APQNews

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Asia-Pacific Quality Network

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HIGHLIGHTS

Call for contribution to APQN 2011 Conference & AGM

The APQN 2011 Conference and AGM is to be held in Bangalore, India (2-4 March 2011). The Office of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bangalore, India is hosting this event. The Chair of the Organizing Committee is Prof. H. A. Ranganath, Director of NAAC. The main theme of the 2011 Asia-Pacific Quality Network Conference is: Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Expectations and Achievements. Following is the indicative list of sub-themes for conference:

1. Quality Assurance and Diversity of Higher Education Systems
2. Issues of Quality and Access in Higher Education
3. Multiple QA Agencies: Prospects and Problems
4. Mutual Recognition
5. Quality Assurance in India
6. QA Cycles and Building on Successive Cycles
7. Ranking of Higher Education Institutions: Issues and Concerns
8. Ensuring synergy between IQA and EQA
9. Research on QA and IQA
10. QA of cross-border higher education
11. What Next for APQN?

The target audience for the APQN Conference and AGM is primarily those associated with quality agencies in the region. This includes APQN Members and Observers, the APQN Board, Committees and Project Groups. In addition, others working in the area of quality assurance and improvement in higher education and government agencies are welcome to attend the conference days that are open to non-members. You are invited to present a paper on a topic of your choice related to one of the sub-themes above.

The program for the next APQN Conference and AGM will available at www.apqn.org/events/ and www.apqn2011.com upon completion of the call for contributions and selection processes.

APQN Board Election 2010

In November 7, 2010, the APQN Secretariat sent out the Call for Nomination for the Board Members (2011-2013) to the Full members and Intermediate members of APQN. The rough schedule for the election process follows:

Action Item	Due By
Nominee publicity	Dec. 21, 2010
Voting begins	Dec. 23, 2010
Deadline for voting	Jan. 06, 2011
Collate responses	Jan. 07, 2011
Announcement of new Board	Jan. 21, 2011

Chinese Association for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CAQAA), China

The Inaugural Conference and the Symposium of the Chinese Association for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CAQAA) was hosted by Higher Education Evaluation Center (HEEC) of the Ministry of Education, China and held in Beijing from 1st to 2nd November 2010. It was attended by over 30 international and domestic special guest speakers and up to 470 participants from 222 CAQAA member organizations from all over the country. The theme of the conference was: *Improve the Quality: Quality Assurance Framework, Evaluation System Operational Mechanism*. Dr. Jiang Yanqiao, the Secretary/Treasurer of APQN represented the network and delivered the congratulatory remarks at the opening ceremony.

CAQAA is a non-profit national association of 14 external QA agencies and 208 internal QA departments, among which HEEC is the lead agency. The objective of CAQAA is to improve the information-sharing and promote the good practices in quality assurance, as well as to enhance the self-regulation and self-management of the QA organizations. CAQAA has showed keen interest in establishing a kind of exchange and mutual cooperation with APQN.

Information available from the HEEC's website: http://www.pgzx.edu.cn/index.jsp

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), Australia

The Australian Government is establishing a new national regulatory and quality agency for higher education, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). TEQSA will be established as an independent body with powers to regulate university and non-university higher education providers, monitor quality and set standards. TEQSA will register providers, carry out evaluations of standards and performance, protect and assure the quality of international education and streamline current regulatory arrangements. It will join together the regulatory activity currently undertaken in the states and territories with the quality assurance activities currently undertaken by the Australian Universities Quality Agency.

An Interim Chair and Interim CEO of TEQSA have been appointed, supported by a transition team. In consultation with AUQA, the team is developing plans for AUQA, together with all its operations and resources, to be transferred to TEQSA after legislation is passed by the Commonwealth Parliament. The current cycles of audits of both university and non-university higher education providers being undertaken by AUQA will continue in their current forms until the end of 2012. All providers should continue to interact with AUQA about their scheduled audits.

