+12	• Report published
+22	• Provider publishes action plan

There are four judgement areas which higher education providers are expected to meet: the setting and/or maintenance of academic standards, the provision of learning opportunities, the provision of information, and the enhancement of the quality of students' learning opportunities.

³ More information on the Quality Code is available here:

www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code

⁴ More information on Higher Education Review is available here:

www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/HER-handbook-14.pdf

Activity: External requirements and how partner institutions respond

Scope of session

To discuss the link between external quality assurance and internal quality assurance, by eliciting the benefits and challenges external quality assurance requirements bring to internal quality assurance arrangements. To decide on how EQA can better support IQA.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

Identify three major benefits and three major challenges external quality assurance has on internal quality assurance, from the perspective of higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies/organisations. Record these in the table provided. Compare with the benefits and challenges recorded by TEMPUS project partners in the Annex, page 87. Have TEMPUS partners identified any additional benefits/challenges which you have not thought about?

Benefits	Challenges

Task 2

Analyse the case studies presented above. Agree which aspects are supportive of HEIs and which aspects pose challenges for HEIs.

Supportive	Challenging

Task 3

If you were to set up your own regulatory framework by a compilation of the three systems proposed above in the case studies, what would you retain in your procedure and what would you do away with?

Retain	Dismiss

Task 4

Formulate three recommendations to external QA authorities/organisations to ensure a more supportive approach to internal quality assurance. Compare your list with the one compiled by TEMPUS project partners. Having seen the recommendations formulated under TEMPUS, would you change your recommendations?

Recommendations

Additional resources

ENQA

Transparency of European Higher Education through Public Quality Assurance Reports
[www.enqa.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/occasional-papers/Transparency per cent20of per cent20European per cent20higher per cent20education per cent20through per cent20public per cent20quality per cent20assurance per cent20reports per cent20\(EQArep\).pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/occasional-papers/Transparency%20of%20European%20higher%20education%20through%20public%20quality%20assurance%20reports%20(EQArep).pdf)

QAA

Higher education review methods in the UK
www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education

NCEQE

Accreditation Standards and Criteria for Higher Education in Georgia
<http://eqe.ge/res/docs/2014120816393520902.pdf>

Chapter 3 - Internationalisation of Higher Education and Cross-Border Activities

This section considers the aims of internationalisation and how cross-border higher education activities fit into an overall strategy for an institution or country's international strategy for higher education. The purpose is to ensure there is an awareness of why internationalisation is important and a plan in place to achieve identified aims.

The section starts by asking what the key features of internationalisation and cross-border activities are, and how these link to quality assurance. It also asks about the benefits and challenges in these areas.

The first two case studies provide examples of university approaches to internationalisation, and the relationship to cross-border activities, more specifically. The third considers the importance of professional accreditation, in particular in subjects that have a global relevance.

In today's globalised world the argument is that it is important for higher education institutions to have a clear internationalisation strategy, to include all cross-border activities, prior to setting up specific QA processes. The activity in this section encourages consideration of the main aims for internationalisation, which will vary across countries and institutions. It then provides an opportunity to develop plans for internationalisation that are important within the participants' own institutions/organisations.

Questions for reflection

Participants may consider these questions individually or they may be used by session facilitators as an icebreaker for group discussion. The session facilitator will select those questions for discussion which are most pertinent for the group.

- 1 In your opinion, what are the key features of internationalisation? What are the benefits and challenges?
- 2 In your opinion, how would you describe cross-border higher education activities? What are the key characteristics?
- 3 Does your institution engage in cross-border higher education activities? For what programmes? If yes, how is it quality assured? Please describe internal and external mechanisms.
- 4 In your opinion, what are the particular challenges of cross-border higher education activities? And what are the challenges to the quality assurance of cross-border higher education?

Case Study: Internationalisation

presented by

Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University (RAU), Armenia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the systems in place at RAU similar to those you are familiar with in your own context, in what regards internationalisation activities? Could they be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Can you recognise from your own context the challenges identified below? Can you provide supplementary suggestions for overcoming these challenges?
- What do you think of the general recommendations below for an internationalisation strategy? Are there recommendations that you could add to the list from your own experience?

The **Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University (RAU)** is one of the leading universities in the South Caucasus region, founded under the joint authority of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia in 1997. The University holds a license for performing educational activity from the Ministries of Education and Science of both the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation. Licenses for providing particular academic programmes (undergraduate and graduate) are granted by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, therefore all programmes are in compliance with requirements and standards provided by Russian legislation. According to the intergovernmental agreement on establishment of universities, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia automatically recognises all licenses of academic programmes released by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. In the scope of all such academic programmes, students obtain Double Diploma accredited by both Armenian and Russian Ministries of Education and Science

The first intake of students was held in February 1999 for the Departments of Law, Public and Municipal Administration, and Journalism. Since then RAU has been constantly growing and encompassing new branches of learning and research. In 2005 Armenia joined the Bologna process. Currently, five institutes with 31 departments operate in RAU, which offers a wide range of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programmes in more than 70 fields of studies. RAU offers 18 undergraduate, four one-cycle Master's programmes (five to six years), and 42 graduate and 50 PhD programmes. Along with the full-time programmes, since 2013 RAU offers nine undergraduate and five Master's programmes part-time.

The University has five institutes:

- the Institute of Economics and Business
- the Institute of Law and Politics
- the Institute of Humanities
- the Institute of Mathematics and Higher Technology
- the Institute of Media and Advertisement.

The internationalisation process is undertaken based on a decentralised approach. Overall coordination of this process is maintained by the Department of International

Cooperation,⁵ while managers of international cooperation are also appointed at RAU institutes and the Department of Research and Innovation. Furthermore, since RAU participates in 10 TEMPUS project, special general coordinators on internal and external matters of these projects were appointed by the rector in order to ensure the universal approach toward implementation and management of TEMPUS projects at RAU. Moreover, each international project (TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus, Erasmus+, Visegrad Foundation, EaP grants, DAAD) has its local coordinator and a working group.

Before the establishment of the Department of International Cooperation in 2011, there was no specific structure performing overall development of internationalisation strategy and overall monitoring of international projects at RAU. The establishment of such a structure has proven to be efficient; in this period of less than four years the number of ongoing international partnerships and projects drastically arose, including the international mobility.

Before 2011, RAU had 97 partner institutions from 14 countries, Russia being the main partner country. RAU had only nine European Union partners. RAU was involved in one TEMPUS project and one United States Agency for International Development (USAID) project. RAU was offering a Joint Master's Degree programme jointly with a European partner, the Swiss Business School,⁶ being the first HEI in Armenia to launch Joint Master's Degree programme.

As of December 2014, RAU cooperates with 196 partner institutions from 41 countries, 64 of which are from 24 European Union countries.⁷ Moreover, RAU participates in 10 TEMPUS projects, along with Erasmus Mundus, FP7, DAAD, Twinning, USAID, Visegrad Foundation EaP and other international projects.⁸ The mobility flows of both incoming and outgoing students and staff significantly increase. RAU has also launched a second Joint Master's Degree programme with the University of Glasgow.⁹

General risks and barriers that most HEIs are facing in the process of internationalisation of programmes and services they offer, are as follows.

Absence of strategy on internationalisation

It is highly important to have an internationalisation strategy that will be one of the key elements of the institution's overall strategy. This is a significant factor, not only because it puts forward particular aims and objectives of internationalisation, but also due to the fact that the highest authorities of an institution adopt the latter, and thus the implementation of an internationalisation strategy becomes an institutional goal.

Lack of commitment of top management

Often, top management of institutions that have been providing educational services mostly on a local basis are reluctant to allocate resources (human and financial) in developing and implementing internationalisation strategies. Therefore, there is a need to further promote the internationalisation of education in many universities in various countries.

Poor management of internationalisation process

The lack of a particular management system of the internationalisation process can lead to inefficiency of certain activities. Management of this process can be either centralised or decentralised, but unconditionally it should be adopted to the needs and resources of the HEI.

⁵ More information available here: <http://international.rau.am/eng>

⁶ More information available here: <http://bs.rau.am/?cid=13>

⁷ RAU partners: <http://international.rau.am/eng/partners>

⁸ RAU international partners: <http://international.rau.am/eng/international-projects>

⁹ RAU Joint Degree Programmes: <http://international.rau.am/eng/study-abroad/joint-programmes>

Lack of commitment and motivation of academic and administrative staff

While piloting the approaches of internationalisation of education, it is a common practice to assign different tasks related to this process to the academic and administrative staff already working in the institution. Considering the fact that in most public universities in Armenia the academic and administrative staff are overloaded with work and have low salaries as opposed to the average salary in the market, staff can have a lack of commitment and motivation to perform additional work.

