

# Overview of 2021 AAC on COVID-19 Response Mechanism

**Project Title:**

Overview of 2021 APQN Academic Conference

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## Executive Summary

The COVID-19 has swept the world and brought varying degrees of impacts to higher education institutions, teachers, and students. Asia-Pacific Quality Network(APQN) held a 2021 academic conference on the online platform of Zoom, entitled "Response mechanism and influence of higher education quality assurance in Asia-Pacific region in the post-pandemic era". There were more than 350 participants in this conference, among whom the organizing committee invited four guests to give speeches, and nine scholars from eight countries or regions gave speeches. In the conference we discussed the difficulties and countermeasures it faces from the internal and external parts of higher education quality assurance. It is pointed out that the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region should go hand in hand and seek progress while maintaining stability in the post-pandemic era. Consequently, it is not only necessary to base itself on the local and strive for stability internally, but also to look at the world and seek progress externally to ensure and improve the quality of higher education.

## 1. Introduction

Because of the impact of COVID-19, different countries and regions around the world have continuously adjusted their teaching models, changed their education strategies and updated their management plans. How to ensure the high-quality development of higher education in the post-pandemic era becomes a new issue. In order to further promote the development of higher education and effectively cope with many challenges faced by the quality assurance(QA) of HE in the Asia-Pacific region after the COVID-19 pandemic, APQN Academic Conference(AAC) was successfully held on November 25th, 2021 on Zoom online platform. This conference was organized by APQN and hosted by EDUVALUE, and the theme is "COVID-19-Response Mechanism and Impact on Quality Assurance for Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region", with 3 sub-themes, with 3 sub-themes: (1)Teaching technology: Does Education have a more prolonged approach to the pandemic? (2) Academic quality: shift in pedagogy and frameworks; (3) Recruitment: recruiting and digital on boarding process.

By November 13th, 2021, the APQN Conference Organizing Committee had received 36 papers from 15 countries and regions. There are 16 articles from China, accounting for 44% of the total. 3 articles from Pakistan and Russia, accounting for 8% respectively (Fig.1).

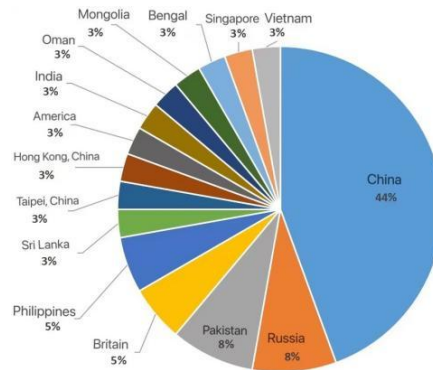


Fig. 1 Distribution diagram of papers submitted by APQN Academic Conference in 2021

Source: APQN Conference Organizing Committee

The opening ceremony of the conference was presided over by Prof. Galina Motova, APQN vice-president. First of all, with the ardent expectation of 350 participants, Mr. Barry Aw Yong, the founder of the EV education group, gave welcome remarks. Then Prof. Jianxin Zhang, APQN president, gave the theme address. On the one hand, she introduced 11 important academic activities of APQN under the background of COVID-19 pandemic, such as the APQN Survey of the COVID impact on higher education institutions (HEIs), Survey of effectiveness of online teaching, APQN standard for online-teaching quality assurance. On the other hand, she pointed out what impacts and changes has COVID pandemic brought us. She also expressed trends of quality assurance for higher education in post-pandemic era. And Dr. Peter J Wells, chief of higher education, gave a keynote speech called Reinventing the Role and Place of Higher Education for a Sustainable Future. Later, three sessions about 1) international higher education QA under the COVID-19 pandemic; 2) online teaching and learning quality QA; 3) innovation path of external QA under the COVID-19 pandemic were discussed. 9 authors from 8 countries and regions reported the research results for 15 minutes to the participants, and answered some questions about their topic. Finally, the APQN Council made arrangements for the upcoming work in 2022, and Dr. Jagannath Patil, APQN board director, delivered the closing remarks, APQN Academic Conference in 2021 ended perfectly.

