Contents

1.   Introduction – background of the peer-review workshop

The report will describe activities that have been taken during the peer review activities that have been organised according to the ESQA project timeline.

The peer review activity will have as **main objective** *analyses and reflection on the ways in which stakeholders are involved in the quality assurance procedures and processes at the level of each agency, through an open, no stake process, and also to identify ways to increase the involvement and the quality of their contribution, directions for future actions and to define a desired and shared vision on the role and cooperation model of stakeholders to improve QA processes.*

This activity supports **the development of the diagnose from each agency involved in the project.** Each category of stakeholders will be defined, describing their role and the specific activities in which they are involved. If possible, the particular impact for the involvement of each category of stakeholders will be analysed. The peer-review helps the QA agencies to identify and address the common and specific points in which involvement of external stakeholders could be made more efficient, to be used in planning further action to improve their practices, standards or procedures. The peer review activities will be an occasion to investigate the perspective of different actors on the quality assurance activities, their willingness to get involved and areas of interest. The activity is also expected to stimulate the interest of external stakeholders in becoming actively involved in QA activity in higher education. For example, a workshop would concern the Danish approach to involving students in quality assurance, where the participants in the project could hear about how this is organized and meet some of those involved, to discuss what they see as the right way to approach students, and what they see as benefits. This could be the basis for a subsequent discussion among the project participants about whether this could inspire similar approaches in other countries.

ESQA project aims to support the activity of Peer-Learning group C on stakeholders' involvement in external QA. Various categories of stakeholders' engagement will be explored, including discussions on stakeholders' expectations towards external quality assurance work and sharing best practices among QAAs', in regards to including stakeholders in EQA activities and ongoing development of practices. Through the project the analyse and reflection will be carried out on how stakeholders are involved in the QA procedures, Identification of ways to increase the involvement and the quality of their contribution, finding the direction for future actions and defining a shared vision on the role of stakeholders to improve QA processes. ESQA project aim to:

• Support to the peer learning activities on QA within the Bologna Follow-up Group and the Bologna process,

• Analyse of various categories of stakeholders involved in QA,

• Analyse of stakeholders expectations towards external quality assurance work,

- Sharing best practices among QAAs in regards to including stakeholders in EQA activities and ongoing development of practices,
- Recommendations provided to the national authorities and QAAs in terms of stakeholders involvement regarding the ways to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with stakeholders, as well as for their effective involvement in the QA process.

2. Goals of the Peer Review activity

First project Peer Learning Activity was organised by ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The meeting was scheduled between on 30th of October 2019 until 1 of November 2020.

The main goals of the first PLA were the following:

- Analyse and reflection on the ways in which stakeholders are involved in the QA procedures,
- Identify ways to increase the involvement and the quality of their contribution, direction for future actions,
- Define a shared vision on the role of stakeholders to improve QA processes.

The answers which the agency is looking for as a result of the project were following:

- How to put stakeholders together to work with each other. Building the stakeholder community around HEI, also as a bridge to society.
- How the potential EQA stakeholders in Romania can be more involved. Finding the way to enhance cooperation that shows the added value for all stakeholders.
- Meaning of the term "Quality". How to communicate the common understanding and necessity of QA in Higher Education for external stakeholders

3. Structure of the Peer Review activity

The project meeting was divided into two parts. During the first internal meeting with project partners, participants had a chance to have an initial discussion regarding the project, do the task division go through the agenda of the plenary workshop for external stakeholders invited for the meeting. NEAA, ANACEC and ARACIS had a chance to present their work emphasizing the aspect of stakeholder involvement. Presentations have also shown that the state-of-play of stakeholders involvement in EQA differs much in regards to the national context.

Second part of the project meeting was the workshop, there were 33 stakeholder participants with diverse backgrounds including from the Ministry, student representatives, teaching staff, management of universities, IQA department staff, employers and teachers' union. Following the plenary presentations, the participants were split into smaller groups in order to discuss and emphasize the point of view regarding stakeholder involvement. In the groups, people had very diverse ideas and expectations about Quality Assurance. Sometimes it came across that people did not necessarily have so much knowledge about EQA.

Based on the group work outcomes, different stakeholder groups pointed out that the possible obstacle to meaningful stakeholder engagement is lack of information on what the participation in shaping the EQA within respective national systems brings to them. The need for this type of information was identified.

Stakeholder participation can be encouraged by demonstrating more clearly the impact of their contribution. That might give the solid ground for further policy changes and lead to reshape the EQA system towards more co-ownership based nature.

The plenary workshop was divided into two parts during the first one attendees had a chance to learn, how the Quality Assurance Agencies, that are project partners in the ESQA project are building the relationship between stakeholders. Setting up the common understanding of what Quality Assurance brings as an added value for each stakeholder was crucial to build a common base for further discussions.