Lack of experience

Even in the case of staff having motivation and commitment, another obstacle is the lack of experience of staff in writing project proposals, project management, intercultural communication etc. At the same time, the majority of students are inexperienced in participating in international projects and initiatives, or preparing and submitting applications and documents.

Language barriers

Furthermore, there is a significant language barrier both among staff and students. Although most of the younger staff have sufficient knowledge of a foreign language, most of middle-aged staff have poor knowledge of a foreign language, which creates a huge obstacle in initiating and implementing international projects even when the staff have enough capacity and skills for given activities.

Cultural differences

Considering that the process of internationalisation assumes intensive interaction of representatives of different nationalities and cultures, cultural differences both in personal and business communication can create some barriers.

Low flows in mobility programmes

The mobility of staff and students is a significant part of the internationalisation process. However, considering the high travel and living costs for Armenians in European Union countries, Russian Federation and other countries of common destination, few people can afford to participate in such programmes at their own costs. Moreover, the universities mostly do not allocate special funds for promoting mobility. Additionally, traditions, cultural traits and family can be reasons for reduced participation in mobility programmes.

Bearing in mind all of these issues, we have made the following general recommendations:

Adopt a strategy on internationalisation

Encourage the management of the university to develop and adopt a comprehensive internationalisation strategy by involving not only the experts in internationalisation, but also academic and administrative staff that will be involved during the implementation of the internationalisation strategy.

Distribute tasks accordingly

Develop an efficient management system adopted to the needs and resources of the institution. In the case of smaller institutions or institutions with few financial resources, it is recommended to use a decentralised management system by distributing the tasks between faculties and departments.

Develop strategies and tools for training and retraining staff

In order to overcome the lack of experience among staff and raise motivation, it is recommended to develop strategies and tools for training and retraining. It is of particular importance to enhance the administrative and managerial skills of academic staff in order to enable them to initiate and participate in international projects.

Develop tools for encouraging staff

Tools for promoting and motivating staff should also be developed, not only including financial encouragement, but also providing opportunities to participate in international mobility, granting special points in a staff ranking system, for example.

Create tools for improving the language skills of staff

Develop special approaches for promoting the enhancement of language skills among staff, such as creating special courses or requiring the presentation of proof of language knowledge (such as a certificate from a language centre or test scores) in a given period of time.

Provide international services

Create special structures or appoint special staff that will assist incoming and outgoing students and staff to apply and participate in international projects, including mobility programmes. These services should also include, not only the academic and administrative services, but also assistance in obtaining visas and finding accommodation etc.

Create a database of international partners

Develop a comprehensible database of international partners that contains all relevant details about ongoing partnerships. The database should be shared among all faculties, departments and staff in order to make the information transparent and enable the maximum exploitation of such partnerships. The database should be regularly updated.

Create websites and e-platforms

Develop and regularly update the English version of your website, adapted to the needs and interests of foreign students and international partners, which will allow all relevant information to be readily accessed. In the case of high flows of mobility, create or obtain a special e-platform or intranet for managing the mobility programmes in a systematic manner.

Case Study: Internationalisation and cross-border education

presented by

Caucasus University (CU), Georgia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- How does the approach and the internationalisation activities described below compare to your own context?
- Could they be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Are requirements highlighted for setting up partnerships similar to requirements you have in your own context? What are the differences? What are the similarities?

Caucasus University (CU) has a long history of international collaboration. It provides double degrees, joint degrees and exchange programmes in Business Administration, Law, Media Studies, Governance, Tourism, Economics and Healthcare, Information Technology and Humanities. Its strategic plan for 2014-20 demonstrates its commitment to internationalisation. Most of its academic programmes are developed and accredited in both Georgian and English. Proficiency in the English language is required at all levels of study; CU provides intensive English courses for all students at Bachelor's level and in some programmes at Master's level.

Since 2005, CU has developed partnerships with more than 96 universities in countries including the USA, Canada, France, Germany, UK, Austria, Netherland, Poland, Greece, Japan, South Korea and Lithuania. The university has implemented five dual/joint degree programmes at Bachelor's and Master's level. These are with Upper Austria University, Lisbon University Institute (Portugal), Grenoble Graduate School of Business (France) and Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia). All programmes give the successful students a qualification from both provider universities, receiving two separate diplomas.

There are several mandatory steps to be completed by Georgian universities in order to set up partnerships. The Ministry of Education and Science requires notification about programmes delivered in a foreign language that the university plans to implement, and must issue an approval letter of permission. The university also provides a letter with further information about the programme they are delivering, including a copy of the memorandum of understanding between the partner universities. Dual and exchange programmes need to be registered initially, and following that gain programme accreditation.

Case Study: Professional accreditation

presented by

European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), Belgium

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- What is your experience of professional accreditation? Does your institution/organisation engage in, recognise or encourage such voluntary accreditation processes?
- In your opinion, are there any risks that counterbalance the advantages mentioned below for international professional accreditation of higher education programmes?
- What are the characteristics of internationalisation in higher education, as described below? Do you recognise such characteristics from your own context? What are the differences? What are the similarities?

The **European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)** created the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) in 1997 for the benefit of its members in need of a QA system and an international accreditation for management education.

It was felt among the community of European Business Schools at the time that the two other major accreditation schemes (respectively AACSB and AMBA) did not adequately address the diversity of European HEIs, while the existing national accreditation systems did not capture the international aspect.

Today, EQUIS is widely recognised as one of the three leading international QA and accreditation mechanisms. It has been awarded to 144 institutions in 39 countries. While mostly European at its creation, EQUIS is now truly global. It is currently experiencing a rapid development in the Americas and Asia.

One of the most important characteristics of EQUIS is that this QA system fully recognises and promotes diversity. Contrary to other accreditations initially developed in a single country and later adapted for an international context, EQUIS has been designed from the start to capture the diversity of the European context.

EQUIS is an institutional assessment. The whole school is assessed, including all programmes, research and other activities. This includes degree and non-degree programmes, as well as executive education.

EQUIS is linked to both academic and corporate needs. It involves both academic and corporate stakeholders at all levels, and balances academic and professional skills, with an emphasis on personal development. Corporate links are a key criterion for accreditation.

EQUIS can be considered as a mission-driven accreditation. It considers the strategy and governance of the institution, and includes the participation of experienced Deans in all peer review teams.

Internationalisation is a key criterion of EQUIS throughout the institution. The process of accreditation is managed by an internationally experienced team. It also focuses on

diversity, in particular in regards to curriculum structure and content, and faculty composition and deployment.

EQUIS is considered both a quality assurance and an accreditation system. It balances random audit against a planned exhaustive audit, and uses consultants rather than auditors.

Activity: Internationalisation and cross-border education in the European Higher Education Area

Scope of session

To discuss internationalisation activities in higher education. To agree the aims of internationalisation and the actions required for successful internationalisation, including the role of cross-border activities.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

Prioritise five aims for internationalisation from the list provided (and add others if necessary).

Priority number	List of aims for internationalisation:
	to attract national and international students i.e. positioning of higher education institution within the national and international context
	to enhance the institutional profile
	to promote plurilingualism; social, citizenship and intercultural competence; employability
	to develop in graduates the necessary competitive edge
	to open new possibilities on the job market i.e. enhance employability
	to raise money i.e. financial issues
	to develop economic and cultural collaboration with other countries through governmental agreements
	to promote future academic/research/professional networking
	to develop intercultural expertise
	to develop the European/international higher education dimension.

Task 2

Choose two of the five priority aims above and identify the areas where investment and action is most needed to reach those aims (you might already have invested or are planning to) and to establish what type of investment would be most appropriate. The areas may more specifically relate to cross-border activities.

Aim for internationalisation	Areas of investment	Actions required

Additional resources

Centre for International Higher Education

Cross-Border Higher Education

www.bc.edu/research/cihe/cbhe/

The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE)

International Branch Campuses: Data and Developments

www.obhe.ac.uk/documents/view_details?id=894

British Council and German Academic Exchange Service

Impacts of TNE on Host Countries

www.britishcouncil.org/sites/britishcouncil.uk2/files/tne_study_final_web.pdf

British Council

The Shape of Things to Come - The Evolution of TNE: Data, Definitions, Opportunities and Impacts Analysis

www.britishcouncil.org/sites/britishcouncil.uk2/files/the_shape_of_things_to_come_2.pdf

Global HigherEd

US Branch Campuses Abroad: Results of a Targeted Survey

<http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/2010/05/02/u-s-branch-campuses-abroad-results-of-a-targeted-survey/>

Higher Education Academy

Enhancing Student Learning and Teacher Development in TNE

<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/enhancing-student-learning-and-teacher-development-transnational-education>

Chapter 4 - Transnational Education and Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Transnational education (TNE) and cross-border higher education are defined by a number of authoritative reference points.