## 2. Double Dilemma: Difficulties in the Asia-Pacific region

Global higher education has experienced the unprecedented disruption and transformation since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the end of 2019. As of April last year, the number of students affected by school or university suspensions reached 1.57 billion, accounting for 91.5% of the global student population.<sup>1</sup> Online learning became the most popular alternative to traditional face-to-face teaching immediately under the sudden attack of the pandemic.<sup>2</sup> However, due to the lack of internal experience and quality evaluation standards, the HE Quality is facing great challenges.

### 2.1 HE lacks internal standards

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, many HEIs have adopted online teaching methods to conduct teaching and learning. Therefore, teaching place transformed from classroom to network, but teaching methods lacked interaction, and students' online learning experience was disappointing. According to Arianna Fang Yu Lin's empirical research, a PhD candidate in the Department of Education, National Chengchi University, Taiwan, nearly half of students thought online learning was not as effective as traditional face-to-face teaching. Only 6% of the students were very satisfied with online learning. Online evaluation was a pressing problem but the best choice to ensure students' learning outcomes.<sup>3</sup> Due to the lack of online education experience in higher education, there are great difficulties to the QA of higher education, which is embodied in the following aspects.

#### 1) The transformation of teaching mode is facing challenges

For most teachers, they are forced to change their teaching mode, just like soldiers going into battle unarmed. All faculty around the globe were given the mission of starting online teaching instantly without appropriate training and supports.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, teachers during this online teaching period required more support

<sup>1</sup> International Centre for Higher Education Innovation under the auspices of UNESCO [UNESCO-ICHEI] (2021). Build back education better in the post-COVID-19 era. Retrieved October 15, 2021, from [https://ichei.org/dist/index.html#/reader?id=190&qk\\_qishu=1&lang=1](https://ichei.org/dist/index.html#/reader?id=190&qk_qishu=1&lang=1)

<sup>2</sup> Wang, L. (2020, November 21). Achieving access to quality blended learning for all. University World News. Retrieved October 14, 2021, from <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20201120123658883>

<sup>3</sup> Coates, H. (2020, March 28). Emergency learning requires next-generation assessment. University World News. Retrieved October 13, 2021, from

[https://www.universityworldnews.com/page.php?page=UW\\_Main](https://www.universityworldnews.com/page.php?page=UW_Main)

<sup>4</sup> Rapanta, C., Botturi, L., Goodyear, P., Guàrdia, L., & Koole, M (2020). Online university teaching during and after the COVID-19 crisis: Refocusing teacher presence and learning activity. *Postdigital Science and Education*, 2, 923-945. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00155-y>

than ever to substantiate the quality of their online-teaching.<sup>5</sup> Oman scholars Dr. Wafa AL-Maawali and Ms. Munira Al-Siyabi, put forward that teachers' work environment, teaching style, self monitoring of performance, teacher quality-related practices and initiatives of professional development are factors affecting teaching quality. However, these factors are difficult to guarantee under the special circumstances of pandemic situation.

### 2) Students are not ready for online learning

First of all, some students are not ready for educational resources. According to statistics, even by 2019, there were still 63% the rural population could not access the Internet at home. The gap of Internet access between rural and urban areas was far larger in developing countries.<sup>6</sup> For students, it was easily to be left behind with poor internet connections. Secondly, in the process of online learning, students are also meeting great difficulties. 54.2% of the respondents indicated that a lack of interactions with teachers and classmates would be the serious learning problem. In addition to the external environment, 53.6% of the respondents deemed themselves were lacking in self-discipline and 50.1% of the respondents considered themselves were easily distracted by surroundings(Fig.2). Therefore, the quality of students' online learning is not guaranteed.

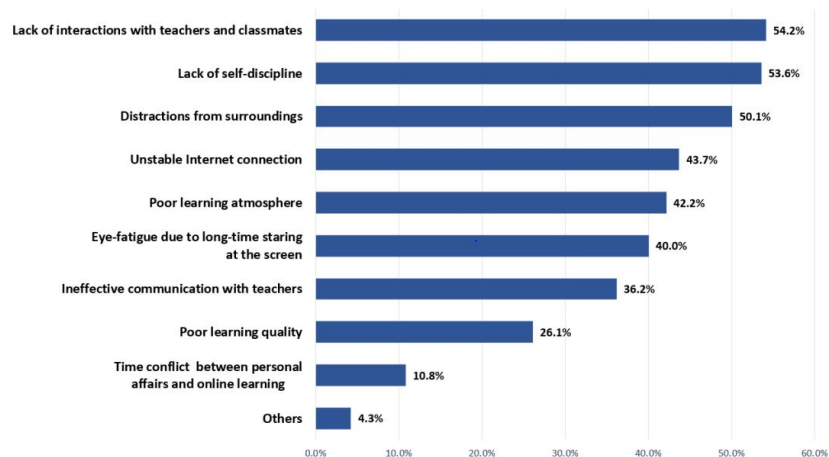


Fig. 2 Major challenges of online learning

Source: Quality and Inequality: Students' learning experiences and perceptions tower online learning amidst COVID-19

