

The European approach for QA of Joint Programmes

Lucien Bollaert

International independent QA expert

Visiting professor

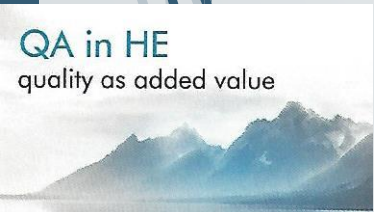
Member of boards of AEQES, QQI, EQ-Arts

EURASHE Community of QA

23 January 2019

TAM seminar | Kosovo | Pristina

- Intro: need, aim, definitions, limitations, approval
- Application
- Standards
- Procedure for EQA of Joint Programmes in the EHEA
- Conclusions: and yet...





The European approach for QA of JPs

Intro: need, aim, definitions, approval

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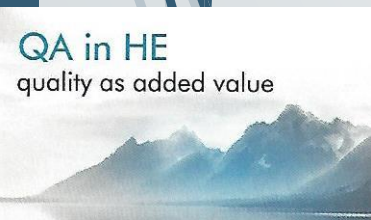
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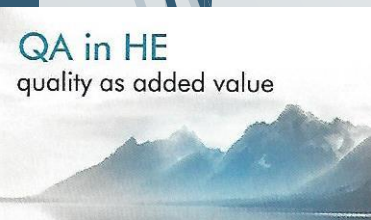
- Introductory observation:
- Many Joint Programmes in the EHEA;
- A great diversity of approaches to EQA, including accreditation, evaluation or audit both at the level of study programme and/or HEI;
- Many national differences in:
 - EQA and accreditation legal procedures and requirements
 - Allowance of foreign QAAs to review
 - Composition and International membership of EQA panels
 - Formats of SER and public review reports
 - Formal decisions based on public reports
 - Recognition of different decisions/proposals/findings/ (re)commendations/conditions and overall conclusion of panels (reports)
 - Cycles of accreditation



A very burdensome, complicated and repetitive process

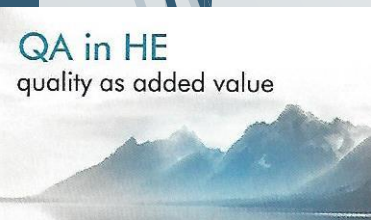


- Main objective: to ease EQA of JPs
 - Dismantle obstacles by setting standards for JPs based on the agreed EHEA tools, without applying additional national criteria
 - Facilitate integrated approaches to QA of JPs that genuinely reflect and mirror their joint character.
- ➔ standards based on ESG & QF-EHEA
procedure & criteria based on JOQAR project

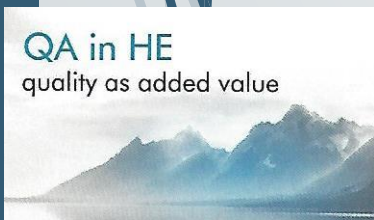


- **Joint programme:** **integrated** curriculum **coordinated and offered jointly** by different **HEIs from 2 or more EHEA** countries, and leading to double/multiple degrees or a joint degree;
- **Joint degree:** **single** document awarded by HEIs offering the JP and nationally acknowledged as the recognised award of the JP;
- **Multiple/double degree:** **separate/2** degrees awarded by HEIs offering the JP attesting the successful completion of this programme;

- Not for JPs delivered jointly by HEIs from one country;
- The European approach for QA of JPs may be used for JPs both within and outside the EHEA. Involved HEIs from non-EHEA countries are encouraged to inquire whether their national authorities would accept the ESG part B and be able to recognise the decision;
- The coordinating QAA must always be an EQAR-registered agency;
- JPs for a profession subject to EU Directive 2005/36/EC need to be notified to the EC by the competent authority of one EU member state;



- Yerevan 2015 EHEA ministerial conference: approval of the ESG
- Yerevan 2015 communiqué, commitment: *“to enable our higher education institutions to use a suitable EQAR registered agency for their external quality assurance process, respecting the national arrangements for the decision making on QA outcomes.”*
- Yerevan 2015: approval of ECTS-guide
- Yerevan 2015: approval of the *“European approach of QA of Joint Programmes”* :
 - Use & interpretation of ESG in order to audit a joint programme through a single audit ...
 - by a(n) (international) panel ...
 - coordinated by an EQAR-registered QAA.



