

# APQNews

## Issue 27

June 30, 2023



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3. Obituary
4. Up-coming Event

### Chief Editor:

Nar Bahadur Raika

### Editorial Committee:

Nar Bahadur Raika, Galina Motova, Jianxin Zhang, Jagannath Patil, Pingping Liu, Barry Aw Yong, Umankulova Onolkan, Timur Kanapyanov, Le Fang

## Issue 27

### APQN Mission Statement

To enhance the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region through strengthening internal and external quality assurance in all kinds of organizations and extending the cooperation among them

### APQN Values:

To be committed to the quality of higher education and supportive of both internal and external quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific Region

## Editor's Message for APQNews (Issue 27)

Dear APQN members, friends and colleagues,

Welcome to the 27<sup>th</sup> issue of APQNews (2023)!

The 27<sup>th</sup> issue of APQNews (2023) is made up of 4 columns in 12 articles: 1) Highlight; 2) QA Activity; 3) Obituary and 4) Up-coming Event. This issue provides detailed information on APQN activities, projects and sustainable development, as well as the QA developments from the QAAs and HEIs from the Asia-Pacific Region.

As always, we are happy to share valuable information on upcoming QA events: 2023 AAC and AGM will be co-hosted by APQN and American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), Bangladesh in Bangladesh from November 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> (Thu. - Sat.), 2023. If you have questions, please contact local organizer, AIUB ([apqn@aiub.edu](mailto:apqn@aiub.edu)). We look forward to seeing you on 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> November 2023, in Bangladesh.

Last but not the least, I cordially invite all of you to contribute articles for the next issue of APQNews (Issue 28). Please kindly e-mail them to Chief Editor and APQN Administrator at: [nbraika@moe.gov.bt](mailto:nbraika@moe.gov.bt) & [apqnsecretariat@163.com](mailto:apqnsecretariat@163.com). Please stay tuned for APQNews!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N. B. Raika', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Chief Editor of the 27<sup>th</sup> Issue of APQNews: Nar Bahadur Raika

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## Highlight

### APQN's Thirteen Innovative Actions of Quality Assurance During the COVID Pandemic

At the end of 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic (hereinafter referred to as “the Pandemic”) broke out unexpectedly. The Pandemic has disrupted education all over the world: school closures affected more than 1.6 billion learners<sup>1</sup>. The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most disrupted regions. Approximately 1.2 billion students across the region lost about 1.1 trillion hours of in-person learning experience as a result of school closures<sup>2</sup>. As a result of this unexpected situation, the way of education has changed dramatically.

One of the goals of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all. This has been affected by the Pandemic. At such a time of need, education innovation serves as a powerful engine for learning recovery.

In March, 2020, the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (hereinafter referred to as “APQN”) lost no time in response to a global crisis in education. During the past three years (2020-2022), APQN made thirteen innovative moves of Quality Assurance to accelerate learning recovery ( see the video in the attachment, as well as the linkage at: <https://www.apqn.org/events/present-events> ). Below is the summary of APQN thirteen innovative actions.

#### I. Relevance of APQN Innovation

The Pandemic challenge brings the opportunity for change. No doubt, higher education has been transformed by Pandemic, the lockdown, and the recovery. APQN believes education must adapt to new changes as soon as possible. APQN must focus on new changes in the participants, education philosophy, connotation, methods, and teacher-student relationships. There should be awareness of public social crisis. APQN must lead a speedy recovery for learning and teaching.<sup>3</sup> This is APQN mission during the Pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, UNICEF, and World Bank. 2021. *The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery*. p.5.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/publication/the-state-of-the-global-education-crisis-a-path-to-recovery>.

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO. 2022. *Learning recovery and addressing the learning crisis in the Asia Pacific: policy brief*. p.1. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381978>.

<sup>3</sup> APQN (2020). *Project Proposal of APQN Survey of the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)*, p.1. Proposal endorsed by APQN Board on March 15, 2020 ( Code: APQN 2020-01).

The sudden closure of campus at the beginning of 2020 changed the traditional method of “face-to-face teaching” to “screen-to-screer teaching” which is ineffective. The New UNESCO global survey revealed the impact of the Pandemic on higher education includes “disruption of teaching and learning” “poor quality of online teaching and learning” and other twelve aspects.<sup>4</sup> APQN’s global survey showed that 15% of the respondents considered online teaching as ineffective and 53% considered the quality as poor.<sup>5</sup>

### III. Beneficiaries and Impacts of APQN’s thirteen Innovative Actions

1. **Beneficiary Countries.** The Asia-Pacific Region covered by APQN includes all Pacific Island nations and territories, New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea; all island and mainland nations and territories of Asia, including Russia, Afghanistan, the other central Asian countries and Iran, but excluding the Gulf countries (which are covered by another network).<sup>6</sup>

2. **Beneficiaries include six groups from the Asia Pacific region and the world.** The beneficiaries include (1) tens of thousands of students from the 47 countries and regions in the Asia Pacific region and around the world; (2) thousands of leaders and managers from the 47 countries and regions in the Asia Pacific region and around the world; (3) thousands of teachers and educators from the 47 countries and regions in the Asia Pacific region and around the world; (4) hundreds of researchers and evaluators focusing on the global online teaching quality assurance; (5) more than 100 external quality assurance agencies from the Asia Pacific region and Europe; (6) APQN’s 268 institutional members in 47 countries/territories in the Asia-Pacific region.

3. **Effectiveness.** APQN has published a number of research reports and papers, and as a milestone, it developed "APQN Online Teaching Quality Assurance Standard" which was released globally on May 30, 2021. APQN also developed numerous free resources including two books to be shared with university leaders, administrators, educators, researchers, teachers and students who are interested in online teaching quality. One is “APQN Research on the COVID-19 Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education Quality” , and the other is “COVID Response Mechanism and Impact on Quality Assurance for Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region”.([https://www.apqn.org/images/projects/APQN\\_Research\\_on\\_COVID\\_impact\\_2021-6-25.pdf](https://www.apqn.org/images/projects/APQN_Research_on_COVID_impact_2021-6-25.pdf))

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4 Andreas Schleiche.(2020). The impact of COVID-19 on education insights from education at a glance 2020, published by OECD, <https://www.oecd.org/education/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-education-insights-education-at-a-glance-2020.pdf>

5 Zhang Jianxin1, Yang Yahan (2020). APQN Survey: The COVID-19 Impact on Higher Education Institutions, Academic journal of Research on Shanghai Education Evaluation, No. 5, p. 77.

