

## European Quality Assurance - a European Higher Education Area success story?

*Hanne Smidt (Senior Advisor European University Association)*

*"the quality of higher education has proven to be at the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area" (Berlin Communiqué, 2003)*

### Introduction

The development and implementation of a Europe of knowledge or the European Higher Education Area has at institutional, regional, national and European level led to a wave or a tsunami of changes to policies, strategies and legal frameworks in a strive for balancing European collaboration and competition. Governments, stakeholder organisations and higher education institutions signed up to the intentions of the Bologna Process and the action lines<sup>1</sup>, but had to "adapt and adopt" the Bologna infrastructure to their cultural, political, social and economic contexts. (Trends 2010). Research has shown that these adaptations have led to both convergence and increased diversity as higher education is very closely intertwined with regional and national cultures (Sursock & Smidt, 2010). National governments and European higher education institutions can thus be seen as having been caught in a conundrum between adapting to joint European policies and legal frameworks and maintaining and highlighting their national and cultural uniqueness. One particular area where the tension between European and national implementation policies are evident is in quality assurance that has emerged as one of the main Bologna pillars.

The history and the development of quality assurance before and within the Bologna Process and the development of the European Higher Education Area has been described and tracked in a plethora of policy reports and research articles<sup>2</sup> over the past fifteen years and as with much of the Bologna infrastructure the development of quality assurance is seen as pre-dating the Sorbonne and Bologna declarations. Quality assurance is considered one of the cornerstones of the European Higher Education (Loukkola, 2012) and has developed significantly since within the EHEA. European quality assurance builds on developments that occurred after the fall of the iron curtain<sup>3</sup> and the increased focus on creating a competitive Europe. For universities in Central-and Eastern Europe the post-iron curtain era meant radical changes and challenges. Adapting to political change processes like the post-communist era, the development of the EHEA and the Modernisation Agenda have meant that European higher education institutions have had to navigate between tradition and renewal, but also to respond to increasing demands for accountability and transparency in an ever more difficult funding environment. These pressures have led to a need to develop their internal quality culture, while addressing the challenges of globalised higher education.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the members of EU several layers of reform agendas have been added by Europe 2020, the Modernisation Agenda and the High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education

<sup>2</sup> The articles presented at the Future of Higher Education Researcher conference in Bucharest 2012 tracked and mapped the development and growth of quality assurance agencies, frameworks and practices at institutional, national and European level and interpreted quality assurance from a variety of stakeholder points of view (Curaj & al.). The present chapter will build on these.

<sup>3</sup> The Fall of the Iron Wall led to a sharp rise in the provision of private higher education that led to the development of accreditation procedures to ensure quality.

Sursock (2012, 247 – 265) raised a number of questions on the transformative potential of European quality assurance framework for the European change agenda, and what its impact could be on the “European dimension”. These questions are still very relevant. The answers to the questions indicate that transformation takes time (Smidt in Curaj & al.) and that despite the high level of interaction and discussion on quality assurance in both a European, national and institutional context *“Too often, changes to external quality assurance are made with little consideration of other higher education policy developments or requirements or by focusing on a narrow set of education policy developments or requirements or by focusing on a narrow set of changes (e.g. evaluating whether institutions are developing a learning-outcome approach to teaching). And the changes to external QA, in turn, affect the way institutions carry out their internal QA processes.”*(Sursock in Curaj & al. 263).

Quality assurance has been perceived by many stakeholders as one of the most successful action lines in the Bologna Process. The present introduction will look at recent developments and challenges in quality assurance in order to track why it is perceived to be successful and if quality assurance has become interlinked with the other Bologna action lines. Indeed, because the evolving nature of the policy agenda, the links between the different Bologna action lines have not necessarily been clear to institutional actors (Sursock & Smidt). The articles in the quality assurance track will present recent research on the development and impact of different approaches and understandings of quality assurance and the status at institutional, national and European level, from different perspectives.