Information available from AUQA's website (http://www.auqa.edu.au)

NIAD-UE holds the Japan-ASEAN Information Package In-House Seminar

On September 30th, 2010 National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE) hosted the 'Japan-ASEAN Information Package In-House Seminar' at the National Center of Science Building in Tokyo, Japan. In response to the growing interaction between Japan and the ASEAN region in the field of higher education, this Seminar was organized as the first step in sharing information and facilitating cooperation/exchange between NIAD-UE and the ASEAN quality assurance agencies with an aim to strengthen the cooperation of quality assurance agencies and encourage quality-assured exchanges.

Participants were invited from quality assurance agencies from five countries, i.e., Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, based on past exchange experiences with NIAD-UE.

The Seminar began with a presentation from each agency concerning an overview of their national quality assurance systems, as well as their roles, challenges, and policies on quality assurance in order to gain mutual understanding about the quality assurance systems of each country. On the basis of the presentations, NIAD-UE and the ASEAN quality assurance agencies discussed future possible areas of cooperation. Some ideas presented revolved on the need to recognize the diversity and cultural and historical background which each country possesses. Possible areas of cooperation include the signing of a MoU; and mutual understanding and human resource exchange among agencies. The participants engaged vigorously in discussions. NIAD-UE intends to continue to enhance dialogue, cooperation, information-sharing and human resource exchange in the field of quality assurance with the ASEAN quality assurance agencies, including the five invited agencies, and will continue to make a contribution to quality-assured inter-university exchange.

Information available from NIAD-UE's website: http://www.niad.ac.jp/english

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

APQN welcomes the new members, who have been accepted since May, 2010:

No.	Country /Territory	Agency	Membership Status
1	Bangladesh	University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh	Institutional Member
2	Korea, South	Korean Council for University Education	Full Member
3	Korea, South	Korean Council for University College Education	Intermediate Member
4	Mongolia	Health Sciences University of Mongolia	Institutional Member
5	Mongolia	Ikh Zasag University	Institutional Member

6	Pakistan	Frontier Women University	Institutional Member
7	Pakistan	Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University	Institutional Member
8	Pakistan	University of Education	Institutional Member
9	Pakistan	Sukkur institute of Business Administration	Institutional Member
10	Russia	National Center of Public Accreditation	Full Member

In addition, ASEAN University Network has been accepted as the Observer of APQN.

GIQAC UPDATE

Proposal for GIQAC Year 3

On November 19, 2010, APQN submitted the GIQAC Year 3 Proposal to UNESCO. In the proposal, the following projects have been suggested for the GIQAC Year 3:

1. APQN Website: Expansion Development and Maintenance
2. Expansion of the Database
3. The Moderated Online Discussion Forum
4. Internship Program
5. Mutual Recognition (MR) Project
6. Workshop on Good Practice
7. Workshop – Round Table Discussion for the 2008 Batch of Interns
8. Capacity Building for the Pacific Nations
9. Peer Review of QA agencies
10. Liaison and Communication among APQN Members and Regional Networks

Database of Consultants and Reviewers

In October 2010, the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE) signed the MoU with APQN to expand the Database of Consultants with the nominees from Arab region. The Call for Nominations for the Database of Consultants for ANQAHE members was issued in October 2010. The Reviewing Committee composed by experts from ANQAHE and APQN will review the nominees in December, 2010 and the Database will be updated soon. The database will be accessible via the APQN website with a link directly to it from the ANQAHE website.

Moderated Online Discussion Forum

APQN conducted the 3rd online discussion forum in October 2010. The topic of this latest forum is "Best Practices in External Quality Assurance". This APQN online forum focused on four of these external quality assurance processes, namely:

- ➢ Best practices in identifying, training and involving peers in EQA,
- ➢ Best practices in facilitating effective self study by HEIs,
- ➢ Best practices in effective site visits,
- ➢ Best practices in supporting Internal Quality Assurance processes in HEIs.

Altogether 90 quality assurance experts, representing 22 APQN member agencies (10 full members, 4 intermediate members, 7 institutional members and 1 associate member) from 18 different countries registered to take part in this important endeavor in October 2010.