6 APQN(2004). *Defining Our Region*, APQN website, <https://www.apqn.org/members/defining-our-region>

## VI. Originality of APQN’s Thirteen Innovative Actions

**1.APQN’s initial action.** In March 2022, at the beginning of the outbreak of the Pandemic, APQN carried out the global survey to understand the status and responses of universities, teachers and students , in order to explore the effectiveness of unconventional measures and a series of measures taken by universities in the face of crisis and conflict.

### 2.APQN actions’ overview

Under the severe situation of Pandemic, APQN innovative activities include six series:(1) four global surveys; (2) one in-depth interviews to Board Directors; (3) three international conferences and one online forum; (4) one APQN online teaching standards design; (5) one qualitative research; and (6) two books. Additionally, APQN published three academic papers on the Pandemic impact on higher education in Chinese. (See table 1).

**Table1: List of APQN’s Thirteen Innovative Actions of Quality Assurance during the COVID Pandemic**

#	Time	Innovative actions
1	March-May, 2020	APQN global survey on the COVID impact in higher education institutions(HEIs)
2	April-June, 2020	APQN survey on the COVID impact on quality assurance agencies(QAAs)
3	June-July, 2020	Interviews with APQN Board Directors on COVID impact on HE quality
4	July 28, 2020	APQN online forum "Influence of COVID on higher education quality assurance: the new normal of higher education 4.0
5	July, 2020	Survey on effectiveness of online teaching during COVID-19 pandemic
6	Nov.25-26, 2020	MPI-APQN 12 <sup>th</sup> international conference on teaching and learning quality assurance in higher education under the pandemic
7	June to December, 2020	Qualitative research on effectiveness of online course during the COVID-19 pandemic
8	May 31, 2021	APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance
9	Nov. 22, 2021	MPI-APQN 13 <sup>th</sup> international conference on education innovation and teaching quality assurance in the post-pandemic era
10	Nov. 25, 2021	APQN Academic conference on COVID response mechanism and impact on quality assurance for higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region
11	June, 2022	Anthology of selected papers of 2021 AAC (online) in Singapore under COVID Pandemic
12	June, 2022	APQN Research on the COVID Impact on the HE Quality
13	Nov., 2022	APQN academic conference “quality assurance for higher education under COVID pandemic & beyond in Asia-Pacific Region”

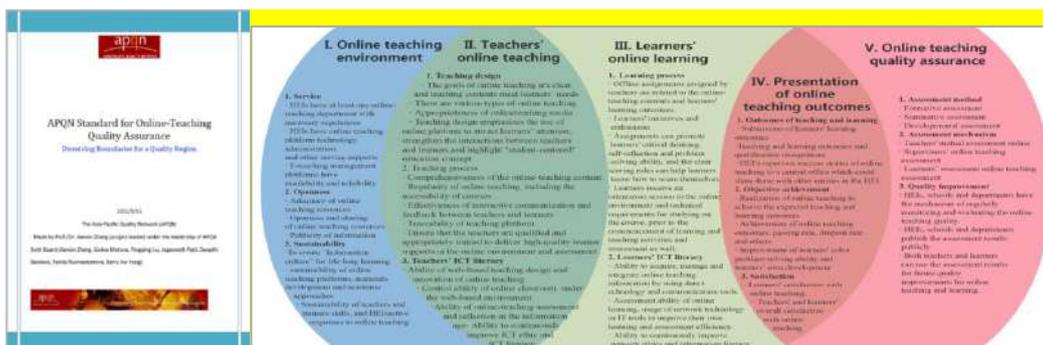
**3. APQN’s Method.** APQN innovation activities are based on a method of "finding problems - analyzing problems - solving problems". As for “finding problems”, a series of timely surveys were conducted:(1) targeting key objects of internal quality assurance institutions such as global university leaders, administrators, teachers and

students from 47 countries and regions; (2) targeting 101 external quality assurance agencies in Europe and the Asia Pacific region;(3) targeting the quality of online teaching for teachers and students; (4) targeting the quality assurance experts by Delphi Expert survey, mainly determining the indicators of online teaching quality standards. As for “analyzing problems”, APQN carried out five international conferences, in-depth interviews and SPSS analysis . As for “solving problem”, APQN used the Delphi expert analysis method to develop "APQN Online Teaching Quality Assurance Standard". It also proposed a set of response mechanisms, which are appropriate for universities in the crisis time in the future .

**Sustainability of APQN’s thirteen Innovative Actions**

“APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance” ([https://www.apqn.org/images/projects/JX\\_APQN\\_Standard\\_for\\_Online-Teaching\\_Quality\\_Assurance2021-5-31.pdf](https://www.apqn.org/images/projects/JX_APQN_Standard_for_Online-Teaching_Quality_Assurance2021-5-31.pdf)) is the first standard developed with a global view focusing only on online teaching and learning. “APQN Standard” consist of 5 criteria, 14 indicators and 46 observation points. The 5 criteria are: 1) online teaching environment; 2)teachers’ online teaching; 3) learners’ online learning; 4) presentation of online teaching outcomes; and 5) online- teaching quality assurance.

**Fig. 1: The framework of “APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance”**



APQN innovative actions can be scaled up with ease. All of APQN’s work are available on APQN’s website free of charge and can be replicated by educational institutions, stakeholders and other interested parties. In addition, APQN Consultant Data provide the contact information of 234 consultants.

**Conclusion**

Globally and especially in the Asia-Pacific region, various innovative education policies and practices have emerged and accelerated learning recovery. APQN has had the fortune to take the first dip to develop a constructive framework. APQN wishes its initiatives would help build a stable platform for communication among fellow agencies, scholars, and educational institutions, and that .one day “APQN Standard” or other quality standards on online quality assurance standard will be carried out in real scenario, to be beneficial by all the students, teachers, university administrators and others in the Asia-Pacific Region.

(Written by Jianxin Zhang from APQN)

## QA Activity

### The APQR Review to the National Centre for Public Accreditation

#### (NCPA), Russia

On April 11-12, 2023, the APQR Review panel conducted the virtual review to the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA), Russia for registration under APQR for the second term.



