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UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Enhancing Quality Assurance Management and Benchmarking Strategies in Indian Universities - EQUAM-BI

KICK OFF MEETING
Bangalore, 6th and 7th December 2017

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Project Rationale

Driven by the rapid pace of globalization and an unprecedented growth in technology, the higher education systems in the world are going through a transformative phase. From an Indian perspective the transformation has been particularly challenging in terms of echoing the need for demonstrable quality education.   Some of the current challenges in ensuring quality in Indian HE include: growth in enrolment rate; calls for inclusivity and equity; the diversity within the HE system and relevant accountability; the various roles of government and quality assurance agencies; academic integrity; and the (limited) availability of resources. Concerted efforts are being made by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), and National Board of Accreditation (NBA) to address such challenges and improve the quality of higher education. However, there remains an essential need to 'step up' the transformation process , and engage the HE sector more consistently and effectively.

In this context, there is a strong case for establishing a shared understanding of the challenging issues and exploring common solutions – 'how are others solving the problems that I have?' An effective and efficient means of achieving this goal is by peer learning through a comparison and benchmarking of processes and

good/best practices of other Institutions. Indian HE recognises that, when applied properly, benchmarking can be a very powerful tool through which organizations can learn from the experiences and innovations of others. Through a collaborative and intelligent approach to benchmarking, organisations can identify the processes, innovations and best practices of each other and, with due respect to context, apply enhanced management decision-making resulting in individual and mutual benefits. The question 'how are others solving the problems that I have?' attains the rider 'but are 'their solutions' relevant in 'my context'?'

In this sense, despite having the second largest higher education system in the world, India faces major challenges within this essential sector. The project is designed to address the most significant and overarching of these challenges - inconsistent or inadequate Quality Assurance management to properly support the governance and decision making required for institutional advancement and enhancement. Based on a comparative exploration of current activities and planned objectives, against international best practice, this Project will provide a 'benchmarking toolkit' and a programme of capacity building / dissemination will provide guidance for Indian universities on how best to improve / enhance their governance and management of 'quality'. Whilst underpinned by agreement on the shared bases and principles for 'quality', the project is targeted at three specific and critical areas: teaching and learning; research and innovation; internationalisation.

Involving key HE institutions in India and supported by leading European partners, the Project will provide an enhanced approach to Quality Management involving the focused application of a set of benchmark tools that take account of, and are relevant to, the complex and different contexts within Indian HE. The Project's 'deliverables' are concerned with enhancing quality management (and related decision making at current and strategic levels) through the development and application of a 'toolkit'. This will guide and support specific aspects of benchmarking relevant to quality management, but with flexibility in application to cope with the diverse contexts and priorities within and between Indian HEIs

Consortium Composition

European Partners

- Co-ordinator/Grant Holder / Universitat de Barcelona – UB- Span
- National Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Spain – ANECA - Spain
- KUNGLIGA TEKNISKA HOEGSKOLAN- KTH –Sweden
- Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza"- UNIROMA1 –Italy
- Université de Montpellier- UM- France
- University of Nicosia UN –Cyrpus

Indian Partners

- National Assessment and Accreditation Council - NAAC
- Jadavpur University –JU

- Symbiosis International University – SIU
- INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY MADRAS – IITM
- University of Mysore - UOM
- Shivaji University, Kolhapur – SUK
- EDULINK PRIVATE LIMITED – EDULINK
- Mangalore University - MU

Objectives

The Indian HE system recognises the essential need to align its national and institutional QA systems with latest international expectations, focussing on 'outcomes' and 'enhancement' (of achievements, experiences and the processes to them). It has identified that an efficient and effective means of meeting this aim of improving the quality of HE, and in particular in the governance and management of that quality, would be through peer learning focussed on the benchmarking of processes and international good practice. The Project seeks to provide this and, as a concrete outcome, a new (practical and sustainable) approach to benchmarking that can support India's HE aspirations through the development of a context-specific 'benchmarking toolkit'.

Creating benchmarks through comparison and identification of good practice is not a new notion in higher education and the Indian partners recognise the experience and expertise that the European partners can bring to their assistance through this Project. In particular the Indian partners seek to:
•O1 develop an understanding of the concepts and practices of benchmarking in order to accelerate quality improvement and its management in HE in India,
•O2 improve the capacities of Indian universities to use and develop different tools that will allow them to benchmark and focus their quality management against relevant national and international expectations,
•.O3 improve the capacities of Indian university and their partners, including improving/enhancing internal QA mechanisms, supported by clear (new) guidelines and standards,
•O4 mprove the capacities of Indian universities to collect, process and analyse data,
•O5 establish network(s) of academic leaders, informed by international expectations of HE, as a unique decision-makers' forum to promote the modernisation of HE management. Such a body would support future leaders and encourage the professionalization of HE management at all levels.
•O6 the creation of new frameworks for ensuring successful and sustainable partnerships between Indian and European HEIs and organisations, to enhance quality and promote the application of internationally recognised good practice.

The Project does not aim at a 'one-off' ranking exercise through comparison of data sets between Indian and European HEIs but will explore in depth the importance of (differing) 'contexts' relevant to Indian HE and develop a 'benchmarking toolkit' (including parameters, procedures and supporting guidelines) to provide better

support for consistent, evidence-based decision making in the governance and management of its quality.

