

Quality Assurance Between Bologna and 2020 Recent Developments and Future Options in the European Higher Education Area

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The Bologna Declaration

Aim and Rationales

- **Main aim:** To establish the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010

- **Main European rationales:**
 - ◆ Increase 'the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education' in the world
 - ◆ Promote mobility within Europe
 - Europe = all countries undersigning 'Bologna'



The Bologna Declaration

Why Did Ministers Sign?

- **My opinion:** There were 29 Bologna Declarations
- Each country had a national agenda
 - ◆ National reform: e.g. Germany wanted shorter time to degree
 - ◆ National aims with internationalisation: e.g. the Netherlands wanted better international recognition
- The Bologna Process got its own dynamics afterwards, with unexpected consequences, e.g.
 - ◆ Seen as part of the *acquis communautaire*
 - ◆ Expectation of cooperation
 - But does it help cooperation?

The Bologna Declaration: 6 Objectives (1-5)

- ◆ ‘easily readable and comparable degrees’
 - ‘also through ... the Diploma Supplement’
- ◆ ‘two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate’
 - 1st cycle: ≥ 3 years
 - 1st cycle: ‘relevant to the European labour market’
- ◆ ‘a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system’
 - ‘also ... acquired in non-higher education contexts’
- ◆ ‘Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles’
- ◆ ‘European dimensions in higher education’
 - ‘curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.’

The Bologna Declaration: 6 Objectives (6)

- ‘Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to develop comparable criteria and methodologies’
- **Comment:** Bologna Declaration is vague about quality assurance
- Role for quality assurance: it is the mechanism to provide much-needed transparency
- Again: expectations set high, but does it help?

Follow-Up Conference Prague, May 2001

- With regard to quality assessment, the phrase was much longer than in Bologna...
- ... but there was not much more clarity in content.
- However: designation of ENQA as 'champion' of the further process, or 'spider in the web'.
 - ◆ ENQA = European Network of Quality assurance Agencies
 - 'European' = European Union = 25 countries
 - Extended to all Bologna countries, in 2004

Follow-Up Conference Berlin, September 2003

- Communiqué sets operational goals until 2005
 - ◆ **Comment:** sense of urgency in EU Commission and Ministers
- Considerations regarding quality:
 - ◆ ‘quality ... has proven to be at the heart’ of EHEA
 - It is the 1st topic in the list!
 - ◆ ‘stress the need to develop mutually shared criteria and methodologies’
 - **Comment:** not uniform quality of programmes!
 - ◆ ‘primary responsibility ... each institution itself’
 - ‘basis for real accountability’

Follow-Up Conference Berlin, Goals for Quality Assurance

- ‘by 2005 national quality assurance systems should include’:
 - ◆ ‘definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions’
 - ◆ ‘Evaluation of programmes or institutions’
 - Internal + external, participation of students, and publication of results.
 - ◆ ‘A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.’
 - ◆ International participation, co-operation and networking.
- Expectations, and some guidelines

Follow-Up Conference Berlin, Goals for Quality Assurance

- Responsible for action ('Berlin Mandate'):
 - ◆ 'ENQA through its members', in co-operation with
 - ◆ EUA [European University Association],
 - ◆ EURASHE [Association of non-university higher education institutions] and
 - ◆ ESIB [association of national student unions]
- Goals of cooperation:
 - ◆ 'to develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines'
 - ◆ 'to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies'



Between Berlin and Bergen (May 2005)

- Where are we now?
 - ◆ You know better than I ...

- What does Bologna imply for quality assessment and accreditation?

Design Rules for Quality Assurance from 'Bologna'

- The object of evaluation has to be the degree
 - ◆ Because that is the 'passport' that students get
 - to study abroad
 - to enter the European labour market
 - ◆ Programme Accreditation is 'logical preference'
 - ◆ 'Catch-22': 1000s of programmes per country
 - institutional evaluation: more feasible, less informative
- Europe-wide transparency
 - ◆ What is specific, what is common to degrees from Poland and Holland etc.?
 - ◆ **My opinion**: we do not have to aim for uniform B.Sc., etc.

Is European Quality Assurance Needed for Students and Employers?

- Distinguish initial \leftrightarrow post-initial higher education
- Initial higher education
 - ◆ Usual degree: ‘bachelor’.
 - ◆ Functions: Initiation and transformation of students
 - ◆ Mostly local or regional catch-basin for students
- Implies: mostly local or regional information on quality needed—more efficiently at national level?

Is European Quality Assurance Needed for Students and Employers?

- Post-initial higher education
 - ◆ Titles: ‘master’, ‘Ph.D.’, ‘bachelor’[!]
... and diverse forms of life-long learning
 - ◆ These students are ‘informed consumers’
 - ◆ Sometimes local/regional, sometimes European market
- There is a need for European quality information on post-initial higher education
 - ◆ But this can include ‘bachelor’,
 - ◆ *ergo* cannot be operationally distinguished from initial higher education.

Is European Quality Assurance Needed for Students and Employers?

- Users' information needs are, I maintain:
 - ◆ Robust, not esoteric distinctions
 - ◆ *Effectus civilis*, that is: What is the meaning of the degree on the labour market?
 - official accreditation and recognition regulations may be less important than ...
 - ... a good answer to the question how to achieve trust in degrees from different study programmes in the eyes of employers or society?