Introduction presentations were the following:

- *Introduction to the ESQA project and its aims - Cristina Ghitulica, ARACIS*

- *Stakeholder involvement as described in the ESG - Solange Pisarz*

- *How stakeholder involvement is reflected in QA agency procedures? Agency perspectives from Romania and Denmark.* - Radu Mircea Damian, ARACIS – RO, Ditte Strandbygaard and Kevin Gønge , DEI – DK

Afterwards, the participants were split into smaller groups. Through two rounds of the group work, stakeholders had a chance to exchange thoughts, express expectations towards the EQA and Higher Education from their point of view. Through the workshop, it was also worth noticing, that for the vast majority the expectations from other groups than the one they have represented were not known before. That may lead to a conclusion that building the active stakeholder environment requires not only direct relations on the line between stakeholder and Quality Assurance Agencies and HE institutions but also between stakeholder themselves.

Prior to the two workshop sessions, introduction presentations were carried out. First session's topic: *What is the Quality of Higher Education? Developing a common understanding,* introduced by Jakub Grodecki (ESU) was aiming to build the common ground for further discussions between participants.

Topics for the group discussions were the following:

- In your daily work - on which occasions you see that HE in your country has/doesn't have good quality higher education?

- What institutions/bodies or people you identify should be responsible for maintaining quality in higher education?

- What actions can you take in order to enhance the quality of education?

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The second workshop session was led by External ESQA project expert Stefan Delplace: *Stakeholders' involvement in QA: what works and what to be done to enhance their contribution?* After the introduction, group discussions were oriented around three questions:

- What is your individual engagement or involvement in quality assurance?

- What do you see as the main obstacles and barriers to stakeholders' involvement?

- What are your suggestions and motivations for the increased participation of stakeholders?

Through the discussion during project meeting and plenary meeting with different stakeholders, peer learning activity showed that stakeholders have different expectations on their involvement in EQA but also that of other stakeholders. The common ground and communication between key actors are crucial as depends on the stakeholder, and they have a very diverse idea of what is real impact and role of Quality Assurance. Participants, who were representing different groups of stakeholders stated that it would be vital to have more meetings with stakeholders, not only those that are involved already but with the bigger public. That could possibly lead to better recognition of needs and build the common ground for further cooperation and mutual understanding. ARACIS, the host agency expressed that Bucharest workshop was helpful to get in touch with stakeholders and hear about their expectations. Based of the outcomes of PLA it is possible to diagnose, that more similar meetings, where stakeholders will have a space to discuss are needed on the national level in romania. It is worth noticing, that the meeting should be more workshop-oriented to deeply understand the needs of different parties.

4. Role of stakeholders – outcomes of the workshop

Stakeholders from different background and expertise were present during the plenary meeting on the second day of the first PLA organised within the ESQA project. The aim of the meeting was to gather the opinions and different approach from actors that are fully or partly involved in the QA process. The main outcomes that were possible to diagnose after first Peer Learning Activity. During the discussions with the stakeholders we could hear about all the challenges they face while interacting with the external quality assurance and the QA agency. It is key to analyse their feedback on the way of understanding how to improve their engagement. It is also important to notice, that this part is the outcome only from the plenary workshop in Bucharest, therefore all the needs and key outcomes below are only applicable to Romanian context.

4.1. Higher Education Institutions authorities and Research Institutes

This group of stakeholders identified the following challenges in the frames of engagement with the Romanian QA agency:

- Often changing methodologies for EQA,

- Time-consuming procedures to fulfill quality assurance requirements,

- Problems with understanding the broader purpose of external evaluation by academics,

- Instability of the labour market. implementation of changes in study programmes, opening new faculties and refocusing the mission of the particular faculty.

The above-mentioned may lead us to think that the necessity of the EQA is not obvious for this group of stakeholders. Furthermore, they find it time-consuming which means that don't see a beneficial outcome resulting from QA procedures.

4.2. Quality Assurance Agencies

Representatives of Quality Assurance Agencies expressed strengths and difficulties in regards to stakeholder involvement.

Strengths:
✓ Regular participation of ARACIS at all meetings of the National Rector' Council,

✓ Engaging representatives of employers and professionals in external evaluations of engineering study programmes,

✓ Participation of academics from the medical profession as members of ARACIS permanent representation.

Difficulties:
✓ Vital engagement of employers due to lack of motivation, time and financial resources

✓ Lack of knowledge and expertise about QA in other possible groups, e.g. NGO's. As one of the possible reasons may be lack of media coverage regarding QA of Higher Education.

✓ Difficulty in engaging other staff besides academics in external evaluations. In case they are involved, the participation is often not visible. Lack of specialized staff in HEIs to become more involved and responsible in IQA and to alleviate bureaucratic tasks of academics creating in universities the perception that QA means more paperwork than necessary.

✓ Lack of sufficient knowledge or experience in HE makes their engagement very difficult permanently.

✓ Lack of time for external stakeholders to participate in training sessions.

✓ Possible lack of motivation or interest in time-consuming quality assurance activities, such as training sessions, participation in evaluation panels.