The panel is made up of four experts: Prof. Dr. Jianxin Zhang (Chair) from China, Fabrizio Trifiro from the United Kingdom (UK), Dr. Nitesh Sughnani from the United Arab Emirates and Dr. Timur Kanapyanov from the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Based on “APQN Constitution” and “Higher Education Quality Assurance Principles for the Asia Pacific Region” (Chiba Principle), the 11 review criteria contain 11 aspects of an external quality assurance agency (EQAA): 1) organization category; 2) operations; 3) mission and objectives; 4) staff and reviewers; 5) independence; 6) resources; 7) process and criteria; 8) appeals; 9) quality assurance; 10) monitoring and evaluation; and 11 agency linkages.

Before the review, the panel made the desk review on the NCPA’s Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and each gave his/her comments and questions to be verified. During the review, the panel watched the introduction video to show around NCPA’s resources and facilities, and held 1 presentation meeting, 2 internal meetings, 1 briefing and wrap-up meeting, and 5 interview meetings with the NCPA CEO, staff members and with a range of other stakeholders. Documents were carefully viewed, including “NCPA Self-Evaluation Report”, “Appendices” and other NCPA documents

as well as documents from the relative stakeholders.

Based on its review of documents, interviews, and validation of statements, the review panel finds NCPA is “substantial compliance” with the APQR criteria. The panel therefore recommends to the APQR Council that NCPA be accepted onto the Register.



(Written by Jianxin Zhang)

## APQN Participating in NQAAHE II Global Study

From the beginning of 2023, APQN participated in the second INQAAHE Global Study on “Trends in Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education”. Nominated by the seventh Board, Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang (APQN Immediate Past President) joined the global survey as the representative of APQN.

From 2018-2020, Prof./Dr. Jianxin and Ms. Jun Guo participated the first Global Study and contributed the survey distribution, data collection and report writing, which resulted in the final report entitled “Development Status and Trends of HE Quality Assurance in the Asia-Pacific Region: An Empirical Study based on APQN-NQAAHE Survey” (2020), and the publication Chapter 8 in the book entitled “Global Trends in Higher Education Quality Assurance” (2022).



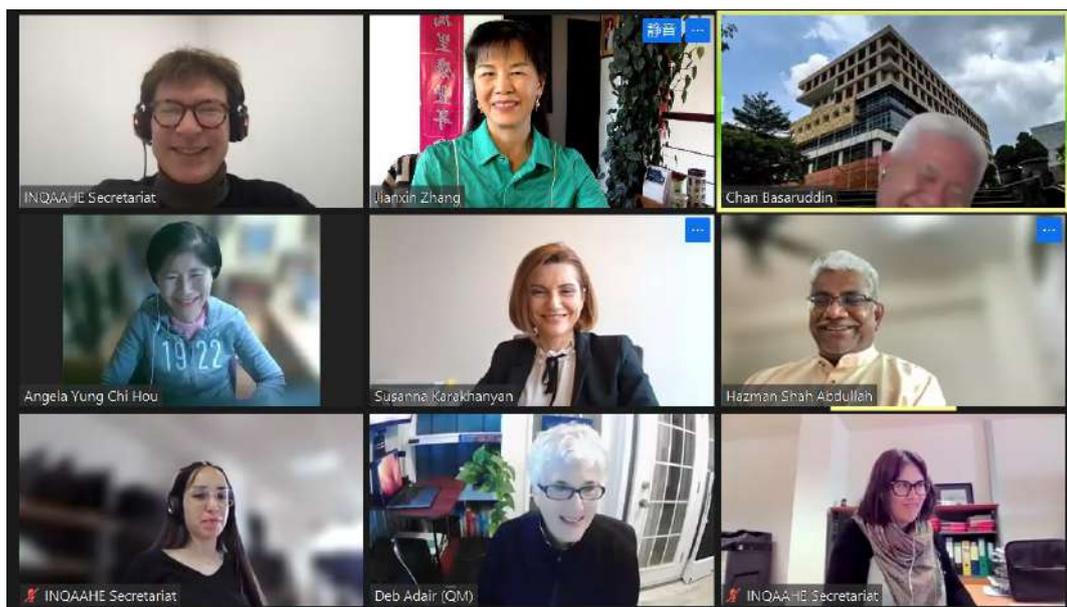
The INQAAHE Global Study is a flagship project conducted every five years. The second Global Study is a unique lever for highlighting recent developments in quality assurance (QA), both internal and external QA. The distinctive features of this Study are its regional focus and participatory modality. INQAAHE has hence initiated a series of meetings with institutional and QA networks and experts with 7 regional groups: Africa, the Arab countries, Asia-Pacific, Western and Eastern Europe, North America, and Latin America-Caribbean.



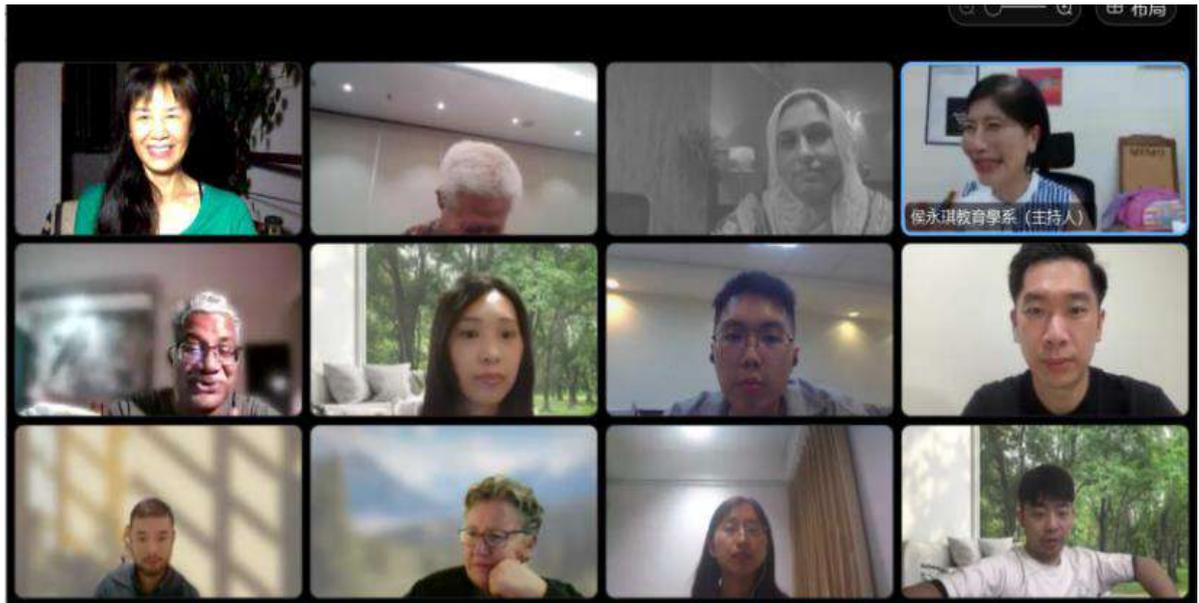
The overall objective is “to explore, observe and interpret global trends in internal and external quality assurance of tertiary education in terms of efficiency, relevance and transformative power of QA provisions globally and regionally”. The specific

