



## **Extract of TEAM II project proposal** *Submitted to the European Commission on 27 February 2008*

### **Background**

The European Ministers wrote in their London Communiqué (18 May 2007): “We acknowledge the progress made with regard to mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions, and encourage continued international cooperation amongst quality assurance agencies.” and “[...] we will work to implement fully the agreed recognition tools and procedures and consider ways of further incentivising mobility for both staff and students. This includes encouraging a significant increase in the number of joint programmes and the creation of flexible curricula [...]”

There are currently 103 Erasmus Mundus Master’s programmes. This is however only a limited (but highly visible) portion of the joint programmes organised in Europe. All these programmes are confronted with national quality assurance and/or accreditation procedures. One programme therefore has to undergo several different, national procedures. These procedures then lead to decisions that only have an impact in one national higher education system. This is burdensome for the institutions, hampers the development of multilateral cooperation in higher education and hinders the creation of the European Higher Education Area. Furthermore, the recognition of a joint programme in one country doesn’t necessarily entail recognition in the other countries concerned. This then also leads to recognition problems regarding the qualification(s) awarded by the joint programme.

Recognition authorities (ENIC/NARICs) have expressed their willingness to automatically recognise qualifications awarded by accredited programmes and/or institutions (Joint Declaration regarding the automatic recognition of qualifications). One of their preconditions however is transparent information. In the case of joint programmes they require information on the quality assessment and the programme’s learning outcomes. ECA has developed Qrossroads. The information in Qrossroads is provided by the accreditation organisations. Currently, Qrossroads doesn’t provide information regarding learning outcomes. This means that ENIC/NARICs are still not fully provided with the information they need and request.

### **Partners**

#### **Coordinating organisation**

Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO), the Netherlands and Flanders

#### **Participating applicant organisations**

- Magyar Felsőoktatási Akkreditációs Bizottság (HAC), Hungary
- Österreichischer Akkreditierungsrat (ÖAR), Austria
- Commission des Titres d’Ingenieur (CTI), France
- Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA), Spain
- Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales (AHPGS), Germany
- Danmarks Evalueringsinstitut (EVA), Denmark
- Fachhochschulrat (FHR), Austria
- Państwowa Komisja Akredytacyjna (PKA), Poland
- Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur Hannover (ZEVA), Germany
- Biuro Uznawalności Wykształcenia i Wymiany Międzynarodowej – Polish ENIC/NARIC, Poland

### Associated applicant organisation

- Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der Schweizerischen Hochschulen (OAQ), Switzerland

### TEAM II Steering Group

NVAO is the coordinating organisation and provides both the Project Coordinator and the Crossroads Supervisor. The Project Coordinator organises the Steering Group.
OAR is the organiser of the Dissemination Conference (Vienna) and lead partner concerning the Conference Report.
ANECA is the lead partner concerning the Progress Report and provides the test environment for some of the testing of the developed databases.
EVA is the lead partner concerning the Single Accreditation Procedures.
PKA is the organiser of the Benchmarking Workshop (Warsaw) and lead partner in the cooperation with the ENIC/NARICs

### Other organisations involved in the project

#### **Other ECA members but not TEAM II applicants**

- German Accreditation Council (GAC), Germany
- Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), Germany
- Agentur für Qualitätssicherung durch Akkreditierung von Studiengängen (AQAS), Germany
- Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge der Ingenieurwissenschaften, der Informatik, der Naturwissenschaften und der Mathematik e.V. (ASIIN), Germany
- Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (NOKUT), Norway

#### **Other agencies from other countries (cf. extension of Crossroads)**

- HSV, Sweden
- HAC, Hungary
- AC, Slovenia

#### **Stakeholders Group**

Representatives from the following organisations/networks:

- European University Association (EUA)
- European Students Union (ESU)
- Association of Higher Education Institutions (EURASHE)
- BusinessEurope (European employers)
- ENIC-NARIC Network (Recognition authorities)

#### **Focus Group**

Representatives from recognition authorities/bodies (ENIC/NARICs).

### Aims and objectives

The first objective of the project is to develop a **European methodology for quality assurance and accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes**. Joint programmes apply for one single accreditation procedure replacing the different national procedures in the countries concerned, taking into account the totality of the joint programme. The assessment specifically includes the learning outcomes aimed for by the joint programme irrespective of the individual study pathways. By running pilot procedures and by publishing a methodological report, the project aims to provide the aforementioned European methodology with a view to the cross-border recognition of accreditation decisions regarding joint programmes.

