



## Conference

# Defining Quality - The Relevance of Field-specific Approaches to Quality Assurance in Higher Education

02-03 November, 2009, Bonn, Germany

**Venue: Maritim Hotel Bonn**

**Jointly hosted by: AEC, ASIIN e. V., ECTNA, ENAEE, EQANIE, FEANI, SEFI**

### Introduction

When discussing the role of field-specific and general approaches to quality assurance in higher education, experts often tend to focus on the differences: While general approaches tend to stress the autonomy of higher education institutions, field-specific approaches accentuate the need for aligning the goals of educational programmes with the expectations of the relevant stakeholders in order to be comparable and ensure their relevance for the labour market.

On the other hand, both approaches are based on the same assumption: that higher education institutions, while in principle autonomous, are nevertheless accountable to their constituents – which includes an obligation to demonstrate the relevance of their output to the stakeholders. Also, on the “technical” level, both approaches share most of their instruments and procedures when it comes to implementing the “view from outside”: self evaluation, peer review, or subject benchmarks as reference point.

For higher education institutions faced with demands from various groups of stakeholders to account for the quality of their processes by employing various instruments of internal and external quality assurance, the question with regard to general and field-specific approaches to quality assurance is often not one of “either or” but of how to best combine them in order to limit the burden placed on the organisation and its members.

We suggest to take subject benchmarks as a starting point for our discussion since these by definition involve a field-specific approach to quality assurance in higher education and yet are generally accepted as one useful item in the toolkit for quality assurance in higher education – not least because they provide a common framework of reference for teaching staff, students and external stakeholders (as well as members of external peer review teams) for judging whether an educational process has been successfully completed.

### Objectives

Based on contributions facilitating the identification and mutual understanding of similarities between both approaches, this conference will focus on discussing and elaborating approaches for aligning general and field-specific approaches to quality assurance in higher education.

At the end of the conference, participants

- will have developed a joint understanding of the methods, instruments and processes of general and field-specific approaches to quality assurance in higher education; and
- will have weighed their respective advantages and disadvantages and assessed their relevance to the concept of their own organisation.

## Participants

The conference specifically addresses

- representatives of external quality assurance and accreditation institutions.
- members and representatives of higher education institutions (students as well as teaching and administrative staff responsible for QA) and
- interested stakeholders (notably employers, employees and ministries responsible for higher education).

## Hosting Organisations

This conference is jointly hosted by the following organisations:

- AEC – Association Européenne des Conservatoires (European Association of Conservatoires, <http://www.aecinfo.org>)
- ASIIN e.V. – Accreditation Agency for Degree Programmes in Engineering, Informatics, the Natural Sciences and Mathematics (<http://www.asiin.de>)
- ECTNA – European Chemistry Thematic Network Association (<http://www.ectn-assoc.org>)
- ENAEE – European Network for the Accreditation of Engineering Education (<http://www.enaee.eu>)
- EQANIE – European Quality Network for Informatics Education (<http://www.eqanie.eu>)
- FEANI – Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales d'Ingénieurs (European Federation of National Engineering Associations, <http://www.feani.org>)
- SEFI – Société Européenne pour la Formation d'Ingénieurs (European Society for Engineering Education, <http://www.sefi.be>)

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### Programme

**Monday, 02 November 2009**

09:30	Registration
10:30	Welcome address <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Prof. Dr.-Ing. Jörg Steinbach, ASIIN</i></li></ul>
10:45	<b>Key note 1:</b> The relevance of field-specific approaches to quality assurance for higher education in Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Helene Clark, Director, Directorate General for Education and Culture, EU Commission</i></li></ul>
11:15	<b>Presenting the tools:</b> Subject benchmarks – definition and application “Approaches to defining and measuring learning outcomes” <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Fabrice Henard, OECD - AHELO Project</i></li><li>◦ <i>Marianne Cox, NUFFIC - CoRe Projects (t.b.c.)</i></li></ul> “Using learning outcome descriptors to foster mobility” <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Philippe de Buck, Business Europe - Director General (t.b.c.)</i></li></ul>
12:30	Lunch
14:00	<b>Case study:</b> Subject benchmarks and their function for internal quality assurance in higher education <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Prof. Anette Kolmos, University of Aalborg, UNESCO Chair on Problem Based Learning, SEFI President</i></li></ul>
15:15	Coffee break
16:00	<b>Case studies:</b> Defining subject benchmarks on the European level <i>Dr. Iring Wasser, ASIIN/ENAEE/EQANIE (Chair and introduction)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Eurobachelor®/Euromaster® : <i>Prof. Dr. Terrence Mitchell, ECTNA</i></li><li>◦ Association Européenne des Conservatoires AEC: <i>Martin Prchal, Chief Executive</i></li><li>◦ EUR-ACE® : <i>Sebastião Foyo de Azevedo, ENAEE Vicepresident</i></li></ul>
17:45	Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Prof. Dr.-Ing. Jörg Steinbach, ASIIN</i></li></ul>
18:00	End of the first day
20:00	Conference Dinner

## Tuesday, 03 November 2009

- 09:00 **Keynote 2:** Stakeholder involvement as key to the successful implementation of subject benchmarks
- *Jorma Ollila, European Round Table of Industrialists – President (t.b.c.)*
- 09:30 **Parallel sessions:** Involving the stakeholders on the European level in established and new field-specific networks
- ECTN(A) - Eurolabels in chemistry  
*Pavel Drasar, Chair of the ECTNA Label Committee (Chair)*
  - ENAEE and TREE - EUR-ACE® labels for engineering programmes
- 09:30 - 10:15 Why EUR-ACE®? Different strategies in engineering education in Europe – comparable outcomes? (advantages of participating in the EUR-ACE® System)  
*Professor Giuliano Augusti, ENAEE - President*
- 10:15 - 10:45 From Europe to the World: Involving global engineering organizations (EUGENE project)  
*Professor Dr. Claudio Borri, IFEES – President*
- 10:45 - 11:00 European Professional Card: new tool for making engineering qualifications visible and easily accessible  
*Philippe Wauters, FEANI (Chair)*- The AEC Institutional and Programme Review Scheme in higher music education  
*Martin Prchal, AEC Chief Executive (Chair) & Linda Messas, AEC QA expert*
- EQANIE - The Euro-Inf framework standards for informatics programmes

09:30 - 10:00 EQANIE: structure, goals and activities  
*Prof. Dr. Hans-Ulrich Heiß, EQANIE – President*

10:00 - 10:30 The European Informatics Bachelor / Master Label: Criteria and Procedures  
*Dr. Jörn Grünewald, EQANIE*

10:30 - 11:00 *Hans Frederik, EQANIE (t.b.c.)*- Euro-AGES - Towards European subject benchmarks in geosciences  
*Manuel Regueiro y Gonzáles-Barros, EFG (Chair, t.b.c.)*

11:00 Coffee break

11:45 **Panel:** Professional and academic accreditation, evaluation and audit – Same tools, different approaches?

  - *Dr. Iring Wasser, ASIIN/ENAEE/EQANIE (Chair and introduction)*
  - *Professor Giuliano Augusti, ENAEE - President*
  - *ENQA President (to be elected on 29 September)*
  - *Rolf Heusser, ECA - President*



- *Andrée Sursock, EUA - Senior Advisor*

12:45

**Closing statement**

- *Dr. Iring Wasser*

13:00

Lunch