



The 3rd European Quality Assurance Forum

20 - 22 November 2008

Hosted by Corvinus University, Budapest

Call for papers, workshops and posters

Deadline 31 July 2008

INTRODUCTION

Europe, like most other regions of the world, has the legitimate ambition to strengthen its higher education institutions, which are seen as central to the development of the knowledge society. This aspiration has a wide range of implications, particularly for quality assurance. Indeed, there have been a range of initiatives that seek to strengthen accountability in higher education. These include, among many developments, the emergence of quality labels and ranking schemes, as well as a focus on learning outcomes linked to the development of qualifications frameworks.

The 3rd European Quality Assurance Forum, the premier conference for quality discussions in Europe, will explore European and international trends in quality assurance. It will examine the implications of various developments for quality assurance in European higher education and internationally and ask, specifically, if these developments increase quality levels in higher education.

Following the success of the first two European Quality Assurance Forums (respectively, at the Technical University of Munich and the University La Sapienza), the third forum, co-organised by ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE and supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission, is hosted by Corvinus University (Budapest, Hungary) on 20 – 22 November 2008.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this third forum are:

- To gain an understanding of how higher education institutions and QA agencies are responding to new forms of accountability
- To analyse whether these new forms of accountability have the desired impact on quality levels and to examine their unintended consequences

PARTICIPANTS

The forum will provide a platform for discussion and exchange of experiences among the main stakeholders in quality assurance. Specifically, the forum will be of interest to rectors and vice-rectors responsible for QA, QA officers in higher education institutions, students, QA agency staff, Bologna Promoters, employers and researchers working on higher education or the QA field.

CALL FOR PAPERS, WORKSHOPS AND POSTERS

As in the previous years the organisers are seeking contributions from forum participants. The deadline to submit all types of contributions is **31 July 2008**. After submission all contributions will be reviewed by the Forum Organising Committee and the authors will be informed whether their contribution has been selected for presentation at the forum. The authors will have the opportunity to revise the papers before presentation. After a further review a selected number of papers will be published in the post conference publication.

Several types of contributions are being sought:

- Papers for the parallel sessions, which will include groups of 25 – 45 participants, and seek to present and discuss QA models, research in QA and good practices in QA. These working groups provide the opportunity for structured discussions around a set topic. Three types of contributions are being sought:
 - Theoretical / research papers
 - Case studies / good practice papers
 - Workshops
- Posters for the knowledge café, which will provide an opportunity to network with colleagues, discuss QA issues or exchange good practice in a relaxed and open atmosphere.

1. Theoretical / research papers

This type of contributions will present, in a theoretical and analytical way, quality assurance concepts or present empirical research studies in the field of quality assurance. The paper will be presented as a stand alone or together with another similar paper in a working group. The presentation of the paper, with a maximum length of 20 minutes, will be followed by a group discussion. To prepare the discussion the author should provide questions for the paper.

Themes

In this category the organisers are seeking papers on a range of themes, such as:

- Learning outcomes: their theoretical basis, their use in and their effect on study programmes and their implications for quality assurance
- Qualifications frameworks: their theoretical basis, their use in and their effect on study programmes and their implications for quality assurance
- Rankings and quality labels: their theoretical or methodological basis, their use, their effect on higher education institutions and their implications for quality assurance
- Presentation of innovative QA approaches
- Comparative view on trends in quality assurance in Europe
- Internal quality processes

Formal requirements

A paper proposal should:

- Identify the author(s) and, in the case of co-authored papers, indicate who will be responsible for presenting the paper at the Forum
- Identify the organisation of the author(s)
- Be no more than 2000 – 4000 words (excluding references)
- Be accompanied by a 100–150 word abstract
- Be accompanied by two to three questions that lead the discussion following the presentation

Papers will be published on the QA Forum website prior to the event.

Evaluation criteria

The papers will be assessed by members of the Forum Organising Committee for compliance with the criteria for acceptance.

- There is a clear focus of the paper that will be of interest to the participants of the conference.
- The argument, development, and structure of the paper are logical, coherent and understandable.
- The paper provides a substantial basis for discussion in the working sessions. Particularly, it identifies clearly the success and obstacles in implementing a specific QA aspect.
- The discussion questions for the paper are adequate to sustain a lively debate.