objectives are: (1) to conduct an in-depth study on the TE landscape and state of the art in internal and external QA; (2) to better understand the trends and challenges of higher learning and needs peculiar to each region; (3) to explore the current trends in and effectiveness of the three helices: quality assurance - qualifications frameworks - recognition of qualifications; (4) to identify new opportunities for QA to contribute to recognition of learning (formal and non-formal) and qualifications regionally and globally; (5) to produce a synthesis report on each of the identified regions; and (6) to produce recommendations on future enhancements.

On April 14, 2023, “II Global Study - Asia-Pacific Regional Group Meeting” was held as one of the Regional Consultations Kick Off. Deb Adair (INQAAHE President), Susanna Karakhanyan (Immediate Past President), Jianxin Zhang (APQN Immediate Past President) and the 7 participants from the Asia-Pacific Region attended it. The agenda consisted of 3 items: (1) Introduction of the participants; (2) Objectives of the meeting; and (3) the Global Survey: objectives and structure. Susanna presented at the meeting on the following aspects: (1)background history; (2)the 1st Global Study: key findings & uses; (3) II Global Study: the purpose and scope in APR; (4) II Global Study: key themes; (5) II Global Study: regional study chapters; (6) II Global Study: the timelines; and others.



On May 16, 2023, “INQAAHE global study: Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting” was held virtually, chaired by Prof. Angela Yung Chi Hou, former Vice President of APQN and INQAAHE. The 15 participants are from Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Thailand, China, Malaysia, Chinese Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand. The meeting discussed the comments collected on survey (draft) and identified the key authors for the report.



No doubt, the Global Study could not exist without the contributions of regional networks. The regional networks are key in authoring relevant chapters as well as critical for data collection, reflection, and validation of the region-wide sections that form a key part of the global study. As APQN representative, Jianxin Zhang together with the team will make great efforts to ensure relevance, validity and generalizability of the data collection, data interpretation, and the resulting identification of the key trends and challenges in this region.

(Written by Jianxin Zhang, APQN Immediate Past President)

## Progress Report on the Development of the Database of Quality

### Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region (DAQAR)

The reporting period: January – June, 2023

<https://daqar.org/>

#### OBJECTIVE AND KEY FEATURES

The Database of Asia-Pacific Quality Assurance Results (DAQAR) represents a database of study programmes accredited by quality assurance agencies registered in the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR). It was initiated by the APQN Board in November 2022 and delegated for development to the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA).

The database is meant to ensure the internationalization of quality assurance policies that should be appropriate and applicable in all the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region. It should provide easy access to information on the accredited programmes, education and accreditation providers, reports and decisions, thus making external quality assurance mechanisms, procedures, and outcomes open, transparent and useful.

The objective of the DAQAR database is the recognition of qualifications and diplomas across countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The following data is reflected in the DAQAR database:

Accreditation agency	Accredited university	Accredited programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– name of the agency</li> <li>– type of quality assurance procedure (institutional/programme)</li> <li>– status of accreditation (obligatory/voluntary)</li> <li>– decision (positive/negative/with conditions)</li> <li>– dates of validity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– official name in the local language and in English</li> <li>– location: city, country</li> <li>– official website link</li> <li>– name of the accredited programmes and the qualification awarded as a result of the programme completion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– level of education (BA, Master, PhD, further education)</li> <li>– type of accreditation</li> <li>– status of accreditation (voluntary/obligatory)</li> <li>– decision on accreditation (positive/negative/with conditions)</li> <li>– terms of accreditation</li> <li>– evidence (Review report, decision)</li> </ul>

Key beneficiaries of the DAQAR database include students, higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies, and the national authorities.

Students could use the database as a helpful source of objective information related to quality assurance procedures when they choose where to study and what programme to enroll in. Students who are enrolled in an accredited programme are eligible to apply for various grants, engage in academic mobility programmes, and pursue cross-border education.

The database could be a useful tool for higher education institutions to improve their visibility, competitiveness, and international recognition.

Quality assurance agencies could use this platform to upload and disseminate their external review results. The database provides easy access to the outcomes of all the previous external quality assurance procedures. The database promotes the agency’s brand name and image, enhances its attractiveness and competitiveness.

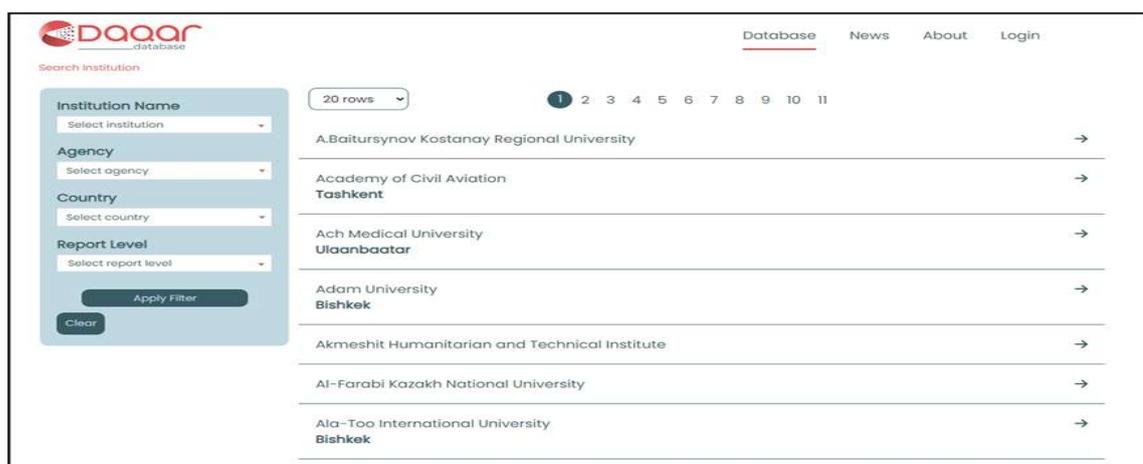
The national authorities could rely on the database as an important source of information on the condition of the national higher education system and quality assurance in the country. The more HEIs and programmes are represented in the database, the higher and stronger positions the national higher education system could have as a whole.