Definition of transnational higher education, UNESCO and Council of Europe, 2001

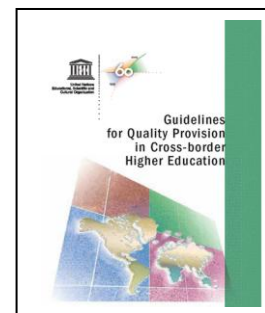
'All types of higher education study programmes, sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based. Such programmes may belong to the educational system of a state, different from the state in which it operates, or may operate independently of any national system.'

Definition of cross-border higher education, UNESCO/OECD guidelines, 2005

'Cross-border higher education includes higher education that takes place where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders'

Definition of transnational higher education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

'Education and learning opportunities that are provided in more than one country. In the context of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, it typically refers to the higher education provision of a UK degree-awarding body which is delivered in a country outside the UK and often by delivery organisations other than the degree-awarding body.'



This section considers the development of internal and external QA systems for the purposes of TNE provision specifically.

It is important to consider both the institutions hosting the TNE provision and the partners who are providing the qualifications from a country other than the one in which the students are being taught (home institutions). The case studies provide examples of systems that have been set up by institutions and agencies to support the quality assurance of TNE within universities.

Institutions need to have a firm understanding of the types of TNE provision they are delivering on behalf of institutions abroad. They, and the national agencies, then need to be clear about what quality assurance procedures are in place and consider how these can be improved. The first group activity tackles these questions and asks participants to prioritise the specific areas that are fundamental to the successful delivery of TNE.

As stated previously, the EQA system has an obvious impact on processes within an institution, and this is similar for TNE. Hence, the second group activity in this section urges participants to consider the national quality assurance systems in their own country and how they impact on institutional delivery/reception of TNE, and then proposes that participants consider how these requirements could be developed further to support institutions in tackling the fundamental areas identified in the former group activity of this section.

Finally, the section highlights a number of useful reference points that could (and in some cases should) be used in the development of TNE quality assurance processes. These reference points can support institutions who are delivering TNE (host institutions) to set up

these systems, and provide them with a guide to how frameworks have been used by partners in other countries (home countries) who are providing the qualifications. In applying these reference frameworks it is important to clarify what is and isn't relevant or appropriate to the regulatory system in which participants are working. The specific activity provides an opportunity to consider a number of reference points and confirm their appropriateness to the institutions and national framework of participants.

Questions for reflection

Participants may consider these questions individually or these may be used by session facilitators as an icebreaker for group discussion. The session facilitator will select those questions for discussion which are most pertinent for the group.

- 1 How does the quality assurance of transnational education link to wider quality assurance processes both within institutions and nationally?
- 2 How do you currently work with partner institutions and national agencies internationally to quality assure transnational education?
- 3 What information and data is there on transnational education in your institution and nationally?
- 4 What differences in approach should home and host higher education institutions adopt in dealing with transnational education?
- 5 Should there be differences in the approach that home and host external quality assurance organisations adopt in dealing with transnational education? If yes, what type of differences?
- 6 What reference points do you use for the quality assurance of transnational education? How do these reference points differ, or how are they adapted, from other quality assurance processes you use?
- 7 What reports and other outputs would you like to see from an external quality assurance process of transnational education, from the home and/or host country organisations?

Internal quality assurance of cross-border higher education/ transnational education by home institutions

In considering the case studies below, participants may wish to think about the following aspects. Further analysis on the case studies is proposed in the tasks which follow.

Case Study: Concepts, approaches, systems and reference points for transnational education

presented by

Bath Spa University (BSU), UK

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the systems in place at BSU similar to those you are familiar with in your own context, in what regards quality assurance of internationalisation and transnational higher education activities by a home institution?
- Can you think how the systems could be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Can you recognise from your own context the challenges identified below?
Can you provide supplementary suggestions for overcoming these challenges?

The **Bath Spa University (BSU)** has three broad aims that contribute to the its vision and strategy for internationalisation:

- establish BSU's profile as a world university
- develop graduates who are socially engaged global citizens
- increase overseas student numbers.

Transnational education (TNE) activity is part of the wider vision and strategy. BSU level processes are developed in response to guidance from QAA and, most recently, *Chapter B10* of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). The Quality Code places responsibility for TNE clearly with the awarding HEI. The Quality Code provides guidance through indicators as to how to meet the overall expectation. Indicators are used to map BSU's procedures and processes, and these are developed in alignment with the guidance provided by QAA.

BSU has a number of procedures to enable the management of TNE provision. Underpinning these procedures is the acknowledgement that they should be reasonable and proportionate. BSU (in addition to most UK universities involved in TNE and collaborative provision) has developed a range of practices and procedures which are tailored and proportionate to the risks of collaboration.

The Collaborative Provision Committee is tasked with ensuring 'that the arrangements between BSU and its collaborative partners are such as to protect the standard of the BSU award and the quality of the learning opportunities of students registered for its awards.' The Collaborative Provision Committee develops systems which are flexible and responsive. These allow judgements on risk to be made, and can invoke action or additional measures if required. Equally, a 'lighter-touch' approach can be approved with lower-risk proposals.

Processes need to be effective and have impact, but are also flexible as TNE continues to adapt and change. The approval process for developing TNE partnerships has four stages. Strategic oversight; due diligence (academic, financial, legal); the business case; and academic approval are considered, and approval for these is sought separately. The final stage of the process is an approval event, often hosted by the partner, with a panel made up of university academic staff and external input, plus the student perspective from a student member.

Once an agreement and partnership is in place, the normal BSU annual cycle of review, reflection and monitoring processes begins. These are the university QA processes that govern all provision; these are cyclical and blended with existing models such as: annual monitoring; the external examiner process of report, reflection and response; module evaluation; and regular partner review.

Challenges that the Collaborative Provision Committee deal with are common to many UK institutions delivering TNE, and they have come up with suggestions of how to deal with them. TNE needs careful costing and advance planning as it can be a complex and costly activity, and often takes longer to approve than anticipated. It is important to manage expectations around realistic timescales with proposed partners to ensure mutual understanding of the objective and delivery. Institutions should be aware of the risk for each individual project and be prepared to mitigate against these. Clear roles and responsibilities for staff and partner's staff involved in managing and delivering the programme(s) should be clearly defined. Making use of external experts and students as part of the approval process is also important.

There are two major challenges to the TNE student experience. The first is to ensure that students can identify themselves as the degree-awarding institutions' students, are given opportunities to engage with the awarding HEI, and feel part of the university community (even when studying overseas). The other is ensuring that there is parity between institutions (awarding and delivering bodies) in relation to the student experience, and that it is comparable, taking into account potential differences in terms of VLE, learning resources, structure of academic year and delivery methods.

Case Study: Concepts, approaches, systems and reference points for transnational education

presented by

University Jean Moulin Lyon 3 (JML), France

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the systems in place at JML similar to those you are familiar with in your own context, in what regards quality assurance of internationalisation and transnational higher education activities by a home institution?
- Can you think how the systems could be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Can you recognise from your own context the internationalisation tools identified below? Can you provide supplementary measurement indicators for successful quality assurance of transnational education (TNE)?

University Jean Moulin Lyon 3 (JML) currently has 4 400 foreign students of 112 different countries – 275 PhD foreign students – 208 Partners Erasmus and 254 agreements off Erasmus – 47 relocated programs with 1950 registered students – 709 French students leaving abroad

The aims which underpin the internationalisation approach for Study Programs at JML are as follows:

- To develop the role of the University in a global system
- To develop relevant partnerships with others Universities in terms of training and employability-related activities.
- To develop the attractiveness of the University by proposing programs of training in English in Lyon 3, allowing to welcome non-French-speaking (SELF: Study in English, Lyon France)
- To develop international research by the co-organisation of workshops, collective calls for projects, pulpits of research and valuation

Programmes in partnership may be: delocalized programs, double degree programmes and European programmes, such as Tempus, JMD, Action 2 Erasmus Mundus.

Delocalised programmes refer to French degrees undertaken at undergraduate or Master's level at a partner institution overseas. The aim of these programmes is to provide students with the skills to become bi-cultural professionals with the capacity to create institutional, industrial and commercial links with the country in which the programme is run, for example with countries in Asia, Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Northern Africa.

