



The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the United Kingdom

The mission of The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in the United Kingdom is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education. In consultation with the sector, QAA is responsible for the development of the standards against which quality is evaluated, as captured in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. QAA reviews and reports on how providers of higher education maintain their academic standards and quality. QAA also investigates situations where it is suspected that a higher education provider is failing to meet the agreed standards. In recent years, the work has expanded to include all higher education provision in universities, colleges, private institutions, and designated coursed providers in receipt of public funding.

In 2013, QAA was reviewed by the European Association of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (ENQA) and was found fully compliant with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The ENQA report states:

'QAA's overall performance against the standards of the ESG is uniformly high. It is a trustworthy, effective and highly credible agency and a leader in the field. QAA is well-led and well-managed at both Board and Executive levels, with a strong Board, which is both well-informed and constructively challenging. The Panel has been consistently impressed by the calibre and professionalism of all those contributing to the work of QAA in maintaining quality and standards across HE in the UK.'

QAA's approach to the quality assurance of Transnational Education (TNE)

Over 75 per cent of UK universities are now engaged in transnational education (TNE) in over 200 countries worldwide. In 2012-13, some 600,000 students were studying outside the UK on programmes leading to UK awards. QAA works with the universities to ensure the reputation of UK higher education is maintained and demonstrated for these students studying outside the UK.

Higher education institutions in the UK are responsible for the academic standards of their awards, whether delivered inside or outside of the UK. QAA undertakes reviews of UK provision that these institutions deliver in partnership with organisations in other countries, as well as provision delivered on the overseas campuses of UK universities. A key aim of these reviews is to ensure that the student experience is at a comparable level to that in the UK.

Overseas reviews are carried out according to the same principles and similar processes as review methods for UK higher education institutions. QAA has carried out reviews in a number of countries including Hong Kong, Greece, the Republic of Cyprus, India, Malaysia, Singapore, China and the United Arab Emirates.