### **European universities consider quality assurance a strategic reform**

There was early agreement within the Bologna Process that European higher education institutions are responsible for the quality of European higher education as stated in the Berlin Communiqué (2003). The EUA Trends 2010 report that tracked the first decade of implementation of the European Higher Education Area showed that quality assurance is perceived as an important development. Both higher education institutions and European national rectors’ conferences considered that alongside the Bologna reforms, quality assurance and quality assurance reforms/policies were *the* key policy change in the first Bologna decade. 60% of the responding higher education institutions in 2010 found that over the past ten years enhanced internal quality assurance processes had been the most important change followed by enhanced cooperation with other HEIs (53%) and more autonomy 43% (Sursock & Smidt, 2010, p 18). Furthermore, the HEIs answered that after strategic institutional development (78%) quality assurance (63%) was considered to be the most important development followed closely by internationalisation (61%) (Trends 2010). The forthcoming Trends 2015 report indicates that the importance of quality assurance and internationalisation seen from a strategic institutional point of view has increased even further over the past five years.

Why do European universities consider quality assurance to be one of the most important Bologna reform? Why is quality assurance a joint European concern seen from a higher education institutional point of view? There are a number of potential answers. One answer is the collaboration and continuous engagement from the four European stakeholder organisations: the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the European Student Union (ESU – formerly ESIB) and the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA). These four organisations, almost from the beginning of the Bologna Process, established a working relationship through the E4 group. Together - despite sometimes diverging opinions – they have developed a common platform for quality assurance the European Standard and Guidelines (ESG), created and

manage the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) and organise the European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF). These initiatives have created a pan-European stage for continuous discussion and exchanges of good practice between European, national and institutional stakeholder like no other Bologna action line have. Another answer is that the four stakeholder organisations have also “walked the talk” by developing projects that promoted the development and implementation of both external and internal quality assurance practices and created foras where members have been able to discuss and develop recommendations with peers via QA projects led by EUA<sup>4</sup>, EURASHE<sup>5</sup>, and ENQA<sup>6</sup>. ESU’s tracked the progress of the Bologna Process through students’ eyes and through the QUEST project reported on in this track<sup>7</sup>. Other projects have jointly tracked the implementation of the ESG e.g. MAP-ESG, Examining Quality Culture and Promoting Quality Culture. The discussions and exchange of experience in these projects and their reports have helped to promote the development of a quality culture in European higher education institutions and simultaneously helped to track the development and helped to engage in communication with and between stakeholders on the progress.

A third answer is the annual European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) that is a cornerstone in the communication within the quality assurance community since 2006. It is considered to be a major contribution to QA in higher education, and a flagship activity in this field (Loukkola, 2012). EQAF provides a platform and a possibility for the higher education and QA communities to follow, discuss, shape and anticipate developments in the area. The conferences have traditionally brought all the key actors in the field together: higher education institutions (leadership, QA responsible/practitioners and academics), quality assurance agencies and students. EQAF keeps attracting all stakeholder groups and the theme of the 2014 forum indicates a shift in the view on quality assurance. The title: *“Changing education – QA and the shift from teaching to learning”* point to a move in focus from quality assurance policies to more focus on the development of the core of the European Higher Education Area reforms: student-centred learning.

A fourth answer could be the training that thousands of academics have as both national and international evaluators and the engaged staff working in quality assurance who work at institutional and national level on the development of policies and practices. Only one other action-line – internationalisation – has created similar structures. Unsurprisingly, this is perceived as the other main policy change aside from the structural changes to the degree-structure by European HEIs (Trends 2010).

Other external change drivers that have promoted quality assurance include the impact of the rapidly expanding students numbers that in many European countries has brought a more utilitarian view of higher education than in previous generations and has created a greater demand for accountability and transparency. The utilitarian point of view is also reflected in the increased focus on skills and employability in the EC, and that is becoming interlinked in many countries with the debate on quality and quality assurance. There is much to be said for linking the quality of higher education and employability, but there is also a great danger in establishing a simplistic and linear connection between the two. When a linear link is promoted the process of diversification of higher education and degrees and the aims of creating a Europe of Knowledge by providing access to education throughout a student’s life is often disregarded. If the goal of permeability, diversification and flexibility is ignored and quality

---

<sup>4</sup> QC, EQC and PQC find titles

<sup>5</sup> title

<sup>6</sup> title

<sup>7</sup> title

assurance is seen as creating conformity the overriding aim of creating a Europe of Knowledge for an increasingly diverse student population might be difficult to achieve. Diversification and flexibilisation in higher education takes many forms: provision of learning and teaching (full-time, part-time, continuous education, national and international), students, teachers, institutions - and higher education systems.

### **Emerging challenges for external quality assurance**

Prior to year 2000 only four European countries had quality assurance agencies (Loukoola 2012); today, ENQA has 39 members in 23 countries (ENQA homepage November 2014). A whole new higher education “industry” has grown around the development of external and internal quality assurance.