QA of TNE at JML

Quality rules followed by French universities relating to transnational education are not expressed in a Quality Code, as in the UK. There is no obligation to establish internal QA structures to support TNE. QA is the duty of every member of staff at JML; it is not reserved for a particular team or body.

Internal procedures for the implementation of cross-border diplomas involve several levels of decision making: firstly, a proposal originates with a professor, who must verify the quality of the project with JML's international relations and legal services; the proposal must then be approved by both the Faculty and University Councils.

In addition to this process for the adoption of new projects, ongoing diplomas are subject to annual or biannual audits by the Education Commission, which is composed of all relevant subject professors, and the Improvement Commission, which consists of external academics with experience in the field. The Commissions examine the lifespan of a diploma and make observations on its continuing relevance in relation to industry.

Diplomas offered in partnership with other providers are also subject to partner QA procedures. Partnership arrangements are regulated by Agreement Guides, which establish rules to ensure the quality and standards of diplomas offered on behalf of multiple providers, as follows.

- **Academic rules** regulate: the quality of teaching offered to students; the content of educational programmes; and selection processes for both students and academic staff.
- **Administrative rules** ensure the quality of information offered to students on a variety of subjects, including: the process of selection and enrollment, examination conditions, the appeals process etc.
- **Financial rules** verify the relevance of planned economic models for diplomas.

QA measuring tools used by JML include :

- **partnership agreements guidebook:** provides a general framework that can be adapted to suit individual partnerships (relates to identity, legal issues, academic contents, periodic review etc.)
- templates for the **Memorandum of Understanding**
- **application agreement** (relates to student exchange and specific programme arrangements)
- **international cooperation arrangements**, currently being restructured by use of Business Process Management Notation
- **statistics department** (provides tools for analysing and decision making, relating to employability, success rates, payroll etc.).

Activity: Quality assurance arrangements for cross-border/transnational education and how these may be improved in higher education institutions

Scope of session

To identify the types of TNE that institutions have and consider the QA arrangements that are in place to accommodate these, identifying what is considered best practice and what could be improved.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

This task may be differentiated between higher education institutions (HEIs) and external quality assurance authorities (EQAAs), as follows:

For HEIs: List the types of TNE that are available in the HEIs under consideration. Use the space below to record these.

For EQAAs: List the types of TNE that are available in the country/area where you operate. Use the space below to record these.

Types of TNE	Typology (as mapped under Task 2)

Task 2

Map the arrangements you have identified above onto the categories/descriptors provided below. Identify which category best defines the arrangements you noted above. Refer to both provider and programme level, and pinpoint also the GATS mode (more information on page 56).

Typology of cross-border provider mobility (Knight, 2005):

Category	Description of form/type of mobility
Branch campus	Provider in country A establishes a satellite campus in Country B to deliver courses and programmes to students in Country B (may also include Country A students taking a semester/courses abroad). The qualification awarded is from provider in Country A.
Independent institution	Foreign provider A (a traditional university, a commercial company or alliance/network) establishes in Country B a standalone HEI to offer courses/programmes and awards.
Acquisition/merger	Foreign provider A purchases a part of or 100 per cent of local HEI in Country B.
Study centre/teaching site	Foreign Provider A establishes study centers in Country B to support students taking their courses/programmes. Study centres can be independent or in collaboration with local providers in Country B.
Affiliation/Networks	Different types of 'public and private', 'traditional and new' providers from various countries collaborate through innovative types of partnerships to establish networks/institutions to deliver courses and programmes in local and foreign countries through distance or face to face modes.
Virtual University	Provider that delivers credit courses and degree programmes to students in different countries through distance education modes and that generally does not have face to face support services for students.

Typology of cross-border programmes mobility:

Category	Description of form/types of mobility
Franchise	An arrangement whereby a provider in the source Country A authorises a provider in another Country B to deliver their course/programme/service in Country B or other countries. The qualification is awarded by a provider in Country A. This is usually a for-profit commercial arrangement.
Twinning	A situation whereby a provider in source Country A collaborates with a provider located in Country B to develop an articulation system allowing students to take course credits in Country B and/or source Country A. Only one qualification is awarded by the provider in the source country. This may or may not be on a commercial basis.
Double/ Joint degree	An arrangement whereby providers in different countries collaborate to offer a programme for which a student receives a qualification from each provider or a joint award from the collaborating providers. Normally this is based on academic exchange.
Articulation	Various types of articulation arrangements between providers in different countries permit students to gain credit for courses/programmes offered/delivered by collaborating providers.
Validation	Validation arrangements between providers in different countries which allow Provider B in receiving country to award qualification of Provider A in source country.
Virtual/distance	Arrangements where providers deliver courses/programmes to students in different countries through distance and online modes. May include some face to face support for students through domestic study or support centres.

GATS educational modes:

- Mode 1** cross-border supply (distance education, virtual educational institutions, education software and corporate training through ICT delivery)
- Mode 2** consumption abroad (students studying abroad)
- Mode 3** commercial presence (i.e. local university or satellite campus, language training companies, private training companies) or programme or institutional mobility
- Mode 4** presence of natural persons (professors, teachers, researchers working abroad).

Task 3

Compare the arrangements you have identified in your own context with the descriptions of cross-border higher education/transnational education arrangements in the case studies above. Label the arrangements being described and summarise key points to be retained for future developments in your institution/organisation.

Case study	Typology (as per Task 2)	Key points
BSU		
JML		

Task 4

Identify five specific areas/actions which are fundamental to transnational provision and prioritise these. HEIs and EQAAs will work together on this activity. Compare with the areas identified by TEMPUS project partners. Are there any areas that TEMPUS partners identified which you might have overlooked? Revise your list, if necessary.

Specific areas/actions fundamental to TNE provision (prioritised)	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Task 5

This task may be differentiated between higher education institutions (HEIs) and external quality assurance authorities (EQAAs), as follows:

For HEIs: Discuss the internal quality assurance arrangements that are in place at your institution that could/do accommodate/facilitate TNE provision. Label them as good practice or in need of improvement.

For EQAAs: Discuss the external quality assurance arrangements that are in place in your regulatory system that could/do accommodate/facilitate TNE provision. Label them as good practice or in need of improvement.

For HEIs and EQAAs: Share the conclusions of this activity, by feeding back key internal and external arrangements and agreeing their level of compatibility.

Good practice QA arrangements	QA arrangements in need of improvement

External quality assurance of incoming cross-border higher education/transnational education

In considering the case studies below, participants may wish to think about the following aspects. Further analysis on the case studies is proposed in the tasks which follow.

Case study: National regulatory frameworks for the quality assurance of transnational education

presented by

National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA), Armenia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the systems in place described by ANQA similar to those you are familiar with in your own context, in what regards the quality assurance of internationalisation and transnational education (TNE) activities by a host EQA organisation? Could they be further developed? What can you retain for your own systems?
- Can you recognise from your own context the challenges identified below?
- Can you add further recommendations to the ones provided below to ensure successful QA processes for TNE?

The **National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA)** presents the context which underpins transnational education in Armenia.

Expectations from TNE

From the student perspective, the most important issue is to be internationally competitive and obtain an internationally recognised education. For employers, the main expectation from TNE is to prepare specialists with internationally recognised competencies, which will lead to the stability and internationalisation of the business and attraction of international clients.

Overview of the situation in Armenia

All types of cross-border education institutions or programmes have licences from the Armenian Ministry of Education and Science. The awarding of diplomas is regulated differently according to universities' agreements. Currently, all TNE universities receive accreditation and attestation from the provider. Though the host country universities have autonomy and can act with the standards of their country, they still act under the regulations and standards of the foreign home country. They pass institutional accreditation within the standards of the foreign country. No emphasis on local aspects and issues is given. No programme level accreditation is required, which puts the quality of the programmes under question. The number of students involved in cross-border education is 12,000 (over 10 per cent of the learners) according to World Bank analysis in 2012.

Licensing in Armenia is carried out according to academic programme at Bachelor's and Master's levels, and by the form of education provided (note that for distance learning there have been no applications). The licensing process is regulated by three types of requirements: basic, such as required qualifications of teaching staff; programme

description, such as alignment with state standards; and facilities, such as building, equipment and laboratories.

Accreditation

According to the law of the Republic of Armenia on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education, the education institutions and their branches are established in Armenia with the participation of Armenia and other foreign states. All HEIs and organisations enjoy legal equality, including with the state HEIs, and are licensed and accredited according to the laws of the Republic of Armenia.¹⁰ This law is envisaged by the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia.