The European approach for QA of JPs

Application

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- Application depends on the needs of the HEIs and the requirements of their national authorities
- If some of the cooperating HEIs require EQA at programme level, they should select an EQAR-registered agency.
- If all cooperating HEIs are subject to EQA at institutional level only, no European approach is needed. Yet, they may use the European approach for IQA of the JPs.
- In case of JPs by HEIs from both within and outside the EHEA the HEIs from non-EHEA countries are encouraged to inquire whether their national authorities would accept the ESG part B and be able to recognise the decision by an EQAR-registered QAA.



The European approach for QA of JPs

Standards

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1. Eligibility

1.1 Status

HEIs officially recognised as such.

Legal framework enables to participate in JPs and to award a degree.

HEIs ensure the degree(s) belong to HE national systems.

1.2 Joint design and delivery

The JP should be offered jointly, involving all HEIs in design and delivery of the programme.

1.3 Cooperation agreement

Covering the terms and conditions, in particular: denomination of the degree(s), coordination & responsibilities regarding management & finances; admission and selection procedures for students; mobility of students & teachers; examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.

2. Learning outcomes (LO)

2.1 Level (ESG 1.2)

Intended LOs should align with the corresponding levels in the FQ-EHEA and the applicable NQFs.

2.2 Disciplinary field

The intended LOs should comprise knowledge, skills & competences in the respective disciplinary fields.

2.3 Achievement (ESG 1.2)

The JP should be able to demonstrate the intended LOs are achieved.

2.4 Regulated Professions

The minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Directive 2005/36/EC, or relevant common training frameworks established under the Directive, should be taken into account.

3. Study Programme (ESG 1.2)

3.1 Curriculum

Structure and content should enable students to achieve the intended LOs.

3.2 Credits

ECTS should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.

3.3 Workload (QF-EHEA)

JBaP: 180-240 ECTS-credits

JMaP: 90-120 ECTS-credits with minimum of 60 ECTS-credits

JPhDP: no credit range specified

The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.

4. Admission & Recognition (ESG 1.4)

4.1 Curriculum

The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the programme's level and discipline.

4.2 Recognition

Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies, including prior learning) should be in line with LRC.

5. Learning, Teaching & Assessment (ESG 1.3)

5.1 Learning & Teaching

The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended LOs. The learning and teaching approaches should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially in view of potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.

5.2 Assessment of students

The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved LOs should correspond with the intended LOs. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.

6. Student support (ESG 1.6)

Student support should contribute to the achievement of the intended LOs. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.

7. Resources (ESG 1.5 & 1.6)

7.1 Staff

Staff should be sufficient and adequate (international experience!) to implement the study programme.

7.2 Facilities

Facilities should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended LOs.

8. Transparency & Documentation (ESG 1.8)

Information should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.

9. Quality Assurance (ESG 1.1 & part 1)

The cooperating institutions should apply joint IQA processes in accordance with part 1 of the ESG.

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Procedure for EQQA of JPs

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- 
- ✓ HEIs should select jointly a suitable EQAR-registered QAA. The QAA should communicate appropriately with all the national authorities in which the HEIs are based.
 - 1. Self-Evaluation Report (ESG 2.3)
 - demonstrate compliance with the ESG
 - + information on all national frameworks and systems
 - + distinctive feature of the JP as a joint endeavour of HEIs from different national HE systems
 - 2. Review Panel (ESG 2.3 & 2.4)
 - at least 4 members combining expertise in subject/ discipline, world of work, and QA
 - HEIs right to object, but no veto
 - briefed by QAA, particularly on the distinctive JP features
 - + international expertise and experience of 2 included countries

3. Site Visit(ESG 2.3)

- discuss with representatives of all HEIs (management, staff, students, and other relevant stakeholders, such as alumni and the professional field)
- + normally restricted to one location, but the provision at all locations has to be taken into account

4. Review Report (ESG 2.3 & 2.6)

- evidence, analysis, and conclusions with regard to ESG part B, recommendations, if necessary also for the decision
- HEIs right to request correction of factual errors, and to comment on a draft version of the review report
- + particular attention to the distinctive features of the JP



5. Formal outcomes and decision (ESG 2.5)

- motivated decision with conditions or recommendations

! Beforehand it should be known how the national authorities accept or translate the decision internationally

6. Appeals (ESG 2.7)

- QAA should have a formalised appeals procedure in place

7. Reporting (ESG 2.6)

- publish review report and decision

+ in case of non-English, English version of decision and its reasons, and English summary of report

8. Follow-up (ESG 2.3) should be agreed with the HEIs

9. Periodicity (ESG 1.10): 6-year period

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Conclusions: and yet...