Further details on how to structure your paper can be found in annex.

2. Case studies / good practice papers

This type of contributions will present, in an analytical and critical way, the case of an institutional, national, or European quality assurance concept. The main objective of this type of paper is to share and discuss good practice and to receive feedback from the working group participants. The paper will be presented as a stand alone or together with another similar paper in a working group. The presentation of the paper, with a maximum length of 20 minutes, will be followed by a group discussion. To prepare the discussion the author should provide questions at the conclusion of the paper.

Themes

In this category, the organisers are seeking case studies concerning conceptualisation, implementation, operation, effect of institutional, national or European quality assurance models.

Formal requirements

A paper proposal should:

- Identify the author(s) and, in the case of co-authored papers, indicate who will be responsible for presenting the paper at the Forum
- Identify the organisation of the author(s)
- Be no more than 2000 – 4000 words (excluding references)
- Be accompanied by a 100–150 word abstract
- Be accompanied by questions that lead the discussion following the presentation

Papers will be published on the QA Forum website prior to the event.

Evaluation criteria

The papers will be assessed by members of the Forum Organising Committee for compliance with the criteria for acceptance.

- There is a clear focus of the paper that will be of interest to the participants of the conference.
- The argument, development, and structure of the paper are logical, coherent and understandable.
- The paper provides a substantial basis for discussion in the working sessions. Particularly, it is critical and identifies clearly the success and obstacles in implementing a specific QA aspect.
- The discussion questions for the paper are adequate to sustain a lively debate.

Further details on how to structure your paper can be found in annex.

3. Workshops

Workshops will focus on providing participants with structured theoretical background on a specific topic or will provide hands-on practical advice on how to implement or use a specific QA tool. The workshop will be held by the presenter(s) in a 90 minute working session. The workshop will be attended by 25 – 45 participants.

Themes

Possible themes for a workshop could be:

- Introducing learning outcomes
- Learning outcomes: implications for teaching, learning and assessment
- New ways of teaching and learning
- New forms of student assessment
- Training of evaluation panels and students

Formal requirements

A workshop proposal should:

- Identify the presenter(s)
- Identify the organisation of the presenter(s)
- Explain the main objectives
- Explain the activity
- Specify any audio-visual requirements
- Be no more than 2 A4 pages
- Be accompanied by a 100–150 word abstract

Workshop descriptions will be published on the QA Forum website prior to the event.

Evaluation criteria

Workshop proposals will be evaluated in terms of the relevance of the topic, the objectives of the workshop and the details of how the workshop will be run. Any supplementary documentation would be useful. For instance, a workshop proposal on comparing different kinds of teaching evaluation questionnaires would include the questionnaires that will be discussed during the workshop.

4. Poster presentations

Poster presentations are offered in the knowledge café to display and discuss good practice examples in a less structured and more relaxed atmosphere. A one-page poster will describe briefly the main features of the example to initiate a discussion. The forum participants are free to join and leave the ongoing discussion during the knowledge café.

Themes

Possible themes for a poster are any case studies or good practice examples of innovative ways of QA related to one of the forum topics. A paper contribution may also be presented as poster in the knowledge café.

Formal requirements

A poster presentation should

- Identify the presenter(s) and the institution
- Provide a summary of the case you want to display of approximately one page

Upon selection the author will be responsible for producing a poster in recommended dimensions (70 x 100 cm). For each poster a pin board and a coffee table will be provided.

Evaluation criteria

Poster proposals will be evaluated in terms of their interest to the participants and their potential to raise and sustain discussions.

PROCEDURE

All proposals should be submitted in Word format by **31 July 2008** to therese.zhang@eua.be.

The proposal will be evaluated by the Forum Organising Committee. Selected proposals may receive comments on which basis the proposal can be amended before presentation at the QA Forum.

In a second selection round, papers for the publication will be selected. All acknowledgements will be by e-mail. Referees' comments will be communicated electronically. In most cases, authors will receive feedback on their submission, even when rejected.

