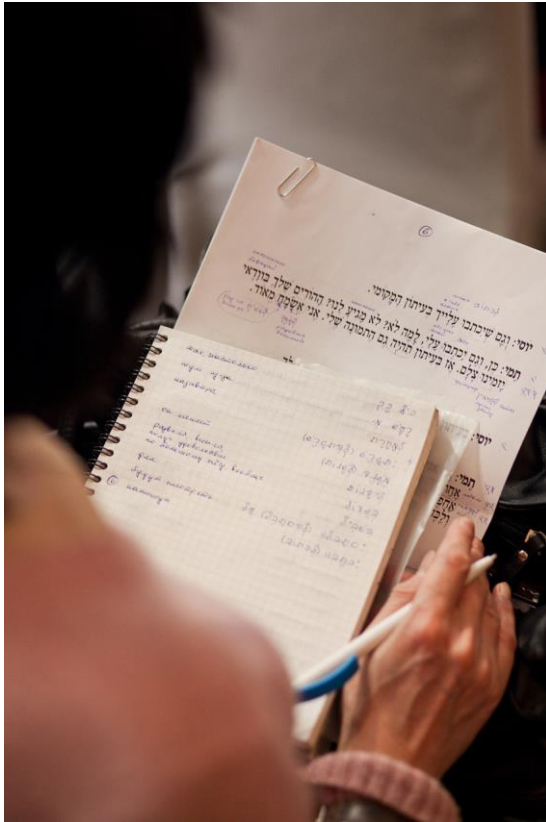# Quality assurance in joint programmes

Internal quality assurance (based on European ESG)

External quality assurance

European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes

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Why do we need a quality assurance system?

Why do we need a QA system?

To improve the programme

To make the programme **coherent in the eyes of the students** (one joint educational experience)

Sustainability of the programme

Legal obligations (the agreement, national legislation, national accreditation)

Recruitment/PR (good evaluations = good PR)

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European standards and guidelines (ESG)

**STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA**

Established by ENQA (European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), student, HEI and employer organizations

Developed as part of the Bologna Process and adopted in 2005, renewed 2015.

- 1) internal quality assurance
- 2) external quality assurance of higher education
- 3) external quality assurance agencies

ESG – Internal quality assurance, overview

1. Policy and procedures for quality assurance (QA)
2. **Design and approval of programmes**
3. **Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**
4. **Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**
5. **Quality of teaching staff**
6. **Learning resources and student support**
7. **Information management**
8. **Public information**
9. **On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes NEW**

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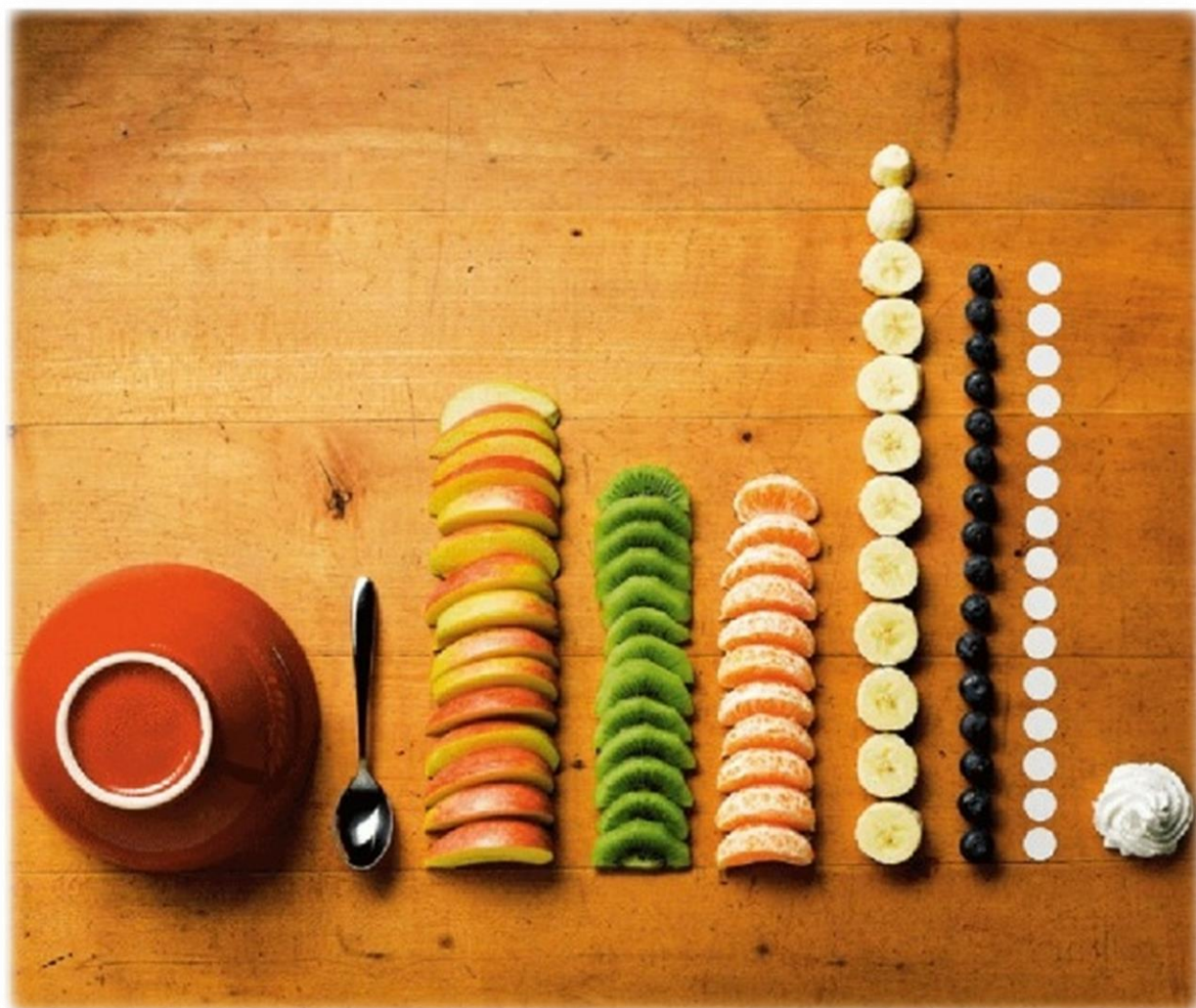
1. Policy and procedures