On completion of the course, the participants were sent an online survey. Survey results showed that the online forum proved to be successful in realizing the pre-designed learning objectives. Most participants were satisfied with the experience received and considered that the course addressed their professional needs.

Internship Program

For the first round of the Internship Program in October, 2010, there were four interns and three member-agencies who served as hosts. The details are as follows:

Name	Home Agency	Host Agency
Dr. Kushum Shakya	University Grants Commission, Nepal	Australian Universities Quality Agency, Australia
Ms. Zia Batool	Higher Education Commission, Pakistan	Australian Universities Quality Agency, Australia
Mr. Khamphao Chanphengxay	Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Lao PDR	Malaysian Qualifications Agency, Malaysia
Dr. Yang Qiong	Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute, China	Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities, Philippines

For the second round of the Internship Program in November, 2010, there were three interns from various countries and three member-agencies who served as hosts. The details are as follows:

Name	Home Agency	Host Agency
Dr. Ganesh Hegde	National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India	Malaysian Qualifications Agency, Malaysia
Ms. Nurul Atiqah Mohd Hanapiah	Malaysian Qualifications Agency, Malaysia	Australian Universities Quality Agency, Australia
Mr. Abilio De Araujo	National Commission for Academic Assessment and Accreditation, Timor Leste	National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India

Training Workshop for External Reviewers

The Training Workshop for External Reviewers was held on November 7-9, 2010 at the Armada Hotel, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia, hosted by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency. Prof Zita Mohd Fahmi and Dr. Jaganath Patel served as facilitators. The key objective of the workshop was to pilot the Training Package and to consider its coherence, appropriateness, completeness and usefulness for training reviewers for APQN members which will support the capacity building of their QA systems.

It was agreed by the workshop group that further work is required before the Training Package can be endorsed officially by APQN and uploaded on our website. It will be necessary for the APQN Board to comment on the final product. The group also recommended to the APQN Board that the Revised Training Package be piloted in a selected member country prior to its being uploaded on the APQN website.

Mutual Recognition Project

The project group held its first meeting at MQA on 21 October. The team decided to focus on the whole of institutional level QA approaches and limit the analysis to the university level institutions. For this scope, the project team has started a mapping exercise of the QA policies and practices..

In addition to the mapping, the project team members agreed that they need to know more about the rigor of the QA activities of each other by observing each others' QA practices. The guidelines to plan and conduct the observation visits and aspects to be highlighted in the report on the findings have been discussed. The group also discussed the challenges in moving towards mutual recognition. The project team has developed a detailed plan for the next phase of the project.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Facing the Rankings ： Using Benchmarking Tools for Strategic Positioning

Vienna, Austria , 20-21 January 2011

This conference will look at the value of benchmarking as a management tool among the range of transparency tools such as classifications, rankings and benchmarking exercises. It will also discuss the relevance and strength of indicators, focusing more specifically on internationalization, university-enterprise cooperation and regional innovation.

A new handbook, "Benchmarking in European Higher Education", which the European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities (ESMU) has produced in the context of a two-year EU-funded project under the EU Lifelong Learning programme, will be presented at the conference. The handbook offers a very detailed methodology on defining and selecting indicators with the use of balance scorecards as well as designing powerful action plans to implement changes as a result of benchmarking exercises. For more information, please visit: http://www.bsrun.org.

New Frameworks, Higher Standards: Lessons from the Evolving Landscape of Quality Assurance in Asia

Singapore, 19 January 2011

This event will bring together a select group of senior policymakers and practitioners for a lively debate on the evolving landscape of quality assurance in transnational education (TNE), particularly as it relates to Asian markets.

With the recent adoption of new regulatory frameworks in several countries and territories (Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore) and the steady increase in students pursuing transnational education courses across the region, this is an opportune time to conduct an assessment of the region-wide push towards higher standards. Along with the UK's QAA, national quality assurance agencies from several Asian countries with heavy TNE involvement will be present at the dialogue. To register for this event, please visit：
www.surveymonkey.com/s/qapolicydialogue.