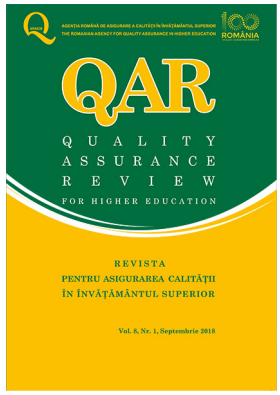
AGENŢIA ROMÂNĂ DE ASIGURARE A CALITĂŢII ÎN ÎNVĂŢĂMÂNTUL SUPERIOR
*Membră în Asociația Europeană pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Superior – **ENQA***
*Înscrisă în Registrul European pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Superior – **EQAR***



Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education

The Quality Governance for Accreditation of Master and Doctoral Programmes

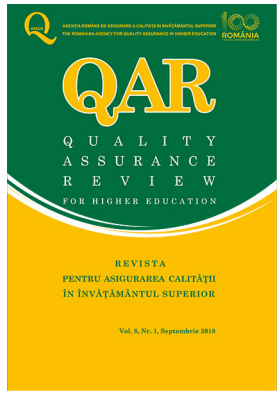
Gyöngyvér Hervainé Szabó

Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2018, pp. 26 – 45

Publicat de: Agenţia Română de Asigurare a Calităţii în Învăţământul Superior - ARACIS
Locul publicării: Bucureşti, România
Tipul publicaţiei: tipărit, online
ISSN: 2066 - 9119, 2069 - 2188 (online)
Adresa: Bd. Mărăşti, nr. 59, Sector 1, Bucureşti, cod poştal 011464
Telefon: +40 21 206 76 00; Fax: +40 21 312 71 35
E-mail: qar@aracis.ro
Pagină electronică: http://www.aracis.ro/en/publicatii/qar-magazine/numarul-curent/

Revista *Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education* este editată din fondurile proprii ale ARACIS şi, în această etapă, contribuie şi la sustenabilitatea proiectului „Dezvoltarea şi consolidarea culturii calităţii la nivelul sistemului de învăţământ superior românesc - QUALITAS”, Contract POSDRU/155/1.2/S/141894.

THE ROMANIAN AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION
*Member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education – **ENQA***
*Listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education – **EQAR***



Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education

The Quality Governance for Accreditation of Master and Doctoral Programmes

Gyöngyvér Hervainé Szabó

Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2018, pp. 26 – 45

Published by: The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education - ARACIS
Place of publication: Bucharest, Romania
Publication type: printed, online
ISSN: 2066 - 9119, 2069 - 2188 (online)
Address: Bd. Mărăşti, no. 59, sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, postal code 011464
Phone: +40 21 206 76 00; Fax: +40 21 312 71 35
E-mail: qar@aracis.ro
Web page: http://www.aracis.ro/en/publications/qar-magazine/current-issue/

Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education is edited from ARACIS own funds and, at this stage, also contributes to the sustainability of the project "The development and the consolidation of quality culture at Romanian higher education system – QUALITAS", POSDRU Agreement 155/1.2/S/141894.

The Quality Governance for Accreditation of Master and Doctoral Programmes

Gyöngyvér Hervainé Szabó ***Professor***
Kodolányi Janos University
of Applied Sciences, Hungary
gyongyver@kodolanyi.hu

Abstract: *The accreditation of the master and doctoral programmes is the focus of global and European community public policy sectoral networks. The key IGOs and INGOs have developed their own viewpoint concerning the 2nd and 3rd level criteria. The national and specialised agencies act differently: the national agencies cannot meet the public policy criteria concerning measures for value of potential programmes. The specialised agencies are ahead in development of qualitative criteria for 2nd and 3rd level programmes, especially in the business and engineering area, reflecting practice orientation and research criteria. The ESG 2015 makes no distinction between types of programmes and misses the ERA and researcher mobility aspects and EURAXESS criteria for employment skills. The ENQA and ESG 2015 have a negative impact on different agencies (both national and specialised) enforcing silo type accreditation against formal type criteria. In UK's case, the research evaluation was eliminated from the scope of national accreditation agency. The experience in international accreditation reflects the formal silo without reflecting the expectation of a transformative role of 2nd and 3rd level programmes in European Higher Education and Research Area.*

Keywords: *EQFS, ESG 2015, specialised agencies, evaluation paradigms and approaches, cluster accreditation*