Armenian external quality assurance procedures entail two types of accreditation:

- institutional accreditation, a mandatory process for both private and public institutions
- academic programme accreditation, a voluntary process undertaken by TLIs.¹¹

Recognition, accreditation and TNE:

According to the Statute on State Accreditation, an institution (including the institutions providing TNE) can apply for institutional and programme accreditation with agencies registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education or with agencies from the list of accreditation agencies defined by the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia. ANQA should be informed beforehand, and the results of the accreditation will be registered in the State Accreditation Register. If ANQA is not informed beforehand, the results are not recognised and are not published in the State Register of Accreditation.¹²

The following types of TNE are split into three categories in Armenia:

- franchising
- joint/double degrees
- branch campuses
- independent institutions
- virtual university
- intergovernmental institutions (two governments/private sectors from different countries make an agreement on establishing an intergovernmental university: the university's activities are regulated by the laws of both countries and it receives a license and accreditation from both countries).

Challenges and obstacles

At this moment, Armenia is in a transitional period. There is little in the way of a systematic approach to state regulations. However, the practice of QA is more advanced than the formal regulations. Legal/normative acts do exist but good practice has not been implemented in relation to their implementation. The links between recognition and quality assessment needs to be strengthened. The difficulties encountered in the recognition of TNE qualifications are due partly to the lack of specific national regulations but also to the absence of common guidelines and approaches to quality control aspects.

¹⁰ More information available here: www.armenic.am/?laid=1andcom=moduleandmodule=menuandid=97.

¹¹ <http://www.anqa.am/en/Portals/0/ANQA%20Accreditation%20Manual.pdf>

¹² <http://www.anqa.am/en/Portals/0/STATUTE%20ON%20STATE%20ACCREDITATION.pdf>

What should be considered:

- TNE arrangements should comply with the national legislation regarding higher education in both receiving and sending countries
- academic quality and standards should be at least comparable to those of the awarding institution as well as to those of the receiving country
- the policy and the mission statements of TNE institutions should be published
- information given by the awarding institution should be appropriate, consistent and reliable
- staff members should be proficient in terms of qualification, teaching, research and other professional experience
- the awarding institution should be responsible for issuing the qualifications and should provide clear and transparent information, through the Diploma Supplement
- the admission of students should be equivalent to those of the same or comparable programmes delivered by the awarding institution
- joint accreditations in the case of TNE providing institutions are preferable to implement, as it will allow for the consideration of both the different peculiarities of the universities and local specifications.

Case study: External quality assurance processes, methods and requirements

presented by

National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE), Georgia

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Does the legal and regulatory context described by NCEQE seem similar or different to your own?
- What are the challenges you consider will appear with regard to national recognition of a joint study programme after accreditation of the programme both abroad and in Georgia? Can you think of any actions that might mitigate these challenges?

The **National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE)** bases its activity on the regulatory framework in Georgia.

The Law on Higher Education, Article 49 states that 'Joint Degree Programmes can be implemented by the nationally authorised higher educational institution (or institutions) together with a higher educational institution, which is recognised by the foreign legislation.'

Currently, no specific standards/criteria are defined for transnational education (TNE) programmes, other than accreditation standards recognised on the national level. Thus, joint programmes should undergo programme accreditation on the national level.

Accreditation

There are five standards for higher education programme accreditation:¹³

- the goals of an educational programme, learning outcomes and compatibility of the programme with them
- methodology and organisation of teaching, adequacy of the assessment of programme mastering
- student performance and individual work with them
- provision of teaching resources
- potential to further enhance educational quality.

In January 2015, the number of accredited programmes in Georgia is 1,489, of which only 12 are joint programmes.

Future developments

The share of TNE programmes among accredited programmes is considerably small. However, it is envisaged to grant state recognition to accreditation received in a foreign country alongside with national accreditation. This action is expected to support and encourage different types of cross-border education in the long-term.

¹³ Accreditation Standards and Criteria for Higher Education:
<http://eqe.ge/res/docs/2014120816393520902.pdf>

External quality assurance of outgoing cross-border higher education/transnational education

In considering the case studies below, participants may wish to think about the following aspects. Further analysis on the case studies is proposed in the tasks which follow.

Case study: Methods, standards, criteria, indicators for external quality assurance of transnational education

presented by

American University of Armenia (AUA) with WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), USA

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing EQA authorities/organisation.

- Are the QA systems described by AUA applicable in your context?
Explain your answer.
- What challenges might appear if you were to opt for WSCUC accreditation?
Are there any actions that might mitigate these challenges?

The **American University of Armenia (AUA)** is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

WSCUC accreditation is voluntary. The accreditation process is designed to: build a culture of evidence; promote a commitment to institutional improvement; validate institutional integrity; and provide feedback that improves the accreditation process itself. While WSCUC establishes minimum standards of quality for institutions, its primary focus is to foster educational excellence. Each institution has the responsibility of defining characteristics of quality and excellence, and presenting evidence that such quality and excellence are being achieved.

Process of Accreditation:

- focus of review (institutional self-review)
- standards of accreditation applied
- identify key focus areas (selected by institution, approved by accreditor)
- demonstration of effectiveness (includes a site visit)
- demonstrate that standards of accreditation are met
- core commitments (from 2013 Handbook of Accreditation)
- focus on recommended improvements
- reports internally circulated for feedback and improvement
- public reporting and transparency
- public announcement.

To ensure student learning and success, institutions have clear educational goals and student learning outcomes. Institutions collect, analyse, and interpret valid and reliable evidence of learning as a way of assessing student achievement and success. Institutions support the success of all students and seek to understand and improve student success.

Institutions are committed to high standards of quality in all of their educational activities. They utilise appropriate evidence to improve teaching, learning, and overall institutional effectiveness. Through strategic and integrated planning, institutions demonstrate the capacity to fulfil their current commitments, and future needs and opportunities for improvement.

Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, and Accountability

Institutions recognise that the public has entrusted them with the critical responsibilities of upholding the values of higher education and contributing to the public good. They engage in sound business practices, demonstrate institutional integrity, operate in a transparent manner, and adapt to changing conditions.

The standards of accreditation are:

- Standard 1** Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives
- Standard 2** Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions
- Standard 3** Developing and Applying Resources and Organisational Structures to
Ensure Quality and Sustainability
- Standard 4** Creating an Organisation Committed to QA, Institutional Learning,
and Improvement.

Case study: External quality assurance of transnational education

presented by

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), United Kingdom

Questions to consider

These are equally relevant for participants representing HEIs and participants representing external quality assurance authorities/organisations.

- Would a similar type of regulation for outgoing transnational education (TNE), as in the UK, be useful in your context? Explain your answer.
- What are the challenges that might appear with a country-by-country approach to TNE review, promoted by the EQA authority in the outgoing/home country?
- What type of collaboration should be established between the authorities in the home/outgoing country and those in the incoming/host country? What challenges can thus be mitigated? What types of difficulties could arise?

The **Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)** presents the way it reviews UK transnational education.

TNE is an integral part of the UK higher education sector. Approximately 20 per cent of all students studying for a UK higher education award study outside of the UK, and over 75 per cent of UK institutions undertake some form of TNE. Maintaining the quality of this provision is important to both ensuring the high standards of UK TNE and supporting its growth.

TNE is reviewed in each institution through the QAA's institutional review process in the UK. *Chapter B10* of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education focuses specifically on an institution's collaborative provision with others and has the Expectation that: 'Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively'. This Expectation is accompanied by a series of indicators that reflect sound practice. The indicators are considered as guidance to HEIs, and *Chapter B10* indicators are particularly relevant for TNE collaborations and provide a robust point of debate for the setting up, development and evaluation of such collaborations.¹⁴

QAA supplements review of HEIs carried out domestically by undertaking reviews of their TNE provision abroad. QAA organises TNE review on a country-based approach in which a sample of provision (i.e. delivery sites) in a single country (or geographical area) is reviewed during the same international visit. This system has been in place for over 10 years.

The TNE review process is designed to identify and resolve issues as well as promote best practice and enhancement of provision. It aims to mitigate against the risks to students and UK institutions from the delivery of poor quality provision through partners abroad, as well as raise the visibility of UK QA processes internationally.

The process for this type of review can be summarised as follows: an initial desk based analysis is undertaken to identify the main HEIs in the region who will be the subject of the review. These institutions are then asked to provide more detailed information of their

¹⁴ All 19 indicators can be found at:

www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b

provision for desk-based analysis. This detailed analysis and subsequent review is undertaken by a peer review team assembled in the UK. Visits to the UK institution will be undertaken to follow up on any points the team would like to explore further. A visit abroad then takes place to follow up on any points that can't easily be looked at from the UK. Finally, reports and case studies are published with the outcomes of the review. These include recommendations but not formal judgements.