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- ❖ And yet, up to now only 4 full European approaches for QA of JPs have been finalized with recognized decisions...
Although the main objective is to make international EQA for JPs easier, it still seems to be quite burdensome;
- ❖ Natural: see table of [basic issues of incompatibility](#)

QA systems tend to work...	Joint Programmes tend to be...
National or regional	European or international
Mono-cultural	Inter-cultural
Assessing compliance with standards (and underlying criteria, indicators and guidelines)	Experimental, innovational and constantly flexible looking for better cooperation
Using defined criteria mostly unrelated to jointness at the core	Jointed at the core

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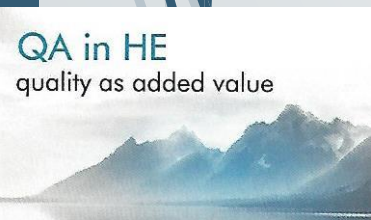
- ❖ National reasons:

- Many countries do still not (legally) accept reviews by the prescribed panel composition (international members, students and employers are sometimes the problem);
- Many countries are still not (legally) open to (automatically) recognize the panel's decision or recommendation to accredit;
- Many countries still do not (legally) allow the European Approach for QA of JP;

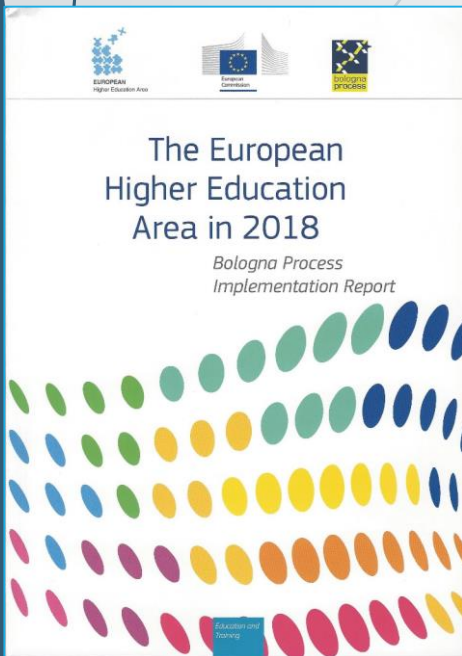
- ❖ HEIs' reasons:

- ❖ QAAs' reasons:

- ❖ Other organisational reasons:

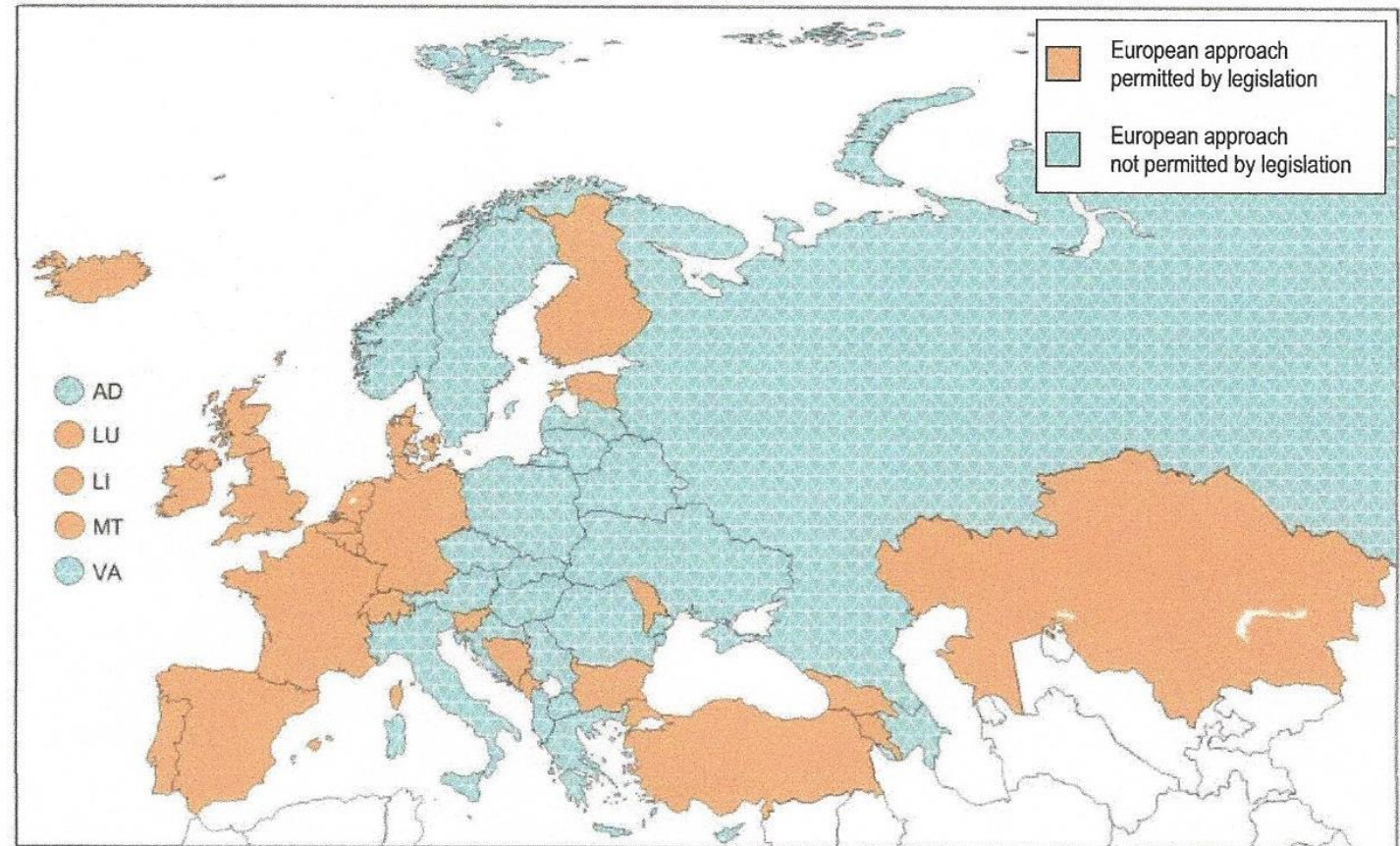


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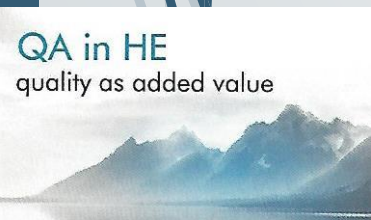


- ❖ National reasons
 - Many countries: panel composition sometimes the
 - Many countries: the panel's de
 - Many countries: QA of JP;
- ❖ HEIs' reasons:
- ❖ QAAs' reasons:
- ❖ Other organisati

Figure 4.12: Countries allowing the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, 2016/17



Source: BFUG data collection.



