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NETWORK FOR THE MODERNISATION OF
THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN LIBYA

QUALITY ASSURANCE

WORKING GROUPS

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July, 2020

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Objectives

- To define a **general framework for QUALITY ASSURANCE** within Higher Education which provides a useful space for reflection and analysis on these issues;

- To give a general description of the **characteristics, methods and trends of QUALITY ASSURANCE** by providing relevant bibliography and literature.

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Quality Assurance and Higher Education

⦿ An **elusive term taken from business & management** sciences and applied into Higher Education (social cohesion, economic growth and global competitiveness).

⦿ DEFINITION:

- *"(...)an ongoing process by which the quality of a higher-education system, institution, or programme is assessed by the competent authority/authorities to assure stakeholders that acceptable **educational standards** are **continuously being maintained and enhanced**"* (UNESCO, 2019).

- *"Quality, whilst not easy to define, is mainly a result of the interaction between teachers, students and the institutional learning environment. **Quality assurance should ensure a learning environment in which the content of programmes, learning opportunities and facilities are fit for purpose.**"* (ESG, 2015).

- "(…) **planned and systematic processes** that provide confidence in the design, delivery and award of qualifications within an education and training system. Quality assurance **ensures stakeholders'** interests and investment in any accredited program are protected." (ASEAN, 2016)


"Have you guys considered actually improving quality and making a better product?"

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Quality Assurance and Higher Education

- ⊙ ELEMENTS:
  - Purposes: **1)Accountability** & **2) Continuous enhancement** .
  - A result of interaction between 3) **stakeholders** (teachers, students and the institutional learning environment)
  - ***"Fitness for purpose"***
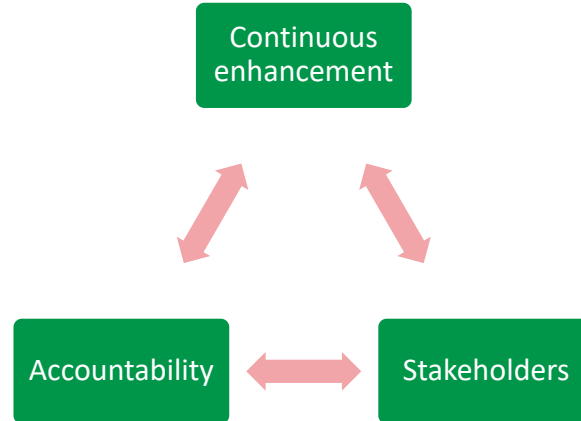
Quality Assurance within the European Union

⊙ As a part of the **Bologna Process (1999),** the **European Higher Education Area (EHEA)** was established in 2010 to increase the global competitiveness of higher education in Europe and promote the employability of its students.

⊙ The main achievements of this initiative are:
- Adoption of a common framework of easily readable and comparable degrees (at bachelor's, master's and doctoral level),
- Launch of the Diploma Supplement, and
- Implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

⊙ In order to enable the implementation of these goals, **European cooperation in the area of QUALITY ASSURANCE** became a central element of the Bologna process (2005 Bergen Communiqué).

⊙ This process culminates with the adoption of the **"Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)"** in 2015.

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European Standard Guidelines for QA - 2015

◉ **Common understanding** for the development, implementation and ownership of quality assurance by the actors of national higher education systems.

◉ **Set of references and guidelines** for internal and external quality assurance in higher education.

◉ **Not quality standards** and **not prescriptive** regarding the implementation of quality assurance procedures.

◉ Based upon the following principles:
  - **Higher education institutions have primary responsibility** for the quality of their provision and its assurance;
  - Quality assurance responds to the **diversity of higher education systems**, institutions, programmes and students;
  - Quality assurance supports the development of a **quality culture**;
  - Quality assurance takes into account the **needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society.**

Quality Assurance within the University – AUDIT guidelines

- **INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM:** A set of principles, guidelines, tools and standards that act as a reference for guiding the consistent application of quality assurance activities.