Through DAQAR, APQR might support future diploma recognition and increase external quality assurance transparency throughout the Asia-Pacific Region.

## 2. Prototype

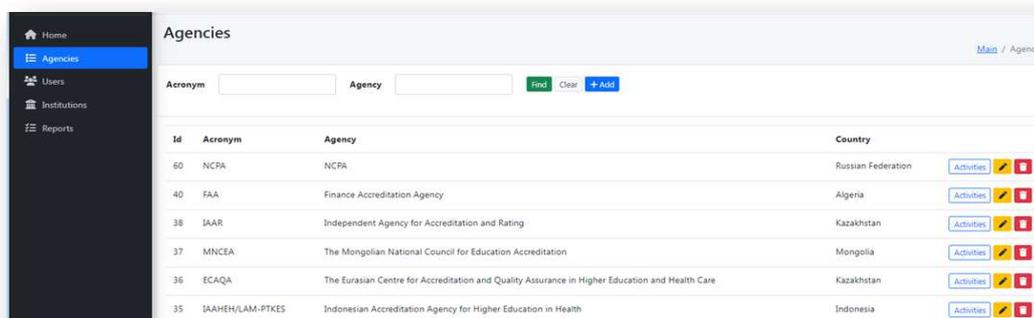
Asia-Pacific Quality Network empowered the National Centre for Public Accreditation to develop the DAQAR database from scratch.

The proposed interface has a clear and logical design:



DAQAR has 2 interfaces: public and administrative. Public interface is open for the general public. Through the public interface any stakeholder can check the key

information on the accredited programme, quality assurance and education providers. Administrative interface is open for APQR-registered agencies, where they can upload information and evidence documents.



The beta version of the database was launched in January, 2023. Since then, the following APQR-registered agencies have uploaded the accredited programmes in beta mode to test the functional capacity of the developed interface and its user friendliness.

As of June, 2023, the database contains 198 HEIs, 3776 reports, and 10 agencies.

### 3. Timeline

January, 2023	Launch of the project
January, 2023 - December, 2023	Development stage
February, 2023 - present	Beta stage
January, 2024 - onwards	Maintenance stage

### 4. Conclusion

The work on the development of the DAQAR database is of continuous nature. It is intended to be an ongoing exercise until December 2023. After this date the database will enter a maintenance stage. The plan is to revise and expand the database as new accreditation agencies join APQR and begin uploading their data into the system.

## INQA AHE Conference-2023 and General Assembly



From May 29 to June 1, 2023 Astana hosted the 17th Biennial Conference

"Roadmap to Enabling Quality in Tertiary Education 2030", organized by the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQA AHE) and the Independent Agency for Quality Assurance Quality in Education (IQAA), Republic of Kazakhstan.

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQA AHE) is a world-wide association of 300+ organisations active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education.

The conference united more than 200 participants from 6 continents. INQA AHE 2023 focused on the role of quality assessment in supporting the implementation of the UNESCO "Roadmap 2030 Beyond Borders: New Pathways to Rethinking Higher Education", as well as addressing the challenges posed by the sustainable development goal of inclusive and equitable quality education and learning opportunities throughout life.

The conference offered plenary sessions, multi-speaker session and interaction sessions on various issues such as:

- Evaluation of micro-qualifications: experience of different countries;
- Flexible learning paths in higher education: challenges and solutions for quality assurance agencies;
- The challenges and opportunities articulated in the UNESCO Roadmap 2030 "Beyond Limits: New Pathways to Rethinking Higher Education", which expresses an urgent call for new thinking, dialogue and transformational action, setting landmarks for co-creating more open, inclusive, equitable and participatory systems of higher education;

- Independent lifelong learning system through credit-hour accumulation and its quality assurance;
- Quality assurance for digital learning environments: strengthening QA systems in higher education at the regional, national and institutional levels to ensure academic quality and student success;
- Digitalization of teaching and learning without compromising quality;
- Quality assurance in the era of artificial intelligence: challenges, opportunities and approaches;
- Students as drivers of change in quality assurance: from participation to agency;
- Cross-border cooperation in the field of quality assessment and improvement of cross-border education;
- Development of new quality assurance guidelines for online learning.
- Russia was presented by the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA).



On May 29, 2023 the meeting of INQAAHE regional partners was held in Astana, as part of the 17th conference of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education INQAAHE "Roadmap to Enabling Quality in Tertiary Education 2030".

The activities of the Asia-Pacific Quality Assurance Network at the meeting of the regional partners were represented by the Vice President of APQN Galina Motova.

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education is a world-wide association and seeks productive and useful engagement with Regional Networks to strengthen mutual efforts and experiences in our common sphere.

Written by Oksana Tanikova, Deputy Head of the Accreditation Department of NCPA

## First Time: International Accreditation

### OLFU- College of Business and Accountancy(CBA)



#### FIRST TIME: INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION

##### *OLFU-College of Business and Accountancy (CBA)*

PHILIPPINES - After an intensive journey of preparations that begun in February 2019, the College of Business and Accountancy (CBA) of Our Lady of Fatima University (OLFU) succeeded in earning its First Time Accreditation from the world-renowned International Accreditation Council of Business Educators (IACBE). The monumental achievement was announced on 14 April 2023 during the IACBE's 2023 Annual Conference and Assembly Meeting in Orlando, Florida where it was distinctly shared that OLFU-CBA's accreditation had been duly approved by IACBE's Board of Commissioners.

Dr. Ignacio Cordova Jr., OLFU-CBA Dean and prime initiator of the accreditation process was expressive in his social media post: "This approval is a testament to the hard work invested by our core team in the college, faculty, staff, and students in providing an outstanding education experience for all our CBA students. As a program that has undergone rigorous evaluation, receiving this accreditation marks the highest distinction and sets our college apart. It is a true honor to have our efforts recognized globally by a well-recognized international council for accreditation."