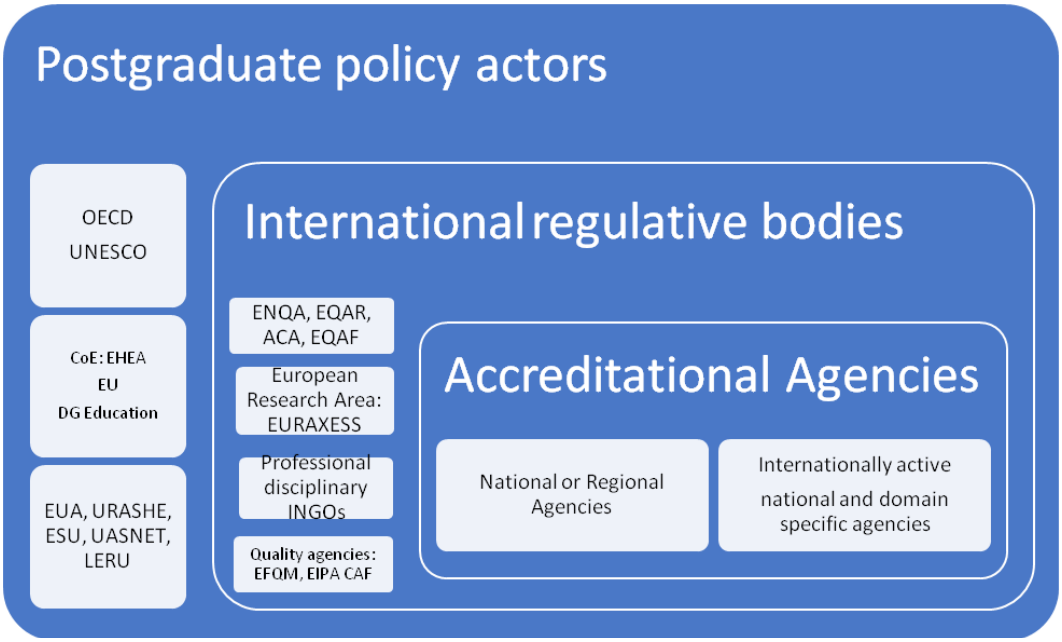
Introduction

The aim of the study is to compare the inner rules and criteria of quality assurance agencies in EHEA for implementing international and European IGO's public policies on Master and Doctoral level education. First we explore the role of global and European international governmental actors, next we explore the investigation of the policy statement of HEI sector NGOs. The third task is to explore the role of regional regulatory accreditation agencies. The fourth element of the research is a comparative analysis of the policy of different types of agencies, as direct actors in accreditation. The fifth element of the research aims to explore the investigating and evaluating experiences as an evaluator expert.

The main actors who developed their relevant policies concerning quality of masters and doctoral programmes are the UNESCO, the OECD, the Council of Europe (ministerial conferences), the EU Commission's relevant DGs and bodies. The second group of actors in quality education comprises the higher education professional NGOs as the European University Association (EUA), LERU, EURASHE, UASNET, ESU. The third groups are semi-public quangos, as actors regulating the activities of the European quality agencies: ENQA, EQAR, EQAF, ACA, ENIC-NARIC Network. The execution lies in the hands of these and national accreditation agencies, who are responsible for the implementation of policies, sectoral aims, transnational regulations forming a European Higher Education and European Research Area policies at community and nation state levels.

The governance of the master and doctoral degree programmes and its quality differs from graduate and short cycle degrees, because they concern the whole European economic competitiveness, EHEA policies, policies of the European Research Area, European Innovation and Technology Transfer policies, enterprise development and social innovation, and creative industry policies as well.

Diagram 1. *The governance of the higher education postgraduate education*



1. Global and European Governmental Actors Regarding the Function of Master and Doctoral Programmes

Council of Europe (ministerial conferences)

Bucharest Meeting Ministerial Conference of the Council of Europe declared the quality of master and doctoral programmes as part of public responsibility.

The Global and European organisations made a sound contribution forming policy documents concerning employability of graduates, ensuring a stronger link between research, teaching and learning at all levels. At EHEA Meeting, in 2012, the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué put an emphasis on changing research priorities and emerging disciplines, and on the fact that research should underpin teaching and learning. The document underlined the diversity of doctoral programmes, the recommendation of Salzburg II and the principle for Innovative Doctoral Training, exploring quality, transparency, employability and mobility in the third cycle. The document made clear the role of doctoral education as a bridge between EHEA and ERA. The document underlined that high quality second cycle programmes are a necessary precondition for the success of linking teaching, learning and research, the importance of the qualification framework is essential for recognition for both academic and professional purposes, (CoE, 2012 Bucharest Communiqué,2)

"Our societies need higher education institutions to contribute innovatively to sustainable development and therefore, higher education must ensure a stronger link between research, teaching and learning at all levels. Study programmes must reflect changing research priorities and emerging disciplines, and research should underpin teaching and learning. In this respect, we will sustain a diversity of doctoral programmes. Taking into account the "Salzburg II recommendations" and the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training, we will explore how to promote quality, transparency, employability and mobility in the third cycle, as the education and training of doctoral candidates has a particular role in bridging the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA). Next to doctoral training, high quality second cycle programmes are a necessary precondition for the success of linking teaching, learning and research."

OECD

The ***OECD IMHE*** working programme (The Institutional Management of Higher Education made clear the importance of quality teaching):

- To balance performance on teaching and learning achievements along with research performance, since even for elite, world-class universities, research performance is no longer sufficient to maintain the reputation of the institution. Connecting teaching and research more intensively is the new task.
- Quality teaching policies should be designed consistently at institutional, programme and individual levels. The programme levels are the pivotal place where quality teaching is likely to flourish. "Strengthen links between teaching and research
  - Explore how the research activities of the institution affect the policies supporting teaching and learning (e.g.: in terms of learning environment, curriculum design, students assessment).
  - Provide support for faculty involved in fostering quality teaching so that their engagement does not undermine their careers as researchers.

- Build research capacity through the promotion of research-teaching linkages, such as:
  – Prove how research helps teaching
  – Engagement in research-inspired teaching
  – The development of undergraduate students' research-skills
- Engage undergraduate students in carrying out research as part of the teaching and learning strategy and encourage and support undergraduate students to publish their research.
- Exchange professional development for teaching and research as to increase mutual learning. Avoid distinctive professional development paths." (OECD IMHE, 2012,14)

EU DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

The report of the DG Education in 2015 stated that the criteria of 300 ECTS for first and second cycles is different in EHEA 58-member states. In four countries, it is accepted the 240 ECTS for minimum duration, and in one country- 270 ECTS. In integrated programmes it is accepted to develop 360 ECTS credits, while there are countries with 240 integrated degrees. 27 countries accept second cycle degree programmes outside Bologna system (150-180 credits, the so-called MPhil, and so on. There are differences between the admission to the second and third cycle programmes. In some countries, professional degrees must fill bridging programmes (7), in some countries the second cycle programmes are missing. If the applicant has qualification in a different field, he has to do additional examinations in 21 countries. The report of the DG Education stated that in 27 countries students are learning in Bologna-type third cycle programme, in 19 countries the access to the third cycle can be without the second cycle. In 2014, in 32 0countries the student learned in doctoral schools, there were 12 countries without doctoral schools, in 19 countries the majority is learning in such schools, in 7 countries there is no possibility to award degree without such schools. (64) There are differences between supervised doctoral studies and structured doctoral programmes. Professional doctoral programmes are not yet widespread, beside Kazakhstan, where all programmes are professional. The third cycle is included in national qualification framework only in 8 countries. (EC EHEA Report 2015, 40-42)