### 3) HEIs suffered a sustained blow

For HEIs, it was challenged to deliver online education without adequate

<sup>5</sup> Wafa AL-Maawali, Munira Al-Siyabi. Teacher Role in Internalising Quality Teaching Measures:A case Study of Oman Higher Education[Z]2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

<sup>6</sup> International Telecommunication Union [ITU]. (2020). Measuring digital development: Facts and figures 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/FactsFigures2020.pdf>

technological equipment.<sup>7</sup> In many developing countries or regions, there is not enough conditions for online education at all. In Ms. Yahan Yang’s research, during the pandemic, HEIs not only need to actively participate in pandemic prevention as important social organizations, but also need to maintain the basic functions of higher education as education and research organizations, and give necessary services and guidance to students when they need. Due to the plague of Coronavirus in 2019, the activities of Pakistan Technical and Vocational Education and Training(TVET) institutes were blocked, all the recruitment agencies and companies postponed their recruitment process, they also delayed internship opportunities in industries. So the unemployment rate of Pakistan increased at the time of outbreak of COVID-19. According to the survey results of APQN, 30.96% think that their HEIs only reach the average, and 2.68% choose “poor”(Fig.3), and HEIs need to further improve the comprehensive prevention and control. Therefore, the lack of technology in HEI and the backward comprehensive management in emergencies are both internal factors that limit the QA of higher education.

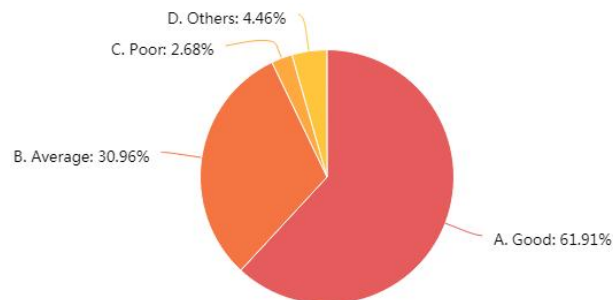


Fig. 3 Respondents’ overall evaluation of their HEIs’ performance in APQN survey

Source: APQN survey: the COVID-19 impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

## 2.2 QA lacks external standards

The duration of the COVID-19 pandemic is unknown, and the continuous closure between regions makes it difficult for international quality evaluation agencies to maintain normal quality evaluation work. The outbreak of COVID-19 is so sudden that social groups all over the world are not ready to deal with it. The forced online education of higher education is only a temporary solution. After the transformation of educational quality evaluation agencies, how should we adjust the evaluation standards for the HEIs? And how can we cope with new risks?

### 1) Risky QE transformation

External quality evaluation will transform from traditional evaluation method to

<sup>7</sup> Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic and online learning: The challenges and opportunities. Interactive Learning Environments, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1813180>

online evaluation, just like the change of education mode transform. Many HEIs are struggling to choose online evaluation to check the quality. Therefore, under the COVID-19 pandemic, the quality evaluation standards of distance higher education have to make technical adjustments, which will pose new challenges to the professionalism of international educational quality evaluation agencies. Ho Dac Hai Mien, vice-director of national center for education accreditation, stressed that in the context of Industry 4.0 and the pandemic of COVID-19, the quality of distance education in HEI has been much concerned by stakeholders.<sup>8</sup>