The difficulties show us that there is a problem with the attractiveness of QA procedures for the externals. This can be explained either by the lack of awareness about the QA procedures among stakeholders or by the lack of the impact of the QAprocedures. We suggest the question to be further studied in the future activities of the project.

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4.3. Student Representatives and students

Key challenges regarding student participation within Romanian QA system and the perception of QA by students and student representatives that have attended the workshop may be diagnosed as following:

- ✓ Encouragement for students to participate in the IQA and EQA process from the beginning of their study cycle. Lack of information and training about QA.

- ✓ Maintaining good quality of engaged student experts within the university.

- ✓ The tension between students and teachers. Professors should see the students as equal. If not, this may lead into lack of motivation within both sides.

- ✓ Putting more value regarding students involvement. Students should also be represented in the board of QA agencies.

- ✓ Building up the student legitimacy, by clearly showing them the impact of their evaluation.

- ✓ Creating space and mechanisms from the beginning of the student cycle, to make them responsible for their own learning path.

Those challenges can lead to a conclusion that it is necessary to build the quality culture between higher education institutions and students from the beginning of the student's cycle. Even if the formal requirements for student participation are fulfilled, it is still important to create the space for broader dialogue within the student's body.

4.4. Employers

Some of the key Challenges regarding the employers involvement are the following:

- ✓ Enterprises do not see the clear added value to be actively engaged in EQA processes.

- ✓ Employers are not willing to have students in practices and internships. That creates the obstacle for students. Employers highlighted the decreasing number of interest of HE graduates. Beyond the capacity QA agencies, it's a matter of economic and political context, country development etc.

- ✓ Employer representatives mentioned lack of knowledge on how to follow-up the student needs and provide support for the students.

- ✓ Pre-university education and university should be broader connected with each other.

- ✓ Participation in EQA is not financially attractive for entrepreneurships.

The challenges that were expressed by employers are connected to the point of view from point 5.2. that attractiveness of involvement in QA is not clearly understood and visible for external stakeholders. The possible reason might be lack of understanding the expectations between HEI's and employers.

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5. Changing expectations of QA regarding stakeholders involvement – first outcomes from Bucharest's PLA withing the ESQA project

After the plenary discussions and wrap-up session within the project partners, it was possible to extract some of the common key messages that have been communicated by different stakeholders. One of the key aspects that was raised by different stakeholders in different group discussions was communication and visible value of the QA processes. If the stakeholders are invited to participate in the external quality assurance, it is also necessary to build up the value stream that flows in both ways.

Communication that includes feedback back to the Stakeholder's and especially the impact of their work is essential to motivate and strenghten their further actions and involvement.

Some of the main suggestions regarding this topic were the following:

- Creating a space for constant dialogue, involving all possible stakeholders
- More frequency of meetings with more variety and balance stakeholders,
- More information and bring knowledge about QA, transparency of the process,
- Better explanation to external partners out of HEI's and QAA's on the main goal of providing evaluations,
- Being open for changes, not only preserving the institutional dimension of the reviews.
- The professionalisation of the QA system,
- Reducing bureaucracy,
- Seeking for more involvement from business representatives.

Other conclusions were circulating around enhancing of QA processes itself:

- The professionalisation of the field. Agencies have not created a profession of QA expert. To engage more professionals from non-academic background, there might be a matter of raising the compensations.
- The universities need to follow the recommendations of the assessment. From the opinions expressed in discussion, follow-up of procedures doesn't function well.
- More stability in law regulations is expected.
- Building and showing the quality of QA Agencies itself.
- Establishing and enhancing collaboration between companies and universities.
- Management control and assistance, who is responsible for what in the QA system.

One of the aspects that were discussed was more connected to the learning and teaching process, impact on study programmes and the role of HEI's:

- Promoting Student Centered Learning (SCL) and its understanding between stakeholders.
- Counselling for students, acknowledging the input from external stakeholders

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- To develop an institutional culture of Quality in the university, this feeling is missing from the graduates,
- Communicating to the stakeholders the added value of co-shaping the study programmes
- Importance of teachers focused on the student's motivations, diagnosing their needs during the learning process.

We believe that reflections and analysis related to the above mentioned bullet points will help in finding the right approaches for the QA stakeholder's engagement in EQA in the context of Romania and will help to improve the procedures.

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- Analyse of various categories of stakeholders involved in QA

- Analyse of stakeholders expectations towards external quality assurance work

- Sharing best practices among QAAs in regards to including stakeholders in EQA activities and ongoing development of practices

- Recommendations provided to the national authorities and QAAs in terms of stakeholders involvement regarding the ways to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with stakeholders, as well as for their effective involvement in the QA process.

2. Structure of the Peer Review activity

Second project's Peer Review Activity was organised by DAI – Danish Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The meeting was scheduled between on 2nd and 4th of December 2019. During the first meeting, project partners have discussed and summarised key thoughts after the meeting in Bucharest.