In February 2014, QAA undertook a TNE review in the United Arab Emirates that focused on UK institutions who have developed branch campuses. The review visit also looked in detail at how business administration programmes are being delivered, with a particular focus on Master of Business Administration degrees. In autumn 2014, an overseas review took place in Trinidad (and the wider Caribbean region), scrutinising in particular the UK's distance learning provision and how the student learning experience compares to those studying face to face in the UK.

Some of the key points for consideration regarding a TNE review process include:

- how to link findings to the institutional review process in the UK
- how to work with, and be sensitive to, the local cultural and regulatory requirements and so maintain a flexible process that recognises these differences
- how to maintain a useful base of information of UK TNE that accounts for the variances in the types of provision and the challenges of developing common definitions.

Activity: QA arrangements for cross-border/transnational education within regulatory frameworks

Scope of session

To consider the regulations existing in various national contexts and to decide what improvements would be necessary to better accommodate the reality of cross-border higher education/transnational education.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

Agree which form of regulation applies in your context currently. Agree which form of regulation described applies to the case studies from Armenia, Georgia, USA and the UK. In considering future developments, what type of regulation would you prefer in your context? You may choose to explain your answer in relation to case studies above.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) and external quality assurance authorities (EQAAs) work together on this activity.

Approach to regulation	Meaning
Minimal or no regulations (<i>laissez-faire</i>)	Minimal or no restrictions on foreign providers' freedom to operate
Liberal	Foreign providers required to register and/or have sending country accreditation
Moderately level	Registration and/or consent or authorisation from competent home or receiving authorities
Restrictive regulations	Foreign providers required to obtain accreditation in the receiving countries

	Current approach	Future approach
Participant context 1		
Participant context 2		
Participant context 3		
Armenia		
Georgia		
USA (WSCUC)		
United Kingdom		

Task 3

This task may be differentiated between higher education institutions (HEIs) and external quality assurance authorities (EQAAs), as follows:

For HEIs: Decide if your institution complies with the requirements summarised above. Are there any developments for the immediate future you would deem necessary in order to align to these?

For EQAAs: Decide if there are aspects you would consider adopting/implementing as part of your methodologies. Would you have good practice to share with the authorities from ANQA, NCEQE, WSCUC and QAA in order to enhance their approach to cross-border higher education/transnational education?

Developments - aspects to be adopted/implemented	To share

Activity: How higher education institutions respond to external requirements for cross-border/transnational education

Scope of session

To consider the benefits and challenges external requirements pose on HEIs to promote/support the development of transnational education (TNE).

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task 1

List the benefits and challenges that external requirements pose on HEIs in implementing TNE. Compare your list with the list TEMPUS project partners compiled (see the Annex, page 92).

Benefits	Challenges

Task 2

Using the five specific areas/actions identified in the task above, decide how external requirements might be formulated to address those areas.

How external requirements might be formulated to address areas identified above	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Activity: Transnational education reference frameworks - what can/should be retained for a transnational education methodology

Scope of session

To study relevant TNE reference frameworks (see comparative overview below) and decide what should be retained when developing a TNE reference framework.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Task

Within your group, consider one TNE relevant document. From the list within this framework, decide what needs to be retained, or rephrased but considered, and what needs to be disregarded as it may be in opposition with the national context or the overall objectives of your institutional context.

Relevant frameworks to use for this task could include:

- UNESCO, Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education
- Council of Europe/UNESCO, Revised Code of Good Practice on TNE (2007)
- QAA, UK Quality Code for Higher Education, *Chapter B10* indicators.

Record your findings in the table below and then compare findings across groups.

Reference framework	
Retain	Disregard

To facilitate the task above, please find below a comparative overview of the three reference points for TNE:

- 1 UNESCO/OECD Guidelines
- 2 the Code of the Council of Europe
- 3 the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code).

	UNESCO/OECD Guidelines:	Council of Europe Code:	Quality Code, <i>Chapter B10</i> :
Registration and licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish a comprehensive, fair and transparent system of registration and licensing 		
QA and accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish a comprehensive capacity for reliable QA of cross-border higher education 		
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure collaboration of QA bodies between sending and receiving countries provide accurate information on criteria and standards for registration/licensing/QA and accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate information needs to be given to TNE students on the type of qualification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain control over accuracy of public information on TNE provision status of programme is made clear to students maintain records of all arrangements for delivering learning opportunities
Comparable quality (principle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> programmes must be of comparable quality and take into account cultural and linguistic sensitivities in the receiving country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> academic quality of comparable standard TNE should encourage awareness and knowledge of culture and customs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HEIs are responsible for and maintain proper control of academic standards (equivalency of standards) HEIs approve modules and programmes, support providers HEIs ensure that students can complete programmes

<p>Admission of students, teaching and learning conditions, examination, workload</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • admission of students, teaching and learning activities and examination requirements must be of comparable quality • academic workload should be comparable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • degree-awarding bodies clarify which organisation is responsible for admitting and registering students to modules or programmes delivered with others • degree-awarding bodies responsible for certification and make sure that arrangements for learning in line with reference points • ensure that assessment requirements are followed by the receiving country • responsible for external examiners
<p>Quality of faculty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure quality of faculty and their working conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff members proficient 	
<p>Internal quality assurance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and maintain IQA systems. 		
<p>Policy, mission, governance and financial management</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy and mission statement of TNE providers should be made public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopt a strategic approach to TNE and deploy appropriate resources • adopt appropriate governance arrangements • develop written and binding agreement for TNE agreements with partners legally entitled to do so • appropriate due diligence and

			<p>risk assessment procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• procedures that safeguard against financial impropriety or conflict of interest.
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Additional resources

UNESCO

Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001433/143349e.pdf>

UNESCO

Toolkit for Regulation in Cross-Border Higher Education

www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/087/index.htm

UNESCO-APQN

Regulating the Quality of Cross-Border Education

http://www.apqn.org/files/virtual_library/other_reports/unesco-apqn_toolkit-reprint.pdf

Council of Europe/UNESCO

Revised Code of Good Practice on TNE (2007)

www.enic-naric.net/documents/REVISED_CODE_OF_GOOD_PRACTICE_TNE.pdf

Research team led by CHE

Delivering Education across Borders in the European Union

www.academia.edu/4143137/Delivering_Education_across_Borders_in_the_European_Union

QAA

UK Quality Code for Higher Education, *Chapter B10*

www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b

QAA

Strengthening the Quality Assurance of UK Transnational Education

www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/TNE-consultation-report-May14.pdf

WASC Senior College and University Commission

Handbook of Accreditation

www.wascsenior.org/resources/handbook-accreditation-2013

UQAIB (Dubai)

Quality Assurance Manual

www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/UQAIB_EN.pdf

MEXT (Japan)

Guidelines for Exchange and Cooperation among Universities in China, Japan and Korea with Quality Assurance

www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shitu/1303468.htm

Winding-up - Action Planning

Action planning

As a final activity, participants are invited to bring together all the knowledge and expertise gained in order to compile an action plan for the development of quality assurance systems in the contexts they operate in.

Activity: Development of quality assurance plans

Scope of session

To consider which areas for the quality assurance of transnational education (TNE) need to be further developed by institutions and authorities in order to align to relevant reference points and to facilitate appropriate delivery/recognition of TNE. To develop an action plan.

Group activity

Participants work in smaller groups of three to four and then feedback to the whole group. A rapporteur should be nominated.

Ideally, this activity is best conducted if participants represent the same institutions/organisations.

Task 1

From the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) as produced by ENQA, identify the standards which the institution/organisation under consideration is fully compliant with, and decide which standards require further actions in order to be met.

Guidelines where there is compliance and good practice	Guidelines where further work is needed

Task 2

From the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines, identify the standards which the institution/organisation under consideration is fully compliant with, and decide which standards require further actions in order to be met.

Guidelines where there is compliance and good practice	Guidelines where further work is needed

Task 3

From *Chapter B10* of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, identify the indicators which the institution/organisation under consideration achieves, and decide which indicators would be appropriate for further development.

Indicators which are achieved and can be evidenced	Indicators which can serve as prompts for future development

Task 4

Summarising the conclusions of the tasks above, decide on minimum five QA-related action lines, which can be implemented, indicating deadlines for achieving these. These may be means to enhance quality in the institution as a general objective, or, more specifically, to set the scene for strengthening transnational arrangements. Use the tables below to agree action lines (Table 1) and to record their details (Table 2).