## 2) Difficult cross-border education

At present, cross-border higher education has become the most important component of higher education internationalization and one of the most important ways to implement it<sup>9</sup>. Studying abroad, studying in China and Sino foreign cooperation in running schools are the main forms of cross-border education. Online evaluation and qualification certification are important prerequisites for cross-border education. Under the COVID-19 pandemic, online evaluation increases the risk of cheating in qualification certification, which will inevitably cause unprecedented great obstacles to cross-border education. Mr. Fabrizio Trifiro', head of quality benchmark services, Ecctis, expects transnational education (TNE) to continue to grow in strategic importance post-COVID-19, as providers are appreciating the role that TNE operations and international partnerships can play in meeting the education and training needs of students unable or unwilling to travel internationally or long distances.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, Alan Go, the lead strategic researcher in Singapore, also pointed out that this has led to a massive issue in many countries where potential employees submit fake certificates to employers and spurred stakeholders from the educations, corporations, recruitment agencies and governments to actively seek solutions.<sup>11</sup>

# 3. Dual Measurements: Responses in the Asia-Pacific region

During the pandemic, the QA of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region was beset with difficulties, while HEIs, teachers and students were still facing difficulties.

<sup>8</sup> Ho Dac Hai Mien. Quality evaluation for distance higher education programmes in Vietnam: Introduction, Benchmark and Lessons[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

<sup>9</sup> Chi Hai. Sino-Russia Cross-border Higher Education:Situation,Problem and Reflections[J].Shanghai Journal of Educational Evaluation,2019,8(01):50-54.

<sup>10</sup> Fabrizio Trifiro'. Improving the recognition climate for TNE qualifications through cross-border cooperation. [Z]2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

<sup>11</sup> Alan Go. Stopping Fake Certificates and Transcripts-Is Digital and Blockchain Technology the Answer?[Z] 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

On the one hand, the internal focus is on the experience of teachers and students to cover the lack of experience. On the other hand, the external focus is on ensuring the quality of education to compensate for the absence of standards.

### 3.1 Emphasize internal experience

The internal experience of higher education QA mainly includes teachers, students and HEIs. Firstly, recommend the model of internally driven teaching quality to promote high-quality teaching; Secondly, pay attention to the unequal learning quality of students to reduce cognitive differences; Thirdly, strengthen the strong support of colleges and universities to improve the quality assurance system.

#### 1) Model of Oman's internally driven teaching quality

It is an important driving force for the internal guarantee of teachers' higher education quality, with special emphasis on the quality and effectiveness of teaching. During the period of COVID-19, teachers needed more support to verify the online teaching quality for the supervision process of offline education quality was frozen. Meanwhile, there is a dearth of research on the role of teachers in ensuring the quality of teaching. Consequently, Dr. Wafa Al-Maawli and Ms. Munira Al-Siyabi aim to investigate the internally driven factors that should contribute to quality in the teaching process in order to inform teaching in post COVID-19. Combining the results of 154 questionnaires and 7 interviews, they find that an average level of teachers' perceptions towards practices of quality assurance and their impact on quality teaching. Finally, it is suggested that teachers should be authorized to actively participate in the quality teaching agreement, and a model of internally driven factors is recommended(Fig.4).<sup>12</sup>

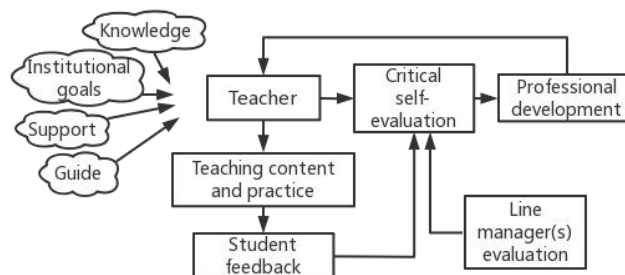


Fig. 4 Model of internally driven teaching quality

#### 2) Learning Quality and Inequality of Students in Taiwan Province

Students are the necessary subjects for the internal guarantee of the quality of higher education. As COVID-19 has spread across the globe, higher education is now experiencing an unprecedented crisis, students were forced to learn online and faculty members were compelled to adopt a new teaching mode without complete

<sup>12</sup> Wafa AL-Maawali, Munira Al-Siyabi. Teacher Role in Internalising Quality Teaching Measures: A case Study of Oman Higher Education[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference, 2021-11-25.



preparation. To ensure the quality of online learning, Arianna Fang Yu Lin and Angela Yung Chi Hou conducted a survey through questionnaires, and discussed students' learning experiences under the pandemic and explored online teaching learning challenges as well as the inequality issues existed in online learning. Based on the results of 517 questionnaires, it is known that inequality and quality will be the main problems for the rapid transition to online learning, and the state and quality assurance agencies should take active measures, not only trying to solve the gap between actual teaching and students' cognition through guidelines, principles or standards, but also strengthening international cooperation to properly evaluate online education.<sup>13</sup>