Some key outcomes from the first meeting can be summarised in following keypoints:

Expectations

stakeholders have different expectations for their involvement in External Quality Assurance. Provision of cohesive information to the stakeholders is crucial, as different actors have a very diverse idea of QA. One of the key commitment towards creating the space for stakeholder cooperation and engagement is enhancing communication and information about value added that EQA brings to different stakeholders.

More meetings:

Organising more meetings with stakeholders that could lead to better diagnose the mutual needs between each other, not only those that are involved already but looking for opportunities within the bigger public. Bucharest workshop was helpful to get in touch with stakeholders in the Romanian context and hear about their expectations.

Stakeholder involvement should create impact:

The purpose of stakeholder involvement should not be just for the sake of them being there, but they should be empowered to participate truly. Another point is to have an impact on stakeholders' attitudes towards other stakeholders, e.g. that also, in reality, teachers treat students equally in panels, committees etc.

Recruitment of stakeholders:

The recruitment process of high-quality stakeholder representatives is essential to maintain further cooperation and to ensure the stability of the functioning system. Perhaps, one solution could be providing feedback on stakeholder representatives' involvement and performance to their representing organisation. It is essential to take the national difference context into consideration. In some countries finding the right people may be easier than in others.

Training:

Training is an important factor in stakeholder involvement effectiveness. For instance, student participation is increased with experience and training. But also teachers may not be prepared if they are not trained to do evaluations and use the criteria. Thus, training should concern all stakeholders. It was also commented that different groups should not be trained in isolation but rather on the same level.

The first day continued with HCERES (France) and DAI (Denmark) presenting their activities with stakeholders involvement and a run through the programme for the workshop with the participation of stakeholders.

The second day, after general presentations, a guided session of discussion in smaller groups, with participation of stakeholders, was realized. The last day of the meeting was devoted to discuss the outcomes of the peer-learning activities and further steps.

3. Presentations carried out by different project partners - Good practices and examples of a different approach for the stakeholders' involvement

3.1. Stakeholder involvement in France, François Pernot and Solange Pisarz, Hcéres

Hcéres has pointed out a paradox in stakeholders involvement. Trying to involve stakeholders is a key responsibility for QAA. On the other hand, it also means trying to try to find a consensus between different goals and objectives: involvement but independance, objectivity and acceptation, accountability and effectiveness etc. The role of the agency is try to define a balance, taking into account all these objectives, and guarantee stakeholders involvement despite the tension. Accountability is illustrated :

- ✓ via the composition of Hcéres Board (The college), with the participation of all stakeholders of the Higher education system,

- ✓ and via interviews at the Parliament.

- Information and transparency are achieved in different ways:

  - ✓ Hcéres keeps regular dialogue with Rectors conference (meetings several times a year to present agency's actions and answer questions); with Ministers (meetings several times a year to show agency's efforts, answer questions and work together to solve problems in particular); and with other evaluation structures (very frequent working meetings with the CTI, the CEFDG, other foreign agencies, etc.)

  - ✓ Hcéres disseminates information through its website (all evaluation reports are published and available for years). In addition, two French HE news agencies comment almost daily Hcéres reports and activities.

  - ✓ Stakeholders in panels: All panels include academics, students, administrative staff and representatives from the socio-economic world. All panel members have the same role, and they gain equal remuneration. There is a collegial decision-making approach among panellists. Depending on the size, there are 4-6 panel members in programme and 6-10 panel members in institutional evaluations.

✓ All stakeholders receive the same training. There is a dedicated training on the structure the panel has to evaluate about three months before the evaluation is to take place. In this meeting, the panel discusses and plans how it will conduct the evaluation. Panellists can split responsibilities, but everyone works on the report. After the site visit, there is a meeting where all panellists discuss and agree on the report.

- In Hcéres diagnose, it is also interesting to point out that some activities experienced to enforce stakeholders involvement were not as successful as planned (like dedicated committees). On the contrary, topic related seminars have worked very well.

- Hcéres is also starting to use more and more webinars and videos for training. In the meeting, a short video where the evaluation was explained was shown. The video included animations and panellists' explanations.

- The development of the use of social media is also a very useful tool for stakeholders involvement.

3.2. Stakeholder involvement in Denmark, Steffen Westergård Andersen, DAI

The presentation by Danish QAA Agency shown the context regarding DAI's approach towards stakeholders involvement lies in the center of its strategy. Through its activities DAI aims to create the environment, which enables the stakeholders to actively participation in enhancing the EQA impact on the Higher Education in Denmark.

DAI is organising events with and for stakeholders. e.g. seminar on SCL for stakeholders. Institutions came with presentations and explained how they work with SCL in their HEI and participants had a chance to comment. DAI sees that stakeholder involvement has several benefits, namely: improving methodology and processes, de-bureaucratization, identifying blind spots, empowering stakeholders, legitimacy, and transparency.