Joint perception of quality?

Comparison, joint scheme based on existing systems?

Common elements of reference

Students and alumni

Joint QA strategy and system, entire cycle of QA

2. Design and approval of programmes and award

- All partners recognized HEIs
- Degree-awarding right
- Specific legislation on international joint programmes / awarding
- Institutional formal programme approval procedures (recognition of all parts of programme)

Consult recognition authorities, Ministries of Education and Research, ENIC-NARIC network

Agreement on joint learning outcomes for the entire programme, to enable smooth student progression, define the student workload

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3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Standard Students should take an active role in creating the learning process and the assessment reflects this process.

Guidelines Respect the diversity of the students and their needs. Professional student assessment procedures are very important.

Joint student data bases

Student advisors

How to measure the achievement of learning outcomes? Clear criteria for marking.

Joint examiners

Joint Conversion Table of academic scores – possibly

Consequences of different examination and student regulations

Student Handover Note

Regular meetings with students

4. Quality of teaching staff

Standard HEIs assured of the competence of their teachers. Fair process for recruitment and development.

Guidelines Staff recruitment procedures and opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity.

Scholar exchanges.

Joint peer-learning and training for supervisors and teachers

Teaching through English

Teaching in a multicultural setting

Joint online platforms for dialogue and discussion

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Standard Ensure appropriate funding and availability of learning resources and student support

Guidelines Physical resources (libraries, IT services) and human support (counsellors, advisors) available for students.

Library resources and IT services made available during the whole study period

Student integration

Jointly online student handbook

Student buddy and mentoring activities

Academic guidance important

General student services (accommodation etc)

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6. Information systems

Standard HEIs collect, analyse and use information to secure effective management of programmes.

Guidelines Institutional self-knowledge through means of collecting and analysing information about own activities.

Student progression and success rates

Student satisfaction

Effectiveness of teachers

Available learning resources and costs

Employability

Archives (degrees and DS)

7. Public information

Standard Publishing up to date and objective information about programmes and awards offered.

Guidelines Provision of programme information; intended learning outcomes; award of qualifications, teaching, learning and assessment procedures; learning opportunities and employability.

Create a common web page – the first impression!

Define unique selling points, international competences and learning outcomes by students, joint academic expertise provided by the programme etc.

Joint standard info to use in communication

Information on the degree and how it will be awarded

Clear facts about employability

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Summary internal QA

- Common agreement on how to define and measure quality.
- Delicate issue – balance between mutual trust and transparency.
- Create an open atmosphere of constructiveness within the partnership – ensuring quality of the whole programme is a common goal and concern.
- Work towards coherence and consistency of QA systems.
- Strive for ability to use common reference points.
- Mutual trust among institutions will increase.

A possibility for students to live a unique learning experience!