2. European International Non-governmental Organisations on Postgraduate Education

EUA

The European University Association in Executive summary stated the importance of the master programmes in employability, especially in knowledge society, with developing competences for doctoral research. "This is mostly marketized, costly, and curriculum depends on transnational collaboration. It has a strategic priority

in Bologna Countries, because of the Lisboan Agenda for sustainable growth." (Davies, 2009,10p.)

Davies makes a distinction, in *EUA Survey of master's degrees in Europe*, between three forms of master degrees: Taught masters, with a strong professional development application; Research-intensive masters integrated into the innovation and knowledge-transfer activities and function as pre-doctoral studies; Master level courses of varying duration delivered mainly for returning learners on in service, executive release or self-referral base. The categorisation of masters in other variation is the next:

- Academic master: the programmes offered by the university contrasted to professional masters awarded by non-university HEIs;
- Consecutive or continuation masters: as a continuance of the bachelor qualification;
- Conversion master: a distinctive programme, different from the subject of student's bachelor;
- Joint Master, delivered by two or more HEIs awarding single or multiple diplomas;
- Lifelong master: a master for returning students;
- Professional master: awarded by non-university HEIs.

Davies explores the speciality of the so-called Bologna Master: 60-120 ECTS, one or two full-time years, disciplinary content consistent with generic level descriptors, curriculum design and pedagogy defined by learning outcomes, a recognised point of entry to the European labour market. (Davies, 2009,15p) "Transnational, joint degrees, part-time, e-learning, post experience, distance, in company modes, as well as accredited prior-learning have become important features in the Bologna master landscape, and they have to access to doctoral studies. (Davies,2009,16.) "Students awarded a master degree must have achieved the level of knowledge and understanding, or high level in artistic competence when appropriate, which allows them to integrate knowledge, and handle complexity, formulate judgements and communicate their conclusions to an expert and to a non-expert audience. Students with a master's degree will have the learning skills needed to pursue further studies or research in a largely self-directed, autonomous manner." (Davies,2009,16.) It is consistent with the Dublin Descriptors. In the EUA survey 21% of HEIs reported that research was not systematically included, and only half of the student respondents were satisfied with research opportunities.

- The MBA is a most known example of professional master programme, and it is accepted the EFMD criteria for them;
- In case of regulated professions, there are other professional standards for making a difference between post-secondary level, bachelor and master levels. It is accepted the EUR-ACE criteria in case of engineering. Further requirements can be included in case of lawyers, notaries, accountants and architects.
- The Lisbon Agenda, the DG Enterprise and the OECD developed models for

enterprise education (HEI Innovate) with emphasis on enterprise development in the first and second cycles for flexibility of course structures, curriculum development, work placement, employer involvement, recognition for prior learning, intellectual property, innovation and incubation, HEI infrastructure. (59)

The European University Association was the main actor in forming quality criteria for doctoral programmes. The so-called Salzburg Bologna seminars were important in linking the EHEA and ERA pillars of knowledge society. The Salzburg II[1] 10 principles underlined the importance of PHD education and among them, crucial for accreditation, are the following:

- Advancement of knowledge through original research with meeting the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia;
- The importance of the diversity of programmes underpinned by quality and practice criteria;
- Doctoral candidates as early stage researchers should be recognised as professionals;
- Supervision must be based on transparent contractual framework with shared responsibilities between the candidate, supervision and institution;
- Achieving critical mass, with different solutions (cooperation between universities);
- Duration and possibility for LLL and international mobility;
- Innovative structures, interdisciplinarity training and the development of transferable skills;
- Appropriate and sustainable funding for doctoral candidates. (Christensen, 2005-2-8)

EURASHE, as another important actor in the European higher education area, developed criteria for professional education, and focused on first and second degrees- because the third degree was absent in university colleges or universities of applied sciences, and public finance for research was minimally accessible to the professional higher educations. Linking the subsector functions with Lisbon agenda, the organisation put an emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation, the regional functions for sustainable entrepreneurship as a social dimension and as part of Corporate Social Responsibility. So, all degree programmes must be research and innovation must link and incorporate applied research dimensions. The programmes offered are practice-oriented, institutions develop into regional centres of knowledge and innovation and generate knowledge and solutions "on demand", courses will be upgraded and become more science-based. (EURASHE, 2005,4p)

[1] Cristensen, K. K. General Rapporteur's Report (2005): Bologna Seminar Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society. Salzburg, 3-5 February 2005 eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Salzburg_Report_final.1129817011146.pdf.

UASnet, similarly to the EURASHE, declared its orientation for professional second and third cycle degrees and for integration to the ERA, to be capable for research and innovation and connection with regional development. They put an emphasis on professional master and doctoral degrees, especially for those who are mid-career professionals. (EURASHE, UASNET, 2012. p. 2.)

LERU is the network of research universities that promotes the so-called innovative doctoral training system and calls for education for research careers, aiming for fitting both academic and non-academic employment. They prefer formal research programmes in contrast to personal supervision model training. They offer comprehensive professional development programmes for researcher. They connect the ERA possibilities with university researcher education. (LERU, 2014,4p.)

