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International Initiatives and Trends in Quality Assurance for European Higher Education

Exploratory Trend Report

Preface

The European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was launched earlier this year by the European Commision to encourage and develope between the QA agencies and public authorities exchange of information and experience on methodological developments and examples of good practice in the field of quality assurance in higher education.

In order to provide an outline of the international and European context in which the Network will operate, the steering group of ENQA decided to initiate a review of the current trends on the international quality assurance scene.

The review should have two complementary aims:

– Firstly the review would inform the Network members about relevant quality assurance and accreditation initiatives in European Higher Education apart from the already ongoing existing activities of national agencies.
– Secondly the review would identify and analyse relevant trends and key issues that are of interest for the Network's field of activity, especially the impact of the Bologna Declaration on the Quality Assurance debate in Europe and the growing interaction between the quality assurance sector on the one hand and recognition of degrees and qualifications on the other hand.

On behalf of the steering group it is my pleasure to extend our thanks to Carolyn Campbell and Marijk van der Wende who undertook to make this report.

The focus of the report is on mapping in particular those initiatives and processes relevant in the field of quality assurance and recognition beyond those undertaken at the national level. Accordingly the report will complete the already existing state-of-the-art reports on quality assurance in EU and EEA countries. Furthermore it provides an analysis of the issues affecting the debate on quality assurance in Europe. The report does not intend to provide the answers, but to identify the key issues and sketch the main questions to be answered.

The first chapter of the report will give an introduction to the theme of internationalisation and quality assurance, discussing both the links and tension between them as a way to introduce the main questions to be addressed in this paper and following discussions. Chapter two will give an analysis of the wider context for European higher education by discussing some world-wide trends and the challenges that they represent for Europe. Chapter three will focus on the recent initiatives that have been taken in Europe in order to respond to these wider challenges, i.e. the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations and the follow-up process. Chapter four will review the current state of the art in the areas of quality assurance and recognition in Europe, illuminating in particular those initiatives and processes beyond those undertaken at the national level and compare those with the challenges of the emerging European agenda. In chapter five, the main issues to be discussed and questions to be answered in respect of the future of quality assurance and recognition in Europe will be summarized.

The speed of developments in the field of quality assurance and accreditation is high and the picture keeps on changing. Consequently, there is a need for regular updating of information and supplements to this report. The steering group of ENQA intends in particular to secure the regular reporting on those current national and regional initiatives which are not covered by this report.

Christian Thune
Chairman
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1 Internationalisation and Quality Assurance

1.1 Introduction

Internationalisation and quality of higher education have always been closely linked together, at least at the conceptual level. This is based on the strong belief that internationalisation enhances the quality of higher education. Many policy documents, especially those published in the 1980s and early 1990s, consider internationalisation as a means to improving quality, rather than an end in itself. Examples include OECD and EU documents, statements on national policies for internationalisation, and also many institutional-level policy plans for internationalisation (Van der Wende, 1999).

The aim of quality improvement has played an important role in the promotion of internationalisation, especially in the period when more comprehensive policies in this area were being developed in Europe. These developments followed on the emergence of EU programmes for cooperation and mobility (notably the ERASMUS programme in 1985), and in various cases on critical OECD country reviews which commented on the lack of international orientation in higher education curricula. In this period, many statements on the quality improving effects of internationalisation on individual student performance and consequent professional careers, on staff performance, on teaching and learning processes, on curriculum content and services and on the institutional and system level were expressed. In general, those statements were mainly based on assumptions about the benefits of mutual and cross-cultural learning, comparison and synthesis of best practices and increased critical mass. Over the years, internationalisation has matured and been broadened. International mobility has shifted from being an activity of a limited, elite group to one that is in principle open to the masses, although the percentage of mobile students in Europe is still limited to less than 5%. Furthermore, the range of international activities has increased. From an initial and almost exclusive focus on student exchange, internationalisation now also includes staff mobility and curriculum development, sometimes linked with international research. Moreover, internationalisation has become an element of institution-wide strategic development (Barblan *et al.* 1998, Van der Wende *et al.* 1999) and has taken shape in a growing range of overseas activities, including the delivery of transnational education. With the launch of the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations, the international dimension is now more present at the system and policy level than ever before.

In the course of this maturation process, a less idealistic and more precise and critical approach towards internationalisation has emerged. It became clear that in order to ensure that internationalisation should not remain a marginal activity, it should demonstrate its 'added value' and become better integrated into the higher education policy debate. Besides, the general and increasingly comprehensive tendency of quality assurance in higher education, together with examples of actual quality problems and resulting criticisms of students and staff have given way to a concern for the quality of internationalisation processes and policies themselves (e.g. Inspectorate of Education, 1995, Bruch & Barty, 1998). Consequently, questions on the contribution of internationalisation and on the quality of internationalisation itself have been raised. The fact that certain types of transnational and collaborative international study programmes escaped regular national quality assurance procedures (e.g. Dutch masters courses offered by *hogescholen* which are accredited directly by British universities) has prompted the need for action in this area.

At the European level, discussions started in 1993, when the Academic Cooperation Association

(ACA) established a working group on research, evaluation and quality assurance in internationalisation (Smith *et al.* 1994), and a quality assurance committee was set up by the European Association for International Education (EAIE) (DeWinter, 1996), which also dedicated its 1994 conference to this theme (Smith, 1994). These groups collected and built up on experiences and pilot projects that were developed in various countries, e.g. Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark and the UK (Snellman, 1995, Van der Wende, 1995, CVCP, 1995, HEQC, 1995). The issue was taken up also by other organisations. The Programme for Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) of the OECD undertook in cooperation with ACA an international project on quality and internationalisation in higher education between 1994 and 1998 (OECD, 1999). This project is now being continued in cooperation with the Association of European Universities (CRE). The International Association of University Presidents (IAUP) has established a task force on accreditation and dedicated its 1999 conference to the issue of internationalisation and quality assurance. A working group on accreditation has also been set up in 1999 by the Confederation of European Rector's Conferences. But also in other continents the issue is being addressed more systematically than before. In Australia, special initiatives on quality assurance and internationalisation were started in 1996 and most recently (January 2000), the annual conference of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the USA took internationalisation of quality assurance as one of its two central themes.

From these various initiatives, it became clear that, although internationalisation and quality may be closely linked at a conceptual level, they were not so much linked at the level of practice and policy. Furthermore, it was found that (a) it is very difficult to evaluate the contribution of internationalisation to the quality of education, (b) that the quality of internationalisation itself was in general not monitored or assessed systematically, (c) that the link between quality assurance and the international recognition of higher education qualifications is often unclear, and (d) that actors and agencies involved in internationalisation and those involved in quality assurance represent quite different and unconnected groups and organisations (Van der Wende, 1996, 1997, 1999). The fact that the quality of internationalisation activities is not assessed systematically was in part due to weak measures at programme and institutional level. Furthermore, internationalisation is not fully covered by quality assurance procedures dealing primarily with the core functions in education and research (Van Damme, 1999). The lack of coordination between quality assurance bodies on the one hand and those which promote internationalisation does not only exist in Europe, but was also reported from elsewhere, notably the US (Lenn, 1994).

At the same time, an internationalisation process was going on in the field of quality assurance, whereas in earlier years factors related to internationalisation, e.g. increased international competitiveness, international academic and professional mobility, only had a marginal impact on the quality debates, which were situated at the level of national policy-making. Increasingly, quality assurance actors and agencies became involved in international networks and associations, e.g. the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Eduction (INQAAHE), through which they exchanged information and experiences. It was acknowledged that also in education, quality assurance processes and outcomes could be strengthened by taking an international approach, as had been the case for a time already in research reviews. The demand for international quality assurance was motivated by both external and internal pressures. Internal pressures include the enhanced international mobility of students and the overseas marketing of higher education systems, i.e. the export of higher education, and external pressures come from the globalisation of the professions, regional trade agreements, and international organisations. (Lenn, 1994).

The internationalisation of quality assurance did not in all cases automatically lead to an increased focus on quality assurance of the increasingly important international dimension in higher education itself. The main reasons for this included: (a) internationalisation was in some cases still seen as a

marginal activity, (b) national processes for assuring quality were not intended to serve an international purpose (c) the diverse nature and spread of internationalisation activities within individual institutions and across institutions within a higher education systemu, and (d) the above mentioned lack of coordination between quality assurance and internationalisation actors and agencies. The latter also include the agencies responsible for the international recognition of credentials and qualifications; the European Network of Information Centres (ENICs) and National Academic Recognition and Information Centres (NARICs) (see also 4.5 below). This re-inforced the often weak connection between quality assurance and international recognition.

Within Europe, there is a multiplicity of higher education systems and curriculum structures (Haug, 1999) and not all countries have fully operational quality assurance systems in place. While the existing QA systems demonstrate some common characteristics (Van Vught & Westerheijden, 1993), mainly in terms of the methods and mechanisms used, the higher education systems which they serve are differerent in respect of structures, aims and objectives and the character of programmes, etc. These differences make it difficult to describe common indicators of quality to facilitate comparison at international level and to improve transparency. An additional factor which often makes international comparison of qualifications a challenge and complicates the recognition of academic credentials, is the lack of transparent national critera for standards and quality.