### 3) Feedback Cycle of QAM and ILPA in HKPC

HEIs are strong support for the internal guarantee of higher education quality. A perfect QA system in HEIs can not only guarantee the smooth development of teaching, but also promote the improvement of teachers' teaching and students' cognitive experience. During the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, Hong Kong Police College (HKPC) was committed to providing quality assurance training through an interactive Quality Assurance Mechanism(QAM) and Internal Learning Program Accreditation(ILPA). As the police officer of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) Carmen Chik emphasized, while the ILPA system is separated from the QAM, is works hand in hand with the QAM to assure and continuously enhance the Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) quality of learning programmes(Fig.5). Through it, officers can receive professional development of generic competencies in police context, and such specialized learning as detective and driving training in the very challenging times of pandemic, with an aim to equipping and strengthening the trainees at different levels with the necessary mindset, knowledge and skills to be professional, ethical and sensitive in "Serving Hong Kong with Honour, Duty and Loyalty".<sup>14</sup>

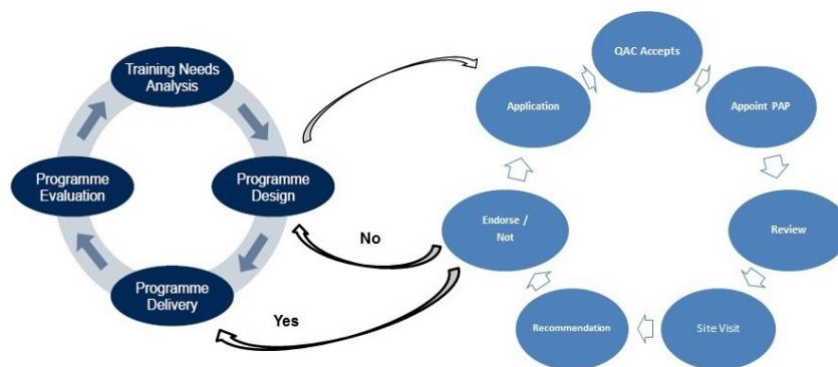


Fig. 5 Interaction diagram of QAM and ILPA

<sup>13</sup> Arianna Fang Yu Lin, Angela Yung Chi Hou. Quality and inequality: Students' learning experiences and perceptions toward online learning amidst COVID-19[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference, 2021-11-25.

<sup>14</sup> Carmen Chik. COVID-19-Response Mechanism and Impact on Quality Assurance for Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference, 2021-11-25.

### 3.2 Normalize external standards

The external guarantee of higher education quality is mainly through coordinated development between regions and countries, so as to eliminate the absence of standards. On the one hand, with the help of regional platforms, APQN launched a global pandemic investigation; On the other hand, Ecctis proposed a transitional qualification benchmark(TNE QB), contributing to cross-border education.

#### 1) A global survey of APQN

In 2020, COVID-19 has brought great influence to study, work and life, and at the same time, HEIs are facing unprecedented challenges. Based on this, APQN has carried out a global survey covering a wide range of areas and disciplines. According to the basic information of questionnaire design, psychological state and behavior of respondents in COVID-19 period, measures taken by HEIs, suggestions to HEIs and feedback from respondents, 1,570 respondents from 47 countries/regions around the world were analyzed (90.38% of them came from Asia). During the pandemic, the impact of individual psychological and behavioral responses is wide and enormous, and HEIs' responses and actions are active and supported(Fig.6). In order to promote the sustainable development of HEIs, Yahan Yang pointed out that higher education must adapt to the new changes of online teaching and blended teaching in the post-pandemic era as soon as possible, make future plans for improving the educational quality and ability in the future post-crisis era, and build a modern education governance system to cope with the public social crisis.<sup>15</sup>



Fig.6 Word cloud of the question about the opinions facing the COVID-19 pandemic

#### 2) Transitional Education Quality Benchmark of Ecctis

Over the past twenty years, the international education community has seen significant growth in transitional education quality benchmark of Ecctis (TNE QB), that is education delivered in a country other than the country in which the awarding institution is based. This growth has occurred across the board, involving the number