ESU, as a representative of students, reports problems of quality concerning misuse of excellence concepts as programmes for elites, in case of academic-oriented programmes in second cycle the ESU suggests breaking with narrow specialisation and develop interdisciplinarity models. The second cycle professionally-oriented programmes must deepen the knowledge and introduce specific professional skills. They cannot accept the limits for access to the second cycle and extra fees and compulsory credits. In case of third cycle, they are against discrimination in case of non-university diplomas. The outcome of the research is weak at every level in student diplomas, and they feel very weak at these skills at all levels of education.

In summary, the EHEA main INGO actors have clear political vision for master and doctoral programmes. Horizon 2020 and EURAXESS network made a clear market for researchers. In case of research mobility, the role of master and doctoral degrees is crucial. The European Charter & Code for Researchers. Recently 32 000 researchers registered members of the ERA's EURAXESS Network[2].

The accreditation agencies, in their document, left all this policy programme without comment. Their strategy doesn't reflect the European policy goals.

The policy of accreditation agencies depends on ENQA standards and guidance. The ENQA focuses on quality of education and quality of research in case of postgraduate programmes. ENQA summarised in a 2009 research that standards for the 1st and 2nd cycle programmes cannot be automatically applied to doctoral education: it depends on the mission of the university, functions, strategy. Contrary to the differences, it cannot be taken separately. As the master's degree is a gateway to the 3rd cycle, it needs a better comparability with 3rd cycle research degrees. In case of external evaluation of doctoral programmes, the quality of teaching and research is included. ECTS is not an appropriate tool for doctoral education, but there are needs in the evaluation of research quality: progress of the student's work and scientific contribution and qualitative aspects of research education. It is important to measure the quality of supervision and mentoring, the capabilities of supervisors, the quality of interaction between supervisors and students. It is

[2] file:///C:/Users/Gyöngyvér/Downloads/EURASHE_UASnet_position_paper_April2012.pdf 2018.08.17.

a problem for QA agencies, how to measure the quality of human relationships. (ENQA, 2010, 32-39pp.)

The other important organisation is the ACA, the Academic Cooperation Association which is interested in internationalisation in European and global scope.

3. European Union Quality Assurance NGOs

In the European Union, for university accreditation, the main responsibility in forming the regulation policy is in the power of ENQA, EQAR, ENiC-NARIC Network and ECA.

ENQA

ENQA defined the role of agencies as independent ones in the 2009 position paper (ESG): "Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders. [...] The definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence."

The ENQA ESG 2005 and 2015 didn't make distinctions between institutional, quality system, and program accreditation, types of institutions, types of degrees, types of cycles. The new ESG 2015, standard 1.2. prescribes that in case of designing and approval of programmes declares its reference to the national qualification framework and EFQS level, and the four purposes of European Higher Education; standard 1.3. reflects for student-centred learning without understanding the problems in postgraduate and doctoral levels. Standard 1.4. shifted in case of teaching staff from high qualification in research to competence for implementing student-centred learning. In case of standard 1.5., the funding has to be focused on learning and teaching, standard 1.8. concerning public information prescribes clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible information on programmes. The ESG 2015 1.9. standard in case of periodic programme review focuses on the objectives set for them and the needs of students and society. In comparing the document, the additional interpretation is the following: evaluation of the programme in light of the latest research on the subject, needs of society, workload, progression and the competition rates, effectiveness of the student assessment methods and learning environment and available support services, mainly from student and other stakeholder feedback: expectation of their needs and satisfaction.

The ENQA membership consists of national or international comprehensive and so-called domain-specific agencies. These agencies serve the regulated access to professions. Basically, the methods and standards are the same, but the domain-specific agencies might include prescribed academic standards. The IQM-HE handbook suggests taking into consideration the next: continuous improvement of

study programmes, fitness for purpose approach, student's participation, the national qualification framework, defined responsibilities and stakeholder involvement together with transparency of results. (IQM_HE, 2016, 1. pp)[3]

In case of national and domain type of agencies, the emphasis is on competence structure models, and it is often missing the measures for competence level indicators. The main problem for both of them is the non-standardised data structure.

ECA mainly accredited joint master programmes in the framework of Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus Mundus Doctoral programmes. It decided the Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees.

4. Quality Approaches of National Accreditation Agencies in Case of Master and Doctoral Programmes

The AQA, the Austrian accreditation agency, a truly international one with a European and global practice plays an influential role in CENQAA network. The British QAA is important because of its success helping the international competitiveness of British universities.

The standards in case of Hungary (HAC) and Austria (AQA Austria) are highlighted by ESG 2015, and partly matched in case of QAA in the United Kingdom.

"AQA Austria"

In case of Austrian AQA practice, there is a shift for international direction, because of the state-owned or other public universities (while they are maintained by an GMBH), are freed from programme accreditation. The Fachhochschules needs programme accreditation following the criteria of degree programme management, the business world's or society demands, the student's needs for the practice possibility and by the qualification objectives to meet the scientific and professional requirements. In case of universities of Applied sciences, special criteria added for evaluation of applied research:

"Applied research and development

a. The objectives and perspectives of applied research and development defined for the degree programme are consistent with the strategic orientation of the institution.
b. The members of the teaching and research staff are involved in application-related research and development projects. The interaction between applied research and development and teaching is ensured.
c. To the extent required by the type of degree programme, students will be integrated into research and development projects.
d. The (planned) organisational and structural framework conditions are sufficient and suitable to implement the scheduled research and development activities." (AQ Austria 2015)

[3] IQM-HE Handbook https://iqmhe.wordpress.com/quality-management-in-competence-based-higher-education/ 2018.08.17.

