

# 'Quality' and Internationalisation of the Curriculum

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# Ensuring Quality in Learning and Teaching in International Higher Education

- What do we mean by 'quality' in higher education?
- How do we measure 'quality' in learning, teaching and assessment?
- How do we 'measure' or ensure 'quality' in an internationalised curriculum i.e. of content, pedagogy (ies), understanding of global perspectives, intercultural capabilities, responsible citizenship?
- What are the complexities of transnational higher education programmes (TNE)?

# Internationalisation of the Curriculum

‘Curricula, pedagogies and assessments that foster understanding of global perspectives and how these interact with the local and the personal; inter-cultural capabilities in terms of actively engaging with other cultures; and responsible citizenship in terms of addressing different value systems’ (Clifford, 2009, p.135)

# 'Quality' in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

'Academic quality' – how and how well a higher education provider supports students to enable them to achieve their award. It covers learning, teaching and assessment, and all the different resources and processes a provider puts in place to help students progress and fulfil their potential' (UK Quality Code for Higher Education, 2012)

# Quality Assurance Agency – UK Quality Code for Higher Education

- Sets out the expectations all UK providers of higher education are expected to meet
- A shared starting point for setting, describing and assuring the academic standards of awards/programmes and quality of learning opportunities

# Quality Assurance Agency – UK Quality Code for Higher Education

- To safeguard the academic standards of UK higher education
- To assure the academic quality of learning opportunities that UK higher education offers
- To promote continuous and systematic improvement about UK higher education
- To ensure that information about UK higher education is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy

# Quality Code for Higher Education

- Part A: setting and maintaining academic standards
- Part B: assuring and enhancing academic quality
- Part C: information about higher education provision
- External reviews of HEIs use the Quality Code as a benchmark – Higher Education Review
- BUT – ‘internationalisation of the curriculum’, ‘internationalisation’ not mentioned

# Bologna Process

- Proposes that the EHEA is developed as a means of promoting mutual recognition of qualifications, demonstrating transparency of systems and easing the mobility of staff and students across higher education in Europe
- Each country should illustrate the robustness of their QA systems and compatibility of their qualifications with the EHEA

# An Internationalisation Strategy for Europe

- 2013 – **European Higher Education in the World** – a response to ‘the EU does not yet have an explicit policy for the internationalisation of HE’
- No ‘one size-fits-all’ approach – Member States should develop their own strategies
- A comprehensive internationalisation strategy should cover 3 key areas – mobility, **internationalisation and improvement of curricula and digital learning** and strategic cooperation

# European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

- Produces Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA
- Currently coordinating the Quality Assurance of Cross-Border Higher Education (QACHE) project
- QACHE aims to address the quality assurance of cross-border higher education by examining the different ways that European QA agencies and HEIs address the accreditation and quality assurance of the programmes delivered outside of their countries

# High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education

- Report to the European Commission on **Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning in Europe's Higher Education Institutions** (2013)
- 'Curricula should be developed and monitored through dialogue and partnerships among teaching staff, students, graduates and labour market actors, drawing on new methods of teaching and learning' (Recommendation 7)
- 'The EU should support the implementation of these recommendations, in particular through promoting:
  - Innovative teaching and learning methodologies and pedagogical approaches
  - Systematic and regular data collection on issues affecting the quality of teaching and learning' (Recommendation 13)

# University of Bristol - FQET

- FQETs (Faculty Quality Enhancement Teams)
- Consider and review School mechanisms for monitoring and sustaining the academic standards necessary for achieving stated aims and objectives in relation to teaching and learning within University, Faculty and School Plans
- Oversee Annual Programme Review (APR)
- Comment on best practice
- Teams consist of academics – and, as from 2011, students
- Visits made annually
- Reports to University Quality Enhancement Committee, Education Committee, Faculty Board and – ultimately – to Higher Education Review (2015)

# 'Measuring Quality' in Learning and Teaching

- Ensuring that learning outcomes, teaching approaches and assessment methods are aligned
- Identifying knowledge and skills to be developed – and how
- Student engagement in committees
- Student evaluation of programmes via questionnaires at local level and at national level e.g. NSS, PTES, PRES
- Gathering regular feedback – written and verbal
- Reflecting on practice – including via peer observation
- Annual Programme Reviews – identifying ways to 'enhance' quality

# 'A Wicked Problem'

- Research into academics' perspectives on the impact of quality assurance in HE indicates that it has had little or no impact on curriculum, quality of teaching or student learning
- Academics consider self-regulation and peer review as methods of quality assurance that are held in the highest esteem
- Characterising quality assurance as systematic, critical enquiry can legitimate it as an element of academic work intended to address 'quality'

(Houston & Paewai, 2013)

# Assuring/Enhancing 'Quality'

- 'Quality' linked to control – quality monitoring is seen as 'intrusive' – academics use 'quality' as a pejorative term (Cheng, 2011)
- Quality will be measured by learner satisfaction/ability to satisfy the needs of the labour market rather than an academic view of what it means to be an educated person in a discipline/field of practice
- Academics associate quality with transformative learning; students recognise it in more instrumental terms

# Assuring/Enhancing 'Quality'

- Students define quality as related to an academic's teaching practice rather than their own learning experience
- Teachers consider their teaching AND the efforts of students to be equally important in achieving quality
- Academics identified the importance of sharing good practice and achieving the right balance between teaching and research
- Key factors (students/academics) – teacher enthusiasm, student-centredness, maintaining currency of material

# 'Quality' and 'International Students'

- 'Institutions should ensure that international students recognise and understand what constitutes academic integrity and what the institution's regulations are relating to academic malpractice, including its consequences. An understanding of academic malpractice can vary considerably across different national contexts' (QAA, 2012)

# 'Active and Engaged Student Learning'

'Institutions should make international students aware of opportunities for giving feedback, for example through completing student surveys and taking part in focus groups, or through engagement with student representatives and the students' union' (QAA, 2012)

# 'Quality' and 'International Students'

- Academic staff should be encouraged to consider the needs of all students, including international students
- They should be supported to develop inclusive teaching and assessment practices
- Institutions should ensure appropriate arrangements for supporting students whose first language is not English
- Study skills
- Ensure that quality assurance processes take account of international students' experiences alongside those of domestic students (QAA, 2012)

# Transnational Higher Education (TNE)

- University of Bristol MEd and EdD offered in Hong Kong since 1995/1997
- ‘Flying faculty’ model
- Subject to UoB QA/QE processes, to the Hong Kong government’s quality control and to City University’s QA procedures
- Modifications in Bristol must be reflected in Hong Kong
- ‘Internationalisation of the Curriculum’?
- ‘Similarity with the home programme is the measure of quality...an approach that nourishes educational imperialism’ (Pyvis, 2011, p.743)
- ‘Strengthening the Quality Assurance of UK TNE’ – QAA consultation, 2014

# Internationalisation of the Curriculum and Quality

- An internationalised curriculum, through ‘strategic, intensive reviews of teaching and learning, profoundly influences the student experience and engagement’ (Crossman & Burkett, 2012, p.230)
- In culturally diverse environments, students and academics may be challenged by varied learning perspectives
- Students do not always share the same needs and expectations of learning and assessment
- ‘Engagement’ in quality assurance/enhancement processes may be unfamiliar to many students

# 'Quality' Learning Experiences in International Higher Education?

- 'Internationalisation of the Curriculum' should be reflected in quality frameworks that relate to learning, teaching and assessment
- Learning outcomes of a programme should reflect intercultural learning and the development of global citizenship
- Curricula – including content and pedagogies – should be demonstrably inclusive and a 'measure' of quality