#### BENEFITS...

IACBE accreditation provides many benefits to institutional stakeholders. For institutions, the accreditation demonstrates their commitment to quality business education and enhances their reputation. Accreditation also provides institutions with access to networking opportunities, resources, and best practices.

For faculty, accreditation provides a framework for continuous improvement and ensures that they are providing students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the business world. Accreditation also provides faculty with opportunities for professional development and collaboration with other educators.

For students, accreditation ensures that they are receiving a quality business education that meets high standards of excellence. Accreditation also provides students with the assurance that their degree will be recognized and valued by employers and other institutions.

Overall, the IACBE is an important organization in the world of business education, promoting excellence and providing assurance of quality to institutions, faculty, and students alike. OLFU-CBA RISE TO THE TOP!

#### THE JOURNEY BEGINS... HOW IT STARTED

Guided by its mission to advance academic quality in business programs, OLFU-CBA's journey in February 2019 bid for international membership affiliation with IACBE which requires that OLFU-CBA majors in Marketing Management, Banking, and Operations & Supply Chain Management— be aligned to internationalized and high quality standards of education. Then, in January 2020, two (2) months before the COVID-19 lockdown, IACBE conducted an initial site visit of OLFU to evaluate its petition to be of Candidate Status which turned out quite well because by July 2021, OLFU-CBA received the exhilarating news that it was granted Candidacy Status by IACBE. While still in the thick of the pandemic in July 2022, the OLFU-CBA core team initiated the fine and detailed preparation of its IACBE self-study manual.

After almost a year of "heavy-lifting", the three-man IACBE Team— Dr. Archish Maharaja, Dr. Gita Maharaja, and Dr. Laurie Yates — conducted its IACBE's Actual First Time Accreditation Onsite Visit of OLFU-CBA on January 25 to 28, 2023. The four (4) days actual site visit program entailed going through compliances, interviews, discussions and campus tours with a fine-toothed comb. And so the story goes— motivated by inspiration, endless energies, and a unison of goals, OLFU-CBA was granted its First Time Accreditation by IACBE in April of this year 2023!

True to OLFU-CBA's mission of being — a globally accredited institution of international standards and industry-preferred partner for innovative business education, as well as vision of being guided by excellence in business domains — OLFU CBA provides competitive learning and education for future business leaders.

## **Assessment of the Quality of Education as a Universal Tool to Promote the Integration of Higher Education for Different Regional Associations and Educational Consortiums**

Russian Register specialists took part in the international conference "Priorities and problems of economic development", May 11–12, 2023, Yerevan (Republic of Armenia), organized by the Armenian State University of Economics (ASUE) and the Association of Economic Universities of Southern and Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region (ASECU).

Today, the countries of the world are facing serious problems that increase the level of uncertainty in the economy and complicate, and sometimes make it impossible, sustainable economic development and improving the quality of life of the population at the regional and global level. Such challenges often force governments of different countries to reconsider development priorities, the implementation of which involves the use of new economic policy tools, new methods and new approaches to organizing economic activity. The hosts developed several SIGs within the framework of the conference, for example, "Geopolitical aspects of economic security: new directions for economic development", "Social landscape and population: employment, poverty and income polarization", "Green economy and sustainable development", as well as the section "Global and regional aspects of new directions of integration and geopolitical contours of the new economic system".

Considering the common educational space of the EAEU member countries as a necessary condition for the formation of the labor market of the Eurasian region, determining the national characteristics of the formation of competencies of university graduates, Russian Register specialists identified new areas of integration and presented a report on the topic "Assessment of the quality of education as a tool to promote the integration of higher education". The presentation developed by Alexandra Zvezdova, Head of the Education Quality Assessment Department of the Russian Register, and Olga Safonkina, the specialist of Education Quality Assessment Department highlighted the best labeling practices of the Asia-Pacific Education Quality Assurance Network, of which Russian Register is a full member. The relevant topic of cross border recognition of tertiary education drew a lot of attention from the participants conference participants, among whom were rectors and vice-rectors of leading universities of the EAEU member countries ( Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia).

Representative of the Vice-Rector of the Rostov State University of Economics Oleg Bodyagin spoke at the plenary session with a report on the topic "Sustainable global energy transition: competitiveness issues for Russia", ASUE representative David Akhverdyan with a report "Coordinated sanctions in the orbit of

transformation of the world economy” and many others. The speakers repeatedly noted the “turn to the East”, considered the prevailing trends in integration processes.

The participants of the section were especially interested in the process of joining the Eurasian Network University (ENU), the memorandum on the establishment of which was signed on May 26, 2022 in Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic). At present, this educational consortium already includes 22 universities from different countries - members of the EAEU, it is necessary to harmonize national legislative acts in order to ensure academic mobility of teachers and students in the implementation of consortium educational programs of an innovative type, to achieve the effective functioning of such a complex, self-developing structure as ENU.

## International Conference on Digital Universities Asia

Mr. Ijaz Ahmad, Director QEC, Government College Women University, Sialkot (GCWUS) attended an International Conference on “Digital Universities Asia” from March 8-10, 2023 at Hilton Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to represent the GCWUS. This conference was organized by Times Higher Education (THE) World University Ranking. Only two universities represented Pakistan in this conference. GCWUS has the honor of being the only Public Sector University from Pakistan that participated in this unique and important International Conference.

More than 250 delegates including higher education leaders, experts, industrial partners and policymakers from different countries of Asia participated in this conference. The latest start-ups and technologies to transform Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were also featured in this conference. Special sessions on enabling students' success in the digital era; modern hybrid education system; and transformation of teaching, learning and assessment in the Post-ChatGPT World were the highlights of this conference.



