

ECA Work Plan 2010-2011

Draft

Working group 1 “Mutual recognition and joint programmes”

Composition:

- Elisabeth Fiorioli (Chair)
- Marianne Cox (expert) / Christoph Demand (expert)
- Mark Frederiks (ECA coordinator)
- Nick Harris (expert)
- Achim Hopbach/Katrin Mayer-Lantermann/Franz Börsch (GAC)
- Leendert Klaassen (NVAO)
- Rafael Llavori (ANECA)
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- Stephanie Maurer (OAQ)
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Meetings 2009/2010

11 June 2009, Zürich
26 November 2009, Vienna
10 March 2010, Paris

Priorities in the past year

Last year WG 1 considered the following activities to be the most important:

1. Mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) - Methodology

The relevance of the different elements of the process to come to new MRAs was discussed (e.g. comparative analysis, observer exchange, external evaluation, CGP & Principles for the Selection of Experts etc.). In addition to the bilateral agreements a proposal for a multilateral recognition agreement MULTRA focusing on joint programmes was elaborated and will be presented in Graz.

2. MRAs and Joint Programmes

MRAs are most useful for the accreditation of joint programmes but for the time being only a few agencies have signed MRAs. Therefore the benefit for university consortia offering joint programmes is still very limited. The MULTRA concept (see 1.) should smooth the way for more agencies to sign a mutual recognition agreement.

3. Implementation of MRAs: focus on obstacles and benefits

The implementation and impact of MRAs have been continuously evaluated. WG 1 identified potential obstacles for the implementation as well as a number of benefits that have become obvious. A statement of benefits taking into account the different stakeholder groups was drafted and will be presented in Graz. This statement will be the basis for a dissemination strategy that is developed in collaboration with WG 3.

4. Co-operation with ENIC/NARICs

The contribution of ENIC/NARICs on a regular basis is essential for the implementation and further development of MRAs. From the ENIC/NARICs viewpoint MRAs will be relevant especially for recognition of qualifications in transnational settings and from private providers. A stronger focus on learning outcomes and non traditional learning paths would also enhance the value of MRAs for the work of ENIC/NARICs.

Priorities for 2010-2011

1. MULTRA – Multilateral Recognition Agreement for Joint Programmes

- drafting MULTRA to be signed in December 2010
- renewing of the existing in MRAs in December 2010
- developing a procedure to enable new members to join the MULTRA by June 2011

2. Establishing a coordination point for Joint Programmes

- to give coordinators of joint programmes the opportunity to consult this specialised information centre when they need to undergo external quality assurance and/or accreditation of their joint programme
- to propose a methodology for a single accreditation procedure to bring QA/A agencies together and to guarantee the results to be accepted in the countries involved

These activities will build on the outcomes of TEAM II and are embedded in the project JOQAR that is submitted as project proposal under action line 3 of the Erasmus Mundus programme.

3. Co-operation with ENIC/NARICs

- continue fruitful co-operation with ENIC/NARICs
- drafting recommendations for accreditation agencies and HEIs how to provide the relevant information for the recognition of joint programmes (building on the results of the WARSAW meeting 2010)

4. Publicising the benefits from MRAs for stakeholders

- dissemination strategy on benefits of MRAs for stakeholders in cooperation with WG 3

4. Further developing of MR-methodology

- The focus of MR-methodology is until now mainly based on the different steps of accreditation procedures (hypothesis: comparable accreditation procedures lead to comparable accreditation results). For stakeholders the value of MR would increase significantly if it could be based on comparable outcomes of an accredited programme. MR-methodology has therefore to be extended to the question how to bring a stronger focus on outcomes as evidence of programme quality.