These developments have been well-documented in the growing literature on quality assurance, which indicates that quality assurance methodologies vary greatly and that the focus in many countries have moved between quality assuring programmes and institutions and between supporting quality enhancement, the development of institutional quality cultures and approaches that stress compliance (Loukkola and Sursock 2014; Stensaker 2011; Sursock (2012). These articles indicate that a dichotomy or a binary system seems to have developed, but they also point to the fact that neither has been considered entirely successful by all stakeholders over time. It is difficult to track the development of the ever changing national external quality assurance systems or policies, and Stensaker and Sursock both indicate that external quality assurance is considered very much a national practice.

The articles in the present chapter support the observation that developments in both external and internal quality assurance (EQA and IQA) are in an almost permanent state of flux. The study presented by Szabo on the use by transnational or cross-border quality assurance by a number of European higher education institutions show that a variety of EQA is in use, but that cross-border QA is so far not a common practice. Many have argued that (external) quality assurance easily promotes compliance, and that it is therefore a requirement for quality assurance to constantly re-address this. A number of the articles in this session address this challenge and it is quite clear that even if European HEIs consider quality assurance to be one of the major reforms of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, it is still work in progress and a shared responsibility as the ESG reflect between institutions and quality assurance agencies.

### **European quality assurance “work in progress” – the revised European Standards and Guidelines**

The Berlin Communiqué recognized that quality assurance:

*“should include: a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved; evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results; a system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures, and international participation, cooperation and networking”.*<sup>8</sup>

The core elements: responsibilities of involved bodies, procedures for evaluation and accreditation, external/international review, student participation and networking etc. were quickly and successfully translated by the E4 group into the “European Standards and Guidelines” (ESG), EQAR and EQAF. The ESG were adopted by the ministers in 2005 in Bergen; the annual networking forum, EQAF, held its first

---

<sup>8</sup> EACEA; Eurydice; Eurostat; Eurostudent: **The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report** Brussels: Eurydice 2012 p 59

meeting in 2006; and European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) was established by the E4 group in 2008.

The implementation or rather the interpretation of the ESG in different contexts is an on-going process, and there has been great variations in how and how clearly these have been adhered and referred to both in an institutional context and national context (EQC, 2009 - 2012). However, the 2011 E4 study - "Mapping the Implementation and Application of the ESG" (MAP-ESG) - found that the ESG had proved to be a major achievement of the Bologna Process and they were applicable in different contexts and had had an impact both on institutional and national level and on the work carried out by quality assurance agencies (MAP-ESG:6). The study found that the ESG have become the language or reference point that all stakeholders refer to, but also point out that the purpose and scope of the ESG had an in-built tension between being identified as a reference document or a compliance tool. This was one of the underlying reasons for the revision of the ESG; another reason was to further integrate quality assurance with the Bologna infrastructure. The discussions at the FOHE researcher conference in 2012 supported the revision.

The E4 group had from the start intended the ESG to be "work in progress" (ENQA 2005: 13) and there was an early understanding that the ESG would need to be analysed and reviewed as the European quality assurance landscape developed and changed. Given this changing context, in 2012 the Ministerial Communiqué invited the E4 Group (ENQA, ESU, EUA, and EURASHE) in cooperation with Education International (EI), BUSINESSEUROPE and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) to prepare an initial proposal for a revised ESG "to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness, including their scope".<sup>9</sup> The revision process has included several consultation rounds involving both the key stakeholder organisations and ministries. The proposal reflects a consensus among all the organisations involved on how to take forward quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area and, thus supports the thesis that the basis of development in quality assurance is close collaboration and discussions within and between all stakeholder groups. The ESG has maintained its structure and the three sections on internal and external quality assurance and on the quality assurance of external agencies<sup>10</sup>.

The proposal for a revised ESG is being proposed to the next ministerial conference in Yerevan in 2015. The main discussions and revisions have essentially been made to Part 1 that presents the ESG for internal quality assurance, and they have now a much clearly defined linked to the whole Bologna infrastructure:

*"The ESG are not standards for quality, nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented, but they provide guidance, covering the areas which are vital for successful quality provision and learning environments in higher education. The ESG should be considered in a broader context that also includes qualifications frameworks, ECTS and diploma supplement that also contribute to promoting the transparency and mutual trust in higher education in the EHEA."*<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> **Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area**, Proposal for the revised version (2014)

<sup>10</sup> Revised ESG

<sup>11</sup> **Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area**, Proposal for the revised version (2014)

The ESG for internal quality assurance have changed from seven to ten and now more explicitly supports a move towards student-centred learning, the development of pedagogics, and a cyclical approach to both internal and external quality assurance<sup>12</sup>. Another change is a more specific approach monitoring students' progression path and future careers.