Development of Evaluation and Accreditation in 20 Countries

Quality Assessment

1983: 0 countries

1992: Almost half of
countries

2003: All countries

Accreditation

1989: Close to 0 countries

1998: Almost half of
countries

2003: Almost all countries

Commonalities and differences

Assessment/evaluation

- Mostly according to common model
 - ◆ Internal + external
 - ◆ Publication of results
 - ◆ Few: involvement of students
- Differences in balance: input – process – output

Accreditation

- Common (mostly): linked to state recognition
- Different models
 - ◆ Part or all of HE
 - ◆ Field and/or institution
 - ◆ How much external review?
 - ◆ ...

Will mutual recognition be possible?



Limitations of Quality Assurance

- It leads to statements about study programmes or higher education institutions (faculties) ...
- ... not about individual graduates or students
- Moreover, credits, options, modularisation, recognition of previous work experience 'deconstruct' the idea of a coherent study programme as a recognisable unit for evaluation
- Conclusion: Diploma recognition remains important

Scenarios for 2020

- CHEPS developed three scenarios
 - ◆ Based on a 2-round Delphi study among 160 HE decision-makers and experts across Europe (2004)
- **Centralia**: based largely on majority opinions in Delphi
- **Octavia**: most-preferred by audiences
- **Vitis Vinifera**: in contrast to Centralia



Scenarios in short



Centralia:

- Hierarchical co-ordination
- Power is centralised: Muscles from Brussels



Octavia:

- Network co-ordination
- Power is spread throughout the network



Vitis Vinifera:

- Market co-ordination
- Power lies with the individual institutions



Centralia Landscape

- **Organized diversity: B- M- D- model is leading**
- **Stratification: D- in the North/West, B- in South/East**

- **Fairly large institutions**
- **Predominantly public**

- **Blended mode learning, life long learning**
- **Research and teaching: basic versus R&D**



Centralia Education

- EU-wide, uniform 3+2+3 degree structure
- With more emphasis on competences

- Students are carefully guided
- Standardised course modules



Centralia Quality

- **Obligatory accreditation by the European Accreditation Agency (EAA):**
 - **Employability is the main criterion**
 - **Re-accreditation is semi-automatic**

- **Uniform EAA quality standards, but universities lobby for exceptions.**



Octavia Landscape



- A great variation in continuously changing networks
- Teaching concentrated in South/East Europe; research in North/West Europe



- Inter- and intra organizational networks
- Public, private and hybrids



- Teaching in learning- working pathways
- Research in public private innovation networks

Octavia Education



•3+2, 3+1+1, 4+1 degrees, ... and short-cycle programmes




•Higher education is a cross-institutional, cross-national journey, with diversified, modular programmes




Octavia Quality



• **Internal quality assurance has led to an internal quality culture**



• **Many ranking guides, with criteria that go beyond the traditional criteria (quality of services and workplaces)**



• **Diversified student body**
• **Mixture of skills and knowledge**
• **Quality continuously tested in the workplace**



Vitis Vinifera Landscape



- Anarchic diversity: HE too complex to classify
- Much diversity within, less across systems



- From small niche players to mega-universities
- One-third HEI is private



- All modes of learning
- Basic research and R&D

Vitis Vinifera Education



- Degree structures: B, M, D plus first and post graduate diplomas:
“some things are just unclassifiable”

- Private HE: often web-based and very strong in short cycle programmes



Vitis Vinifera Quality



- Few national quality assurance or accreditation schemes left at programme level



- Market demands innovation, responsiveness, renewal and mass individualisation

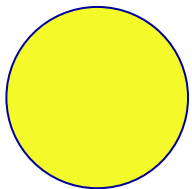


- Public concern about declining/differential quality
- Still less diverse than the USA

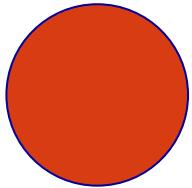


1st vote

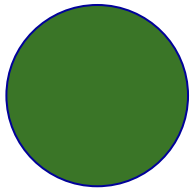
Which scenario do you personally think most probable in Europe 2020?



Centralia



Octavia

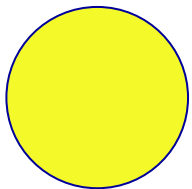


Vitis Vinifera

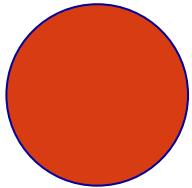


2nd vote

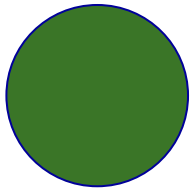
Which scenario do you think most desirable in Europe 2020 for the Ministry or accreditation agency in your country?



Centralia



Octavia

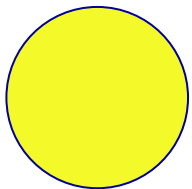


Vitis Vinifera

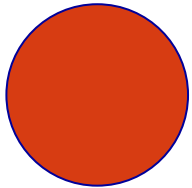


3rd vote

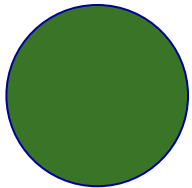
Which scenario do you think most desirable in Europe 2020 for a student from your country?



Centralia



Octavia



Vitis Vinifera