It is acknowledged that, despite the strong promotion of international study experiences and mobility, the actual recognition of such endeavors is still problematic. The lack of transparency and "readability" of higher education systems and regulations at the national, but also at institutional and sometimes even faculty levels, creates many problems. Research has shown that in Europe over 40% of the students who studied abroad in the framework of the ERASMUS programme expect that the completion of their studies will be delayed by 50 to 100% of the time spent abroad due to incomplete recognition (Maiworm *et al*. 1993, Van der Wende 1994). This situation has only been slightly improved over the last years, mainly by the wider introduction of the ECTS system and a better integration of study abroad periods in the home institution's curriculum (Bremer & Scholten, 1999). However, the automatic transferability of credits between countries is still a dream, when credit transfer between and within institutions in the same country often still poses problems (Van Damme, 1999). The recognition of foreign diplomas and degrees is, in spite of various measures, such as the EC General Directives, the Lisbon convention, etc., still considered to be one of the main obstacles in international (labour market) mobility within Europe. This problem was one of the main rationales for the launch of the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations (see chapter 3 below).

1.2 Converging trends?

The issues and developments outlined so far illustrate two trends, which could be described as:

- *Quality assurance of internationalisation*
  Based on the lack of attention that was paid to internationalisation of higher education in most quality assurance systems, it was concluded that such approaches should be promoted. In order to do so, initiatives were taken to develop suitable methodologies for quality assurance of internationalisation and efforts were made to enhance the dialogue with quality assurance actors and agencies.
- *Internationalisation of quality assurance*
  The increasing international networking between quality assurance actors and agencies, including the exchange of information and experiences, inclusion of foreign experts in review panels, various forms of cooperation, EU projects and international and European networks, etc.

Although these two trends have common elements, it is not certain at this point whether and when they will converge and into what. Ideally this would be an approach to quality assurance that is international (or European) in scope (i.e. taking the international aspects of higher education explicitly into account) and application (using comparable methods and mechanisms, foreign experts, etc.), leading to internationally comparable outcomes, facilitating the recognition of qualifications and degrees. Examples of initiatives in this direction will be presented and discussed in chapter two and four.

1.3 Facing new challenges

This agenda has become all the more important and urgent because the internationalisation of higher education is currently undergoing new and dramatic changes, enhancing its role as one of the major features of higher education in the 21st century.

A first important change is the shift in rationales and paradigm for internationalisation. From mainly cultural and educational rationales, internationalisation is increasingly motivated by economic rationales and motives (Kälvermark & Van der Wende, 1997). These may be related to short term economic benefits (e.g. institutional income from fees), or long term interests (e.g. establishing trade relationships). This is linked to a paradigm shift from cooperation to competition, which can at present be observed in Europe (Haug, 1999b, Van der Wende 1999b).

Second, the competition paradigm is related to the strongly developing international market for education. The increasing demand for higher education worldwide and the lack of local provisions in various regions of the world create a growing interest for international study opportunities. This market has attracted the attention of traditional higher education institutions and new corporate sector and for-profit providers. Consequently, the transnational delivery of higher education in some areas is becoming "big business". This may be realised through off-shore campuses, franchising arrangements, by virtual on-line education, or other. These new models and practices raise questions about the responsibility for the quality of education that is delivered (from) overseas or via the Internet and on consumer information and protection. These trends and challenges and the emerging responses to it will be further discussed in chapter two and four.

The market developments are not limited to the recruitment of students from countries with an insufficient higher education infrastructure. Marketing strategies focus also on students from western countries who may be interested in a foreign degree. These developments further enhance the competition in higher education, which is truly international since non-European providers (e.g. from the USA and Australia) are entering the European market. With respect to this market it should be noted that Europe has lost its position as the number one destination for study abroad in the world to the USA,and that the strongest market shares are held by English-speaking countries, notably the USA, the UK, and Australia.

Third, higher education is affected increasingly by the globalisation of the economy. Regional and global trade agreements are encouraging the movement of professional services, as much as goods, capital and individuals, across national borders. This gives way to international or even global definitions of the quality of their education, based on common evaluation criteria. As a result, international systems of licensure, certification and accreditation are emerging as a powerful means of ensuring international mobility of the professional. Professional organisations and their respective accrediting bodies and certification and licensure boards are thus pressured to consider mutually acceptable standards in cooperation with other countries and will also have to accept international applications (Lenn and Campos, 1997). Furthermore, the liberalisation of trade principles is likely to be applied more strongly to education and training as elements of the transnational trade in services. Issues such as

market access and legal requirements to treat foreign providers in the same way as national ones (eg. right of establishment under EU laws) will challenge national regulations, which can present major barriers due to cultural sensitivities and the extensive role of governments in education (WTO, 1999). Chapters two and five will elaborate on these issues in more detail.

Fourth, the role of government in the steering of higher education has been subject to change over the last few years. In many countries, governments have introduced deregulation policies in favour of more institutional autonomy and stronger market influences. Increasing competition, globalisation and decreasing public funds for higher education mean that higher education institutions are motivated to expand their activities across the borders of the nation state. The role of information and communication technology (ICT) is further contributing to this process of internationalisation, facilitating the export of higher education on a large scale and to a virtual and borderless world (see also chapter two). Probably this process could better be described as the "de-nationalisation" of higher education, indicating the loosening of the relationship between higher education and the nation state (Van der Wende *et al.,* 1999).

Fifth, the changing age profile of the student population in many western countries and the requirements of the information society for continuous learning have resulted in the concept of lifelong learning, which is supported by policies at national, European and international level. This was one of the central issues at the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education held in 1998 (see chapter two). More flexible learning paths will be required with important implications for credit transfer and accumulation including the cross-border application of such systems.

Sixth, the various developments described above have provoked a response at the European level. First by the launch of the Sorbonne Declaration in 1998, followed by the Bologna Declaration in 1999 (see chapter three). These initiatives aim to promote the international competitiveness of European higher education and the employability of European citizens by adopting a system of easily readable and comparable degrees. It is envisaged to establish a European space for higher education and to abolish the existing obstacles to mobility and cooperation. A European credit and accumulation system and a European-wide compatible and transparent quality assurance system to accompany and structure the European space for higher education is also mentioned in the Bologna Declaration. In the forthcoming years, this Declaration will strongly influence the debates regarding degree structures, credit frameworks, quality assurance arrangements, etc. (see chapter five). As a result, national and institutional-level decision making on higher education will gain an explicit international dimension, with strong implications for quality assurance agencies operating at the national level.

2 The wider international context for European higher education

2.1 Introduction

In October 1998, UNESCO convened a World Conference on Higher Education in which some five thousand stakeholders in higher education took part. The purpose was to lay down fundamental principles for the in-depth reform of higher education systems throughout the world in order to strengthen their role in sustainable human development. Higher education has become seen as essential to participation in an advanced economy. The economy requires an educated work force and individuals can only profit from such an economy if they are equipped through education and training to respond to its demands. The global higher education challenges were identified as:

• Increased demand for access
• The impact of mass participation
• The need to diversify post-secondary education and training
• The trend towards dual modes of funding – private and public – for higher education
• The potential of Information and Computing Technology (ICT) to improve the quality of learning and teaching
• The impact of internationalisation in terms of the mobility of persons and expertise.

Most of these issues are common to all nations but their capacities to address them and provide effective solutions differ dramatically. (Kearney, M-L. 2000). These differences in capacity, whether financial, cultural or structural in origin, have contributed to the important growth, particularly at tertiary level, in the international trade in educational services and to the increasing involvement of new providers of higher education and training willing to meet the needs and demands of learners.

2.2 Trade in education services: a growing market

Economists define three traditional sectors of trade. The first focuses on agriculture and mining, the second sector transforms agricultural and mineral products into goods and utilities and the third comprises those industries which transform material goods into physical services, human services or information services (Miles 1995). The services sector is the most rapidly growing sector of the economy in all leading manufacturing economies with the category 'other private services and income' which includes professional, business, communications and technical services growing more rapidly than the overall total. (Mallea 1997.)

Education falls into this third category of trade and as such comes within the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organisation. In preparation for the World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Seattle in December 1999, a background note on Education Services was prepared at the request of the Council for Trade in Services to stimulate discussion of relevant issues by Members. The note identified direct 'barriers' to trade, for example, immigration requirements and foreign currency controls. But, indirect barriers to the movement of educational services such as the problems faced by students seeking recognition for degrees obtained abroad or by education providers in the setting up of facilities abroad were also highlighted. Following the failure to reach agreement on next steps at the Ministerial Conference in Seattle, agreement has now been reached by

the WTO's General Council to organise negotiations to further liberalize services and agriculture. These discussions are imminent (http://www.wto.org/wto/about/agmnts0.htm) and indicate that the profile of education services will continue to rise in the international trade agenda.