### **Changes and challenges for the European higher education landscape**

There is no common definition for quality assurance (Williams 2011), or the closely related concepts of quality enhancement, quality culture, accreditation, accountability, transparency and transparency tools – and perhaps the lack of definition is a strength as this supports adaptability rather than conformity. The diversity in approach and understanding is not surprising as there are over four thousand higher education institutions in the 48 countries that are part of the European Higher Education Area<sup>13</sup>, all operating within the legal and administrative frameworks of their national or regional higher education systems and who vary in size and mission. The Bologna Process has over the past fifteen years developed a Bologna infrastructure with tools to support student-centred learning: learning outcomes linked to qualification frameworks, the use of ECTS for transfer and accumulation and diploma supplement for increased transparency and flexibility. It has created a common European language or terminology – even if this has very national or individual interpretations (Trends 2010). Nevertheless a considerable diversity remains in European higher education, *“between systems, which retain their own characteristics, between institutions, which vary in size, mission and profile and even, within institutions.”* (Reichert 2009)<sup>14</sup>. In quality assurance the European language is the ESG, and the revised ESG can be seen as towing the line between creating a joint understanding and supporting a diversity of approach to IQA in European higher education institutions.

It is difficult to consider the quality of higher education without reflecting on not only the changing global reality for higher education systems, but also the complexity of its three missions: education, research and service to society – and the knowledge triangle. The repeatedly quoted challenges of massification, technological changes/digital learning environments, globalisation, financial crisis, changing demography, high youth unemployment rates and whole employment sectors like the media sector that are under deconstruction. In recent year one particular change has been emerging as the technological revolution has seemingly broken the knowledge “monopoly” and opened up opportunities for new types of education that goes beyond the traditional open and distance learning (High Level Group 2014<sup>15</sup>).

New approaches to learning and teaching have almost exploded and new pedagogics include such as the flipped classroom, blended learning, MOOC, OER, TED lectures. Approaches that by some is seen as opening up higher education. Other developments are in the area of transnational education. These developments raise a key question on the need to develop specific quality assurance for specific higher education offers such as open and distance learning, continuing education including LLL provision, bridging courses, etc. The (new) forms of learning and teaching delivery to a diversified student

---

<sup>12</sup> New ESG 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes, and 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

<sup>13</sup> High level group report

<sup>14</sup> Reichert, S (2009) Institutional diversity in European higher education: Tensions and challenges for policy makers and institutional leaders, EUA

<sup>15</sup> The European Union's High-Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education (2014) [Report on 'new modes of learning and teaching in universities'](#)

population (full-time, part-time, national/international or LLL student or in a combination) in the mode of traditional campus-based education, traditional distance or e-learning, MOOCs, SPOCs or in a flipped classroom together with many new transnational/joint/cross-border initiatives poses challenges for quality assurance. A great number of European projects and initiatives have looked at specific quality assurance activities (e.g. E-xcellence, EFQUEL, EQUAL, EQUIPE, SEQUENT, and the ARDE project on quality in Doctoral Education). It raises the question if a diversified European higher education landscape demands separate quality assurance processes? Is the revised ESG not a sufficient shared basis and are modes of teaching more important than content? Are the challenges diversification poses for the qualitative development of learning and teaching not reflected sufficiently in the revision of the ESG?

The Bologna Process has created an infrastructure that is based on a collection of separate developments that together support the qualitative development of student-centred learning by creating a framework as mentioned above. This framework, if used for the development of student-centred learning, would promote transparency and accountability and the quality of higher education. The understanding of this long-term vision may be lost with the arrival of new generations of students, teachers, administrators and ministers, and a much more utilitarian approach could become apparent as other challenges may overshadow the European vision. This raises the aspect of leadership. Many European higher education projects and in particular the different rounds of EUA's quality assurance projects over the past 15 years have concluded that leadership is an essential success factor for the development and implementation of the European strategies and policies. Quality assurance has become interlinked with strategic development (EUA Examining Quality Culture 2009 - 2012) and engaged leadership, and is another potential explanation for the perceived success of European quality assurance development.