DAI involves stakeholders in accreditation processes in the following ways:

- startup meetings with HEIs to explain the logic of the accreditation and to start a relationship;

- interviews during the site visit with HEI and employer representatives. As per Danish Law, employers need to be included. They provide information on what are the current trends in the labour market, what skills should be developed, which one not;

- hearing process as regards to the panel composition (HEI);

- evaluation (HEI);

- educational programme (panels);

- site visits (panels);

- commenting on the report;

- evaluation (panels).

There are also stakeholder involvement activities that go beyond accreditation processes. These include:

- STAR
- IA 2.0
- analysis projects (e.g. publication on stakeholder interviews, this helps to get into a dialogue with stakeholders in a trust-based way);
- ongoing dialogue (with HEIs undergoing an evaluation);
- Learning Analytics Network;
- specific activities, e.g. SCL seminar.

Currently, The Accreditation Council is composed of 2 students, 2 labour market representatives and 5 HEI representatives.

All the main stakeholders (Students, labour market representative and HEI representatives are part of the evaluation panels. Each individual evaluation team is going through the specific training. DAI's next steps for moving forward include meetings with labour market representatives and redefining agency's role to more consulting and collaborative partnerships.

3.3. Students' involvement in QA – How to cultivate a rewarding collaboration, Kevin Gønge from DAI

Students, as a key stakeholder within QA processes and the Higher Education as a whole. Identifying the blind spots, pointing the areas that are important in the context of learning, having an impact of the future study programmes that are being tought etc. The basis for meaningful involvement and participation in IQA and EQA processes lies into maintaining the dialogue, and clear communication between the students body, student representatives and othere stakeholders within the HE systems. Because of the nature of the student's body which is the most numerous and at the same time students cycle is very short in comparison to, e.g. academic staff, it is crucial to find the way to start the cooperation as soon as possible after students come to the HEI. DAI involves students in accreditation processes in different formal ways.

Students are included in accreditation panels (student representative in each panel).

- During site visits, "' organised'' students (e.g. representatives in the HEI board) are interviewed during the first visit, ''ordinary'' students are interviewed during the second site visit.
- In the Accreditation council, there are two students out of 9 members.

Besides the formal involvement of students in QA the STAR – The Student's Accreditation Council is an activity that goes beyond formal involvement. Despite the name, STAR is more of a network than a council. It was established in 2014, and it provides a discussion forum for students engaged in QA and political activities at the HEIs. Seventeen national student organisations are represented in STAR. It holds two meetings per year with discussions on accreditation and quality is HE.

It enables knowledge sharing between students across sectors. STAR contributes to appoint potential students for accreditation panels; informs local student bodies about accreditation (before accreditation there are meetings to inform students); provides input for thematic analyses by telling what is relevant from a student perspective.

STAR is a good tool to find common ground. "Ambitions for student involvement" agreement is important as before students were almost frightened by universities prior to the evaluation interviews. Students are represented in the Study boards in HEIs and the participation there is equally treated. HEIs prepare course evaluations, and sometimes response rate is not so good which HEIs may use as an excuse not to take action. A solution from students would be to involve students already before the surveys.

Students believe that when assessing the involvement of students in quality assurance, It is essential to hold Co-decision making between students and HEI staff. A student should have a voice regarding the outcomes and preparation for the accreditation There is diversity on how much students are involved in writing the self-evaluation reports or giving comments for the factual check.

Course and teaching evaluations exist, but sometimes formal surveys are not taken by students. There is a move to finding other ways to evaluate than filling in surveys. This includes dialogue between student and teachers, which is a more trust-based approach. The student representative sees value in real student participation (in the form of STAR) instead of surveys.

3.4. The role of students in SCL: New opportunities/challenges for students' participation brought by the latest trends in learning (digitalization, remote learning etc.), Adam Gajek, former President of the European Students' Union (ESU)

Another presentation that was given by Adam Gajek have provided the introduction to the background of Student-Centered Learning in the Bologna Process and presented the definition of SCL which aims towards representing both a mindset and a culture within a given higher education institution and is a learning approach which is broadly related to, and supported by, constructivist theories of learning. It is characterised by innovative methods of teaching which aim to promote learning in communication with teachers and other learners and which take students seriously as active participants in their own learning, fostering transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and reflective thinking.

The new trends in Higher Education concerning different approaches and expectations of students are also rising the new challenges for Quality Assurance Agencies. Since most of the QAA's are already involving students into the formal procedures, evaluation panels and consultations, the further challenge is to establish a well-working environment within HE systems within less traditional education. Digitalized and internationalized online campuses that allow the students to acquire flexible and remote learning require even more involvement of stakeholders to ensure the trust and reasoning in the more "contactless" study process. Some of the possible opportunities and challenges may be found below, according to the different new trends in learning.

✓ **Digitalisation.**

Opportunities that are possible to match with the use of digital technology are accessibility, individual focus, digital literacy and flexibility of learning.

Challenges: lack of social interaction, lack of relationship with campus, digital inequalities. Some solutions include: students' involvement (group work etc), online interaction, online campus, blended learning.