<sup>15</sup> Jianxin Zhang, Yahan Yang. APQN Survey: the COVID-19 impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)[J]. Shanghai Journal of Educational Evaluation, 2020, 9(05):74-79.

of providers involved in TNE, the number of students studying on TNE programmes, the number of countries involved in TNE delivery either as sending or receiving country, as well as the different models and types of TNE operations. Moreover, TNE plays a key role in meeting the education and training needs of students unable or unwilling to travel internationally or long distance. However, there are still major challenges in recognizing TNE as an acceptable mode of qualification. Consequently, Dr. Fabrizio Trifiro' puts forward a TNE QB from four dimensions of international scope, international standards, international peer-review and international peer cooperation to overcome the global quality assurance and recognition challenge for TNE ( Table 1).<sup>16</sup>

Table 1 Transitional Education Quality Benchmark (TNE QB)

Dimension	Content
International Scope	Regardless of location of origin or delivery
International Standard	Aligned with accepted international reference points
International Peer--review	International review teams and Advisory Board
International cooperation	With sending and receiving countries' authorities

## 4. Hand in hand: Progress in the Asia-Pacific region

In the post-COVID era, higher education QA in the Asia-Pacific region emphasizes steady progress and actively responds to the new normal of education quality assurance. It is essential to base itself on the local area and seek stability internally, but also to look at the world and seek advancement externally.

### 4.1 Based on local and seek internal stability

As far as the internal guarantee of higher education quality is concerned, we must start from the local area and seek stable development based on a clear understanding of our own development history and characteristics.

#### 1) Evaluation of world-class universities from CASEE

World-class universities are the direct embodiment of the internationalization of higher education, and their evaluation is the top priority of higher education quality assurance. The Chinese Academy of Science and Education Evaluation(CASEE) has

<sup>16</sup> Fabrizio Trifiro'. Improving the recognition climate for TNE qualifications through cross-border cooperation [Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

done the world-class evaluation since 2006 which based on the history of Research Centre for Chinese Science Evaluation(RCCSE). Dr. Qiu Junping emphasized that the evaluation index should be adjusted according to the background of the sustainable development of higher education based in China with global visions. The evaluation will help universities' stakeholders to fully understand the development status and trends of universities around the world. More importantly, the evaluation will help universities fully realize their position in a broad context, so as to understand the gap between individual universities and world-class universities in a rapidly changing world (Figure 7).<sup>17</sup>



Fig.7 Evaluation principle

## 2) Vietnam's Distance HE Standards

In the context of Industry 4.0 and COVID-19, the quality of distance education in higher education institutions has attracted much attention. Based on the introduction of distance higher education development and quality assessment standards for distance higher education programs in Vietnam, Ho Dac Hai Mien compared it with open and distance learning issued by Malaysian Qualifications Agency, to provide benchmark between Code of Practice for Program Accreditation(Fig.8).

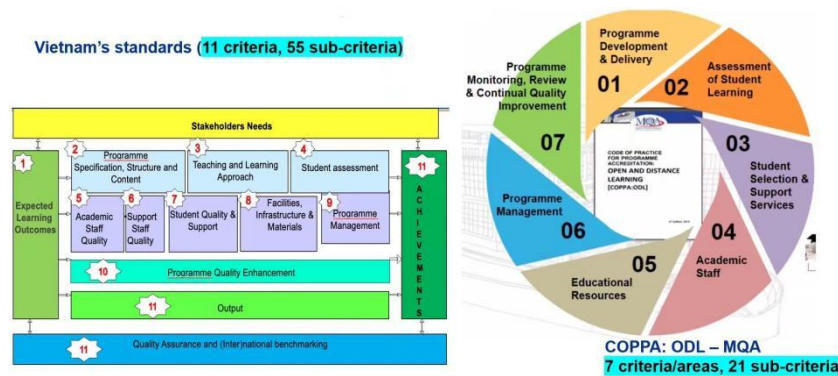


Fig. 8 Benchmark with COPPA: ODL - MQA

17 Junping Qiu, Rui Zhang, Jing Tian, JingChao Wu. World-Class Universities Evaluation: History and Characteristics-from the perspective of Chinese Academy of Science and Education Evaluation[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

The distance education standard of Vietnam consists of 11 criteria and 55 sub-criteria, while that of Malaysia consists of 7 criteria and 21 sub-criteria. Ho Dac Hai Mien pointed out that Open and Distance Learning(ODL) emphasized the academic autonomy of projects and staff, the consistency of curriculum and qualification framework, and the relationship between primary and secondary standards, all of which needed to be improved and perfected.<sup>18</sup>Based on this, they put forward the following suggestions to the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam: Firstly, conduct more regional and international research in distance higher education assessment; Secondly, build sufficiently guidelines on process, methods and instruments for distance higher education assessment. Thirdly, encourage institutions providing distance programs to establish and implement the quality assurance process of distance courses. By these improvements, we can shorten the gap with international standards and promote the improvement of distance education quality in Vietnam.

