Recent developments in UK higher education and quality assurance

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Chief Executive
1 December 2016
About QAA

Founded in 1997

Offices in England, Scotland & Wales

Member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
Our mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education, wherever it is delivered around the world.
UK higher education
Characteristics of the UK higher education sector

Mass levels of participation, with high student retention

A world-leading research base

Diverse range of providers

Recognised worldwide for high quality and standards
Delivering UK higher education (2014-15)

159 higher education providers (source: UUK)

241 colleges delivering higher education (source: AoC)

732 alternative providers (source: BIS)
Higher education students in the UK (2014-15)

2.26 million students (approx), of which:
  1.72 million undergraduates
  540,000 postgraduates

Where did they study?
  England (1.9 million)
  Scotland (215,000)
  Wales (125,000)
  Northern Ireland (50,000)

Where were they from?
  UK (1.8 million)
  European Union (125,000)
  Outside the European Union (312,000)
Snapshot of UK transnational education (2014-15)

663,915 TNE students:

11.3% (75,270) studying within the European Union (EU)

88.7% (588,645) outside the EU

Top 20 countries represent 71.4% (474,010) of all TNE provision (by student number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Student Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>78,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>56,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii)</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>48,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv)</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>42,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>32,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi)</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>29,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii)</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>18,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii)</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>16,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix)</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>16,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x)</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>16,545</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source of data: HESA (2014-15)
The work of QAA
THE WORK OF QAA (I)

Quality assessment

Managing the assessment process for the Teaching Excellence Framework

Enhancement-led Institutional Review and Enhancement Themes in Scotland

Reviews of alternative providers
The work of QAA (II)

UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Strategic international work (including TNE and partnerships)

Adviser to government on applications for degree-awarding powers and university title
Stakeholder engagement

Public affairs - government and politicians

Students:
- QAA governance (Board, Student Advisory Board)
- Reviews

Employers

Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies

QAA subscribers
Recent policy developments
A time of significant change

Quality assessment review

New higher education legislation for England

New Teaching Excellence Framework

Major developments in the devolved administrations

‘Brexit’ vote to leave the EU
England: new government policy and law

- Green Paper
- White Paper
- Draft Higher Education & Research Bill
- Higher Education & Research Act

We are here
Key points in relation to quality

New Office for Students, responsible for quality *and* standards

Independent quality body

Risk-based quality assurance

Simpler market entry for new, high quality providers

Protecting the student interest

Teaching Excellence Framework
Recognition for QAA

‘Our higher education system is internationally renowned, something that is reflected by the high number of students who wish to come here to study.

‘Underpinning this reputation is our system of quality assurance, both within providers and externally. The QAA has been at the heart of this, in developing many of the methods, approaches and techniques which have since been adopted across the world.’

BIS White Paper, page 32
About the Teaching Excellence Framework

• Confirmed in government White Paper (May 2016)
• Assesses the quality of teaching in higher education providers
• Differentiates quality over and above the baseline set by quality assurance

TEF ratings:

GOLD
SILVER
BRONZE
Purpose of the TEF

The government has introduced the TEF as a way of:

a) Better informing students’ choices about what and where to study

b) Raising esteem for teaching

c) Recognising and rewarding excellent teaching

d) Better meeting the needs of employers, business, industry and the professions
Post-Brexit: the UK’s relationship with Europe

Triggering Article 50 – by end of March 2017

Parliamentary vote

‘Hard’ Brexit?

UK – participation in EHEA & Bologna Process
Thank you