Higher education is already an important sector of the economy for several countries. As noted above in chapter 1, the recruitment of fee-paying international students was the predominant international education activity but, in the past ten years, there has been substantial growth in other activities through which education opportunities are being taken to the learners rather than the learners having to move. These activities include the development of distance learning provision – either supported locally or delivered on-line, the establishment of branch campuses, and franchise arrangements – a term which covers a wide range of partnership relationships between foreign institutions and local partners to deliver programmes of education and training. Where higher education is delivered across national borders it has come to be called 'transnational education' or in some cases 'off-shore' education.

The US has been the leading exporter of education services for some time with 58% of its exports going to the South East Asia region followed by Europe and Latin America. But, the US is facing increasing competition from other countries such as Australia and the UK, with 90% of the universities in the former now running some 500 programmes off-shore mainly in China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam and educating some 20,000 students in that region. In 1996, in addition to earnings from off-shore work, Australian higher education contributed 1.3% of the country's GNP through the recruitment of some 50,000 foreign students (Adams and Brown 1999). Recent reports (February 2000) indicate a massive increase in the number of foreign students studying in Australia including a 60% rise in the number of students from Europe and a 38% rise in the number from the US. Canada and New Zealand hope to expand their shares of the market and other countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Dubai have aspirations to become regional providers of higher education.

2.3 Transnational education: balancing benefits and concerns

There are no complete, reliable data on the numbers of students receiving education in their home country from foreign providers but such information as exists, both statistical and anecdotal, suggests that they are likely to be substantial and are growing. The range of provision which is offered tends to focus on subject areas such as business and management, law, information technology, art and design, teacher training (usually the enhancement of initial teacher training qualifications and teaching English as a foreign language), communications and engineering. But, the match between subject area and 'importing' country or region varies according to local needs and demands. Programmes are offered at all levels–from the Foundation or access level to higher education up to and including postgraduate degrees. Transnational education crosses all continents.

While some governments deem franchising and other types of transnational education to be illegal, others, such as Malaysia, actively welcome transnational education initiatives in order to enhance domestic capabilities in higher education without the concomitant infrastructure costs. There is also the added benefit of a reduction in the foreign exchange costs derived from the large outflows of students. Partner institutions involved in the delivery of transnational education benefit from the experience. As many of the local partner institutions involved in the delivery of transnational education are private and/or 'for profit', a common assumption is that the benefits for them are purely financial, but this is not the complete picture, and in many cases may not be representative at all. Good transnational education partnerships involve staff and curriculum development activities, and afford all participants the opportunity to share experiences of different approaches to teaching and learning. The reputations

and status of local partner institutions can be enhanced through TNE partnerships. A recently reported example (*The Higher*, March 2000), is the experience of the private tertiary colleges in Cyprus where more than 118 courses, including some 23 at degree level, have now been accredited by the government. Many of the colleges at which the courses are offered have had successful partnerships with foreign institutions especially from the US and the UK.

Students welcome the opportunities transnational education affords in terms of widening access to education and qualifications and of the exposure to new ideas, teaching, learning and assessment methods which normally only come through foreign study experience. In some countries, transnational education is the only possibility open to students who are not nationals of the country in which they are resident.

This welcome has however been tempered by concerns about the quality of the education that the students receive and the standard of the awards and qualifications they obtain. Many complaints about transnational education are not founded on evidence of poor quality or academic standards but are based on misunderstandings or prejudices about differences in approaches to teaching, learning and the assessment of students between local higher education provision and the transnational provision. Frequently, there are misunderstandings about the 'ownership' and status of qualifications gained through transnational education. Misleading publicity by agents, poor communication between providers and local (national) authorities and the presence of unregulated 'degree mills' also serve to compound concerns. There is, however, no doubt that transnational education poses considerable challenges for quality control and assurance processes at institutional and higher education system levels. Initiatives at international, national (exporting and receiving countries) and institutional level have been initiated to address these concerns.

Transnational education: international quality assurance initiatives

Under the auspices of UNESCO (Europe region) and the Council of Europe, following the approval of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European region (the Lisbon Convention), a Working Group on Transnational Education was set up (in 1998), to develop a Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education. The composition of the Working Group reflected a mix of the education exporters, the USA, UK and Australia, countries where transnational education was delivered such as Israel, Slovakia and Spain, and countries that both receive and provide transnational education such as Russia and Latvia. The Code (which is still in draft) includes a set of principles that should be respected by institutions involved in the provision of educational services through transnational arrangements. The Code will be complemented by a Recommendation on procedures and criteria for the assessment of foreign qualifications to be implemented by the network of recognition centres in the Europe region (ENICs, see chapter 4 below).

The work of the Global Alliance for Transnational Education has already been mentioned in chapter one.

Transnational education: quality assurance initiatives on the part of the 'exporters'

The UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of Practice will complement Codes and other instruments developed and implemented by some of the major exporters of education services. These initiatives include:

- The Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students by Australian Universities, Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee;
- The Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education: Section 2 Collaborative provision, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK;

- Principles of Good Practice for Educational Programs for Non US Nationals.

In addition to producing codes of practice, some of the major providers of transnational education actively monitor the adherence of institutions to the principles outlined in them through accreditation or quality audit visits. The QAA is one of very few national quality assurance agencies to have developed a code of practice for the quality assurance of 'collaborative provision' (QAA 1999), i.e. programmes of study in co-operation between two or more higher education institutions, often across national borders. Regular forms of such collaborative provision include franchising, validation, and joint degree programmes. The main line of control of quality is through awarding a degree. The two basic principles of the QAA's approach are:

- The higher education institution that awards a degree is responsible for the academic standard of all awards granted in its name;
- The academic standard of all awards made under a collaborative arrangement must be equivalent to comparable awards for programmes in the home institution and compatible with any relevant benchmark informaiton recognised within the UK.

The former principle goes against traditions in many continental European countries, where the final definition of – thus responsibility for – degrees is laid down in national laws. The British approach allows for greater flexibility than uniform national approaches, but it may give less assurance about equal minimum standards across programmes, at least as far as these are determined in Continental Europe by the principle of legal homogeneity. This statement may no longer be the case in the future, when more rigorous qualifications frameworks will be introduced in British higher education (see chapter 4). Moreover, most countries in continental Europe (except Denmark) lack the other unifying force in UK higher education – the external examining system. Finally on this point, there is little transparency about output standards as opposed to input, although some comparative studies have been made (e.g. Brennan *et al.* 1992; Vroeijenstijn *et al.* 1992; Goedegebuure *et al.* 1993; Westerheijden & Lughthart 1999).

In the latter principle, 'equivalence' is a term requiring careful navigating between rigid equality to education in the home institution, and relevance of the education in the receiving institution. A perhaps trite, hypothetical example would be courses on national law in a business study programme: does one use law courses from the awarding institution, or courses on the receiving country's laws? And in the latter case, how is 'equivalence' of academic standards assured?

The QAA has made more than 90 partnership audit visits including some in Greece, Republic of Ireland, Malaysia, Singapore, Israel, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates and Hong Kong. Visits to Cyprus, Egypt and China will take place this year. The reports of partnership audit visits are published as well as country overview reports and are available on the Internet (http://www.qaa.ac.uk).

US regional accreditation agencies accredit full branch campuses of US institutions within their remit and several of them now accredit non-US institutions outside the US. Examples of this activity in Europe include:

- New England Association of Schools and Colleges (http://www.neasc.org/) which accredits four institutions in Switzerland for Associate degrees and two in Greece (American College of Thessaloniki and Deree College, Athens) for Bachelors degrees;
- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (http://www.msache.org/) which accredits three institutions in Europe, one in Paris, Switzerland and London, and has accorded candidacy status to the Central European University (Hungary) and John Cabot University (Rome).

Transnational education: quality control initiatives in 'receiving' countries

The authorities in several countries where there is a substantial volume of transnational education delivery have reacted to concerns about the quality and standards. Several of them have introduced legislation which requires foreign providers to be registered, licensed or in some other way approved by local quality assurance authorities or by the Ministry of Education. This legislation often complements the licensing or approval of local private education providers who are the partners in transnational education enterprises. Examples of countries that have introduced local legislation include:

- Hong Kong: Non-Local Higher and Professional Education Regulation Ordinance (1996), for which the Hong Kong Council for Academic Awards (HKCAA) acts as Registrar
- Israel: Council of Higher Education Law (Amendment No 11) 1998
- Malaysia: the Private Higher Educational Institutions Act (1996) which recognises the role of the private higher educational institutions in providing sufficient education infrastructure as well as increasing the capacity to meet the demand for higher education. The number of such institutions has increased from 227 to 449 in 1997 and is still rising. The 1996 legislation also included the National Accreditation Board (LAN) which provides for the introduction of a statutory body responsible for governing the quality and standards of higher education provided by PHEIs. There are more than 200 partnerships between PHEIs and UK higher education institutions.
- South Africa: Higher Education Act 1997, which requires private institutions operating in partnership with foreign universities to have their courses accredited or face being closed down. Foreign institutions are recently reported to have accused the South African government of protectionism and discriminating against them and to have warned that restricting trade in educational services could violate WTO rules.

