



The Quality Assurance of UK TNE: recent activities and looking ahead

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Structure of presentation

- QAA's approach to transnational education
- Recent and forthcoming TNE review activity
- Looking ahead

QAA's mission and remit

Mission: to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK HE **wherever** it is delivered

- ✓ We develop reference points setting out expectations for UK HE providers (*The UK Quality Code for Higher Education*)
- ✓ We undertake institutional peer-reviews to check HE providers meet those expectations

Both reference points and peer-reviews cover TNE

The quality assurance of UK TNE

Institutional reviews: comprehensive in scope

TNE Review: complementary in-country review process focused on

- how institutional policies and processes are implemented in practice
- better understanding the TNE student experience
- disseminating good practice across the sector / enhancing UK TNE
- re-assuring international stakeholders / safeguard UK HE reputation

A country based approach

TNE Review is carried out on a country-by-country basis

- Malaysia (10), Singapore (11), China (12), UAE (13), Caribbean (14), Greece/Cyprus (15), Ireland (17), Hong Kong (18), Malaysia (19)

It is more cost-efficient than an institution-based approach, given the scale and spread of UK TNE

It allows to get an in-depth understanding of the features / challenges involved in operating in particular countries

It allows to establish stronger links with host country QA bodies to lessen burden on providers and agencies too

A partnership approach

We regularly seek to cooperate with host country agencies to avoid regulatory gaps and overlaps:

- striving to lessen the burden on providers and ourselves, and implement a risk based approach
- given the scale and spread of UK TNE, it's imperative for QAA to rely on host countries' agencies' intelligence and cooperation
- bilateral strategic partnerships (MoUs)
- multilateral initiatives (QACHE Toolkit, Quality Beyond Border Group, Cross Border Quality Assurance Network)

Recent and forthcoming TNE review activity

Three-year programme ('17-'19)

TNE Ireland 2017 (key host country in Europe)

- concerns raised by QQI, strengthening cooperation with QQI
- support growth of quality UK TNE post-Brexit and local policy developments

TNE Hong Kong 2018 (5th largest host country)

- progressing innovative cooperation with HKCAAVQ, joint-review activity and recognition of HKCAAVQ accreditation decisions

TNE Malaysia 2019 (largest host country)

- *progressing cooperation in joint-review activity*
- *addressing local concerns on double degrees*

TNE Ireland 2017: General findings

UK TNE providers are doing a good job in ensuring quality/standards, and meeting local needs

UK providers appear to be more flexible to meet the national need for academic qualifications with vocational orientation... as well as students' demand for flexible modes of delivery

Only foreign provision that brings educational advantage is allowed to operate in the country

The benefits of cultural (linguistic) and geographical proximity

TNE Hong Kong 2018: General findings

UK TNE provision offered in Hong Kong is generally both relevant to the local market and labour needs, and meet UK expectations:

- TNE has developed to address unmet demands for HE - top-up degrees are a very common model in HK
- Most UK TNE is delivered in partnership with vocationally oriented local providers with strong links with industry
- The flexibility of UK TNE programmes (top-up arrangements and block-teaching), allow students to pursue HE while in employment
- Many of the local partners have also well-developed QA systems and have experience of partnering with multiple degree-awarding bodies

TNE Hong Kong 2018: joint-review

- Two joint-review activity with HKCAAVQ
 - QAA reviewers joined HKCAAVQ accreditation panel acting as both HKCAAVQ and QAA reviewers
 - QAA reviewers were able to use information gathered through HKCAAVQ accreditation exercise to inform the QAA TNE review
- Recognition of HKCAAVQ accreditation decision:
 - HKCAAVQ reviews and judgements can be relied upon for the purpose of UK quality assurance by the QAA

TNE Malaysia 2019?

To be confirmed as we discuss with the sector future arrangements for TNE review post-OfS

TNE Students Forums

Initiative under the Quality Beyond Borders Group

Two joint UK TNE students forums + student satisfaction survey: Dubai/KHDA (April), Singapore/CPE (May '18)

Final Report in Autumn 2018

Two main areas for improvement:

- Employability: engagement with industry/internships
- The student experience: more services as at the home campus/Dubai – making feel part of the institution/Singapore

Looking ahead

'Internal' challenges

- The establishment of the OfS (QAA's TNE contract with funding bodies ending Sept. '18)
- A metrics based approach to QA: lack of data for TNE (e.g. NSS and DLHE)
 - A QA (and Teaching Excellence) gap for TNE?
- Continued growth of UK TNE

'External' challenges

- Increasing number of host countries are developing regulatory frameworks for incoming TNE... asking reassurance that TNE is quality assured by the home country
- Recurrent international concerns about the quality, and quality assurance, of UK TNE
 - Especially about the choice of locally unrecognised partners (due diligence)

QAA and the sector must work together...

...to ensure that the QA of UK TNE remains robust and fit for purpose in the context of national and international developments

...and that it continues to be valued and trusted internationally

How can we best achieve that?

Three key challenges ahead

The funding question:

- What alternative funding models would be viable and sustainable

The metrics question:

- How to ensure that currently used metrics cover TNE (e.g. NSS, DELHE)

The method question:

- What alternative methods could be used

Thank you



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