Details relating to the use of Table 2 are as follows.

- The headings allow for both good practice and areas in need of improvement to be highlighted. If you have identified good practice in your institution the action plan will allow you to agree how you can maintain and further disseminate the good practice. If you have identified areas in need of improvement the action plan allows you to indicate how you intend to address those issues.
- The provision of a timeline for implementation of actions is of utmost importance, as it allows for intermediary deadlines to be set.
- The indication of who is responsible (this should not be a committee, but rather a post within the institution) and who they report to/who monitors their action is also very important as it allows for clear roles to be set.
- Success indicators need to be established from the beginning - how will you measure if the actions are achieved? What mechanisms are in place or need to be put in place for such measurements to be relevant and reliable?
- Extended contribution of stakeholders should form the basis for the development of the action plan.

Table 1

Action lines, including details of activity required	Deadline
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Table 2

Objective What are you trying to achieve?	Action to be taken How are you trying to achieve it?	Rationale Why are you trying to achieve this? Why is this important now?	Actioned by Who is responsible for implementation?	Target date When will you complete it?	Success indicators How will you know it works?	Reported to Who will monitor it?	Evidence What proof will you collect of its implementation and monitoring?	Progress Maintain this column to report progress and/or any changes
Good Practice								
Include as many rows as necessary								
Areas for improvement								
Include as many rows as necessary								

Annex

Examples of the completed tasks as provided by project partners during the workshops organised in Lyon, France (April 2014) and Gloucester, UK (June 2014)

Example: Reaching common understanding, agreeing common terminology

Quality assurance (QA)

Developing and implementing capacity and tools in order to ensure the quality of internal and external processes in HEIs.

Quality enhancement

Formal or informal system and mechanisms of control, monitoring and collecting feedback in order to improve quality.

Quality culture

Informal way of having all the staff members and stakeholders being aware of the challenges and being involved in the QA process.

Internal quality assurance (IQA)

Process and communication inside the institution in terms of QA.

External quality assurance (EQA)

- drives the mechanisms of IQA
- demonstrates to stakeholders how the HEI deals with quality
- safeguards quality.

Student engagement

Involvement of students in the management and QA processes of HEI and academic programmes.

Accreditation

The process by which a (non-)governmental or private body evaluates the quality of a HEI as a whole, or of a specific educational programme, in order to formally recognise it as having met certain predetermined minimal criteria or standards.

Evaluation

The general process of a systematic and critical analysis (carried out through internal or external procedures) leading to judgements and/or recommendations regarding the quality of a HEI or a programme.

Standards

Statements (quantitative or qualitative) regarding an expected level of requirements and conditions (either referring to inputs or outcomes or institutional procedures and practices) against which quality is assessed or that must be attained by HEIs and their programmes in order for them to be accredited or certified.

Guidelines

Recommendations providing advice on what should be monitored and how this monitoring of quality should be carried out.

Expectations

Statements in a quality code that set out what all HEIs expect of themselves and each other and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

Indicators

Operational variables referring to specific empirically measurable characteristics of HEIs or programmes on which evidence can be collected that allows for a determination of whether or not standards are being met.

Example: Areas of improvement for quality assurance arrangements in institutions/organisations represented

List current areas of good practice in IQA generally, and identify areas for improvement. Consider actions that could take place collectively to enable improvement in this area.

Examples of good practice:

- internal programme evaluation: each semester, anonymous evaluation by each student and professor is done through an online questionnaire
- stakeholder surveys and participation, for example: annual surveys of alumni job descriptions; wages; and how qualifications relate to jobs
- alumni participate in the advisory boards of academic programmes
- self-evaluation: each programme director self-evaluates their programme once a year, for example, based on a template provided by the national agency
- QA manual and promotion of quality culture: developed at institutional level, benchmarked against various guidelines for process development and procedure implementation at national level.
- evaluation of faculty, researchers, staff/management, resources and support services for national and international students, teaching and research quality
- training of accreditation experts and QA staff.

Areas identified that need improvement:

- collecting data: using technology (IT) to collect and analyse data in the HEI
- peer review process: include independent peer reviewers
- equality and diversity: for example, diversify the demography of universities, especially the student body, to encourage more foreign students as well as students from more diverse backgrounds within a country
- cooperation between Georgian and Armenian universities with respect to programme evaluations and expert exchange
- international programme (i.e. joint degrees) evaluation: by international experts and international accreditation
- communication and awareness raising at all levels within an HEI
- develop relations with the labour market and professionalise programmes
- develop detailed guidelines of competencies (defined with regard to specialisations) for the recruitment of teaching staff.

Examples: Action plan for working together to improve IQA	
Outputs	Actions to be taken:
Develop a pool of international experts by subject e.g. medicine, engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify relevant subject areas according to national qualification frameworks • select experts (the entire process including: define criteria, recruitment, selection process) • develop a training module • train the experts • pilot the process • improve based on the results of the pilot.
Develop a network of international	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invite relevant experts from the project • work together on pilot projects

accreditation agencies	• exchange experts.
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Example: External requirements and how partner institutions respond

List the benefits and challenges that EQA requirements bring to HEIs.
Develop recommendations that would support institutions in relation to EQA.

Major benefits of EQA on IQA:

- stimulates regularity of IQA and self-evaluation
- encourages installation and improvement of systematic mechanisms for IQA
- enables sharing of best practices across HEIs; gain an external point of view through the participation of internal staff in the EQA of other institutions
- receiving recommendations from external experts
- more transparency and information for all stakeholders and the public
- HEI and its IQA will be recognised as a quality institution
- documentation which brings transparency and analysis
- EQA helps internal IQA to gather and analyse relevant data
- alignment of international standards
- peer review, side vision (external and internal), and self-evaluation report.

Examples: recommendations to support EQA, having identified challenges	
Challenges	Recommendations:
New programmes are not accredited initially when they are set up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accredit new programmes from the start and, following the first round of graduation, check the programme again
EQA links to funding is a barrier to innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding should be given based on priorities defined by the state
IQA staff must be trained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQA bodies should give guidance and trainings • holding regular seminars with QA agencies would provide additional support
Difficulties in communication between EQA and IQA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQA bodies should communicate regularly and outside of the formal accreditation process
EQA recommendations may be difficult to implement in the local context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national questionnaires by QA agencies so as to gain a better understanding of the landscape and variances at national level
Not all stakeholders are involved in the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing training package involving professionals and receive feedback from stakeholders
Feedback is not always gathered and acted on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to monitor the action plans given by the universities and to check whether the recommendations given in the expert report are appropriately implemented
Innovative teaching may be stifled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share best practice in innovative teaching and run more projects linked to this

Taking into account (continuous) improvement rather than an absolute position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measure progress over time in a HEIs with regard to quality criteria rather than an absolute position
Heavy reliance on quantitative indicators for the measurement of criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into account both quantitative and qualitative indicators for the measurement of criteria
EQA is not always conducive to the development of a quality culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QA agencies need to work with the sector to improve quality awareness
EQA system is not always flexible and contextualised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct research and analysis of EQA systems to ensure that the quality criteria and indicators match the changing nature of quality provision of HE.

Example: Internationalisation and transnational education in the European Higher Education Area

Identify the key aims of an internationalisation strategy and list areas that need further investment.

The aims of internationalisation:

- promote plurilingualism (social, citizenship, intercultural competence, employability) and to develop in graduates the necessary competitive edge
- promote future academic research and professional networking
- open new possibilities on the job market (i.e. enhance employability)
- attract national and international students (i.e. positioning of HEI within the national and international context)
- enhance the international profile of the university
- develop the wider European/international higher education dimension.

Areas for investment:

- student, faculty, and staff exchange
- recruitment of international staff with native speaker capacity
- internationalising curricula and approaches to teaching and learning
- develop language courses for foreign students (so that they can meet the entry requirements for study programmes)
- develop infrastructure (labs, libraries)
- host and attend summer schools, workshops, conferences
- develop international study programmes (in the English language)
- develop joint study programmes (preferably at Master's level)
- mobilise the Diaspora to send their children to international programmes in Armenia and Georgia.

Example: Quality assurance arrangements for transnational education and how these may be improved in partner universities

Consider the different types of transnational education (TNE) provision in Armenia and Georgia. Highlight the good practice of IQA arrangements in regards to TNE and identify areas for improvements.