But, transnational education is not always 'visible'. On-line provision is beginning to emerge, especially at postgraduate level, and is not covered by existing legislation on TNE as there are no local partners or branch campus. In this instance, apart perhaps from local consumer protection legislation covering advertising, it is difficult to see how responsibility for quality control and assurance can rest other than with the providing institution and whatever national controls apply to it in respect of the standard of its qualifications and quality of education. This presents a challenge to quality assurance agencies to ensure that their processes cover new modes of delivery. While this may mean a re-focusing or adaptation of processes or a re-definition of 'quality' in terms of education provision, it should not result in any difference in expectations about the academic standard of qualifications gained through different modes of study.

2.4 New providers and new models of education and learning

A study, "Higher Education Relevance in the 21st Century", commissioned by the World Bank for the World Conference on Higher Education (Kearney, 2000) suggests that a new mode of knowledge is emerging which is characterised by:

- Production in the context of its application
- Transdisciplinarity
- Heterogeneity in the skills needed for its mastery
- Organisational diversity for its management
- Enhanced social accountability
- A more broadly based system of quality control

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are predicted to bring about the decline of traditional forms of organisation, ranging from large business corporations to government and the public sector including universities. (Scase, 1999.) The capabilities of information technologies in general and the use of the Internet in particular will offer opportunities for the learning process to be made available to all. This method of learning means that students can study flexibly and in a manner compatible with their other commitments. Does this mean that traditional teaching will become redundant in an information age? Will the role of universities change from being providers of knowledge to become certification authorities – i.e. examiners of learning achievements? Does this imply that quality assurance agencies should focus more on the way students are assessed and how institutions or other bodies responsible for the standard of qualifications assure consistency in the assessment of student achievement levels?

Distance learning: old and new providers

The oldest distance learning university in the world is in South Africa. (Daniel, J.). In fact, eight of the ten largest, distance learning institutions are in developing countries. Within Europe, there are several well-established distance and/or open learning universities, and two of them (France and the UK) are among those ten largest institutions. Traditional distance learning universities have tended to operate within their national borders although transnational cooperation and programme delivery is emerging through organisations such EADTU and on a regional basis, for example, in the Baltic region. However, the UK Open University has recently sought and achieved accreditation in the US and has for several years operated study centres in all EU member states as well as offering programmes in several other countries. To date, no other European distance learning institution has made similar moves. But, meanwhile new distance learning providers from outside Europe, such as the University of Phoenix, are appearing on the scene. The University of Phoenix is one of the fastest growing, distance learning organisations in the world. It is pursuing a niche market – the adult student with established personal and professional goals (the lifelong learner?) – and has structured its programmes so that education fits in more easily with the professional and personal working life of adults. In addition, faculty staff – who are all part-timers – are working practitioners and professionals. (Oblinger, D.G. 1999)

Institutions that formerly did not have distance learning as their core mission are now emerging as major providers of distance education. For some time, universities in eg Denmark Finland, Sweden and the UK have been offering distance learning programmes in parallel with or in addition to their more traditional teaching. Indeed, some traditional universities now have more students registered off-campus than resident on campus. Is this the emergence of the 'dual-mode institution' (Oblinger, 1999) in Europe along the lines of those which already exist in Australia, Canada (University of British Columbia), Mexico (Instituto Tecnologico y de Estudios Superiores de Moterrey – ITESM) and the USA (eg Florida Gulf Coast University)? Within these dual-mode institutions, even full-time students are encouraged to take some courses at a distance each year. The use of university intranets is already common learning methodology on campus in the US and Australia – preparing both students and institutions alike to respond to the demands of and for 'lifelong learning'. All of this is in stark contrast to the situation in parts of Europe where recognition agencies (see chapter 5 below) will not grant academic recognition to degrees obtained through distance learning studies, even where the providing institution has undergone the same external quality assessment processes as traditional universities.

New providers

Universities are, however, only one of the actors in the new 'knowledge business'. Who are the new providers? Examples include:

- telecommunications, cable and satellite companies who are entering the distance education and training market by funding the establishment of universities or assisting in the delivery of programmes;
- publishers, including newspaper groups, who are designing and delivering course materials, sometimes in partnership with universities;
- software and other computing and information technology companies who are developing their own training programmes, have their own academies and offer qualifications and certification processes which are regarded as general standards for employment in the industry. Examples include Microsoft 'engineer', SAP 'consultant';
- 'corporate' universities such as Motorola which run courses for their own employees;
- 'virtual' colleges such as the Michigan Virtual Automotive College which do not award degrees but broker the delivery of courses and programmes for several companies in the sector and draw on many different academic providers.

Have European universities recognised the threat from these new providers or identified opportunities for cooperation? Do they have appropriate links with stakeholders in education, especially enterprise and employers? Can they react or are they willing to act fast enough to respond to the changing demands of students and employers? Do they have the appropriate governance and management structures to enable them to compete in this environment?

2.5 Demographics: Europe, the aging continent

Another key force for change in higher education in the next ten years will be demographics. With a couple of exceptions, Western European countries have an aging population and in the first decade of the 21st century, the population will increase little. Nevertheless, the number of students attending universities is rising. In some countries (Denmark, Germany, the UK, Sweden and the Netherlands), the number of student aged over 25 years who are studying for degrees is increasing (Eurostat 1998). This is a trend that is expected to continue: in fact the demand for short masters degree programmes, following the wider introduction of the bachelors degree throughout Europe, is likely to increase, further contributing to the changing profile of the student population. This trend, combined with the capabilities of ICTs will lead to a dramatic restructuring of higher education and the way in which it is delivered. The demand for on-line learning or other forms of distributed learning which are offered at a time and in a manner to suit the learner rather than the teacher will increase. Mature learners are more demanding and discerning about education provision and will expect their needs to be met.

Other elements creating a climate of change include skills shortages in Europe and the resultant mobility of employment. If European higher education cannot produce the graduates with the skills that employers want, especially in information technology where there are already shortages, then employers may fill vacancies from abroad. But this may not necessarily mean an influx of skilled labour into Europe. There are already examples of employment in the 'knowledge based industries' moving to the workers rather than the workers moving. An example of this is the 'outsourcing' of accounting and some information processing work by British companies to companies in India. The provision of transnational education may well facilitate this activity by allowing students access to internationally recognised qualifications.

2.6 Key issues for quality assurance agencies

Transnational education is not going to disappear while an enormous demand for learning and qualifications goes unmet in the developing world. To legislate it out of existence would be to deny access to education for many people. The fast pace of development of ICTs and the use of the Internet will provide one means of meeting increasingly diverse demands for flexible access to education and qualifications from those already in employment. These developments pose challenges for quality assurance agencies.

- What is the optimal way of assuring the quality of transnational education provision to protect the interests of students while ensuring that the objective of widening access to higher education is achieved? Given different philosophies about the purposes and aims of higher education and the diversity of transnational education provision can there be a single solution to the quality assurance dilemma? Are the evolving strategies of greater oversight by exporting countries and national licensing of local partners and bilateral cooperation between them, the way forward? Are the outcomes of these strategies transparent enough for students and other stakeholders? Is this an area for closer cooperation between quality assurance agencies, particularly in the case of joint or double degrees?

- Given the challenges of managing new modes of delivery such as on-line distance learning and transnational education provision, is there a need for greater focus by quality assurance agencies on institutional quality management processes? Many of the quality control and assurance challenges posed by new modes of delivery are not discipline or subject specific. But, they relate to matters such as curriculum design, the security of student assessment, the development of the competence of academic staff to manage complex international joint ventures, the management of course delivery and processes.

- Do the new modes of delivery and study imply some re-thinking about the use of duration of study or contact hours i.e. input factors as any kind of measure of learning or descriptor for academic qualifications? Should the focus shift to clearer definition of outputs: learning outcomes and competences? Without clearer definition of outcomes and academic standards at national level is international comparison possible?

- Why are transnational education activities between 'peers' apparently unproblematic and commendable, for example, the networks of peers and not subject to any kind of scrutiny, whereas transnational partnerships which mix different types of education providers and which epitomise diversity are automatically under suspicion?

- Should quality assurance agencies seek greater participation of a wider group of stakeholders in higher education in their processes and governance to tackle the review of new provision and providers? For example, how many actively involve employers, recent graduates and/or students?

3 The European response: the Bologna Declaration

3.1 Introduction

The changes in the global environment and the challenges that they represent for higher education have been introduced in chapter 1 and were further elaborated in chapter 2. As a response to these challenges, recently, new European-level initiatives have emerged. First, the Sorbonne Declaration, which was presented in May 1998. This Declaration on the harmonization of the architecture of the European higher education system was signed by the education ministers of France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom, who called on other Member States of the EU and on other European countries to join them in this initiative. The success of this call is demonstrated by the Bologna Declaration, which was signed in June 1999 by the ministers of education of 29 European countries. This Declaration aims to establish a European space for higher education and to increase the competitiveness of the European system of higher education.