## 4.2 Look globally and strive for progress

In terms of external guarantee for the quality of higher education, it is emphasized to look at the whole world. Use alliance analysis to build global university aggregate rankings; use digital technology to solve fake certificates and build quality assurance standards for online teaching.

### 1) Build a global aggregated university rankings

The ranking of global institutions is an important factor to measure the quality assurance of higher education, and it is also an objective manifestation of the globalization and internationalization of higher education. Based on the results of research into eleven most famous global institutional rankings and the analysis of their characteristics, Prof. Galina Motova and Prof. Vladimir Navodnov suggest a new results aggregation methods of education evaluation to build the Global aggregated university ranking, especially the global position of universities in the Asia-Pacific region(Table.2).<sup>19</sup>

Table 2 Ranking of countries by the number of universities located in different continents and listed in the Global Aggregated Ranking-2021 (as of 2020)

Continent	Total	Top 1%	Top 2%	Top 3%	Top 4%	Top 5%	Top 10%	Top 15%
Asia	1302	54	67	97	84	101	884	15
Europe	1061	118	119	98	115	105	502	4

<sup>18</sup> Ho Dac Hai Mien. Quality Assessment for Distance Higher Education Programmes in Vietnam: Introduction, Benchmark and Lessons Learned[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

<sup>19</sup> Galina Motova, Vladimir Navodnov. Aggregated ranking as a tool for positioning Asia-Pacific universities at the global level[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

North America	472	83	65	45	35	21	223	0
South America	256	1	8	6	12	13	115	1
Africa	118	2	4	1	8	10	93	0
Oceania	48	9	19	8	4	5	3	0

This method relies on various methods used to evaluate the achievements of universities, reduces the subjectivity of evaluation, and shows the status of universities at the global, regional and national levels. Moreover, the construction of global aggregated ranking (GAR) makes it possible to understand how universities are positioned at the international level. The use of generalized results of several different rankings can significantly enhance the credibility of assessment of every university and provide a more comprehensive picture of its achievements.

## 2) Use digital technology to solve fake certificates

The COVID-19 pandemic is a catalyst for educational institutions all over the world to seek innovative solutions, which promotes the retraining and skill upgrading of the labor force. With e-learning gradually becoming a new normal, more and more employers have reduced their vigilance about issuing certificates online to trust the certificates issued by the e-learning teaching model, while the appearance of online fake certificates and transcripts have contributed to more educational fraud. With the recent innovation of digital technology, the Blockchain technology platform has been gaining interest. Accordingly, Alan Go explores how Blockchain applications should be considered as a noteworthy solution to significantly reduce circulations of fake certificates globally (Fig.9).<sup>20</sup>