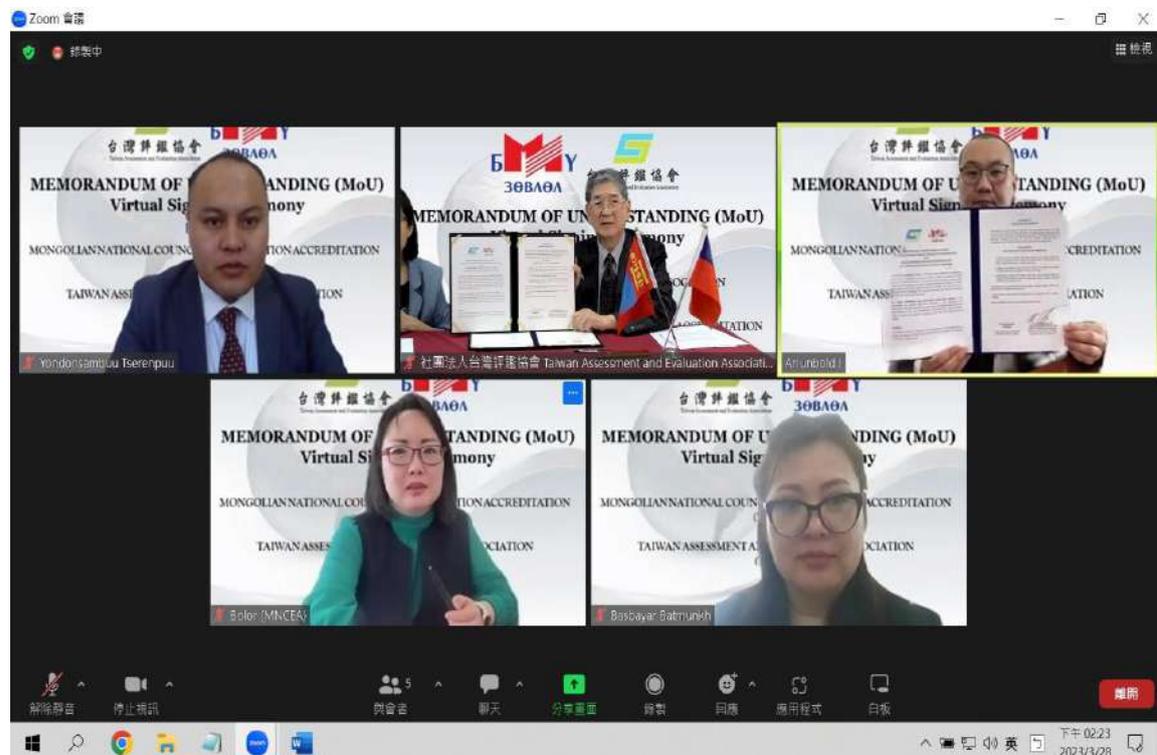


## TWAEA Signs MoU with MNCEA

The Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association (TWAEA) built an interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA) on March 28, 2023 through an online ceremony. This MoU presents the consensus of both parties on strengthening the development of quality assurance and marks a new chapter on the international relations of TWAEA.

The online MoU signing ceremony was represented by Dr. Chi-Yeh Yung, Chairman of TWAEA, and Dr. Ariunbold Jaaljv, Deputy Chair of the Governing Board of MNCEA. TWAEA and MNCEA are both devoted to promote international visibility and enriching the implementation results of various projects. This MoU signing is extremely meaningful for both agencies to gain more versatile collaborators and facilitate a well-established relationship.

TWAEA is always committed to forming partnerships and actively creating new collaboration opportunities for international partners. Starting from 2023, MNCEA has jointly participated in the “International Survey Project on Students’ Learning Outcomes and Satisfaction in Higher Education,” which was first launched by TWAEA among Taipei (China), Japan and Thailand since 2018. With the signing of MoU, we shall achieve mutual goals and expectations all together by maximizing our respective strengths and supporting each other.



## Obituary

### Tribute to Peter Cheung



It is with deep sorrow and a heavy heart that we, the Board of Directors of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), extend our heartfelt condolences on his untimely decease. Mr. Peter Cheung was the co-founder and first President of APQN. Peter was an extraordinary individual — highly competent, supportive, and passionate about everything he undertook. His caring attitude, gentle nature, and unwavering dedication to quality assurance in education define the legacy he leaves behind.

Peter's remarkable leadership and boundless enthusiasm were instrumental in the development of regional quality assurance in higher education. We were profoundly moved by his unwavering support during the foundation years of APQN as first elected President as well as his contributions to the Secretariat during the early years. His commitment to the advancement of our organization and the field of quality assurance in education was truly commendable.

We share in the profound sense of loss experienced by everyone who had the privilege of knowing Peter and, of course, by the entire APQN community. His absence will be deeply felt by all who had the honor of collaborating with him. Peter was an amazing person — so competent, supportive, and enthusiastic about everything he was involved in. His invaluable contributions and gentle nature endeared him to all who had the pleasure of working alongside him.

## In memory of APQN Founding President: Peter Cheung

Jianxin Zhang

Just like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, I am deeply saddened to hear that Peter Cheung, one of APQN co-founders and APQN's first President, passed away on June 16th at the age of 75.

Time is like a small stream, trickling down, and never stop. The slow flowing of time always dilutes some memories, but some important and special persons, are unforgettable for a lifetime.



Esteemed Peter, I want to write one short message in memory of you. Having opened "APQN 15th Anniversary Album", I gaze at your smiling face on the photo, pour you a glass of red wine, light three sticks of incense, my thought has been drifted away as your departure from the earth.

### First Handshake with Peter

The first time I had the chance to shakehands with you is 16 years ago - November 8, 2007. It is in Spring City - Kunming in China, my hometown. You and Ms. Concepcion V. Pijano, your successor of APQN President, together with other QA experts came to Yunnan University to hold a workshop entitled "Quality Enhancement: Theory of External Quality Assurance and its Practice in China" jointly organised by APQN, Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute (SEEI), and Yunnan Higher Education Evaluation Center (YHEEC). 45 participants were from external quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions from throughout China.

You gave a speech on "Strengthen Capacity Building for the Quality Assurance Agencies". Your profound knowledge, scholarly demeanor and your wonderful eloquence have given me a very deep impression. It is because of your support and encouragement, Yunnan Higher Educational Evaluation Center (YHEEC) joined the APQN family as a full member, and therefore I have also established an indissoluble bond with APQN.



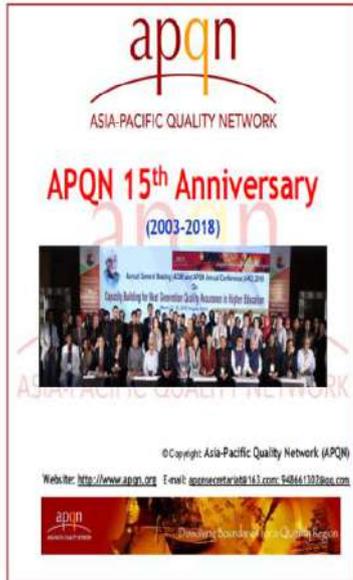
(Peter stands at the fifth from the left at Row 2, the author at the second from left at Row 1)

### Peter's Tale of APQN's Establishment

As APQN current President, I was lucky enough to have communicated with you multiple times in 2018. The purpose is to compile "APQN 15th Anniversary Brochure". You were very pleased to contribute one article to remember APQN beautiful past. After learning what APQN has done for many years, you passionately said, "I really didn't expect that 15 years have passed, and APQN still adheres to the original mission, objectives, and tasks which we set earlier". You told me what happened during the initial stage of APQN creation in 2003.