Publication

A post-conference publication will be produced, based on a selection of the papers presented at the forum. This publication is intended to contribute to the sustainability of the forum's outcomes by providing a wider audience with up-to-date information on current debates on internal and external quality processes in Europe. A selection of papers will be chosen for the publication. Papers which will be published may not have more than 3000 words.

Calendar

31 July 2008: All elements of the proposal must be submitted in Microsoft Word format to therese.zhang@eua.be. Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed. Please do not send a hard copy or a PDF file.

Beginning of September 2008: Notification of acceptance or rejection will be sent by e-mail to all authors. Accepted proposals will be accompanied by comments. Information regarding the day and time of sessions at the Forum will be provided later.

December 2008 (for papers type 1 and 2 only): Notification whether the paper will be included in the publication. Authors may receive comments on how to adapt the paper before it is finally accepted for publication.

15 February 2009 (for papers selected for publication only): Deadline to submit the final paper for publication.

FORUM ORGANISING COMMITTEE

ENQA:	Emmi Helle and Bruno Curvale
ESU:	Anela Beso and Anne Mikkola
EUA:	Prof. Henrik Toft Jensen and Dr Andrée Sursock
EURASHE:	Prof. Lucien Bollaert and Dr Bryan Maguire
Academic advisor:	Prof. Lee Harvey, Higher Education Academy, UK

Annex 1: GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS¹

Content

Papers should be original. If there is an overlap with material published elsewhere, details should be given.

The EQAF is an international event aimed at those interested in the theory, practice and policies relating to the control, management, improvement and evaluation of quality in higher education. This has two implications for authors.

First, the paper has to be of interest to a broad readership, which means that (a) the paper draws on international examples, or (b) reports some international comparative research, or (c), if country specific, explains how developments in one country have been informed by international developments, or (d) how developments or research in one country has implications beyond its borders. The aim is to provide readers with information about, and lessons from, ideas and practices that are transportable from other contexts.

Second, the paper should avoid local references or assume that the readership will understand the processes used in a specific institution, or agency or be familiar with the higher education system in a given country. Localised abbreviations or taken-for-granted notions should not be cited without explanation. Some words are ambiguous and should be used with care. 'Faculty' in the UK, for example, is an organisational unit of a university, in the US it means, what in the UK would be called the academic staff. 'School' rarely means a University in the UK, unlike in the US. So it is incumbent on authors to be clear about terminology.

A clear line of argument (or story) should flow through the paper. The paper needs to keep readers interested: they should not struggle to get to the end of the paper.

Institutional Case Studies

The case can be developed from a QA agency's or a higher education institution's perspective as well as from the perspective of a faculty or a department, demonstrating the various tensions and challenges.

Suggested headings:

- The quality assurance approach and/or strategy of the institution
- Legal/national/cultural context and/or constraints
- Stating the specific case and core issues
- Barriers and problems encountered when implementing new practice
- Policies and tools applied to overcome them
- Successes achieved/status to date
- Lessons learned (what would you do differently in retrospect)
- Key issues still to be mastered (this would be particularly helpful in generating discussion during the session)

Methodological Papers

Research methodology should be included in the paper but in an economical way that provides maximum information in as few words as possible. The following should be provided where appropriate: methodological approach including epistemological underpinnings; data sources including sample and population details; sampling method;

¹ These guidelines have been adapted from the guidelines of the journal *Quality in Higher Education*

response rates/drop out rates; how data was collected; forms of analysis (not the name of software packages (e.g. SPSS) but what techniques were used (e.g. cross-tabulation); any methodological concerns. If the methodology is complex and inhibits the 'story' then it is acceptable to put detail in a methodological footnote. Statistical data should be reported in an accessible way – especially where it is fundamental to the argument. Peripheral numerical details, such as significance levels, correlation coefficients, should normally be incorporated into tables or footnotes unless they can be integrated into the text without making it cumbersome and hard to read.

Abstract

The first sentence or two of the abstract should sum up the core idea, argument or thesis of the paper. This should be followed by details of the evidence used to support the argument. The implications of the paper (for different stakeholders) should normally follow.

Length

Contributions to the Forum should be a maximum of 3000 words and should include an abstract of 100–150 words.