✓ **Internationalisation**

Opportunities: global citizenship, using learning materials from all over the globe, border-less jobs, learning new learning and working cultures.

Challenges: Adaptation of foreign students (often no voice in student representation), foreign language facilities, short term students out of students' body, language learning of students and teachers.

Student mobilities are different to evaluate and here trust is very important (e.g. trust in terms of recognition of credits). Possible solutions are consist of training provision for students and teachers, language learning as part of the curriculum, involvement of students in campus.

✓ **Remote learning**

Opportunities: accessibility, variety of choice, flexibility of learning, connecting with professional life.

Challenges: lack of community, loneliness, no connection between students and teachers, low student participation, less focus on each student, difficulty with keeping motivation.

Solutions: Use the student representation scheme, possibilities for student networking, online consultations, group assignments, frequent feedback collection.

✓ **Flexibility**

Opportunities: variety of modes of learning, content and teachers, Scheduling options, less pressure on time outcomes, adjustment to other occupations, improves access and retention.

Challenges: taking self-responsibility for learning, learning management.

Solutions: training on responsibility for learning and learning management.

✓ **Job skills**

Opportunities: Generic skills, practical knowledge, easier transition to labour market, better economy.

Challenges: challenging co-operation with labour market, commercialisation of studies, endangering academic values.

Solutions: Programme consulted not dictated by business, evaluation of provided skills by students and graduates, ensuring multiple purposes of education in curriculum (personal development etc).

To match above-mentioned challenges in the future the EQA systems have to ensure now, that all of the partners will come together in policy making. Stakeholders need to feel responsible for the process and be part of the community. In order to ensure this, stakeholders responsibility is to:

- Research to know what is important, know what are the obstacles.
- Constant improve the QA and adjust it to different needs.
- Pressure on government done together.
- Empower of the less heard ones.

3.5. Stakeholder Involvement in the Changing Landscape of Higher Education in 2020-2040, Prof. Bert van der Zwaan

The presentation gave the project partners and participants a wide perspective on the possible scenario for the future of higher education which could be linked to the development of QA and stakeholder involvement.

Before reaching any further conclusions is is important to understand and list the driving forces that will be affecting universitites in the upcoming decades.
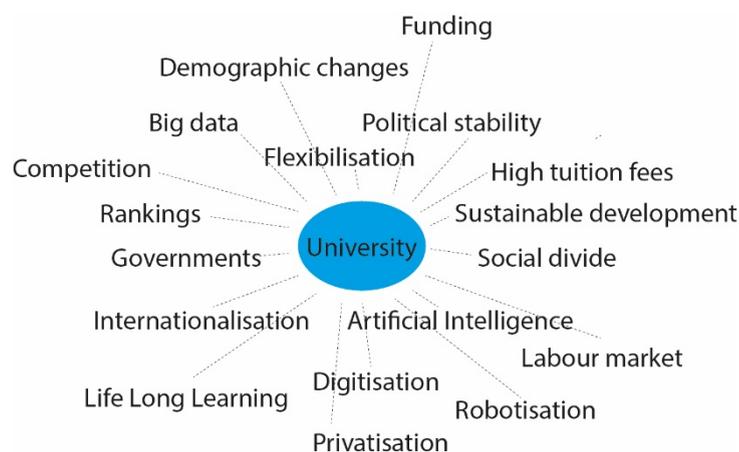

Key forces for the future of universities:
- ✓ Strength: Universities are (still) respected and relatively well-funded
- ✓ Weakness: Universities are inward-looking and not agile
- ✓ Opportunity: digitalisation and artificial intelligence
- ✓ Threat: (Rapid) shift in focus from qualifications and skills

The Higher Education landscape has changed profoundly, therefore HE itself is reacting slowly. In a stronly changing labour market, deepeniong social division, and digitalization of all the data and knowledge, the University is in danger of loosing its support in the political arena and society. The demand for customized education by offering short courses and modules grows rapidly, supported heavily by digital education.

Personalised learning, unbundling the traditionall full programmes and lifelong learning will lead to a different university, which will be less physical and more network-based, and belonging to a larger (regional) knowledge infrastructure. The importance of full curricula and degree certificates will decrease, step-by-step certification in combination with continuing education will increase in importance. There will be a shift in emphasis from qualification (degree) to competencies and skills, which currently seems to be too low. Growing confrontation with major social issues will dictate the university's knowledge agenda. This is particularly true in Europe and the US, less so in Asia. Growing importance of 'impact' versus 'economic value/valorisation'. Sustainability will be key element in many decisions. Mobility of students and staff will decrease dramatically, internationalisation will shift towards "the cloud". But the labour market will continue to globalize.