On a sunny day 20 years ago (January 18, 2003) in Hong Kong, China, a small core group of QA experts led by you (Peter Cheung of HKCAA), together David Woodhouse of AUQA in Australia, VS Prasad of NAAC in India) and others had a meeting with a common wish for excellence in quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region. And here APQN came into being! You told me: "We come together not because of any coercion or requirement but a common wish to learn from one another and to help one another. We are concerned about quality, especially the quality of our own work." No doubt, this is basically the reason why APQN was established so quickly and how it has become the example for other regional networks which were set up under the auspices of INQAAHE, like APQN.

You told me, "I would always like to believe, APQN is more a brotherhood than an organization. We don't have many resources and membership is entirely voluntary, but we have a tradition of achieving by working hard pro bono and helping one another proactively. If we maintain this spirit, I am sure that our success story will continue." In the short article, you expressed your pride in the creation of APQN, your deep affection for APQN, and your expectations for a better tomorrow for APQN.



#### IV. Reflections of the Old Good Days

The 1<sup>st</sup> President: Mr. Peter P T Cheung



In this joyous occasion of the APQN's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday, I am indeed honored to have been invited to contribute a small message as its founding president.

APQN has come into being not because of a push but a strong pull. We come together not because of any coercion or requirement but a common wish to learn from one another and to help one another. We are concerned about quality, especially the quality of our own work. And this is basically the reason why APQN was established so quickly and how it has become the example for other regional networks which, like APQN, were set up under the auspices of INQAAHE.

It all started with the practice of INQAAHE providing opportunities for agencies to meet by the region at the fringes of its conferences. Eventually India and Hong Kong were tasked to explore the option of having a regional sub-network for Asia.

A meeting of QA agency heads in Hong Kong in 2003 established the common wish and a small core group was formed to follow up. There were 3 persons, David Woodhouse of AUQA, VS Prasad of NAAC and myself, having just taken over from my predecessor in HKCAA Wong Wai-sum. And rather fortuitously Majorie Peace Lenn, a member of INQAAHE Board from the United States, in the nick of time secured an agreement in principle from the World Bank to give us a three year starting grant.



### Cherishing the Memory of Peter

This year (2023) is APQN 20th anniversary. I thought I might see you in person at APQN Academic Conference to be held this November in Bangladesh. But, unexpectedly you left us and you left APQN forever.

Esteemed Peter, starting from the original 20 members, APQN has 268 members from 47 countries/ territories today. APQN has become the largest & the most influential non-governmental, non-profit international organization in QA in this Region.

Esteemed Peter, please rest assured that APQN will always follow "APQN Constitution" to be efficient in its operations to realize the vision of "promoting quality culture, being a self-sustaining, and being the first point of reference".

Esteemed Peter, all the QA persons in APQN big family will continuously make great effort "to enhance the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region" for its ultimate goal of "Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region".

APQN is so lucky because God made you APQN founding president! APQN will never forget you! Today, with a heavy heart, I bow deeply to you and mourn for you in silence.

May you have a good journey to heaven because all APQN people are praying for you,

May you be happy in heaven because there will be rainbows and sunshine in heaven.



## Up-coming Event

### Welcome to APQN Academic Conference in 2023

APQN Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM) are annual highlight events to discuss and advance quality assurance in higher education in Asia-Pacific. APQN Board is delighted to announce that the next AAC and AGM will be hosted by American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), Bangladesh (hereinafter referred to as “AIUB”) on November 02 - 04 (Thu. - Sat.), 2023.

The target audience for the AAC and AGM are primarily those associated with quality assurance in the Asia- Pacific Region, including all types of APQN members and observers and others, who are interested in quality assurance in higher education in the region and beyond. The AAC is open to all registered delegates, and the AGM is for APQN members only.

The theme of 2023 AAC is Innovation and Sustainable Development in Higher Education. The four sub-themes are : 1) Quality of Transformative Learning (TL) and Transformative Teaching (TT); 2) Blended Education from the Perspective of 4th Industrial Revolution and the COVID Pandemic; 3) Digital Quality Assurance and Journey to Quality Enhancement; 4) University-Industry Linkage in the Background of Internationalization.



**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**APQN ACADEMIC CONFERENCE 2023**

**Conference Themes**  
Innovation and Sustainable Development in Higher Education

**Sub-Themes**

- ☑ Quality of Transformative learning (TL) and Transformative teaching (TT)
- ☑ Blended Education from the perspective of 4th Industrial Revolution and the COVID Pandemic
- ☑ Digital Quality Assurance and Journey to Quality Enhancement
- ☑ University-Industry Linkage in the background of internationalization

The registration fee is 100 USD for APQN members and 125 USD for Non APQN Members. Please note down the key dates and events:



**IMPORTANT DATE**

01 September Abstract Submission	15 September Registration	30 September Review Notification	10 October Full Paper Deadline	20 October Payment Confirmation Deadline	03-04 November Conference Date
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Please visit <https://www.aiub.edu/apqn2023> for detailed information.

If you have any question, please contact the APQN Secretariat (apqnsecretariat@163.com) and local organizer, AIUB (apqn@aiub.edu)



## Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region

### APQNews (Issue 27, 2023)

#### *Call for Articles and News for the Next Issue*

APQNews is a half-year periodical newsletter on updating APQN development within the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN). It also gives members an opportunity to share QA activities within their organization. All members are invited to contribute articles for the next issue of APQNews.

A great way to get involved with the APQN community is to share your thoughts and ideas. Do you have something you would like to share with your APQN colleagues? Are there any upcoming quality events that you would like to release in APQNews? APQN welcomes all contributions for the next issue of APQNews! Please kindly e-mail them to Chief Editor and APQN Administrator at: [nbraika@moe.gov.bt](mailto:nbraika@moe.gov.bt) & [apqnsecretariat@163.com](mailto:apqnsecretariat@163.com).

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