- a) How HEIs use their units, regulations, standards, procedures, etc. to **continuously enhance the quality** of the design and development of their programmes, the selection and promotion of teaching staff, classroom activities and learning outcomes.

- b) How HEIs **involve different interest groups/stakeholders** in the design, development, evaluation and dissemination of teaching activities.
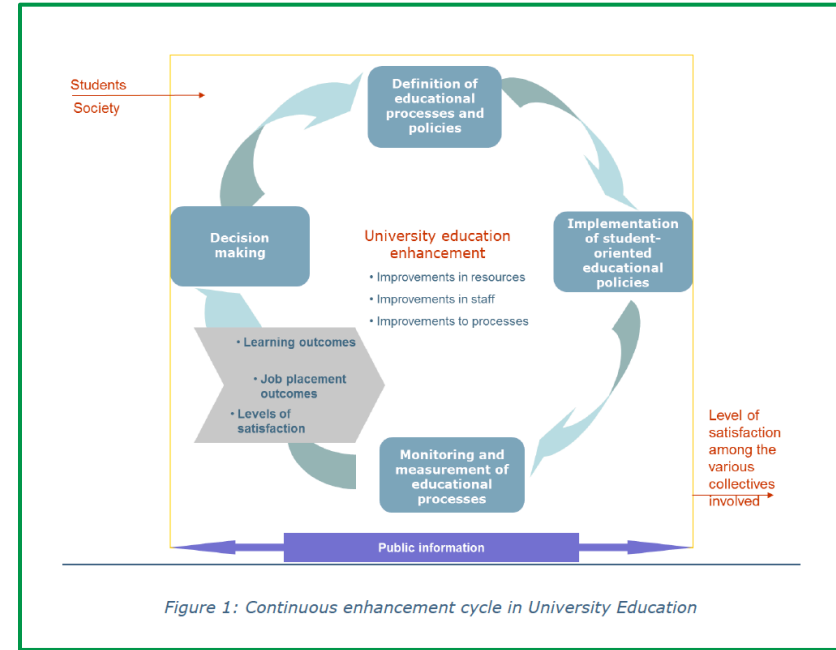

Figure 1: Continuous enhancement cycle in University Education

AUDIT Guidelines - Criteria

1. Quality policy and goals:

◉ The institution shall consolidate a quality culture based on a known and publicly available quality policy and goals and those in charge of the study programme's internal quality assurance system.

2. Programme design:

◉ The institution shall have mechanisms to maintain and update its programmes and develop methodologies to approve, control, evaluate and periodically enhance their quality. In addition, these mechanisms shall provide for the eventual suspension of the qualification, and also the ways that suggestions and appeals are dealt with.

3. Student-orientated actions:

◉ The institution shall have procedures whereby it can check that the purpose of any action that it undertakes, including outside work experience and mobility, is to encourage learning by the student.

AUDIT Guidelines - Criteria

4. Academic staff and auxiliary teaching staff:

◉ The institution must have mechanisms to ensure that the hiring, administration and training of its teaching and auxiliary teaching staff is carried out with the necessary guarantees to ensure they can fulfil their corresponding functions.

5. Physical resources and services:

◉ The institution shall have mechanisms that enable it to design, manage and improve its services and physical resources in order for student learning to develop appropriately.

6. Outcomes-Measurement:

◉ The institution must develop procedures to ensure that outcomes (of learning, employment and the satisfaction of the different interest groups) can be measured, analysed and used for decision-making and the enhancement of the quality of degree programmes.

7. Public information:

◉ The institution shall have mechanisms to ensure the periodic publication of updated information on programmes of study.

Bibliographic resources

- European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018. The European Higher Education Area in 2018: Bologna Process Implementation Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Brussels, Belgium, 2015.

- AUDIT PROGRAMME – Tools/Diagnosis in implementing internal quality assurance systems in higher education, ANECA, 2016.

- Other references into:
  - Development of quality culture
  - E-learning

WHY QUALITY ASSURANCE?

The electric lightbulb did not come from the continuous improvement of candles Oren Harari

Thank you!

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