Activities (2018)

Work package type and ref.nr	PREPARATION	1
Title	Scoping work	
Related assumptions and risks	The assumption is that in order for the project to effectively address the needs of the Indian institutions regarding strategizing QA and developing benchmarking tools an initial mapping of related projects should be conducted. This will help to orient the project activities and ensure their pertinence. An assumption is also that an initial scan of the partner institution needs has been done prior to the project application, to ensure that they have some needs and compatibilities that can be addressed in project. This risk is that exercise does not go deep enough in the Indians institutions, and all relevant internal stakeholders such as different faculties and student groups are not adequately addressed.	
Description	The WP focuses on scanning and scoping the different notions and uses of benchmarking and the different QA strategies of Indian universities. The WP will also develop a desk research to explore and present the different models of approaching benchmarking in Europe. During the very same Kick off meeting the partners, in particular NAAC and ANECA as the representatives of the QA sector in the project will present the Indian and European framework of QA and benchmarking setting up the general tone of the project. The research conducted will provide information to generate a first EQUAM-BI white paper that will contain the main issues to be developed and discussed in the project as well as a series of policy points that might serve as a road map to enhance the Indian-EU HE cooperation.	
Tasks	Organize a KOM Scan the different uses of QA in Indian and the different approaches of Indian partners Prepare a desk research on EU trends Discuss and generate a White paper	
Estimated Start Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	15-10-2017	**Estimated End Date (dd-mm-yyyy)** 31-5-2018
Lead Organisation	ANECA	
Participating Organisation	All partners	

	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	1.1.	
Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Title	**Kick off meeting**	
	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	The kick off meeting of the project will be organised in Barcelona, two representatives per partner institution will attend. The objectives of the project, the Work plan and the main management guidelines will be presented and discussed during this meeting. During the event, the NAAC, will also present the general trends of benchmarking strategies in India and will present a report on the current status of Quality Assurance principles.	
	Due date	1-1-2017	

	Languages	EN

	Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians Other
		If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*

Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International

	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	1.2	
	Title	**Scanning the uses of benchmarking in QA**	
Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	Coordinated by NAAC, Indian partners will prepare a Questionnaire in order to scan current uses of benchmarking in QA (internal and external) and expectation for the future application of benchmarking.	
	Due date	1-2-2018	
	Languages	EN	

	Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians Other
		If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*

Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International

	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	1.3	
	Title	**Desk research - EU TRENDS**	
Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	In parallel with the development of the questionnaire, ANECA, with the support of EU partners, will prepare a report on main trends in benchmarking and QA in Europe.	
	Due date	1-2-2018	

	Languages	EN

Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians Other		
	If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*		
Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International

Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	1.4	
	Title	**White paper**	
	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	NAAC and ANECA, with the support of UB, will coordinate a White Paper containing the main results of 1.2 and 1.3. The draft will be a road map for phase 2 and 3 of the project. The document will be publically presented and discussed in the first multiplier event of the project in 6.1	
	Due date	31-5-2018	
	Languages	EN	
Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians Other		
	If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*		
Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International

Work package type and ref.nr	**DEVELOPMENT**	**2**
Title	Comparisons of current QA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.	
Related assumptions and risks	It is assumed that all institution will share their QA procedures a. The main risk is that institution rejects the sharing of data and internal procedures.	
Description	The work package will be focused on cross-checking the QA systems among Indian partners by a) comparing the structures and procedures use in the QA management in learning and teaching b) comparing the structures and procedures in QA in research, innovation and internationalization.	
Tasks	Compare structures and procedures in QA management for learning and teaching and for research and innovation Organize a workshop to discuss the results	

	Present a report integrating the results.	

Estimated Start Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	15-3-2018	**Estimated End Date (dd-mm-yyyy)**	15-9-2018
Lead Organisation	Symbiosis University		
Participating Organisation	All partners		

Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	2.1.	
	Title	**Comparing the structures and procedures use in the QA management in learning and teaching**	
	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	A questionnaire developed by NAAC and ANECA, with the collaboration of the UB, will be distributed among the partnership in order to compare the different strategies at the institutional level on the structures and procedures use in the QA management in learning and teaching.	
	Due date	15-8-2018	
	Languages	EN	
Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians Other		
	If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*		
Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International

Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	2.2	
	Title	**Comparing the structures and procedures in QA in research, innovation and internationalization.**	
	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	A questionnaire developed by NAAC and ANECA, with the collaboration of the UB will be distributed among the partnership in order to compare the different strategies at the institutional level on the structures and procedures in QA in research, innovation and internationalization.	
	Due date	15-8-2018	
	Languages	EN	
Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff		

	Technical staff Librarians Other			
	If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*			
Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional		National International

Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	2.3	
	Title	**Integration document**	
	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	A report integrating the findings in 2.1. and 2.2 will be prepared. The task will be coordinated by NAAC and all Indian partners will participate.	
	Due date	15-10-2018	
	Languages	EN	
Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians Other		
	If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. *(Max. 250 characters)*		
Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International

Expected Deliverable/Results/ Outcomes	Work Package and Outcome ref.nr	2.4	
	Title	**Workshop at NAAC**	
	Type	Teaching material Learning material Training material	Event Report Service/Product
	Description	A workshop, with participation of all partner institutions will be held at NAAC in order to discuss the results and the report in 2.3. Two representatives of each partner institution will be invited. A report will be prepared by SIU	
	Due date	10-1-2018	
	Languages	EN -	
Target groups	Teaching staff Students Trainees Administrative staff Technical staff Librarians		

	Other		
	If you selected 'Other', please identify these target groups. (Max. 250 characters)		
Dissemination level	Department / Faculty Institution	Local Regional	National International