



LIREQA: surveying external quality assurance agencies

Aurelija Valeikienė, Deputy Director, SKVC

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Overview

- The goal of the surveying: to get an in depth view of the existing external quality assurance (EQA) mechanisms regarding recognition (of full foreign qualifications, periods of study, RPL).
- The questionnaire is aimed at the quality assurance agencies that declare academic recognition processes are already either fully or partially covered by EQA.
- Primary focus on the indicators and aspects considered during the EQA procedure as well as tools employed to determine compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC).

Categories of agencies selected for surveying



Based on their participation in ENQA working group on quality assurance and recognition survey (2016).



Based on agency self-evaluation reports and ENQA external review reports with a view of compliance towards renewed ESG-2015.

LIREQA

External quality assurance agencies in LIREQA project partner countries.

Questions asked (1)

- Q.1. Is the quality of recognition processes conducted by the HEIs assessed during the external quality assurance (EQA) procedures (such as evaluation, accreditation, review etc.)?
- Scenarios possible:
 - YES
 - NO, but during other quality assurance activities, such as training, consulting, thematic analysis etc.
 - NO, not at all at the moment
 - NO, but in the planning process

Questions asked (2)

- Q2: If yes, during which procedure(s) and how?
- *Procedures:*
 - 1) Institutional level procedures (institutional review / quality system audit etc.)
 - 2) Programme level procedures (evaluations of programmes / clusters of programmes / other
 - 3) Thematic reviews / desk based thematic analysis
- *How:*
 - 1) on regular basis / only if problems arise / other
 - 2) particular ways how recognition matters are addressed (requirement to cover recognition matters in institutional self-evaluation reports, questions asked during meetings with students and faculty etc.)

Questions asked (3)

- Q3: What indicators are taken into account to signal compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention during EQA procedures?
 1. Standards (availability of policy and evidence of its enactment)
 2. Procedure itself
 3. Ways of implementation
 4. Criteria used
 5. Tools and information management

Questions asked (4)

- **Q4. What other information resources are used for the assessment and determination of compliance during EQA processes?**
- national public statistics – aggregated or per university / programme-related to recognition decisions (used for example, in a context of risk-based methodologies)
- consultations with the national ENIC/NARIC centre regarding indicators for fair recognition
- EAR family Manuals, LRC Committee recommendations or other recognition tools
- other

Questions asked (5)

- Q5. Is information on the assessment of recognition processes conducted by the HEIs provided in the final assessment report? If yes, which aspects are usually covered?
- Q6. Could you provide any examples of procedures – programme, institutional- in which recognition has been an issue? Please describe, and give links to documents if possible.
- Q7. What types of cooperation take place between yourself as QA agency and the ENIC/NARIC office?
 - input into development of legislation
 - input into development of QA methodologies
 - participation in EQA procedures
 - projects
 - joint events
 - other

Draft recommendations for QA agencies re ESG 1.4

- To systematically address recognition in all EQA procedures as appropriate while seeking maximum impact for the benefit of students and applicants to HE. [To identify relevant criteria and indicators.]
- Build capacity of HEIs (e.g. by developing policy briefs, other materials) on external QA and recognition.
- To offer appropriate briefing and other support to experts be able discern good practice and areas for improvement per different types of recognition (full foreign qualifications, periods of study, RPL).
- Systematically and (if possible) independently from HEIs gather student feedback and monitor implementation of recognition across all HEIs in a given HE system.
- Regularly gather feedback from academics on recognition in practice to learn what is working and what is not.
- Engage in thematic analysis across all HE sector and by different EQA procedures to identify and promote best practices and address areas of persistent difficulties.
- Develop cooperation with ENIC/NARIC offices and other key actors, such as internationalisation agencies, HEIs associations, student organisations.

Proposed possible indicators to signal compliance with the LRC (to be verified during EQA procedures by QA agencies and used by HEIs themselves)

1. Standards:

- Existence of policy and regulations regarding recognition in HEIs
- Publicly available and communicated
- internal monitoring, audits etc to make sure the main provisions in the policy and regulations are taken into account and/or verified

2. Procedure

- transparency and proper information provision
- proper communication with applicants
- clear deadlines
- alternative recognition decisions offered
- right to appeal

indicators [continued]

3. Implementation

- statistics related to recognition decisions gathered (what type and how they are used to determine compliance)
- sample and/or supporting documents, such as samples of decisions, samples of requests or information provided to the applicants, etc.
- evidence of cooperation with the national ENIC/NARIC office

4. Criteria:

- status and quality assurance of foreign providers verified;
- policy on authenticity;
- focus on learning outcomes;
- recognition, unless substantial differences identified;
- provisions or policy for recognition of “non-traditional” qualifications (e.g. qualifications awarded after flexible learning paths, through transnational education or other means)

indicators [continued]

5. Tools and information management

- evidence of use of tools and information resources
- use of qualification frameworks,
- diploma supplement,
- EAR Manual, EAR-HEI Manual used
- existence of internal databases for recognition decisions
- internal information management (e.g. samples of documents)