

APQN Project Group on Mutual Recognition

Work Plan 2007–2008

The Work Plan 2007–2008 for the project group on Mutual Recognition is the result of the discussions of the project group at its meeting in Kuala Lumpur Thursday 8 February. The participants in the meeting were:

- Zita Mohd Fahmi, LAN, Malaysia
- Rama Kondapalli, NAAC, India
- Dorte Kristoffersen (Project Group leader) AUQA, Australia
- Jordan Cheung, HKCAA, Hong Kong (Observer). Connie Lok has since the meeting been appointed as HKCAA's member of the project group
- Antony Stella, AUQA, Australia (Observer)

Focus of the activities in the Work Plan 2007

The purpose of the project group is to develop and test measures that in the short run will enable agencies to make use of each other's work, i.e. the review reports and outcomes of these reports, when they review foreign providers/local providers operating offshore. The experiences gained from this exercise should be a step towards considering the possibility of establishing more formal agreements of cooperation and eventually mutual recognition of agencies' reports/outcomes in regard to transnational education activities.

Making increased use of each other's work and eventually discussing possibilities of more formal cooperation between two or more quality assurance agencies require that the agencies have a thorough understanding of and trust in each other's processes. An understanding of the processes is a necessary component to have confidence in the outcomes of the processes.

There are two obvious areas where it is relevant to make extended use of each other's work, i.e. when an agency, either in a provider and/or receiver country, review a (foreign) branch campus or a partnership arrangement between a local and foreign institution. These two types of transnational education will be the focus of the work of the project group on the next stages.

When the project group has conducted these initial stages of analysis and testing, other relevant stakeholders such as recognition bodies and professional organisations will be involved.

The Work Plan includes targets for reporting to the APQN membership on our work and progress made.

Work Plan 2007–2008

	Activity	Responsible	Deadline
1	A first step is to analyse the existing memoranda of cooperation/understanding with a view to assessing their usefulness as a basis for formal cooperation and possibly mutual recognition and how memoranda can be operationalised to effectively address the intended purposes. The project group believes that memoranda of cooperation are important for agencies to start working together and develop a better understanding of each other's organisational structures, objectives and processes. The analysis should inform the work of the project group and be reported to APQN members in the form of 'minimum' requirements for memoranda of cooperation.	Dorte	22 Jun. 2007
2	Description and analysis of the participating agencies' quality assurance frameworks for transnational education activities, i.e. how does the agency check the quality of providers operating overseas and the academic activities of foreign providers working in the country of the agency. The analysis should incorporate the quality criteria applied in the review processes and the sources of evidence used. The following examples of QA frameworks and criteria for the agencies which are members of the project group were identified: AUQA's TNE quality framework NAAC's 7 criteria for institutional audit HKCAA's issues from its Code of Practice for Non-local Courses MQA's nine criteria and qualifications framework The analysis should distinguish between procedures and criteria which are relevant for campuses and partnerships respectively. The analysis should also how the judgements of the quality of foreign branch campuses and foreign/local partnerships are made	Stella Rama Connie Zita/Najmi	22 Jun. 2007 for everybody
3	On the basis of the analysis mentioned under #2 identify major gaps and differences in the approaches and suggestions for ways to address these. This should lead to a public document which can be circulated to the APQN members to share the preliminary results of the work of the project group. This discussion should include a consideration of how it is possible to establish rigour of and therefore trust in our judgements.	TBC	1 Jul. – 27 Aug. 2007
4	Explore the possibility of having a meeting of the project group to discuss and develop the analysis of gaps and challenges to overcome. If a face-to-face meeting is not possible, then the project group should consider the value of a teleconference.	Dorte	Before June 2007
5	Develop a set of minimum criteria to be covered during the audit/accreditation and suggestion for good practices regarding the reporting of outcomes.	Stella and Dorte?	1 Sep. – 19 Oct. 2007
6	MQA and AUQA will explore the possibility of working together on an audit of an Australian University campus in Malaysia in order to test to what extent the approaches are compatible and what is needed to make them more compatible.	Zita/Najmi Stella	Jan. – May 2008
7	Develop Work Plan for 2008–2009		