The awareness that Europe has lost its number one position in the world as a destination for overseas study (to the USA) and that the growth of transnational education is increasing the international competition in higher education also within the European region has led to this aim. It is described in the Declaration as follows: "We must look with special attention at the objective to increase the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilization is measured in fact by the attraction that its cultural system exerts on other countries. We need to ensure that the European system of higher education acquires in the world a degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions" (Bologna Declaration, p.2.). But the European space for higher education is not only seen as a way to make European higher education more attractive for foreign students. Equally important is the purpose of increasing the mobility and employability of the European citizens, which is related to the international competitiveness of Europe in a broader and more economic sense.

These initiatives can be called new because it is the first time that a direct attempt to harmonize the European higher education system – although the word harmonization as such does not appear anymore in the Bologna Declaration – has been announced. The competencies of the European Union in the field of education have always been extremely limited, based on the subsidiarity principle and on Article 126 in the Maastricht Treaty (referring to the sovereignty of the Member States with respect to the content and structure of their educational systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity). These limitations, and the political sensitivity of the Member States towards Commission proposals regarding issues such as educational content, quality and structure, meant that the idea of harmonisation has for long been avoided in the European debate on higher education. A proposal on harmonization of systems could therefore only come from the level of national governments. Consequently, the notion "European-level initiative" should be understood as an initiative of national governments and not of the European Union and should thus be seen as a bottom-up rather than as a top-down initiative. Moreover, the range of countries included is much larger than those members of the European Union.

3.2 The Bologna Declaration

The Bologna Declaration states that in order to establish the European area of higher education and for the promotion of the European system of higher education in the world, the following objectives will have to be attained:

- the adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system.
- The adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries.
- The establishment of a system of credits – such as in the ECTS system – as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by receiving Universities concerned.
- The promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:
  – for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services
  – for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.
- The promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.
- The promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 2–3, see also annex 1).

3.3 Convergence or divergence

The achievement of greater compatibility and comparability and in particular the introduction of the two-cycle degree structure, raises questions with respect to the current systems and the extent to which convergence towards such a structure can already be observed. A background study (Haug, 1999), which was carried out in preparation of the Bologna meeting, included a survey of existing European higher education structures. It concluded that at present there is a state of extreme diversity, chaos even, and that this jungle of degrees and systems is the biggest obstacle to mobility in Europe. It was found that there are even more structures than countries in Europe: in some cases there were up to 100 different academic qualifications found within one single country. It was pointed out in this respect that: "A potential European framework of qualifications cannot be less complicated than the most complicated of the national systems included in it" (p. 2.). It was also found that there is no ready-to-use external model (e.g. in the USA) that could be replicated in Europe. Furthermore it was found that there is in Europe no convergence towards a three-year undergraduate type of degree. Bachelor-type degrees tend to vary between three and four years. There is, however, a high degree of convergence towards a duration of about five years for master-level studies, but there is no eight-year standard duration for doctoral degrees. It was concluded that a rigid uniform model would not be desirable or feasible for Europe, but that the following could serve as a broad frame and a common reference:

- First degree level of between three – four years worth of ECTS credits
- Master level: about five years worth of ECTS credits
- Doctoral level: variable (about seven – eight years in total).

The proposed structure corresponds with recent reforms like in Germany and Austria, where new bachelors – masters curricula have been introduced alongside existing programs and with developments in countries such as Italy, France, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, etc. Convergence can be observed in these reforms, like a move towards shorter studies (reduction of actual length of studies), 2-tier degree structures (introduction of bachelor – master degrees in stead of long, 5–7 year, first degrees), more credit systems, external evaluation, more autonomy linked with more accountability, and the blurring boundaries between the university and non-university sector (Haug 1999b). However, it should be remembered that in many of these countries there are still huge differences between the official and real duration of studies (many students take seven years to complete a four–five year curriculum). Besides, the model does not pay attention to the large number of higher education students (e.g. in further education) that are enrolled in all types of short courses with a duration between one and two years.

It is important to underline that the introduction of a bachelor-master structure had already taken place in several European countries (e.g. Germany, Finland, Denmark) before the Sorbonne and Bologna declarations existed. As well as indicating a willingness to increase the transparency of European higher education, they were in some cases chosen as a solution to national-level concerns. In some cases it concerned the wish to attract more foreign students (from beyond Europe), but in others to reduce drop-out rates and the costs of student support and to shorten completion time by offering shorter degree programmes. This underlines the importance of national-level actors and agendas in the process (Beverwijk & de Maat, 1999). Convergence in national agendas for higher education policy will thus play an important role in process of creating a European higher education space.

The fact that the bachelor-master structure has been introduced in some countries alongside the existing system increased the diversity in these higher education systems. But also other forces create an increasing diversification of higher education curricula. Especially the diversifying student population (more adult learners), the lifelong learning agenda and the need for more flexibility lead to an increasing diversification of qualifications. This seems to be in conflict with the harmonization effort. Consequently, compatibility seems to be the greatest challenge: serving the increasingly diversifying needs within the system while ensuring compatibility at the supra-national level. This calls for sophisticated credit transfer and accumulation systems reaching from pre-tertiary to post-graduate level, which are not yet in place at the national level. It also demonstrates again the importance of coordination at national level as well as at European level (Van der Wende, 1999c).

During the Bologna conference, the issue of diversity was discussed intensively. The European rectors, members of the CRE, also underlined that the high degree of diversity in European higher education is a result of the large range of challenges and opportunities that it has to respond to (e.g. wider access, lifelong learning, skills training, social exclusions, etc.). This has led to a great diversity of provisions both within and between institutions, which provokes problems of ensuring compatibility of awards and qualifications and of mutual recognition. Such confusion and misunderstanding affects the competitive position of European higher education world-wide. The discussion suggested that it should be realised, however, that it is not the diversity per se that weakens the competitive position. A comparison with the USA shows that the problem is one of understanding the variety in the systems. A step towards transparency in a diversified system and towards compatibility is to develop credit transfer and accumulation systems. There are concerns, however, that unregulated credit accumulation systems would leave aside important aspects of intellectual development. Therefore, the con-

tent of the overall programme leading to a qualification should be considered, in order to ensure intellectual, personal, cultural and social development and the possession of general skills associated with employability (Edwards, 1999).

The Confederation of European Rector's Conferences emphasized the importance of diversity as an essential response of higher education to social challenges and demands and that higher education institutions will have to develop more flexible curricula, consisting of modules and the introduction of credit systems (Erichsen, 1999). Here the question whether a mere accumulation of credits is sufficient for awarding a degree or qualification remains open.

It should be noted here, that the above presented responses all represent the point of view of universities. It will be interesting and very important to know how the non-university sector of higher education in Europe is responding to these issues.

3.4 The significance of the Bologna Declaration

The changes announced in Bologna are not an isolated process. The launch of the Bologna Declaration clearly coincides with some major changes in the higher education environment, such as the emergence of a real European labour market and increased international competition in higher education (see chapter 1 and 2).

The European labour market is characterized by an average of 10% unemployment. The new degree system should therefore promote European citizens' employability by enhancing the transparency and comparability of qualifications. At present, this is a problem for employers who wish to recruit from other member states or in the Union as a whole. The existing conventions on the recognition of academic degrees and the structure of European information and recognition centres (NARICs and ENICs) do not focus enough on the effectus civilus of the degrees and are thus insufficient in linking intellectual power to employability. Therefore, another main challenge of the Bologna initiative will be to move beyond academic recognition towards competence appraisal (Barblan, 1999a). This calls for an active involvement of labour market partners, employers and professional organisations, and the future employees, the students, in the process. Only such a broad involvement of non-academic actors in the implementation process can make the initiative a success.

The other purpose of the new degree system is to increase the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. This is based on the fact that Europe has lost its number one position in the world as a destination for study abroad and the threat that is felt from non-traditional and non-European providers of higher education that enter the European market, by means of branch-campuses, virtual universities or other. Increased transparency would in principle enhance Europe's position on the world market for higher education. However, it is not yet clear to what extent this really represents a concern in Europe.

Haug (1999b) found that ministries and higher education institutions are highly aware of internal issues (e.g. the need for more compatibility, access to labour market, remaining obstacles to mobility). However, they are much less aware of external issues and challenges in spite of the growth of transnational education and the decreasing attractiveness of European higher education in the rest of the world. In discussions with institutional leaders it became clear that globalisation is in general perceived in Europe as a threat as it is a process that cannot be controlled (Barblan, 1999b). In addition there were differences in opinions as to the seriousness of the competition, but many perceived the danger as being very great indeed. There was an agreement that Europe should respond by increasing transparency but not at the cost of diversity, and by emphasizing high quality rather than by attempting to compete on prices (Edwards, 1999). The European Commission has so far not demonstrated much

systematic interest in the balance of student flows from and to the European Union as a whole. Adequate statistics are not available. The focus has hitherto been rather on intra-European mobility.