Availability of the European Approach

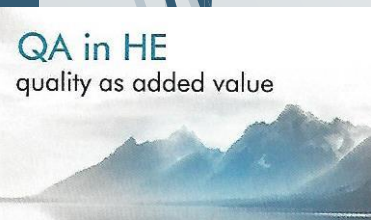
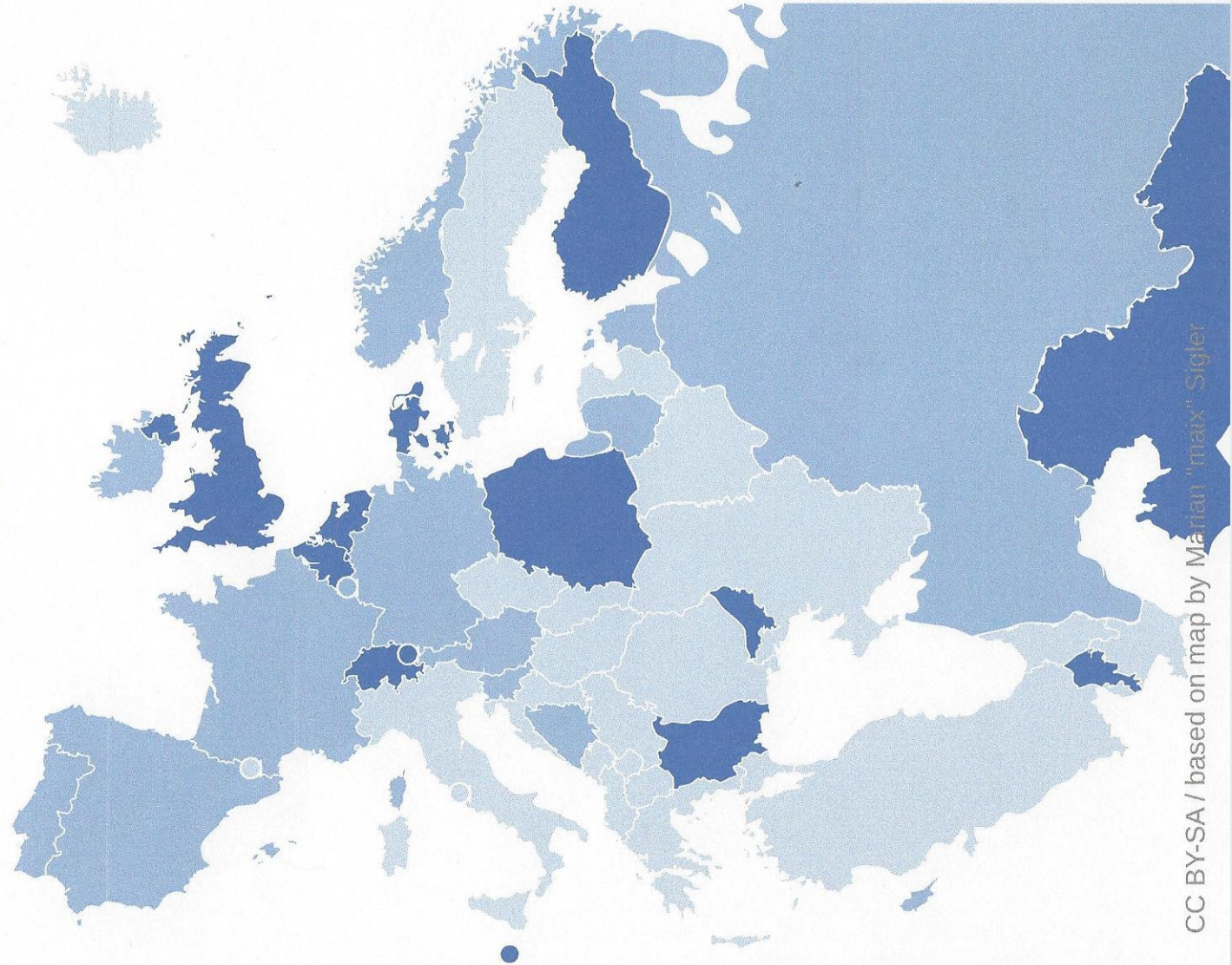


<https://www.eqar.eu/kb/joint-programmes/national-implementation/>

All higher education institutions are able to use the European Approach to satisfy national QA requirements

Some higher education institutions or only under specific conditions

Cannot be used to satisfy national QA requirements

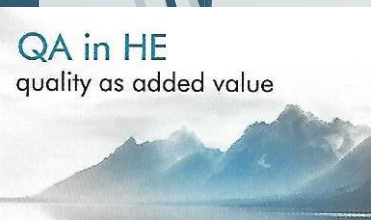
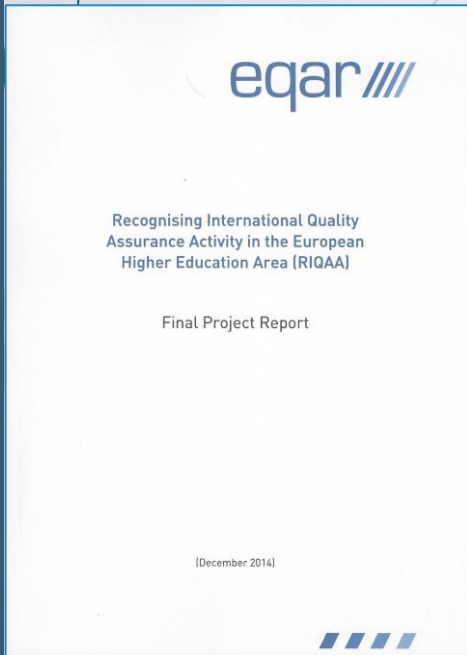


- ❖ And yet, up to now only 4 full European approaches for QA of JPs have been finalized with recognized decisions...
Although the main objective is to make international EQA for JPs easier, it still seems to be quite burdensome;