European higher education is in the middle of a paradigm shift (IEP 20 year report) and looking back at fifteen years of higher education reforms as many of the stakeholder and stakeholder organizations do in preparation for the 2015 ministerial meeting in Yerevan, it is clear that much has been done at European, national and institutional level to address and support the changes. The term Bologna Process has perhaps lost part of its meaning for the vast majority of students in European higher education who now studies in the new structures. The collective memory is often short. In other words the structural reforms are now largely in place, even though some countries have started to discuss new structural reforms in order to facilitate more flexible student pathways within and between higher education and VET. The Bologna Process reforms are not considered successful in all countries and by all stakeholder groups. The revised ESG reflect a development towards a more student-centred perception of quality assurance and higher education. The now ten ESG for internal quality assurance are both inclusive and responsive, and have been formulated in a way that IQA ESG can be applied to the diversification and massification of higher education: of widening participation, on tracking the progression path of student to improve not only the student experience, but teaching and learning. The paradigm shift is a move towards creating higher education that is "fit for purpose" for the student and creating quality assurance that is able to reflect the diversity of courses, programmes and institutions that provide education in different modes and media.

## **Conclusion**

Behind the seemingly European quality assurance success story a much more complex picture is emerging through the contributions to the session on quality assurance, an image emerges that points to both convergence and divergence in approach and to remaining challenges – and this is perhaps not surprising given the diversity of the European Higher Education Area.

In the past couple of years much research and a great number of projects and studies have been carried out tracking the development of quality assurance, a quality culture and the use of transparency tools. The sheer number of activities and projects indicate that there are many stakeholders and a high degree of engagement, that many stakeholders “practice as they preach”, that quality assurance is based on a number of different tools in order to triangulate information about practice that include formal and informal and ex ante and post ante initiatives. There is agreement that evaluation results must be used and that the use of results must be published, that quality assurance must include feedback loops and be based on an understanding of responsibilities.

The papers in the quality assurance sessions mainly reflect the key role that key stakeholders (in particular students and staff) play both at national and institutional level, but also that quality assurance play an essential part in all parts of the student experience. The Rutherford and Pickup paper can also be seen as an important reflection on achieving a balance between student support and quality processes for enhancing the experience of all students groups.

The conclusion of EUA’s Examining Quality Culture project indicate the importance of self-reflection for enhancement, a theme that is echoed throughout the papers in this chapter and that the critical engagement of leadership and stakeholders are essential for the further development of tools and practices and that these must be based in principles and underlying assumptions.

The conclusions from the FOHE 2012 Conference were that the ESG needed revision and can be seen as an example of the need for constant development and evaluation, and that quality assurance is increasingly intertwined with the core of higher education. A shift can thus been detected from the development of practices and processes to a more exhaustive perception where all parts of the provision of higher education is included whether it is the provision of full-time education, part-time at the bachelor- master or doctoral level or continuing education; whether the teaching mode is campus or non-campus based or jointly provided regionally or transnationally. Quality assurance is thus part of the dialogue on the progress of creating a Europe of knowledge. An on-going process where the interaction between the internal and external processes is essential and where a multifaceted approach seem essential and where the constant dialogue ensure that the stakes do not encourage a compliance culture.

It can be expected that both external and internal, national and institutional quality assurance also in the coming decade will continue on a winding road with a:

*“rather complex history, full of twists and turns, that took them – variously – from evaluation to accreditation; from assigning ratings to subjects or study programmes to abandoning such a process; from the evaluation of subjects or programmes to the evaluation of institutions, and back to subjects or programmes” (Sursock, 2011).*

It can be hoped that the continued engagement in the different quality assurance communities will spread as a good practice and new pan-European communities will develop around student-centred

learning; that in the next decade focus will move from form to content and continuous dialogue a dialogue that was very much part of the early success of the ERASMUS programme, which engaged large number of academics in discussions on curriculum development, recognition and were in fact the protagonists behind many of the Bologna tools like the ECTS and the Diploma Supplement. The conversations have moved on and as with all good conversation engage ever more deeply into the heart of the matter: student-centred learning and all the pre-conditions of developing that in an ever-changing global context. In an academic context a “result” is always questioned and the starting point of the next phase – and the experiences from the quality assurance community can form the basis of the phase of development of the European Higher Education Area. The quality loop – what do we do, how do we do, how do we know what we do and how can this knowledge be used for change – is an excellent background or framework for the next visionary phase for the EHEA.