The second objective of the project is to explore the **cross-border recognition of qualifications awarded by joint programmes**. Recognition procedures regarding qualifications from joint programmes will be facilitated with the provision of transparent information on the quality and learning outcomes of these programmes. Quality assurance and accreditation agencies should provide this information to the ENIC/NARICs. By linking recognition to learning outcomes, through benchmarking efforts and by organising a dissemination conference with accreditation organisations and institutions, ENIC/NARICs of the countries concerned will engage in efforts to automatically recognise qualifications from joint programmes.

The third objective is the **extension of Grossroads**. Grossroads will be further developed to include: the learning outcomes of programmes (at European and national level), the institutional and programme information from at least five other countries in Grossroads and a feature to import data from other databases (such as institutional databases).

In 2008, Grossroads is intended to present the qualifications awarded by quality assured and/or accredited programmes and/or institutions from eight countries. The extended version of Grossroads will automatically link thirteen national databases to the European level Grossroads database. All these databases and linked websites will be able to include programme's learning outcomes and to import data from institutional databases.

## Achievements (by the end of the project)

### Grossroads manuals

- *Nature:* Publication (EN) of three volumes of each +/- 15 pages
- *Substance:* Information to set up export functions in xsd/xml schemes and an overview of the content management system of a national database and website for national administrators and for institutional administrators.

### Progress report regarding mutual recognition of joint programmes

- *Nature:* Publication (EN) of +/- 15 pages
- *Content:* Analysis of the current relationship between quality, learning outcomes and the recognition of qualifications from joint programmes; a catalogue of achievements with regard to mutual recognition; an exploration of the involvement of governments (legal issues) and stakeholders (respect for institutional autonomy) needed to achieve cross-border recognition of accreditation decisions and qualifications.

### Report of the results of a survey on the recognition of qualifications from cross-border education

- *Nature:* Publication (EN) of +/- 20 pages
- *Content:* Results of an online survey with interpretations by the Focus Group. The survey explores how ENIC/NARICs currently recognise qualifications from joint programmes, problems they encounter, the use of learning outcomes and the solutions they propose.

### Benchmarking workshop on the recognition of qualifications from cross-border education

- *Nature:* Workshop for 40 participants from ENIC/NARICs
- *Content:* Presentation of the results of the survey, exchange of recognition methodologies and work in small groups on learning outcomes and recognition issues regarding qualifications from joint programmes.

### Methodological report regarding single accreditation procedures for joint programmes

- *Nature:* Publication (EN) of +/- 50 pages
- *Content:* The methodologies applied during 5 single accreditation procedures for joint programmes, the lessons learned and the way forward.

### Grossroads extended

- *Nature:* Website and database

- *Volume:* 5 (By the end of the project: 13 in total)
- *Content:* European level website and database with institutional and programme details, the link to the European Qualifications Framework, the higher education systems, quality assurance and accreditation systems and recognition of foreign qualifications. This database gets its information from (by the end of the project) at least 13 national databases.

#### Dissemination conference

- *Nature:* Conference for +/- 200 participants
- *Content:* Presentation of the achievement of mutual recognition of accreditation decisions, the results of the pilot projects of single accreditation procedures for joint programmes, the recognition issues regarding qualifications from joint programmes and the current status of Crossroads.

#### Conference report

- *Nature:* Publication (EN) of +/- 20 pages
- *Content:* Outcomes of the conference, and thus the overall project, with contributions from the speakers and workshops.

### Planning

Workpackage No	Workpackage title	Start Month	End Month
1	Project steering and Steering group	1	24
2	Qrossroads Administrators	4	24
3	Dissemination conference (Vienna)	10	21
4	The recognition of qualifications from joint programmes	5	21
5	The extension of Qrossroads	5	24
6	Stakeholder Group	1	21
7	Focus group (ENIC/NARICs)	1	21
8	Single accreditation procedures regarding joint programmes	1	24
9	Database developments	2	24

Deliverable No	Deliverable title	Delivery date
1	Progress report	March 2009
2	Conference report	September 2010
3	Qrossroads manuals	February 2009
4	Training event	September 2009
5	Conference website	January 2010
6	Conference (Vienna)	June 2010
7	Survey report: recognition of cross-border education	September 2009
8	Workshop: recognition of cross-border education	February 2010
9	Qrossroads	September 2010
10	Single accreditation procedures	February 2010
11	Methodological report	March 2010
12	Qrossroads database model	February 2009
13	Manual: export data to a national Qrossroads database	August 2009