Supplementary to the categories provided the following were elicited:

Category	Description of form/types of mobility
Mobility of model, soft-forced transfer of culture	<p>Modelling of regulational environment model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider in host Country A models the characteristics popular for providers of Country B. • Provider follows the regulations concerning education, best practices and cultural values of education environment of Country A. It is a kind of culture transfer. • Diplomas are recognised indirectly after evaluation of model adaptation strengths.
Mobility of regulations, hard-forced transfer of culture	<p>Transfer of country regulations and standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country A state authorities finance the establishment of state-recognised and financed provider in Country B. • Provider has degree awarding power for two countries. • In conflict situations, generally, some regulations of the host country are silenced and regulations of Country A are prioritised by default. • Regulations of Country B are obliged to be accepted. • Awarded Diplomas are recognised by both countries.

Examples of good practice:

- a partnership agreement
- an assessment procedure that is jointly validated
- programmes that are adapted to the requirements of the receiving country
- frameworks that are developed for internal and external QA
- processes in place to gain accreditation
- collaboration with international agencies to gain experience and share ideas
- systems in place to deliver multilingual education
- surveys conducted among students and students mentoring other students
- promotion of research activities
- exchange programmes/projects for professors and students
- involvement of key stakeholders in the process
- strong leadership that can balance academic pedagogy and business models.

Areas identified that need improvement:

- provide relevant and up to date information for students
- focus on student experience with academic advice for international students
- provide necessary teacher training, in particular in relevant foreign languages

- develop an internationalisation strategy
- seek advice from EQA in relation to structures for QA processes
- develop mutual recognition of standards
- gain more participation from employers in implementation of programmes
- adopt the ECTS.

Example: How higher education institutions respond to external requirements for cross-border/transnational education

List the benefits and challenges that EQA requirements for transnational education (TNE) pose on HEIs.

Benefits of external requirements:

- international recognition and rankings
- increased opportunity for mobility
- increased opportunity for funding
- more flexibility/opportunities for students
- easier implementation of regulation procedures
- encouragement to develop an internationalisation strategy that includes TNE
- more student involvement and development for the university
- improves faculty performance and programmes quality
- encourages transparency.

Key point

It addresses quality management of the whole process, leading to permanent improvement.

Challenges from external requirements:

- scale of resourcing, in particular staff time and finances
- lack of sufficient for training staff within HEIs to meet requirements
- requirements of external agencies are regularly changing
- requirement to ensure TNE standards are comparable
- requirement to demonstrate that TNE benefits the host country
- scale of bureaucracy and lack of flexibility.

Key point

Obtain financial support and increase all faculty engagement.

Identify areas/actions that are fundamental to TNE provision and suggest how external requirements could be formulated to address these areas.

Examples: requirements set out nationally to enable TNE to be effectively quality assured	
Areas/actions that are fundamental to TNE provision	How external requirements could be formulated to address these areas:
A clear legislative process, with the rules and regulations for TNE partnerships publically available, including financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree on language and terminology. • authorities then regulate the legislative framework and develop a methodology for implementation, making this publically and easily accessible
Regulate legislative frameworks of TNE standards to enable recognition of degrees and diplomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise the accreditation statute to clarify standards and criteria for TNE, including linking to nation qualification frameworks to ensure academic standards are never compromised • QA, accreditation and recognition should lead to the formulation of standards and indicators to evaluate degrees and diplomas
Joint accreditation of TNE provision, so as to ensure there is mutual benefit to the partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inter-governmental agreements should be encouraged where feasible, this could lead to systems that enable joint accreditation of TNE programmes, recognised by relevant national governments and universities
A robust and appropriate system for using ECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop credit transfers equivalence systems by defining clear learning outcomes, benchmarks similar programmes at other universities/countries • allow students to transfer credits units
Internationalised programmes recognised regionally or globally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliant and recognised programmes that provide teaching staff with relevant qualification for TNE provision
Employer involvement in the development of programmes, in particular when being adapted to a local context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an annual review of the labour market's needs should be implemented
The label of university is protected, in particular when partnerships are being developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • criteria set out for what constitutes a university and requirements for TNE provision, an example could be to stipulate that a certain amount of the partnership has to take place at research level
Staff development opportunities are available to engage staff in TNE and provide them with the skills to fulfil their requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mechanisms and funding to be put in place to promote academic mobility, (relating it to credit accumulation).

Example: Transnational education reference frameworks - what we can/should retain for the transnational education methodology

Consider three transnational education (TNE) reference frameworks (listed below) and consider which principles and indicators are appropriate in this context and which are less so.

Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education¹⁵

Given that the guidelines for governments, QA and accreditation bodies and HEIs and providers are written from a generic perspective, almost all suggestions should be retained when developing a TNE QA methodology. They serve as a good starting point to consider when setting out principles and processes.

The UNESCO/Council of Europe revised code of good practice: Principles¹⁶

The principle relating to transnational arrangements (1), culture and customs (6), awarding institutions responsibilities regarding qualifications (8), the equivalency of the academic workload (10) and the stipulations of the Council of Europe/UNESCO recognition convention (11) were agreed as appropriate for this project.

The principle relating to academic quality and standards (2) was also considered appropriate, although could be simplified since it is complex in its current form.

The principle relating to policy and mission statements (3) is again appropriate, but clarity should be provided on who the authorities and beneficiaries are who will be receiving this information.

The principle relating to information (4) could be split in two and relate to information about collaborative arrangements and information for students separately.

The principle relating to staff (5) was considered appropriate but should be more specific in terms of proficiency in knowledge and language for academic staff. The principle should also acknowledge that this concerns all staff at an institution.

The principle relating to agents (7) needs more clarity in defining the role of an agent, and identifying that agents are not always used.

The principle related to the admission (9) was considered appropriate where possible, but should acknowledge that it is not possible for some countries to respect it due to local regulatory aspects.

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B10 Indicators¹⁷

The 19 indicators in *Chapter B10* of the Quality Code fall into six categories:

- strategy and governance
- developing, agreeing and managing an arrangement to deliver learning opportunities with others

¹⁵ Guidelines available here: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001433/143349e.pdf>.

¹⁶ Principles available here: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/lrc/code_tne_rev2007.pdf

¹⁷ UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B10, available here: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b

- responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards
- quality assurance
- information for students and delivery organisations, support providers or partners
- certificates and records of study.

The majority of the 19 indicators are appropriate and should be retained in some form when developing a TNE methodology. Indicator 16 relates to external examiners and is not a requirement of many countries higher education legislation, so can be discarded. Indicator 14 relates to developing policies for registering and admissions of students, in particular highlighting admissions are consistent with those policies of the degree-awarding bodies. This may not always be relevant in international contexts, especially where degrees are awarded centrally through government authorities.

Activity: Development of internal quality assurance plans

Using the European Standards and Guidelines (ENQA), for each HEI consider the standards which are fully compliant, and those which require further action to be met. For each HEI create an action plan, listing five QA related actions that could be implemented in the next six months.

Examples of institutional action points to be developed and implemented are cited below:

Akaki Tsereteli State University (Georgia):

- make the website more accessible and relevant to different relevant audiences
- develop an effective stakeholder engagement plan
- Quality Culture: develop a QA strategy to better engage faculty quality heads in each faculty
- assessment criteria: analyse how these link to learning outcomes and provide sufficient communication.
- develop systems to apply feedback from existing QA procedures.

French University in Armenia (Armenia):

- A Quality policy:
 - a formulate an institutional quality policy
 - b reorganisation of QA commission
 - c organise negotiations with relevant stakeholders
- B Teaching staff development:
 - a for language teaching
 - b for specialised teachers
- C Information systems (involves IT and technical people).

Caucasus University (Georgia):

- review internal policies and procedures transnational education
- develop short training module for staff (curriculum development)
- consider development of e-learning system with external expertise
- review questionnaires (employability survey, satisfaction survey)
- review and update faculty evaluation survey.

Russian-Armenian University (Armenia)

- system of monitoring programmes and awards (no system of monitoring)
- development of assessment criteria for students
- clarify responsibilities for recruitment and appointment
- get feed-back from services provided
- improve the system of information gathering.

Batumi State University (Georgia)

- improve part-time distance learning education
- improve statistic system (employability, graduation, student progress)
- improve procedure on student assessment
- QA of teaching staff (self-assessment procedures, online teaching for QA)
- software development for QA.

American University of Armenia (Armenia)

- increase student involvement in committees (needs training for staff, faculty, students)
- more student involvement in QA processes (needs training)
- enhance support services at the graduate level
- identify and support students with special needs.

This document has been co-produced by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the United Kingdom (QAA) and the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning in France (IIEP) with contributions from TEMPUS TNE_QA project partners

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