In the case of private universities, the criteria is the EHEA Qualification Framework for master and doctoral programmes. The AQA uses in everyday practice the ESG 2015 – instead of special guidelines as in case of UAS. Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (2015) thoroughly describes the accreditation requirements similarly to UAS with special requirement the accreditation of Doctoral Programmes:

"A well-established research environment is in place at the institution. This requires especially that: the staff designated for the degree programme and the supervision of doctoral students:

- possesses the scientific and/or artistic qualifications (habilitation or equivalent qualification) relevant to the profile of the doctoral degree programme;
- can prove recent research activities at the university, which may be proven through publications or third-party funded projects;
- has gained sufficient experience in tutoring doctoral students. In any case, a habilitation degree in the relevant scientific and/or artistic subject is required for independently tutoring doctoral students;
- in addition to any other teaching and administration work, the permanent scientific and/or artistic staff is able to handle research activities and supervision responsibilities for doctoral students. The benchmark for an adequate tutoring ratio is no more than eight doctoral students per tutor. It furthermore ensures close contact between doctoral students and scientific staff doing research and/or artistic staff, as well as the opportunity for intrauniversity and non-university cooperation;
- in the case of interdisciplinary doctoral degree programmes, all subjects involved are covered by scientific and/or artistic staff possessing sufficient qualifications;
- the minimum duration of the doctoral degree programme is three years."

In case of UAS AQA, Boards decide on the term of accreditation.

In case of international accreditation, the AQA developed special guidelines for international accreditation of bachelor, master and PhD programmes. The agency added the ESG 2015 and EQFS description, the ECTS Uses' Guide, the Diploma Supplement. The International Criteria, its latest version is from 2013, didn't match the ESG 2015. It reflects a structure-based on 6 standards: programme management, staff, quality assurance, funding and infrastructure, research and internationalisation. The AQA program management criteria are specified for institution, the qualification level is connected to EQF, ECTS, and makes distinction only in case of PhD level (1.13.):

- "A well-established research environment is in place at the institution, which ensures the contact between doctoral students and scientific research staff and/or artistic staff as well as the opportunity for intra-university and non-university cooperation.
- For PhD programmes, the number of permanent scientific and/or artistic staff possessing the relevant qualifications, having carried out recognised research activities and having gained experience in tutoring doctoral students is sufficient.

In any case, a teaching qualification (venia docent) in the scientific or artistic subject is required for independently tutoring doctoral students. In the case of interdisciplinary PhD programme, all subjects involved are covered by scientific and/or artistic staff possessing sufficient qualifications.

- In addition to any other teaching, research and administration work, the permanent scientific and/or artistic staff is able to handle the teaching and tutoring responsibilities within the scope of PhD programme in accordance with the number of doctoral students." The accreditation is valid for 6 years.

AQA developed special criteria for the accreditation of institutions and programmes in Germany. There are interesting points 1.2. concerning special rules for combined programmes, and the so-called cluster accreditation. In case of combined programmes, it declares meeting criteria in each program. The cluster accreditation is made for universities by discipline clusters: social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, which is reflected in the formation of the study groups. According to the 2.3. section, the study programme concept covers the specialised knowledge and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as of technical and procedural and generic competencies according to the qualification level. The 2.4. is about the academic feasibility, 2.5. is about the examination system, 2.6. is about programme related co-operations, and the accreditation is valid for 7 years. (AQA 2013/2)

QAA UK

The QAA in the United Kingdom is the only institution which developed special description concerning the programmes. It works as the Intended Learning Outcome concerning a disciplinary area. The descriptions don't make a difference in case of qualification level and don't reflect the distinction between research degrees and professional degrees. It reflects a flexible and diverse landscape. QAA makes distinction between taught and research degrees. The document describing the characteristics of master degrees, in appendix makes distinction among research, specialised/advanced study and professional/practice degrees. The HEIs can develop degrees for specialised aspects, for deepening the knowledge, for research with structured learning, enabling students to undertake a research project, or to become highly specialised in practice area. They can be led to postgraduate certificate or master's degree, professional doctoral degree or bachelor with honours giving a master degree. The Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland refers to the EQFS descriptors. In case of programme accreditation, the QAA makes accreditation on the bases of benchmark statement.

The research accreditation is organised into the Research Assessment framework. It is a public – independent from the sector exercise and evaluation, and the main objectives are the next: to investigate the university accountability for public investment in research, to provide benchmarking with giving reputational yardstick, and to inform for selective allocation. The UK funding body evaluated 1911 research units in different types of universities in 2014, 52061 academic staff,

191150 research outputs, 6975 impact case studies. 30% of the university units were accredited as world-leading, 46% internationally excellent, 20% recognised internationally and 3% recognised nationally. The research exercise is a very complex administrative process and makes universities equal with universities of UAS. The British universities are suffering from this activity, but it gives a clear vision concerning theirs research performance.

If we compare the national and nationally-funded accreditation agencies, we can state that the national agencies cannot be compared because of national traditions and different views on higher education systems.

5. The Role and Practice of Professional NGOs and Professional Accreditation Agencies in Developing Accreditation Approaches

The European specialised accreditation agencies developed their standards concerning different levels of programmes: In the European Higher Education Area the AASIIN, the FIBAA, the AHPGS in Germany and the EFMD in Belgium are the most important agencies.

AHPGS

The social sciences are accredited by AHPGS, the member of ENQA. In its guidance documents, the first criteria are the study program objectives: the objectives have to cover professional and extraprofessional or interdisciplinary objectives, the domain of academic competences, competence for employment, skills for social commitment and personal development. It uses the Dublin descriptors as criteria for accreditation. It has to reflect the ECTS criteria. The self-evaluation describes in detail the modularization: common modules in university, programme specific modules, skills-oriented design of exam system qualification objectives with regard to scientific qualification, for qualified occupation, for social responsibility and for personal development. The AHPGS accredited probably 100 programmes in health, social work, law areas- mainly for private universities. The university has no special criteria for master programmes and didn't evaluates doctoral programmes.