Therefore, this point will also depend strongly on the interests and initiatives of individual European countries. Some have already demonstrated strong interests in attracting students from beyond Europe, e.g. the United Kingdom, and more recently also The Netherlands, Germany and France. Other countries, however, are still facing a shortage of student places for their own students and should rather be seen as exporters of students (e.g. Greece). Another important issue that is related to the capacity of a country to attract foreign students is the language of instruction. The countries mentioned above either have a *lingua franca* as their mother tongue, or are willing to switch to that. Consequently, the success of the Bologna initiative in increasing the competitiveness of European higher education, in terms of attracting more students from beyond Europe, will depend strongly on (again) the convergence between national agendas and initiatives and on the responsiveness of higher education institutions to that.

Another important impact that can be expected from the Bologna initiative is a change in the type of mobility in Europe. Besides short-term organised mobility (exchange), we can expect to see a trend towards long-term free mobility of students who will continue their graduate studies abroad after having obtained a first degree in their home country. Such a trend may in time impact the European programmes for cooperation and mobility.

3.5 The Bologna Process: follow-up and actions

The Bologna Declaration states that governing action for the attainment of these objectives is planned for the short term, and in any case within the first decade of the third millennium and in full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of university autonomy. To that purpose ways of intergovernmental cooperation will be pursued, including non-governmental European organisations with competence in higher education. The next meeting has been planned to take place in Prague two years after Bologna. Although the process will mainly be inter-governmental, there is also going to be input from the European Union. The follow up to Bologna has been an important item on the agenda of recent EU ministerial meetings and the preparation of the next meeting will be a priority for the respective countries in charge of the EU presidency during the period in between the Bologna and the Prague meetings. However, the Declaration has been signed without granting any new or extra authority to the European Commission for its implementation. Consequently, fear of a top-down driven imposition of European contents and standards clearly does not match with the political reality. Only bottom-up forces, i.e. intergovernmental and inter-institutional cooperation can drive the process.

The main trust of the Bologna Declaration is a pledge freely taken by 29 countries to reform their own system in such a way that all systems converge. This reflects not only a bottom-up, but also a voluntary approach. Therefore, the question is whether the process will be strong enough to create real convergence, and second whether the process will not lead to an overly euro-centric approach, loosing sight of the position of European higher education in the rest of the world. Besides, it is unclear at present whether and how the European countries that have not signed the Bologna Declaration (i.e. in the south-eastern part of Europe) will be included in the process. Haug (1999b) noted a widespread willingness in the various countries to reform and convergence, but a lack of information on what is actually happening in other countries and in which direction reforms should be planned in order to achieve greater compatibility and comparability. In order to avoid the opposite effect, networks of governmental and ministerial officials (a special contact person has been appointed in each country for

questions relating to the Bologna process) has been set up in order to exchange information and to coordinate the process. The dialogue will also involve representative organisations of higher education institutions in Europe (e.g. the CRE and the Confederation of European Rector's Conferences). Furthermore, it is proposed to develop a common framework.

3.6 Implications for quality assurance in Europe

What kind of action can be expected from this dialogue between ministers, ministerial officials and higher education institutions? One could expect a series of national reforms, possibly taking inspiration from those countries that recently reformed their systems in line with the Bologna Declaration. They are likely to go for a two-tier degree structure (bachelor – master) through the introduction of shorter first degrees. The introduction of a more convergent degree system urges the need for comparable quality standards and, according to many experts, for the setting of minimum standards or requirements for the envisaged degree levels. It can therefore be expected that the Bologna initiative will bring accreditation in the center of the higher education debate for the coming years in Europe. At the same time, it cannot be overlooked that in some European countries systems for quality assurance have not yet been (fully) developed, while other do already have more or less sophisticated systems in place. Furthermore, and as has been stated already in chapter 1, the requirements of compatibility and comparability refer strongly to the transparency function of quality assurance systems, whereas quality assurance in the national context is typically geared towards accountability and improvement. This raises questions regarding the relationship between these various functions of quality assurance and between transparency and improvement in particular.

The Bologna Declaration includes a phrase on "The promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies" (p. 2). In this context, it is only proposed so far that a common framework of reference for qualifications will be worked out. It is said that this should not introduce a new category of "European" degrees or qualifications, but a common framework for existing ones (Haug 1999b). Some recent reactions on the Bologna initiative from the side of the higher education institutions demonstrate an agreement on the need to guarantee the quality of programmes, credits and degrees. Accreditation is seen as a means to guarantee such minimum standards of quality in favour of students, employers and society. It was emphasised, however, that this should refer to content and not lead to the labelling of quantitative factors (Erichsen, 1999). The establishment of first cycle qualifications (bachelor's degrees, as for example in the UK) was observed with great interest. Concerns were expressed, however, with respect to whether employers would accept such intermediate qualifications as a suitable basis for recruitment and on whether such arrangements would be appropriate for certain professional subjects (e.g. medicine), which usually require an integrated curriculum. It was emphasised that universities should retain the responsibility to award degrees, but also that this right equaled the acceptance of an external accreditation scheme backed up by an external quality assurance system (Edwards, 1999).

The question on how a European-wide accreditation system and quality assurance system should operate was answered in the following ways. It would be the responsibility of the higher education system itself to develop a continental-wide system, based upon self-regulation schemes, which would use the national systems of quality assurance as a reference point or benchmark. Therefore there should be close liaison between the higher education system on the one hand, and governments on the other (Edwards, 1999). This does not mean that a European accreditation agency would be desirable, since the recognition of credits and degrees is within the autonomy of the universities. A step forward is rather seen to guarantee minimum quality by a national accreditation agency and to recognize the

results of national accreditation procedures in a multilateral agreement, establishing a common but, to a certain extent, flexible frame of reference for joining to all universities concerned and willing. It was made clear that this procedure should include representatives of the higher education community, future employers of graduates, and that it should observe expertise of the individual discipline or profession, guarantee internationally competitive quality by the contribution of experts of peers from other countries (Erichsen, 1999).

It is clear that there is no body or platform with the necessary competence in this field that could operate at a European level and also that this idea would not be acceptable for the higher education institutions, as much as for most governments. Therefore, also here, only bottom-up developments can be expected. Illustrations of this can be found in Germany, where the introduction of bachelor-master programs has lead to the initiative to establish an accreditation council. And in The Netherlands, where the introduction of international accreditation has been announced in the most recent higher education and research plan (HOOP 2000–2004) and where cooperation in this area is envisaged on a bilateral basis with the UK, Germany and Flanders by means of mutual recognition on the basis of trust in each others national quality assurance system. Initiatives towards such mutual recognition of national quality assurance systems and to other forms of multiple accreditation (e.g. through institutional networks) will be further discussed in chapter four.

A different type of bottom-up initiative is the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) process through which provision in Business Schools is accredited. The process has the aim not only of improving quality but of creating transparency to assist and inform consumers and enhance recognition. An increasing number of Business Schools from Europe, and some from beyond, have been accredited (see Annex 3 for details). However, the EQUIS accreditation process is not the only label for international recognition in mangement education. Other accreditation processes include the AMBA accreditation of MBAs and accreditation by the AACSB. Indeed several of the best known Business Schools have sought and been awarded accreditation by more than one accreditation body which poses questions about transparency. (See Annex 3 for details)

Although no top-down process is intended, this type of approach would at some point put pressure on countries where quality assurance systems do not yet exist, or where they are not sufficiently transparent. If they respond positively, by establishing of improving such systems, this would contribute to the desired convergence. However, if this would not be the case, an undesired division would be created in Europe, with possible negative consequences for the competitiveness of these "non-convergent" systems and for the flows of students from these particular systems to others, which better guarantee the quality and thus the recognition of qualifications.

Finally, it should be emphasized that in general the role of governments, and thus that of national recognition agencies, in recognition of qualifications is being marginalised by bottom-up developments at other levels. The first example concerns that of professional organisations, which are organised at the European, international, or even at the global level. They have an increasingly strong role in regulating graduate access to regulated professions (see also chapter 4). Secondly, networks and consortia of universities across Europe and beyond will play and important role in academic recognition, through mechanisms such as benchmarking and joint quality assessment at multi-national level (Christensen & Plannthin, 1997)

4 Recognition and quality assurance

4.1 Introduction: the academic and professional recognition of qualifications

Broadly speaking there are two types of recognition of qualifications. Academic recognition is used for the recognition of periods of study, degrees or diplomas in respect of an individual who wants to continue studying or to take up an academic career. Within Europe, universities usually have autonomy over academic recognition decisions although this is not always the case in respect of foreign qualifications. The second type of recognition is professional recognition, which applies to the right to work in or follow a profession.

4.2 International approaches to professional recognition

Professional recognition is a more complicated matter as it reflects not only the national system of education but also the organisation of the profession in the 'recognising' country. In Ireland and the UK, professional qualifications such as 'chartered engineer are most usually gained after completion of training which takes place after graduation from university. Thus the academic qualification, provided it has been accredited by the appropriate body, gives entry to the route for professional qualification. However, in other countries such as Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, most academic qualifications also serve as the professional qualification without the requirement for additional training, study or examinations.

The recognition of professional qualifications is often determined by issues beyond the professional training (Mallea, 1997). These include:

- Trade policies and alliances
- Migratory policies
- Cultural isolationalism or internationalism
- Historic relationships often stemming from empire or hegemony.