The profile of future stakeholders: Change in the future field of stakeholders is complex; besides the core stakeholders such as students there are much more of those. It is about politics, society, the changing labour market, and the totally different way knowledge will be transferred.
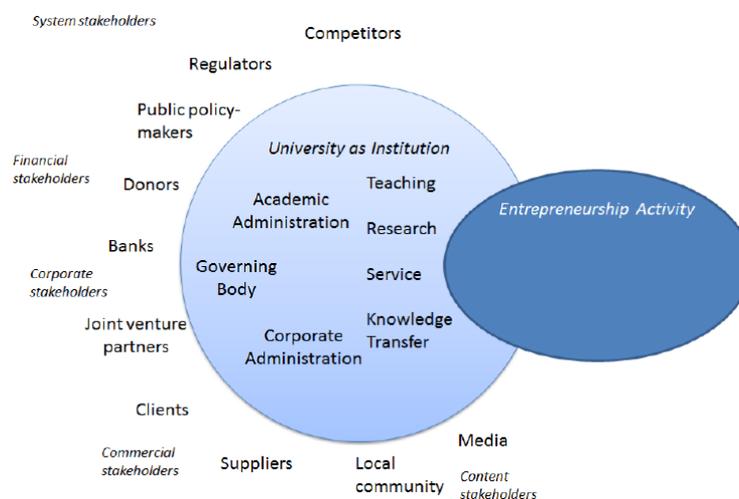
Source: Slide 17 of Prof. Bert van der Zwaan' presentation

Stakeholder classification from core stakeholders to indirect ones: Among the core stakeholders the largest change is coming from students. Faculty will demand a totally different reward and incentive scheme Among the external stakeholders largest pressure is from the changing labour market and the demand from businesses. Society is the largest indirect stakeholder: the change will be profound.
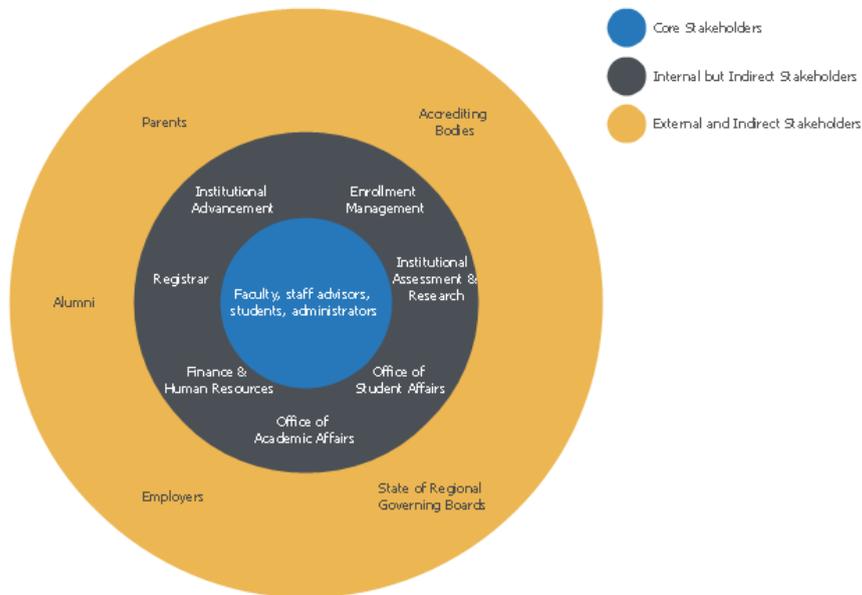
Source: Slide 18 of Prof. Bert van der Zwaan' presentation

Most important core stakeholder – the student: The sociology of students will change, with increasing wealth they live longer with their parents; parents have a strong say in selecting a university and study profile. Focus and demand from students will shift from knowledge, to competency and skills.

Teaching will increasingly be together with potential employers: "the university as workshop". Unbundling of the curriclum will imply shorter time at university before entering the labour market, together with continuous development/education during career steps.

Most important direct stakeholder – the university organisation: Over the past decades, the knowledge production increasingly has been valued in economic terms, illustrated by the present-day emphasis on the economically productive disciplines. This will change: focus will shift to societal challenges. Universities need to cope with an increasingly clear division between global, high ranked and rich universities, and the more locally operating institutions with less money. Rankings remain important. Faculty will require different reward and incentive schemes: less "bean counting" in research and much more focus on teaching.

Most important external stakeholder – labourmarket and businesses: According to OECD, the level of skills and competencies of student leaving the modern university, is too low. Traditional strong focus on qualification will shift to competency. The demand for soft skills and ai/it literacy-skills will strongly increase. Labour market will be more volatile, each career having more steps than at present. Therefore, developing continuous education or Life Long Learning, is urgent.

The most important indirect stakeholder – society: Lowering of trust, increasing critiscism of elitism, the widening social divide: these all demand action from the university. The Open Science debate, particularly fierce in Europe, shows that more and more universities are prepared to pay attention to the society at large. In response, the university will change from increasingly technocratic, to a more value-driven institution working for society and will be challenged to take leadership in times of profound change. Governments will step back – private HEI's increasingly important.

The challenge of change:

Interaction of HEIs and stakeholder: Faculty and government are conservative factors in responding to necessary change. Re-training of faculty is crucial. Government needs to invest to teacher training. Students and business demand change.

