

# Quality Assurance and Enhancement in HE in the UK

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# A round

- An example of a high quality HE experience for students is when...
- My institution tries to provide such experiences by...

# What is quality?

Williams (2009) suggests it consists simply of asking these questions:

- What are you trying to do?
- Why are you trying to do it?
- How are you doing it?
- Why are you doing it that way?
- Why is that the best way of doing it?
- How do you know that it works?
- How are you trying to improve it?

# History of QA in UK HE

Tight (2009) states that prior to the expansion of the 1980s external examining was the main QA mechanism in UK HE.

1990 The Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) established an Academic Audit Unit (AAU) to assess universities' mechanisms for the quality assurance of courses. This required institutional self-evaluation, brief visits to some departments and a follow up report.

# History of QA in UK HE

1992 the Academic Audit Unit (AAU) was replaced by the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) with increased requirements for documentation, and required review teams to visit every department and provide a numerical assessment on a 1-3 scale. HEQC also expanded its remit to include matters like the dissemination of good practice

# QA in the UK today

1995-2001 Teaching Quality Review/ Subject review required every academic department to self assess, produce a report and a visit scoring 6 dimensions out of 4 to give score out of 24.

1997 the HECQ was superseded by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/home>

# QA in the UK today

- Data

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/publicinfo/>

- Audit

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=2672#.VD72fclU3w0>

QAA eg <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports>

Internal audit eg <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/part-7/iqr>

Annual monitoring eg <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/part-7/am-procedure>

- External Examiners

- Complaints

Internal example <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/part-5/student-complaints-procedure>

# QA in Eastern Europe today

Join your colleagues from the same university and prepare a short presentation on quality assurance processes at your university.

You might focus on one theme or process such as the validation of new courses, or the annual review of courses, ensuring fairness in assessment, or gathering student feedback.



# International comparison

- National control or institutional autonomy: curriculum and assessment
- Accreditation: degree awarding powers
- Funding: state, direct or indirect or private?
- Inspection vs peer review
- Student participation in governance and decision making vs feedback
- QA of teaching, or research or both?
- Unit of assessment: individual, department, university?

# ACTIVITY

Read Brennan (2012) and split into four groups

- Data
- Audit
- External examining
- Complaints

In each theme identify one thing to avoid and one thing that could be useful about the UK approach to QA to take forward in your TEMPUS project

# References

- Brennan, J. (2012). *Talking about quality: the changing uses and impact of quality assurance*. Gloucester, UK: The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.
- Williams, P. (2009) *The result of intelligent effort. Two decades in the quality assurance of higher education*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Tight, M. (2009). *The Development of Higher Education in the United Kingdom since 1945*. Buckingham: SRHE/Open University Press.