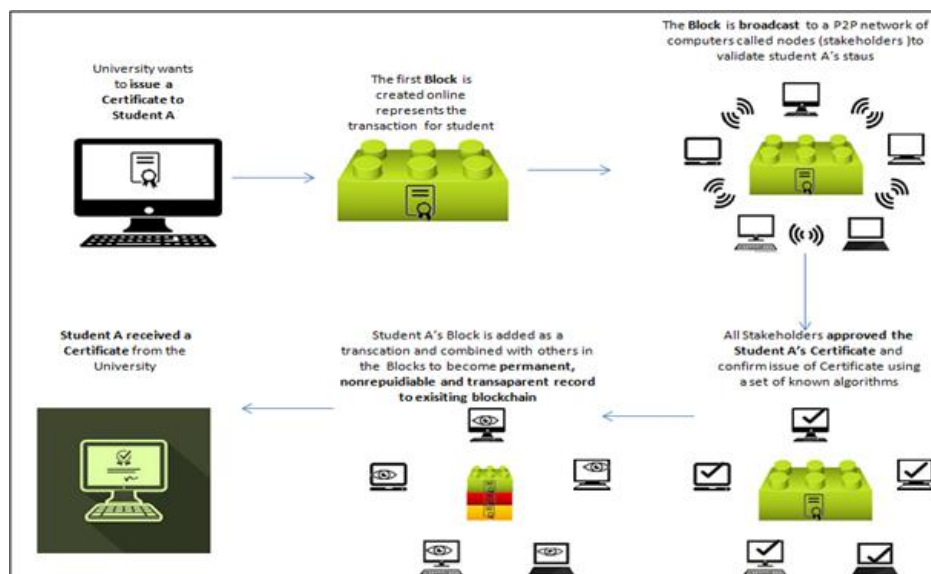


Fig. 9 Digital Certificate

<sup>20</sup> Alan Go. Stopping Fake Certificates and Transcripts-Is Digital and Blockchain Technology the Answer?[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference, 2021-11-25.

### 3) Formulate QA Standards on online teaching

The COVID situation in COVID-19 has brought great challenges to traditional education and teaching, moreover online teaching has gradually become the "new normal" in the COVID era. To guarantee and improve the quality of higher education, Prof. Jianxin Zhang, takes the educational evaluation experts, faculty and students in the Asia-Pacific region as the object, and further carry out the research on online teaching satisfaction and APQN online teaching quality assurance standard. By means of questionnaire, factor analysis and expert consultation, a comprehensive and systematic online teaching quality assurance standard in Asia-Pacific region is constructed from five aspects: online teaching environment, teachers' online teaching, learners' online learning, presentation of online teaching outcomes and online teaching quality assurance. This standard consists of 5 primary dimensions, 14 secondary dimensions and 46 specific standards (Fig.10).<sup>21</sup>

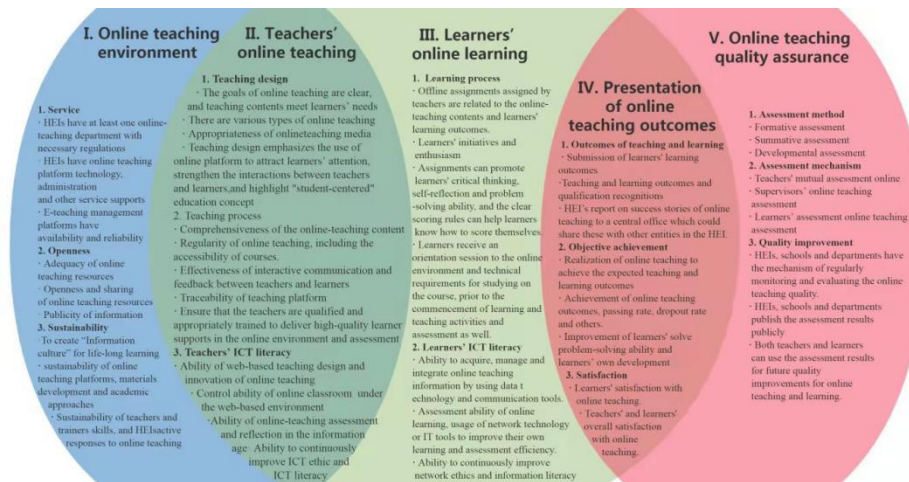


Fig. 10 Framework diagram of online teaching quality assurance standard in Asia Pacific region

## Concluding Words

Under the COVID-19 pandemic, the quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region is the dawn from dilemma to opportunity by taking dual measures to overcome difficulties. In the post-COVID era, the quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region should emphasize steady progress and actively respond to the new normal of education quality assurance. We should not only base ourselves on the mainland, seek stability internally, but also look to the world and seek progress externally. On the one hand, as far as the internal guarantee of higher education quality is concerned, we must start from the local area and seek stable development based on a clear understanding of our own development history and characteristics. On the other hand, from the external guarantee of the quality of higher education, it emphasizes the global perspective. With online teaching

<sup>21</sup> Jianxin Zhang. APQN Annual General Report[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference, 2021-11-25.

becoming the new normal of teaching, integration based on the APQN platform, promoting the open sharing of educational resources, improving the quality of online teaching, ensuring the quality of higher education, and standardizing the formulation of educational policies and rules will be the themes that we should consider and discuss.