### **Bibliography**

Adam, S. (2006) An introduction to learning outcomes. A consideration of the nature, function and position of learning outcomes in the creation of the European Higher Education Area. In: E. Froment & J. Kohler (eds.) *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: Raabe Verlag.

Bach & al. (2014) (ENQA) *TRANSPARENCY OF EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH PUBLIC QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORTS (EQArep)*, Brussels [http://www.enqa.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/occasional-papers/Transparency%20of%20European%20higher%20education%20through%20public%20quality%20assurance%20reports%20\(EQArep\).pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/occasional-papers/Transparency%20of%20European%20higher%20education%20through%20public%20quality%20assurance%20reports%20(EQArep).pdf) Accessed on 12 November 2014

Bech Hansen, J., Gallavara, G., Nordblad, M., Persson, V., Salado-Rasmussen, J. and Weigelt, K. *LEARNING OUTCOMES IN EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE APPROACHES* Investigating and discussing Nordic practices and developments NOQA, 2013 [http://www.nokut.no/Documents/NOQA/Reports/Learning\\_outcomes\\_in\\_external\\_quality\\_assurance\\_approaches\\_NOQA\\_report\\_%20220413\\_250613.pdf](http://www.nokut.no/Documents/NOQA/Reports/Learning_outcomes_in_external_quality_assurance_approaches_NOQA_report_%20220413_250613.pdf) Accessed 17 November 2014

Bologna Process Ministerial Conference (BPMC), (2003) *Realising the European Higher Education Area*. Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/about/Berlin\\_Communique1.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/about/Berlin_Communique1.pdf) Accessed 20 October 2014

European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA), (2005) *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Helsinki:ENQA <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/> Accessed on 7 November 2014

European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA), (2011) *Mapping the implementation and application of the ESG (MAP -ESG Project)*, Brussels <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/publications/papers-reports/occasional-papers/> Accessed 20 October 2014

European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA), (2014) *TRANSPARENCY OF EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH PUBLIC QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORTS (EQArep) Final report of the project* <http://www.enqa.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/occasional->

*papers/Transparency%20of%20European%20higher%20education%20through%20public%20quality%20assurance%20reports%20(EQArep).pdf* Accessed on 21 October 2014

European Commission (2014) *Final Report INPUT STUDY TO THE REPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON PROGRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN THE VARIOUS MEMBER STATES AND ON COOPERATION ACTIVITIES AT EUROPEAN LEVEL*  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/reports/2014/quality-assurance-report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/reports/2014/quality-assurance-report_en.pdf) Accessed on 20 October 2014

European Commission (2014) *REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Report on Progress in Quality Assurance in Higher Education*  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/quality\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/quality_en.pdf) Accessed on 21 October 2014

European Commission (2012) *The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report*  
[http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/\(1\)/Bologna%20Process%20Implementation%20Report.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/(1)/Bologna%20Process%20Implementation%20Report.pdf)  
Accessed 12 November 2014

European Commission (2010) *Feasibility Study for Creating a European University Data Collection EUMIDA report.* <http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/docs/en/eumida-final-report.pdf>  
Accessed 24 October 2014

European Commission (2011) *COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems {COM(2011) 567 final }, Brussels 2011* [http://www.emma-project.eu/uploads/Documents/documents/2%20EU\\_Working\\_Doc\\_By\\_Modernisation\\_Agenda.pdf](http://www.emma-project.eu/uploads/Documents/documents/2%20EU_Working_Doc_By_Modernisation_Agenda.pdf)  
Accessed 17 November 2014

The European Union's High-Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education (2014) *Report on 'new modes of learning and teaching in universities'* Accessed 22 October 2014

European Commission JRC Report (2014) *State of the Art Review of Quality Issues related to Open Educational Resources (OER)* <http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/documents/201405JRC88304.pdf>  
Accessed on 22 October 2014

European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (2013) *Learning Outcomes in Quality Assurance and Accreditation Principles, recommendations and practice*  
[http://ecahe.eu/w/images/b/ba/Publication-Learning\\_Outcomes\\_in\\_Quality\\_Assurance\\_and\\_Accreditation.pdf](http://ecahe.eu/w/images/b/ba/Publication-Learning_Outcomes_in_Quality_Assurance_and_Accreditation.pdf) Accessed on 22 October 2014