- ❖ National reasons:

- ❖ HEIs' reasons:

- The JP consortium or one/some cooperating HEIs are still not that far in the truly jointly designing and organising the JP (learning & assessment methods, IQA, finances, sleeping partners);
- The JP consortium or one/some cooperating HEIs do not want to discuss with the national authorities (to make an exception);
- The JP consortium is still afraid for the unknown procedure and international panel, which could be more severe than a national one;
- The translation of documents needed in the EQA (SER) process, although most JP documents are already in English or another common language;
- The price of an international approach as opposed to a merely national

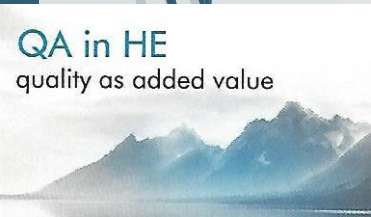


- ❖ And yet, up to now only 4 full European approaches for QA of JPs have been finalized with recognized decisions...
Although the main objective is to make international EQA for JPs easier, it still seems to be quite burdensome;
- ❖ National reasons:
- ❖ HEIs' reasons:
- ❖ QAAs' reasons:
 - The absence of the legal competence to make international decisions or decisions in another (EHEA) country;
 - The inexperience and lack of knowledge (to coordinate) an international EQA;
 - The burden of communicating with (all) national authorities involved;
 - The lack of international appropriate experts;
 - The (multi-)language problem;
 - EQAR registration
- ❖ Other organisational reasons:



Implementing the
European Approach
for Quality Assurance
of Joint Programmes

Background report



- ❖ And yet, up to now only 4 full European approaches for QA of JPs have been finalized with recognized decisions...
Although the main objective is to make international EQA for JPs easier, it still seems to be quite burdensome;

- ❖ National reasons:

- ❖ HEIs' reasons:

- ❖ QAAs' reasons:

- ❖ Other organisational reasons:

- The price of the intense preparation, of the actual site visit and of the QAA(s);
- The intense communication and collaboration (with possible unknown partners as a non-national QAA);
- The differences in timing with the (national and/or internal) IQA cycles;
- Lack of trust and commitment (of one or some cooperating HEIs and/or QAAs and/or national authorities)
- Lack of (inter)national funding of the JP;



Implementing the
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Background report



- ❖ And yet, up to now only 4 full European approaches for QA of JPs have been finalized with recognized dimensions... Although the main objective is to make international EQA for JPs easier, it seems to be more of a hindrance than an incentive.

- ❖ National reasons

- ❖ HEIs reasons

- ❖ QAAs

- ❖ Other orgs

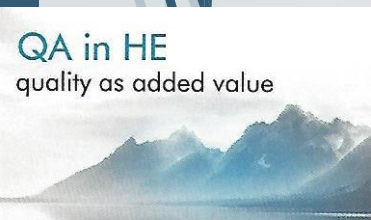
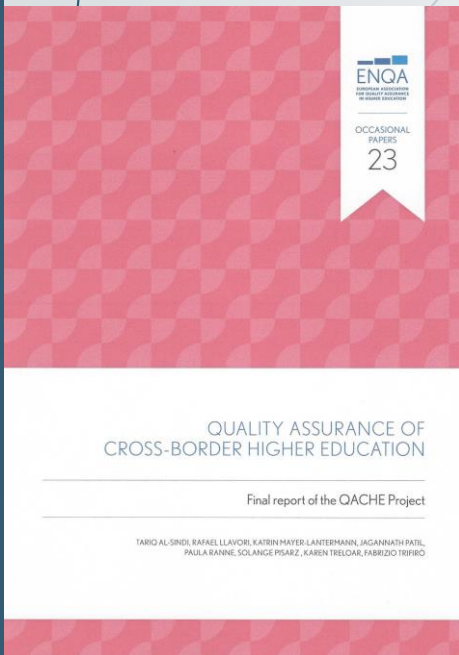
How to cope with all these pitfalls in the next session

- The... (with possible unknown...)

- Lack of... (international and/or internal) IQA cycles;

- Lack of true... commitment (of one or some cooperating HEIs and/or QAAs and... national authorities)

- Lack of (inter)national funding of the JP;





Thanks



lucien.bollaert@gmail.com

lucien.bollaert@gmail.com

Q & A