FIBAA

The FIBAA is making the accreditations according to the ESG 2015, EQUAL EUROPEAN MBA Guidelines, using ECTS system and Dublin descriptors, and EQFS. The FIBAA developed guidelines for programmes in Management Studies, Economics, Law and Social sciences in 2015. It has a very detailed criteria and sub criteria system with so-called Asterix criterion- and if the criteria is not met, then there is no accreditation. The Guidance is reflecting a more fragmented viewpoint with 33-page description. The program criteria are very weak in accessing the research and making differences at bachelor and master levels "Methodological competences and scientific practice are thoroughly trained. Students are equipped with the necessary skills for research-oriented work and for applying those skills in the respective vocational fields." (FIBAA, 2015, pp.15.). The doctoral programme

evaluation guidance reflects the structure of the first and second-level programmes "The offer covers the relevant requirements of discipline to achieve the pursued research competency of the doctoral students. It corresponds with the focus of research of the scientists and doctoral students involved in the programme. The courses on different research methods and approaches to science are part of the curriculum." (FIBAA, 2013,13pp.).

EFMD

EFMD is a complex accreditation organisation with membership of the institutions. It is based in Brussels with offices in the USA and Asia. It runs according to EQUIS, EPAS, CLIP, EOCCS, BSIS and EDAF criteria. It makes differences between academic, corporate and on-line course accreditations. While the EQUIS is an institutional accreditation system, the EPAS is a programme accreditation system. It accredits master and doctorate programmes as well. It does service the member institutions, who can apply for stand-alone programmes, cluster of programmes or joint programmes. They accredit against institutional, national and international environment. The process considers a wide range of programme aspects including:

- The market positioning of the programme nationally and internationally;
- The strategic position of the programme within its institution;
- The design process including the assessment of stakeholder requirements– particularly students and employers;
- The programme objectives and intended learning outcomes;
- The curriculum content and delivery system;
- The extent to which the programme has an international focus and a balance between academic and managerial dimensions;
- The depth and rigour of the assessment processes (relative to the degree level of the programme);
- The quality of the student body and of the programme's graduates;
- The institution's resources allocated to support the programme;
- The appropriateness of the faculty that deliver the programme;
- The quality of the alumni and their career progression- EFDM, 2018.

The EFDM accreditation guidelines didn't reflect the EQFS, but they refer to the EQUAl Guidelines for MBA and Principle for Responsible Management. It needs explanation of personal development of students, corporate interactions, ethics, responsibility and sustainability, quality of students work, graduate quality and career placement among others.

They enclose guideline of EQUAL on undergraduate degrees in General Business & Management. EQUAL developed a special position on master's degree titles in management education Europe. They make differences among generalist (type A), specialised (Type B) with research-orientation or professional subtypes, generalist professionally oriented (type C) with significant work experienced programmes. Type A: made for Generalist Master for younger students (Master of Management

or MSC in Business Studies). Specialised Masters can be research or profession-oriented and can be taken without work experience or some years in the work place (MSc in Finance). The C type is the MBA, as treated as a generalist programme with strong practical and professional orientation for career acceleration or change. This MBA is described in detail concerning content and module structure. The EQUAl Guidelines for Doctoral Programmes in Business and Management were accepted in 2016. The guidelines follow the Salzburg Principles, and were jointly developed by EAMBA and EIASM, AMBA and the EFMD international NGOs[4].

It is a well-developed system of professional doctorates in business and management studies. The function of academic doctorate is to provide the qualification for entering the research community as a direct continuity of a Master research programme, working in faculties and research institutes. The professional practice doctorate (DBA), with aims doing research on a part-time basis, is supported with a research led university. Its objective to make contribution to a management practice in industry, advanced professional and personal development, and likely to be interdisciplinary in nature. It in detail describes the standards for research environment, have to be equivalent to 8th level of EQFS. Those who have a career in the academic environment have to gain teaching experience, but professionals have to become reflective practitioners. It developed standards for doctoral coursework and dissertation, supervision on dissertation process and final assessment.

The EQUAL Guidance of Collaborative Provision

The EQUAL Guidelines reflect on international dimensions of Business education and its qualitative aspects: international content in all areas, international cooperation with business environment, research that is relevant to the international challenges and openness of the institution to foreign cultures. It clearly defined what is the degree internationalisation: policy, strategy, reputation, advisory board content, curriculum and learning resources, research and development, the language (English), faculty and visiting professors, student mobility, staff mobility, management mobility, networks (clients and recruiters, alliances and partners, offshore activities (EQUIS March 2018).

AACSB American-based International Agency

The Florida based AACSB agency has the most developed guidance with highly deep accent:

1. Strategy with continuous improvement and innovation consistent with mission;
2. Intellectual contribution concerning theory, practice and teaching in business and management: discipline-based or discovery scholarship, applied or integration scholarship, teaching a learning scholarship, impact of intellectual contribution;
3. It has financial strategies and allocation of resources;
4. Prepares students during different university pathways, and student cycles;

[4] http://equal.network/guidelines-position-papers/ 2018. 08. 17.

5. It employs and deploys a faculty in balanced rate for different programmes, support faculty members participate in intellectual or in operational life;
6. It has a well-documented and well-managed process concerning the support of faculty members;
7. It has a quality professional staff;
8. The school uses well-documented, systemic processes for determining and revising degree programmes;
9. The curriculum content is appropriate for the degree programme. The AACSB defines the role of General Business Master Programmes and objectives and tasks of specialized programmes differentiating the professional and research-oriented degrees. The AACSB didn't make distinction between specialised research masters and doctoral programmes: both of them have to develop advanced research skills, understanding managerial and organisational context of specialisation, preparing for faculty responsibilities in teaching and research;
10. It facilitates student-faculty and student-student interactions according to the programme type;
11. The programmes are equal in different delivery modes;
12. The school has policies for accrediting the effectiveness of faculty and professional staff;
13. The curricula facilitates the student's academic and professional career, according to the type of the degree programmes;
14. The programme is well elaborated for executive education;
15. It evaluates the different types of academic and support staff;
16. It describes the impact of the programme connected to the mission, academic impact (research outcome), teaching and instructional impact, bachelor or master level education and doctoral education impact, impact on community and practice, executive education impact and research-centred impact (AACSB International 2013).