Beyond Europe, the profile of international trade in professional and educational services has often been raised as a result of international trade agreements including:

- the North American Free Trade Agreement: NAFTA (1994)
- the Association of South East Asian Nations:ASEAN (1995)
- the General Agreement on Trade in Services: GATS (1995) which was the first multilateral, legally enforceable agreement covering trade in investment in services. Subsequently the WTO has given priority to the accountancy profession where it is close to achieving the setting of international standards.

Mutual recognition agreements have been the preferred way of resolving issues of professional reciprocity and equivalency in recent years (Mallea, 1997). They vary in scope and can be reached between professional bodies, nations and regional groupings. An early example of a reciprocal agreement between engineering organisations is the Washington Accord. It recognised the equivalency of the national accreditation mechanisms for basic engineering education i.e. first professional degrees in the countries of Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the USA, with the more recent additions of South Africa and Hong Kong. Signatories define their own approaches to quality

assurance for graduate entry and initial professional recognition. The Accord recognises each of these as valid, and observer verification visits and exchanges of information are used to confirm their continuing quality. FEANI, the European engineers' association, sought an agreement for the mutual recognition of graduates from The US Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accredited programmes and the European Engineers registered with it. But, the agreement was not ratified by ABET due largely to concerns about the difference between the basic objectives of the two organisations, namely accreditation (of programmes) by ABET and registration (of individuals) by FEANI. For similar reasons, FEANI's approach to get signatory status to the Washington Accord did not succeed.

The Washington Accord 'model' was seen as a 'hopeful model' for mutual acceptance/recognition of quality assurance and evaluation agencies by participants in the Trans-North Atlantic Dialogue on Quality Assurance in Higher Education, held in Paris 1998 prior to the UNESCO WCHE.

ABET has been asked over the years to evaluate engineering programmes outside the US. Where ABET has found programmes to be comparable in content and educational experience to ABET accredited programmes but not necessarily identical in format or method of delivery, they are recognised as 'substantially equivalent'. The implication of this is that an engineering programme has prepared its graduates to enter professional practice, but 'substantial equivalency' is not accreditation. In January 1999, the list of substantial equivalency programmes included those in some universities from Colombia, Iceland, Korea, Kuwait, Mexico, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

4.3 European approaches to the recognition of qualifications

The evaluation of foreign diplomas on a course by course basis to establish *equivalence* with every component in the receiving country's programme was the norm until the mid 1980s, when the notion of equivalence was replaced by that of *recognition*. Recognition means that a qualification, although not completely equivalent, is recognised provided it passes the 'fitness for purpose' test. It is sufficient for the foreign degree to be at a comparable level and have a comparable function, even though it may differ in details. More recently, the notion of '*acceptance'* has been adopted, whereby a foreign qualification which may even be slightly lower in level and/or function than the closest comparable degree in the receiving country will be accepted as the differences are insignificant. Recognition is allegedly only denied where there is 'substantial difference'.

4.4 The European framework for recognition

The principle of acceptance underpins key legislation and conventions in force in the European region. The most significant conventions and agreements include:

• The European Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to admission to Universities (Paris 1953) which established the principle of admitting persons to universities in the receiving country on the basis of credentials that give admission to universities in the home country.
• The European Commission Directives. Sectoral directives for health professionals, namely doctors, dentists, veterinarians, nurses, midwives and pharmacists, and architects were adopted in the 1970s after lengthy discussions to establish qualitative and quantitative criteria which diplomas must meet in order for mutual recognition. This route to recognition was not repeated.

- The 'General Directives' (89/48EEC of 1988 and 92/51 of 1992), established generally acceptable minimum requirements which apply to the finished product ie the fully qualified professional. If these requirements are fulfilled, the host country has to prove that the foreign qualification is not up to standards. The directives are operated on a case-by case basis with each state being required to examine the diplomas of applicants and to examine their education and training against the requirements for its own nationals. Substantial differences in content or duration of study (i.e. of more than one year) may mean that an aptitude test or other additional requirements may be laid down. The general directives put the burden of proof of substantial difference on the recognition authorities. Rulings on applications must be given within four months and reasons for decisions must be given.
- UNESCO/CEPES and Council of Europe Convention on the recognition of qualifications – 'the Lisbon' Convention: the principles of fair recognition procedures and the burden of proof of substantial difference with the host country underpin the Convention.

Two other European developments to enhance recognition are noteworthy: the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Diploma supplement. Both are referred to above.

4.5 The recognition networks

There are three networks for recognition in Europe. In 1984, a network of national centres for academic recognition, the EU National Academic Recognition Centres (NARICs) was established. This network meets regularly to exchange information and discuss recognition and diploma assessment matters. In 1994, the networks of CEPES, the higher education department of UNESCO, and of the Council of Europe merged to form the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC). The NARICs and ENICs are staffed by the same organisations and have a joint meeting. The third network is for professional recognition, the members of which have responsibility to provide information on professions regulated under the general directives. In most cases this function is situated in the NARICs.

4.6 Key issues and trends

It is very difficult to get comprehensive statistical data about the activities of the recognition organisations (ENICs and NARICs): how many applications/requests do they receive? How many decisions do they take and what proportion of applications are turned down on grounds of 'substantial difference'. Is there any consistency as to what substantial difference is? What proportion of requests for recognition come from outside the EU? As there is no requirement for them to make a report to the Commission on their activities so there are no composite statistics for the volume of recognition requests and the success rate.

NARICS are not a homogeneous group. The nature and authority of NARICs varies greatly from state to state with most being rather small organisations or enclaves situated mainly in the Ministry of Education or staffed by Ministry officials. The Swedish and Dutch NARICs are notable exceptions. Some NARICs have decision-making powers, others have an advisory role and still others are pretty much invisible to the wider academic community. How does this ensure parity of treatment in recognition across the EU?

In general, there is very little contact between quality assurance agencies and the recognition bodies. However, there are indications that the latter tend not to be well informed about changes in the delivery of higher education programmes, of how quality assurance is effected at national level, of

changes in national qualifications frameworks and in the status of higher education institutions. This has led to conservative stances being taken on the recognition of qualifications gained for example by distance learning, or through credit accumulation and transfer which would appear to make 'recognition' a stumbling block in delivering on the Bologna declaration. Would improved transparency of the outcomes of national quality assurance processes and enhanced cooperation between national quality assurance agencies foster mutual recognition and acceptance of qualifications, thus decreasing the bureaucracy of recognition?

Will the European Commission have to review the appropriateness of the criteria it has laid down, for example, in the General Directives, if a move to credit based systems of higher education is achieved and qualifications become described in terms of credits not years?

Does the changing nature of employment, for example, the increasing privatisation of national industries in Europe and the globalisation of the economy imply a reduction in the role and influence of recognition agencies and a shift towards employers and professional associations?

5 Future agendas for quality assurance in European higher education

The above described trends and issues seem to have important implications and challenges for quality assurance systems, such as:

- The context in which the quality of higher education is assessed. Is there is a tension between the fact that while higher education is becoming more international its quality is still mainly being assessed in the national context?.

- How can quality assurance contribute to improving the international comparability of higher education and the recognition of diplomas and degrees, in the first instance in the European context (Bologna declaration) but also in the wider international context?.

- Which methods and mechanisms for quality assurance and accreditation will best facilitate such international comparability and can be linked with recognition measures such as credit transfer and accumulation, including lifelong learning tracks?

- How can quality assurance systems address the quality of programmes offered by new types of higher education providers, including commercial and virtual institutions? This is even more complex where these providers may be offering transnational provision. What then is the responsibility of national-level or other actors for the quality assurance of transnational education and related issues such as consumer information and protection.?

- How can the international dimension of higher education be better integrated in quality assurance systems and methods. How can coordination between actors and agencies in the field of quality assurance and those involved in internationalisation including recognition agencies be improved?

  Will there be a shift in the functions of quality assurance systems as a result of stronger international influences and applications? While quality assurance in the national context is typically geared towards accountability and improvement, in the international context there seems to be a need for an increased focus on transparency and consumer information for students.

- At what level should initiatives in this area be undertaken, and by whom?

- Will Networks and multiple accreditation inititiatives contribute to quality improvement and transparency other than identify minimum threshold levels of quality?

- How artificial will common international qualification frameworks be if they have to cover or include all the existing national frameworks?

- Is there a need for convergence of terminology? Is there a role for the EQNA in working towards proposing (and using) a common terminology for quality and standards?

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Annex 1

The European higher education area

Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education
Convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999

The European process, thanks to the extraordinary achievements of the last few years, has become an increasingly concrete and relevant reality for the Union and its citizens. Enlargement prospects together with deepening relations with other European countries, provide even wider dimensions to that reality. Meanwhile, we are witnessing a growing awareness in large parts of the political and academic world and in public opinion of the need to establish a more complete and far-reaching Europe, in particular building upon and strengthening its intellectual, cultural, social and scientific and technological dimensions.

A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space.

The importance of education and educational co-operation in the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful and democratic societies is universally acknowledged as paramount, the more so in view of the situation in South East Europe.