European University Association (EUA), (2006) *Quality Culture in European universities: A bottom-up approach. Report on the three rounds of the quality culture project 2002 – 2006.*  
[http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Quality\\_Culture\\_2002\\_2003.1150459570109.pdf](http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Quality_Culture_2002_2003.1150459570109.pdf)  
Accessed 20 October 2014

European University Association (EUA) (2014) *ATwenty-Year Contribution to Institutional Change*  
[http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications\\_homepage\\_list/20\\_years\\_of\\_IEP.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications_homepage_list/20_years_of_IEP.sflb.ashx)

European University Association (EUA), (2009) *Improving quality, enhancing creativity: Change processes in European higher education institutions*  
[http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Quality\\_Assurance/QAHECA\\_Report.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Quality_Assurance/QAHECA_Report.sflb.ashx)  
Accessed 20 October 2014

Hazelkorn, E., Loukkola, T. & Zhang, T. (2014) *Rankings In Institutional Strategies And Processes: Impact Or Illusion?* EUA 2014  
[http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications\\_homepage\\_list/EUA\\_RISP\\_Publication.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications_homepage_list/EUA_RISP_Publication.sflb.ashx) Accessed 17 November 2014

Hopbach, A. *External Quality Assurance Between European Consensus and National Agendas* In Curaj & al. (eds.) *European Higher Education at the Crossroads Between the Bologna Process and National Reforms*, Dordrecht 267 – 286

Loukkola, T. & Zhang, T. (2010) *Examining quality culture: Part I Quality assurance processes in higher education institutions* EUA, Brussels 2010  
[http://www.eua.be/pubs/examining\\_quality\\_culture\\_part\\_1.pdf](http://www.eua.be/pubs/examining_quality_culture_part_1.pdf)  
Accessed 20 October 2014

Loukkola, T. (2012) *A snapshot on the Internal Quality Assurance in EHEA* In Curaj & al. (eds.) *European Higher Education at the Crossroads Between the Bologna Process and National Reforms*, Dordrecht 303 – 316

Observatory Magna Charter Universitatum (2011) *Contemporary Threats and Opportunities Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy within the Context of Accreditation, Quality Assurance and Rankings* *Proceedings of the Conference of the Magna Charta Observatory 15-16 September 2011*  
<http://www.magna-charta.org/observatoryPublication.aspx?uid={ee752d70-7afe-484a-89a9-f3e76d7006d2}>  
Accessed 21 October 2014

Revised version Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Brussels 2014 <https://revisionesg.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/esg-draft-endorsed-by-bfug.pdf> Accessed 17 November 2014

Scott, P. (2012) *Going Beyond Bologna* In Curaj & al. (eds.) *European Higher Education at the Crossroads Between the Bologna Process and National Reforms*, Dordrecht 1 - 17

Stensaker, B. (2011) *Accreditation of higher education in Europe – moving towards the US model?*, *Journal of Education Policy*, 26:6, 757-769  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02680939.2010.551785>

Smidt, H (2012) *Education as transformation – Transforming European Higher Education* In Curaj & al. (eds.) *European Higher Education at the Crossroads Between the Bologna Process and National Reforms*, Dordrecht 141 - 151

Sursock, A. (2011) *Examining quality culture: Part II Processes and tools – Participation, ownership and bureaucracy*. EUA Brussels 2011 [http://www.eua.be/pubs/examining\\_quality\\_culture\\_part\\_ii.pdf](http://www.eua.be/pubs/examining_quality_culture_part_ii.pdf)  
Accessed 20 October 2014

Sursock, A. & Smidt, H. (2010) *Trends 2010: A decade of change in European higher education*. EUA 2010 [http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications\\_homepage\\_list/Trends2010.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications_homepage_list/Trends2010.sflb.ashx)  
Accessed 20 October 2014

Sursock, A. (2012) *Quality Assurance and the European Transformational Agenda* In Curaj & al. (eds.) *European Higher Education at the Crossroads Between the Bologna Process and National Reforms*, Dordrecht 247 – 266

Sweetman & al. (2014) *Learning outcomes across disciplinary divides and contrasting national higher education traditions* In *Tertiary Education and Management*, Volume 20 Number 3 September 2014