ASIIN

ASIIN is a special accreditation agency for engineering, computer science, natural sciences. The agency developed criteria using EUR-ACE label concerning engineering (ENAEE), Euro-Inf label concerning bachelor and master degrees in informatics (EQANIE), Eurobachelor and Euromaster for Chemistry (ECTN). The guidance document is similar to other programme accreditations and benchmarked against ESG 2015 criteria. What is new: there is a concept accreditation, first accreditation and renewed accreditation. They developed individual, cluster and two stage procedures, complementary procedures and procedures for international cooperation (ASIIN, 2015)[5]. The Agency adds 13 subject-specific information and other functional professional criteria. In case of the US, a conceptual framework for Research Engineering higher education was developed. . (Svinicki, 2010, 10-25pp.)

[5] https://www.asiin.de/en/quality-management/accreditation-degree-programmes/procedure/types-of-procedures.html.

6. Experiences of International Accreditation Practices Concerning Master and Doctorate Level

During the last ten years I could attend international accreditations as a user, and in the role of the evaluator. The agencies were international comprehensive and specialised as well, but the processes were similar.

- Both national and programme-accreditation agencies missed the quality teaching policies of relevant international actors and evaluated the programme without reflections for quality in teaching in EHEA and four criteria of the CoE.
- No agency had any theoretical knowledge concerning program-accreditation paradigms and criteria. If we try to understand the accreditation, they were expertise accreditation models, when the judgement relies on expert opinion, mixed with consumer-oriented and utilisation-focused approach and rarely reflected the organisational learning approach. The data concerning programme planning, implementation and evaluation were accidental, they didn't reflect time-series design and mostly missed the facts. The universities were hardly understanding the continuous-improvement principle of ESG and the PDCA cycle in exploring data. I didn't meet a self-evaluation document well-written and based on working higher education quality system.
- Both national and programme agencies took the knowledge of the expert as precondition. They choose the expert team internationally. The expert teams reflected the programme's discipline area, consisted from discipline experts, and rarely had professional knowledge for higher education program accreditation, and naturally represented the agency, the industry and the student body. Both agencies invited experts from national environment too.
- Both agencies worked in a cluster type of programme accreditation with focusing on a faculty or on a group of programmes in vertical lines. Both agencies worked with extremely large expert groups, more than 25 visitors settled to the university, and they made impossible the normal university life for a couple of days.
- The role of agency expert was crucial in finalising the report, who acted according to the agency inner rules and guidelines. All agencies worked accepting the European Policies concerning ESG, Dublin Descriptors, EQFS, and none of them made distinction between the type of accreditation (initial, in process, returning). All agencies made crucial error in preparing for accreditation, didn't think of cultural gaps: in central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia there is no possibility to start a programme by one own's initiative. So, the universities made the self-evaluation document as a static description for initial accreditation, while some part of the programme worked 20 years, 10 years or some years, or other part had no students with awarded diploma.
- The cluster accreditation of the programmes needed collection of different data, both it was missing from the guidance document which data are crucial for accreditation. The detailed descriptions produced archive-type mass

documentation (some thousands of pages). If the agency didn't match the expert with special programmes (from the bachelor to doctorate), they had to read the whole cluster documentation.

- The agencies developed criteria for evaluation as met by the international standards, but the absence of professional accreditation and evaluation knowledge made personal the evaluation of the self-evaluation document, the miss of clear data needed a lot of questions and additional data services. As the universities have no experience in forming programme objectives, there were frequent mismatches between first, second and third level programmes, and it was difficult to explore the EQFS level of the subject.
- In case of new disciplines as social work, social pedagogy, communication and media, politics and international relations, there are no professional programme criteria instead of British subject benchmark document (without distinction the qualification level), so it needed a deep research for matching the programmes with international practice. In EHEA, the doctoral schools are very young in case of social work, or before the Bologna degrees the master or doctoral degrees were absent. Without access to official documents in national language, it is impossible to accredit against national law or framework system. Practices concerning site visit differs in forming the focus groups, and in case of cluster accreditation it is difficult to meet the right persons and students.
- Regarding practices concerning co-working and co-evaluation in clusters the agencies have different rules: if the agency reports the evaluation of a cluster of programmes in a single document, it needs a lot of time for coming to an accepted solution. If the agency is making the evaluation for each vertical programme it is more easily to draw a common statement. It was common that in forming the final document the agency's project leader had a crucial role.

7. Experiencing of Evaluating Phase for Different Level of Programmes

There are no clear criteria for evaluating the teaching staff: some agencies make crucial the international component of the staff without any distinction if they are recently networked into international community or they gained their diploma decades ago abroad, or there is a permanent staff of visiting teachers. It is problematic that the real performance of the teachers is connected to the mainstream programme or they all perform research and teaching in a peripheral area of the programmes. In case of old state universities, the professors fit for all, in case of new universities the key persons are from professional area. There are no distinctions between the orientations of the programmes, so the evaluation of the staff as fit for purpose is difficult.