The Sorbonne declaration of 25th of May 1998, which was underpinned by these considerations, stressed the Universities' central role in developing European cultural dimensions. It emphasised the creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development.

Several European countries have accepted the invitation to commit themselves to achieving the objectives set out in the declaration, by signing it or expressing their agreement in principle. The direction taken by several higher education reforms launched in the meantime in Europe has proved many Governments' determination to act.

European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge.

The course has been set in the right direction and with meaningful purpose. The achievement of greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education nevertheless requires continual momentum in order to be fully accomplished. We need to support it through promoting concrete measures to achieve tangible forward steps. The 18th June meeting saw participation by authoritative experts and scholars from all our countries and provides us with very useful suggestions on the initiatives to be taken.

We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions.

While affirming our support to the general principles laid down in the Sorbonne declaration, we engage in co-ordinating our policies to reach in the short term, and in any case within the first decade of the third millennium, the following objectives, which we consider to be of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide:

Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system

Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries.

Establishment of a system of credits – such as in the ECTS system – as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by receiving Universities concerned.

Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:

– for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services
– for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.

• Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies
• Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

We hereby undertake to attain these objectives – within the framework of our institutional competences and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy – to consolidate the European area of higher education. To that end, we will pursue the ways of intergovernmental co-operation, together with those of non governmental European organisations with competence on higher education. We expect Universities again to respond promptly and positively and to contribute actively to the success of our endeavour.

Convinced that the establishment of the European area of higher education requires constant support, supervision and adaptation to the continuously evolving needs, we decide to meet again within two years in order to assess the progress achieved and the new steps to be taken.

Annex 2

The participants of the CRE reviews

Italy
Università degli Studi di Camerino
Università degli Studi di Catania
Università degli Studi di Genova
Università degli Studi di Macerata
Università degli Studi di Roma Tre
Università degli Studi di Trento
Università degli Studi di Venezia

The Netherlands
Universiteit Utrecht
University of Twente for Technical and Social
Sciences, Enschede

Norway
Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Poland
University of Wroclaw

Portugal
Universidade de Aveiro
Universidade do Minho
Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisboa
Universidade Nova de Lisboa
Universidade Técnica de Lisboa
Universidade de Lisboa
Universidade do Porto

Slovak Republic
Comenius University Bratislava
Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava

Slovenia
University of Ljubljana
University of Maribor

Spain
Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona
Universidad de Granada
Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Universitat de Lleida
Universidad de Vigo

Sweden
Göteborg University
World Maritime University, Malmö

Turkey
Bogaziçi Üniversitesi, Istanbul

United Kingdom
University of North London

Austria
Johannes Kepler Universität Linz
Universität Klagenfurt

Belgium
Université Libre de Bruxelles
Université de Liège
Université Catholique de Louvain

Brazil
Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife
Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
Universidade Federal do Para, Belem

Chile
University of Talca

Croatia
University of Zagreb

Czech Republic
Czech Technical University, Praha
Palacky University, Olomouc

Denmark
Copenhagen Business School
Roskilde Universitetscenter

Finland
Åbo Akademi University
Helsinki University of Technology
Tampere University of Technology

France
Université de Paris 12 - Val de Marne

Germany
Katholische Universität Eichstätt
Universität-Gesamthochschule Siegen

Greece
University of Ioannina
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Democritos University of Thrace, Komotini
University of Patras
University of Macedonia Economic and Social
Sciences, Thessaloniki

Hungary
Lajos Kossuth University, Debrecen
Attila József University, Szeged

Ireland
University College Dublin

Annex 3

Accreditation in Business and Management Education: a label for the market or a market for the label?

Institution/Country	EQUIS 26 Accredited Schools in 11 countries	AMBA Accredited programmes in 54 schools in 9 countries	AACSB 370 accredited programs including schools in 7 countries outside the US	CEMS Institutional network One institution per country (16)
1. Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien (A)				CEMS
2. Universite Catholique de Louvain (B)				CEMS
3. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (B)		MBA FT		
4. Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales (CDN)	EQUIS			
5. Warsaw School of Economics (CZ)				CEMS
6. Copenhagen School of Business (DK)	EQUIS			CEMS
7. EAP European School of Management (F)	EQUIS	MBA FT		
8. E.M. Lyon (F)	EQUIS	CESMA MBA FT		
9. EDHEC (F)	EQUIS			
10. ENPC (F)		International MBA FT		
11. ESCP (F)	EQUIS	Executive MBA PT		
12. ESCNA (F)	EQUIS			
13. Groupe ESSEC (F)			AACSB	
14. HEC	EQUIS	MBA FT		CEMS
15. IEP (F)		MBA FT		CEMS
16. INSEAD (F)	EQUIS	MBA FT		
17. IAE d'Aix en Provence (F)	EQUIS			
18. Theseus International Management Institute (F)		MBA FT		
19. Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration (FIN)	EQUIS	International MBA FT/PT	CEMS	
20. WHU Koblenz: Graduate School of Management School (D)	EQUIS			
21. Universität zu Köln (D)				CEMS
22. Universitat Mannheim (D)			AACSB	
23. Budapest University of Economics Sciences (H)				CEMS
24. SDA Bocconi, Milan (I)	EQUIS	MBA FT		CEMS
25. University of Dublin, Trinity College (IRL)		MBA FT		
26. Erasmus University Rotterdam (NL) MBA/MIM FT	EQUIS AACSB	MBA FT CEMS		
27. NIMBAS (NL)		MBA FT/PT Utrecht/Bonn /Mainz		CEMS
28. Nyenrode University Business School (NL)	EQUIS	International MBA FT		

Institution/country	EQUIS	AMBA	AACSB	CEMS
29. Haarlem Business School (NL/UK)		Kingston University-Haarlem Business School MBA		
30. NHH Bergen (N)				CEMS
31. Handelshøyskolen BI (N)	EQUIS			
32. Leon Kozminski Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management (PL)	EQUIS			
33. Warsaw School of Economics (PL)				CEMS
34. EADA (E)	EQUIS			
35. ESADE (E)	EQUIS	MBA FT		CEMS
Institution/country	EQUIS	AMBA	AACSB	CEMS
36. Instituto Empressa (E)	EQUIS	International MBA FT		
37. IESE	EQUIS	MBA FT		CEMS
38. Swedish Institute of Management (S)	EQUIS			
39. Stockholm School of Economics (S)	EQUIS			CEMS
40. IMD (CH)	EQUIS	MBA FT		
41. Universität St Gallen (CH)				CEMS
42. Aberdeen Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
43. Ashridge Management College (validated by City University) (UK)	EQUIS	Executive MBA FT/PT European Partnership Consortium MBA		
44. Aston Business School (UK)	EQUIS	MBA FT/PT/DL/ Public Sector Management		
45.University of Bath School of Management (UK)		MBA FT Executive PT MIM/Modular MBA		
46. Birmingham Business School (UK)		MBA FT/Ev/modular MBA executive modular delivered in Singapore		
47. Bradford Management Centre (UK)	EQUIS	MBA FT/PT/OL		
48.University of Bristol, Graduate School of International Business (UK)		MBA International Business FT/PT		
49. Bristol Business School, UWE (UK)		MBA PT		
50. University of Cambridge, Judge Institute (UK)		MBA FT		
51. City University Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT MBA Engineering Management		
52. Cranfield School of Management (UK) MSc Project Management	EQUIS	MBA FT/PT		
53. Royal Military College of Science, Cranfield (UK)		Master of Defense Administration FT&Exec		

Institution/country	EQUIS	AMBA	AACSB	CEMS
54. De Montfort University School of Business (UK)		MBA FT/PT MBA PT (South Africa)		
55. Durham University Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT/DL		
56. Edinburgh University Management School (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
57. University of Glasgow (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
58. Henley Management College (UK)	EQUIS	MBA FT/PT/DL/ modular and project management DL		
59. Imperial College Management School (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
60. Kingston Business School (UK)		MBA PT/OL		
61. Lancaster University Management School (UK)		MBA FT Executive PT		
62. Leeds University Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT/ Exec/EV/ MBA PT Health & Soc Sci		
63. Leicester University Management Centre (UK)		MBA FT/DL		
64. London Business School (UK)	EQUIS	MBA FT & Exec PT Sloan Fellowship Program		
65. London School of Economics (UK)				CEMS
66. Loughborough Business School		MBA Exec PT and PT at Peterborough campus		
67. Manchester Business School UMIST (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
68. Manchester Metropolitan University (UK)		MBA PT		
69. Middlesex University Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
70. University of Newcastle School of Management (UK)		MBA FT/PT		
71. University of Nottingham Business School (UK)		MBA General FT/PT MBA Financial FT/PT		
72. Open University Business School (UK)		MBA DL		
73. Said Business School, University of Oxford (UK)		MBA FT		
74. Strathclyde Graduate Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT/OL (UK and international)/MM		
75. Warwick Business School (UK)	EQUIS	MBA FT/Ev/DL & modular	AACSB	
76. University of Westminster Business School (UK)		MBA FT/PT		