

MPI-APQN Successful Held the 9th HE International Conference

The 9th Higher Education International Conference on “*The New Developments of Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance*”, which was jointly organized by Macao Polytechnic Institute (MPI) and Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), was held on 22-23 November at Macao Polytechnic Institute, Macao SAR, China. More than 30 renowned experts and scholars from the United Kingdom, Portugal, Ireland, Japan, Mauritius, Vietnam, Chinese Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao gathered in Macao to discuss the various factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning and to present the latest innovations and frontier developments of quality assurance. In total, more than 100 representatives from higher education institutions participated in the conference.



The highlights of the conference included four keynote speeches and a teaching and learning enhancement workshop. Eight parallel sessions conducted in English and Chinese were also held.

I. Conference Themes

This year's conference theme was on the 'New Developments of Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance'. Discussions and exchanges spanned various sub-themes such as the theories and practices of teaching and learning quality assurance systems, enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education, outcome-based approaches to teaching and learning, learning environment of students, student evaluation of teachers (SET) and teacher self-evaluation (TSE), assessment of students' professional competence, voice of students to enhance teaching effectiveness, use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in teaching and learning enhancement, professional development for teachers in connection with teaching and students' learning, quality assurance framework to safeguard and enhance experiences of international students, case studies of teaching and learning quality assurance in higher education with special reference to Asia-Pacific, and other relevant topics related to the conference theme.

II. Opening Ceremony

The 9th Higher Education International Conference on The New Developments of Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance opened on 22 November at MPI. The opening ceremony was officiated by Professor Jianxin Zhang, President of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network, Professor José Sarsfield Cabral, Member of the Board, Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education (A3ES), Portugal, Professor Luís Filipe Menezes, Vice-Rector of the University of Coimbra, Portugal together with Professor Lei Heong lok, President of MPI. In his opening address, Professor Lei Heong lok stated that the conference is in its ninth year and provides a valuable platform for participants locally and from abroad to discuss emerging and evolving notions of teaching and learning quality assurance. Professor Lei added that MPI is constantly at the forefront of quality assurance and academic reviews in Macao higher education. MPI was awarded the APQN's Best/Model Internal Quality Assurance Award in 2015 and again in 2017. MPI will continue to fulfill its commitment to excellence in teaching, academic development and research, and to create a conducive learning environment for its students



Professor Jianxin Zhang, President of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network, congratulated the success of this conference on behalf of the Board members and 204 members from 40 countries and territories of the Asia-Pacific region. Professor Zhang said MPI again was awarded the 'APQN's Best Model of Internal QA Award' in 2017, which made MPI the most outstanding example among over 100 APQN institutional members. APQN has been organizing the conference jointly with MPI for three consecutive years, which can help to promote high quality of teaching and learning in higher education and deliver many by-products related to 'teaching' and 'learning'. Professor Zhang welcomed the participants to have a stimulating exchange of experience and theoretical discussions and ideas around the theme of 'quality assurance of teaching and learning' on this conference platform of 'global vision' and 'localized action'.



III. Keynote Speeches

- The first keynote speech by Professor José Sarsfield Cabral (Member of the Board, A3ES) was on how higher education institutions (HEIs) may ease the transition of first-year university students by embracing the quality management principle of an evidence-based approach making. This can be achieved by collecting, analyzing and reporting data on students' admission

and progress.

- The second keynote speech was delivered by Professor Jianxin Zhang (President of APQN). Professor Zhang discussed how programme evaluation promotes teaching-learning quality in her detailed analysis of the programme evaluation of Yunnan higher vocational colleges. She highlighted the four key notes for the internal QA processes of HEIs, namely achievement of student learning outcomes, teaching-learning meets social needs, ‘five degrees’ through the whole process and highlight development-orientated teaching and learning.
- In the keynote speech by Ms. Dorte Kristoffersen (Executive Director of HKCAAVQ), the audience was provided with an overview of the higher education environment and its impact on quality assurance. With the use of quality management in the Hong Kong context, she stressed that the increased expectations from the public and increased institutional competition calls for a high degree of responsiveness from both HEIs and QA bodies. Particularly, she proposed that a right fit is preferred over the one-size fits all accreditation approach.
- The final keynote speech delivered by Professor Luís Filipe Menezes (Vice-Rector of the University of Coimbra) focused on the Pedagogical Quality Management Process at the University of Coimbra. The QM process of the university covers all of its courses and includes a comprehensive set of procedures executed at the faculty, course and curricular unit levels. It has contributed immensely to the promotion of a quality culture at the university and has led to improvement actions.



This workshop was hosted by Professor Robin Snell, Director, Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University, Hong Kong. Service-learning (S-L) plays a crucial role in student experience at the Lingnan University. Professor Snell gave a detailed account of how S-L facilitates student learning through combining academic study with meaningful service in the community. He also explained several criteria against which the quality of service-learning (S-L) can be assessed.

IV. Parallel Sessions

Apart from these keynote speeches and T&L workshop, the two-day conference also comprised presentations of more than 20 papers by academic and experts from various countries and regions.

These parallel sessions explored the role of HE accreditation bodies, best practices in implementing QA models in HEIs, student affairs and curriculum design to

enhance student engagement and academic achievements, and the role of technology in enhancing teaching and learning, among various other themes.



V. Participant Feedback

Participants of this conference have had an enthusiastic exchange of ideas and found the two-day sharing of insights and experience to be very beneficial. They thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the QA practices in Asia and indeed around the world, meeting and interacting with practitioners and scholars who have a shared interest in enhancing teaching and learning at their own institutions.



(Written by MPI)