Evaluating the Curriculum is a complex task: there are mandatory national prescriptions, and there are different practices in credit allocations. The programme leadership criteria in case of both types of agencies reflects the faculty structure of the university and works for conservation traditional roles. In case of both type

of agencies is missing the quest for linking the strategic and operative culture. In self-evaluation documents we hardly find program development objectives, improvement actions, evaluations, roles in regional setting. The master and doctorate degrees rarely meet criteria for actions and programmes for adapting to the knowledge economy. Evaluating admission practices is formal because of the absence of national regulations. There is small emphasis on educational environment, for funding of research and research infrastructure, and for evaluation the level of internationalisation. The European Parliament formed a policy and best practice guidance, but it needs time for informing universities and agencies as well. The agencies built the information criteria to the guidance, but there are no clear standards at international level.

Summary

The international accreditation practice became an important feature of the EHEA, but the accreditation of master and doctoral level is going mostly of the bachelor level silo. The specialised agencies made a distinctive contribution for understanding the role of master and doctoral programmes, but it is more problematic in case of national agencies. All reflects formally the ESG 2015 criteria, without correcting their guidelines, and without domain specific descriptors. So, it is difficult for understanding them, and translating the EQFS for discipline area. The practice of cluster accreditation made visible the weaknesses of the Bologna processes, made possible master levels and doctoral programmes in truly professional areas without practice orientation. The practice of accreditation misses the stakeholder's viewpoint, the EU's aims and the needs of ERA. Only the Business accreditation area was engaged with professionalisation for research profession completing certificate for researchers. The ENQA's role is crucial meeting the targets of European public policy actors. In case of second and third level programmes its role is a conservator role, pushes the agencies for accreditation silo without helping them meet European Lisboa objectives for knowledge economy. It could not be able to reflect the needs of European Research Area. There was no agency which formed some criteria meeting employment good practice of EURAXESS criteria for research related jobs in universities and programmes for professional researcher education.

Reference list

European Ministers in charge of Higher Education. *Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education.* 2012. Accessed on May 12 2018.p.2. http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2012_Bucharest/67/3/Bucharest_Communique_2012_610673.pdf .

Hénard, Fabrice and Deborah Roseveare. *Fostering Quality Teaching in Higher Education: Policies and Practices. An IMHE Guide for Higher Educational Institutions.* 2012. Accessed on May 12 2018.14pp. http://www.oecd.org/education/imhe/QT%20policies%20and%20practices.pdf.

European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE). *EURASHE's Vilnius Statement for Bergen.* 2015. Accessed on May 12 2018. https://media.ehea.info/file/EURASHE/84/8/050429_EURASHE_580848.pdf.

Davies, Howard. 2009. *Survey of Master Degrees in Europe*. EUA Publications.

Cristensen, Kirsti Koch. 2009. *Bologna Seminar Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society.* Accessed on May 12 2018. http://www.eua.be. http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Salzburg_Report_final.1129817011146.pdf .

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice. 2015. *The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Accessed on May 12 2018.40-42pp. https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/european_higher_education_area_bologna_process_implementation_report.pdf.

League of European Research Universities (LERU). 2014. *Doctoral Degrees Beyond 2010: training talented researchers for society. Good Practice Elements in Doctoral Training.* Accessed on May 12 2018. https://www.leru.org/files/Good-Practice-Elements-in-Doctoral-Training-Full-paper.pdf.

Bitusikova, Alexandra, Janet Bohrer, Ivana Borošić, Nathalie Costes, Kerim Edinsel, Karoline Holländer, Gunilla Jacobsson, Ivan Filip Jakopović, Mary-Louise Kearney, Fred Mulder, Judith Négyesi, and Manuel Pietzonka. "Quality assurance in Postgraduate Education". *ENQA Workshop Report 12*. 2010.

IQM-HE. *Handbook for Internal Quality Management in Competence-Based Higher Education.* 2016. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/.

AQ Austria. *Decree on Accreditation of Universities of Applied Sciences.* 2015. Accessed on May 12 2018. https://www.aq.ac.at/en/accreditation/universities-applied-studies/downloads.php.

AQ Austria. *International Accreditation of Bachelor, Master and PhD Programmes*. 2013. https://www.aq.ac.at/en/accreditation/dokumente-international-accreditation/AQ-Austria_Guideline_International-Accreditation.pdf?m=144613020312.05.2018.

AQA Austria . *Rules for Accreditation of Study Programmes and for System Accreditation.* 2013. Accessed on May 12 2018. http://www.akkreditierungsrat.de/fileadmin/Seiteninhalte/AR/Beschluesse/en/AR_Regeln_Studiengaenge_en_aktuell.pdf.

EFMD. *Guidelines and Position Papers: Supporting Material for the EQUIS and EPAS Accreditation System*. 2018. http://www.efmd.org/images/stories/efmd/EPAS/2018/Guidelines_and_Position_Papers.pdf.

AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. *Eligibility Procedures and Accreditation Standards for Business Accreditation*. 2013. http://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/aacsb/docs/accreditation/standards/business-accreditation-2017-update.ashx?la=en.

FIBAA. *Assessment Guide for Accreditation of Programmes in Management Studies, Economics, Law and Social Sciences*. 2015. http://www.fibaa.org/fileadmin/uploads/content_uploads/151127_AG_FIBAA_english.pdf.

FIBAA. *Assessment Guide for the accreditation of Doctoral programmes for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)*. 2013. http://www.fibaa.org/fileadmin/uploads/content_uploads/130620_FBK_PhD_HEI_engl.pdf.

ASIIN. *Criteria for the Accreditation of Degree Programmes - ASIIN Quality Seal Engineering, Informatics, Architecture, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, individually and in combination with other Subject Areas*. 2015. https://www.asiin.de/en/quality-management/accreditation-degree-programmes/quality-criteria.html?file=files/content/kriterien/0.3_Criteria_for_the_Accrediation_of_Degree_Programmes_2015-12-10.pdf.

Svinicki, Marilla. *A Guidebook on Conceptual Frameworks for Research in Engeineering Education.* 2010. http://crlte.engin.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2013/06/Svinicki-Conceptual-Frameworks.pdf.