The change of the Higher Education landscape also indicates that QA agencies should change. Quality Assurance need to change significantly, because of :

- ✓ Flexible programs
- ✓ More focus on competencies and skills than on qualification
- ✓ Entrance and exit qualifications highly variable; competency-based admission will increase, also to ensure successful LLL
- ✓ More need for international benchmarking
- ✓ Increase of privatization
- ✓ Decreasing value of degree - stacking of credentials will increase

Current focus on QA is now mostly on preserving/establishing the quality withing the institutions; it should shift more towards a role as partner in collaborative transformation.

After the presentation the Q&A session and discussion started. Some of they key thoughts from the discussions were following:

- ✓ The position of Quality Assurance Agencies might be not the most fortunate in relation to governments.
- ✓ QAA's are about checking the efficiency and still their responsbility is to check the boxes set by a standard which might be not fitting different aproaches.
- ✓ Agecies should have more information on the trends around society.
- ✓ HEIs should inform QAAs more about their different mission and the QAAs boxes do not see this and are very uniform.
- ✓ QAAs should also be involved in the debate about student admission and recognition of prior learning.

3.6 Process of stakeholder involvement in the development of new guidelines (IA 2.0), DAI

In 2018 DAI came with a new focus on dialogue with external stakeholders. Background to this was ENQA review report and the general focus on increased cross-boundary dialogue in the public institutions in Denmark.

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DAI has presented the new stratégy which aims to achieve a broad involvement of all HEIs and a close involvement in terms of small dialogue groups consisting of representatives from the different types of HEIs. The tactic was to involve confederations of HEIs in making a wish list for the dialogue during the development process.

DAI presented guideline prototype suggestions and participants gave feedback on it. It needs to be kept in mind that the Danish law gives a certain framework; the Ministry has the criteria. The Ministry consulted DAI on the criteria which are based on the ESG. The process with the ministry was working in parallel with the stakeholder dialogue. Stakeholders understood that they have different interests regarding the guideline and that DAI owns the guideline and that the guideline was a compromise between different parties.

Key outcomes from the wrap-up discussion regarding DAI were the following:

✓ Listening to external stakeholders can bypass the internal stakeholders

✓ The represented stakeholders do not necessarily represent all stakeholders. The representatives may represent only partially the stakeholder institution, and some reps may dominate the conversation. Important to know who you are talking to!

✓ Negotiations in a dialogue are both political and technical: New suggestions for technical issues can introduce uncertainty leading to political interventions from stakeholders. Important to involve high-level management so that they feel well informed.

4. Group discussion outcomes and key thoughts from the Q&A session

Group discussions in Copenhagen were circulating around three main topics.

• How to bridge the gap between education and the labour market?

✓ Access and work on data on employment relevance.

✓ Focusing on internship programmes, development and monitoring of their's quality

✓ Depend on the field of studies, and the role of the particular stakeholder, it is essential to create a space for communication. To ensure sufficient knowledge and engagement, it is necessary to maintain constant contact between the parties.

• What stakeholders are relevant to involve and how?

✓ Trade unions tend to help students and have a very clear interest in getting the student ready for the labour market. A closer collaboration could bridge the gap between education and the labour market.

✓ Close collaboration with trade unions is also a way to inform students about the relevance and importance of trade unions.

• What good practices/deficiencies have you experienced regarding stakeholder involvement in QA activities?

✓ Supporting student involvement by hiring a consultant who helps students to organise and structure their work.

✓ Providing teacher training at the faculties

- ✓ Dialogue with labour market regarding internships and evaluation of work-based learning
- ✓ Enhance co-operation about the content of programmes with partners emphasising the evaluation of internships.
- ✓ Student Council at the Ministry

5. Summary

Through the two peer learning activities project partners had a chance to share the ideas, gather the national stakeholders around the workshops organised within the project, see the different context and define the areas to develop.

The main topics on stakeholders' involvement for further reflection as presented and discussed may be identified as following:

- ✓ Different stakeholders have different views and engagements, and thus creating a shared vision on EQA could be a most essential objective in stimulating their engagement;
- ✓ National contexts of HE systems, QA systems and frameworks, EQA cycles and practices, and maturity of agencies as well as mutual trust and cultures are important dimensions;
- ✓ Training and communication (information and feedback) seems to be essential in developing stakeholders' involvement;
- ✓ Real and mutual dialogue is something else than just consulting the stakeholders and is important to create co-ownership through co-creation;
- ✓ For all stakeholders' it seems to be important to know and be clear about their impact;
- ✓ Thematic activities (trainings, seminars, etc) for and with stakeholders can improve their motivation and thus their involvement;
- ✓ With all stakeholders there seems to be a different attitude between officially representation nominated by (national) organisations and just belonging to group, e.g. an "organised" student or not, or a local employer as member of a panel reviewing a specific study programme and a representative of the (national) employers' organisation as board member.

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