The role of NQF in HE Quality assurance

Sorin Eugen ZAHARIA,
University professor, “Politehnica” University of Bucharest,
President of Knowledge Transfer Association of Romania
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1. Context

- **New jobs**: the shift to a low-carbon economy and the growing importance of the knowledge economy, in particular the diffusion of ICTs and nano-technologies offer great potential for the creation of sustainable jobs.

- **Globalisation**, ageing populations, urbanisation and the evolution of social structures also accelerate the pace of change in labour market and skills requirements.

- The **public** are changing and also the **teaching process**.
Word competition

Technological Changes Based on competences

The changing and higher needs from economy to education

Global Economy

Education and Training Systems – the Education and Training offers

Economical growth

A competitive workforce capable answering to changing demands of professionel pathways

Economy and society

Economy and society
How strategies for do this?

• Incentives to encourage structured partnerships with enterprises will be needed to bring universities closer to the world of business.
• Universities must also provide knowledge and skills geared to the needs of the labour market.
• Universities must also concentrate on the development of excellence.

A renewed agenda for modernisation
Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems

• Involving employers and labour market institutions in the design and delivery of programmes and foster employability and entrepreneurship.

• Encourage a greater variety of study modes by adapting funding mechanisms where necessary.

• Enhance the capacity of labour market institutions and regulations to match skills and jobs, and develop active labour market policies to promote graduate employment and enhance career guidance.

• Introduce incentives for higher education institutions to invest in continuous professional development for their staff.
The New Skills for New Jobs initiative sets out to:

- Promote better anticipation of future skills needs;
- Develop better matching between skills and labour market needs;
- Bridge the gap between the worlds of education and work.
The development of new skills and competencies becomes a priority and a challenge at international level and national public authorities, for education and training providers, companies, workers and students.

What it is the role of universities?

To give confidence to students to take the plunge in life
Important

- Education is a socialization process and students are influenced by the values, culture and ethos of their institutions.
The key role of universities

- Universities must provide **knowledge and skills** geared to the needs of the labour market.
- Graduates' qualifications must meet the needs of the labour market.
- **Solution:**
  - Innovative curricula, teaching methods and continuing or refresher training courses combining general and specific skills.

Access to the labour market should serve as an indicator of the quality and performance of universities.
Exellence of university

- An institution that makes a claim to be excellent would be expected to provide evidence that it meets the following criteria:
  - **Positive stakeholder satisfaction.** The concept of excellence is linked to the perceived performance of institutions, evaluated through feedback from stakeholders.
  - **High levels of student satisfaction.** Excellence can be viewed in terms of the service provided to students and their satisfaction with the quality of their learning experience.
Conclusion

• Quality Assurance have to assess in what measure the qualifications delivered by universities keep pace with the evolution of knowledge, skills and competences needed by the labor market.
2. European Tools

- European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- Qualifications Framework for European Higher Education Area (Bologna Framework)
- Diploma Suplement
- Quality Assurance in HE (Bologna Process)
- European Quality Assurance in VET (EQARF)
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
- European Credit System for Vocational Training and Education (ECVET)
- ESCO: a new European classification of skills, competences, occupations and qualifications.
Bologna Process
EHEA (EEES)
and EC tools
Quality Assurance

General definition of Quality Assurance:
The planned and systematic activities implemented in a quality system so that quality requirements for a product or service will be fulfilled.

Quality assurance means developing operational controls to ensure that the results match the desired outcomes.

In education
Simplified notions are drawn from the business sector and uncritically applied in the educational context, and ignore the complexity and indeed contradictory demands in some cases of the various stakeholders: students, academic and professional interest groups, research funders and practitioners, government, employers, society at large, and future generations.

Who are the actors?
Who are the customer?
2005, the Bergen Communiqué:

“We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (...), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. We commit ourselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA by 2010, and to having started work on this by 2007.”

• Knowledge
• Skills
• Competences
(Responsability/ autonomy)
What is the Qualifications Framework for higher education?

• A mechanism that provides visibility and consistency of national higher education system, which support the mobility and employability of graduates;

• A mechanism based on a broad partnership: universities, students, employers, unions, professional associations, sectoral committees, policy makers, etc.
What is the EQF and what benefits does it present?

- The EQF is a common reference framework that enables European countries to link their national qualifications systems.
- It acts as a translation device for easy reading and understanding across different countries and European systems.
- A tool for enhancing partnership education – society and thus to promoting trust among stakeholders.
- It has two main objectives:
  - promote citizens' mobility between countries;
  - facilitate education and training throughout life.
3. Interaction of tools in Higher education

Quality assurance

Qualification framework  ESCO
3.1 Acknowledging teaching as a skill

- Continuous professional education as teachers should become a requirement for teachers in the higher education sector.

- This means **new skills for teachers** established by **ESCO**, sector education.

- Learning outcomes for teachers in **QF**.
Which skills must 21st century teachers have to promote high quality learning?

• To face rapidly changing demands, which require a new set of competences and call for new approaches to teaching and learning.
• be able to stimulate open and flexible learning that will improve learning outcomes, assessment and recognition.
• An excellent teacher can enhance creative skills and learning outcomes such as:
  ▶ complex thinking – problem solving, reciprocal learning, experiential learning;
  ▶ social skills and participatory learning – interaction with tutors and other learners, active participation in learning, interdependence;
  ▶ personal shaping of knowledge – progressive mastery, individual pacing, self-correction, critical reflection, active seeking of meaning, empowered self-direction, internal drive/motivation.
3.2 Curriculum design: involving students as partners in teaching and learning

Curricula should be developed and monitored through dialogue and partnerships among teaching staff, students, graduates and labour market actors, drawing on new methods of teaching and learning, so that students acquire relevant skills that enhance their employability.

Curricula have to be established on the base of learning outcomes.
3.3 Assessment

Student performance in learning activities should be assessed against clear and agreed learning outcomes, developed in partnership by all faculty members involved in their delivery.

The assessment standards are part of QF and are based on learning outcomes established for each level and sector of education.
3.4 Knowing our students

- Higher education institutions and national policy makers in partnership with students should establish counselling, guidance, mentoring and tracking systems to support students into higher education, and on their way to graduation and beyond.

The persons involved in counselling have to know the competences and skills demanded by occupations from diverse sectors - ESCO.
3.5 New skills for teachers

- Higher education institutions – facilitated by public administrations and the EU – should support their teachers so they develop the skills for online and other forms of teaching and learning opened up by the digital era, and should exploit the opportunities presented by technology to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
3.6 Multidisciplinary for better outcomes

- Higher education institutions should introduce and promote cross-, trans- and interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning, helping students develop their breadth of understanding and entrepreneurial and innovative mind-sets.

Cross-, trans- and interdisciplinary competences are demanded by employers and they are part of QF as transversal competences.
5. Education – Labour market

- Determinants of education
- Education and learning outcomes
- Employment outcomes
- Employment
- Government

Education and training system
The macroeconomic and social context
Quality assurance
Education and learning outcomes

Employment

Education and learning outcomes

General competences, Ethic and ideological behavior

Specific competences

Knowledge

Diploms, certificates and titles

Time passed in education system. Primary school, gymnasium, high school & higher education

General Education

Vocational and technological Education
Contribution at knowledge

Higher employment outcomes

Experience competence accumulated

Employment outcomes

validation

Formal

Nonformal

Employment
ESCO

European Skills/Competences, Qualifications and Occupations

- Facilitate dialogue between labour market and the education/training sector.
- The ESCO classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market and education and training.
- It systematically shows the relationships between occupations, skills, competences and qualifications.
ESCO: THREE PILLARS

ESCO is a Europe 2020 initiative.
SCOPE OF ESCO

1. Covering the entire labour market reality:
   - Broader regional relevance EU

2. Reference vocabulary with level of detail:
   - Required to exchange information
   - Broad enough to include all major concepts
   - Precise enough to describe them

3. Manageable / Easy to use/ Regional coverage

4. National, regional, or sectoral extensions
Role of Qualification Framework in QA - conclusions -

- To ensure the adequate *learning outcomes* and consequently the new skills and competences asked by labour market;
- To link the universities and there quality assurance approaches to the *national and international context*.
- To ensure the *flexibility and adaptability* of higher education qualifications.
- To ensure the *appropriate curricula* in order to ensure the *expected needs* of society in terms of graduate’s competences.
- To improve *transparency*.
Role of Qualification Framework in QA
- conclusions-

• To ensure and consolidate a systemic partnership between universities and economic and social environment.

• To contribute to the excellence of HE institutions and to the excellence of graduates.

• QF influence QA by establishing the appropriate skills and competences and is influenced by QA by enhancing the teaching and learning processes in order to ensure the better skills and competences of graduates.
Conclusion

• Quality Assurance have to assess in what measure the qualifications delivered by universities keep pace with the evolution of knowledge, skills and competences needed by the labor market.

• Access to the labour market should serve as an indicator of the quality and performance of universities.
Higher Education

QA

QF & ESCO

Excelence
Thank you for your attention!
sorin.zaharia@gmail.com