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External QA

National procedures
- **Focus on evaluation of the institutional processes (i.e. Finland) and continuous development**
- **Focus on cyclic programme-level accreditation**
- **Procedure by:**
  - Individual agency
- **Result:**
  - National (accreditation)

Assessment framework for joint programmes

e.c.a european consortium for accreditation

Shared European component

- Assessment criteria
- Assessment procedure
    - Self-evaluation report
    - Assessment panel
    - Site visit
- Assessment report
- Decision-making process

Additional national components
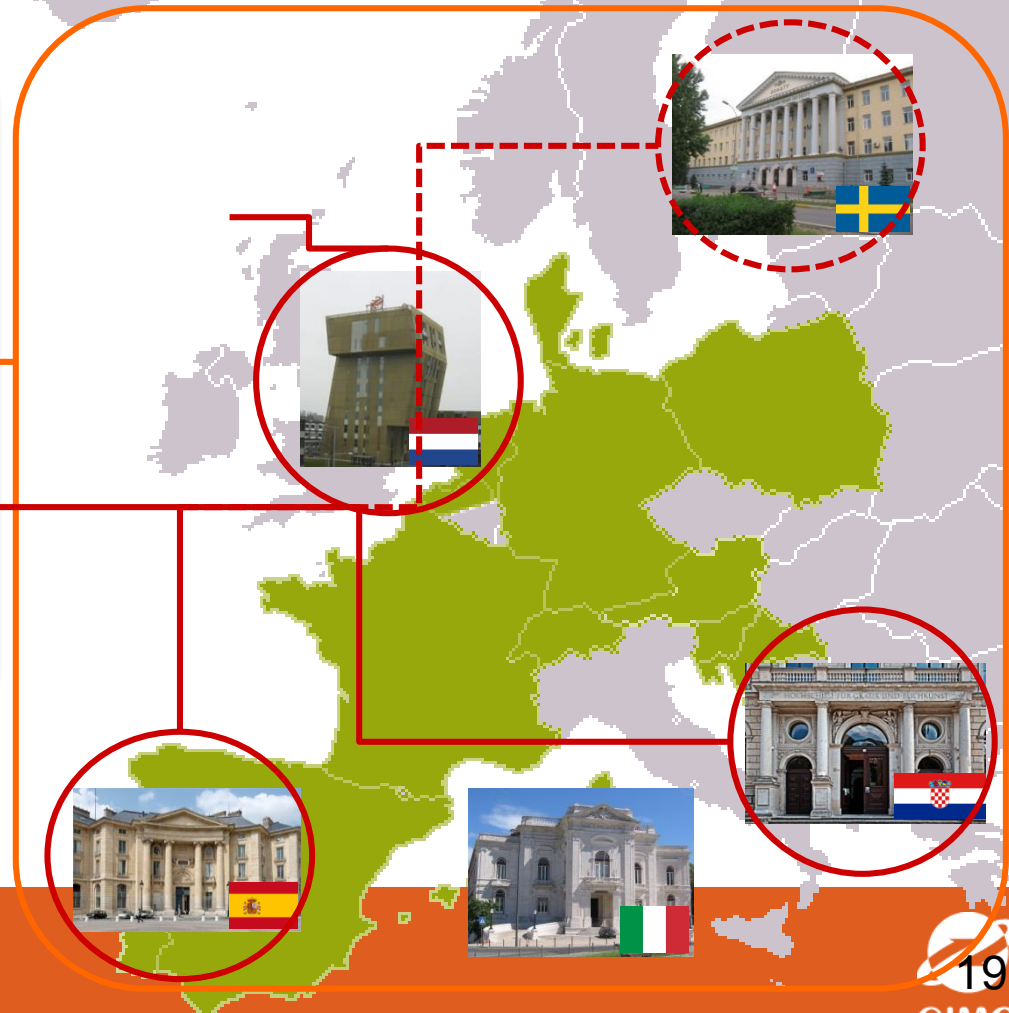
- Assessment criteria
- Assessment procedure

Guidelines for self-evaluation report

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If programme-level accreditation is required, seek single accreditation

Single procedure by one agency

Whole joint programme

Many challenges left, and all national

Too many <u>national standards and national requirements</u> in external quality assurance and accreditation

- Not about quality
- Not suited for joint programmes
- Contradict each other

Very long list of examples:
• Master thesis:
"max. 30 ECTS credits" vs. "at least 35% of the total number of credits";
• The assessment report (expert report) is required to be in the national language;
• National QA agencies which are not allowed to coordinate an international procedure / undertake a site visit abroad;

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Thank you for your attention

→ LOCAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES