



To recognise – and to be recognised!

Spinning the web of Recognition and QA

Rolf Lofstad, Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)
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Your host for this event

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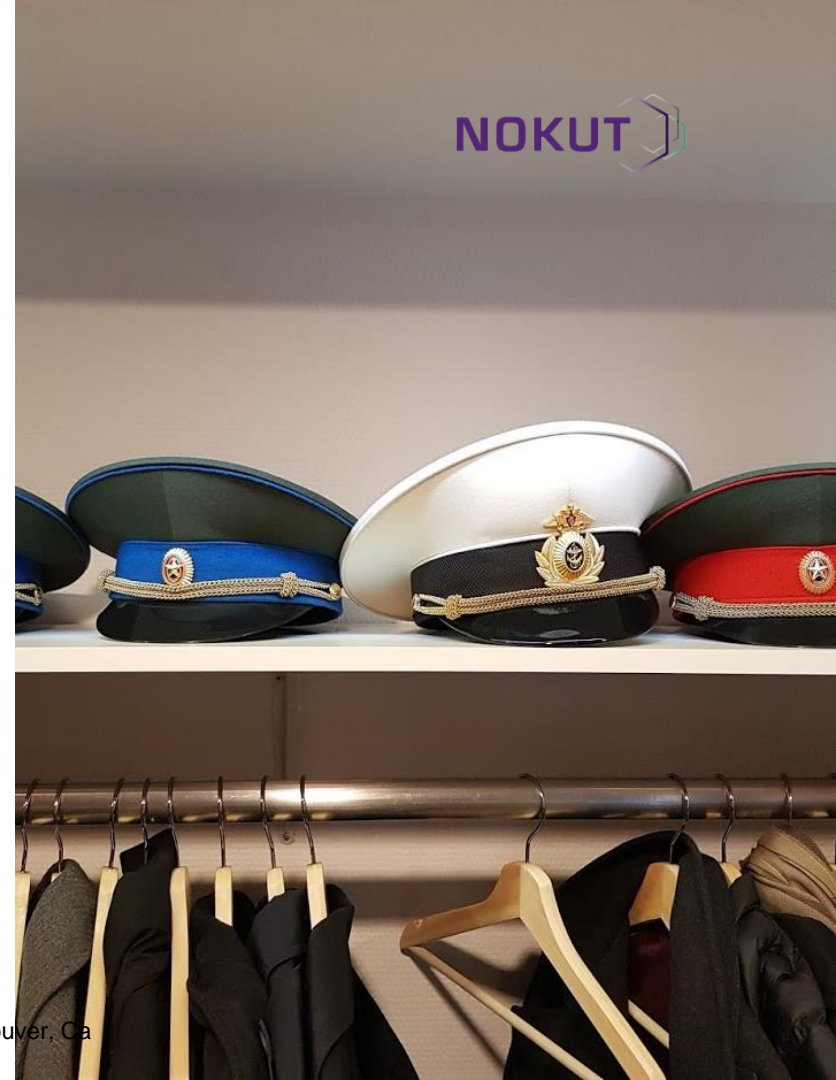
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Who are you?

- QAA?
- ENIC-NARICs?
- HEI – Admission?
- Licensure?
- Other?



Background

- The Bologna Process and the world of recognition are merging. The European Standards Guidelines (ESG 2015) explicitly address the link between the Lisbon Recognition Convention and quality assurance (QA).
- But, what does this mean and what is the interaction between QA and recognition?
- This session explores how recognition is important to- and its impacts on- QA, as well as how it serves as a key consideration for HEIs to achieve strategic ambitions.

Agenda

- About NOKUT
- Recognition & QA
 - LRC
 - ENQA /ESG
- LIREQA!
- Examples from “RecoLatin”
 - General recommendations
 - Findings

About NOKUT www.nokut.no

NOKUT (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) is an independent, public expert body under the Ministry of Education and Research. The board of NOKUT is the agency's supreme governing body. Established in 2003

- **NOKUT is the national quality assurance agency for higher education and tertiary vocational education**
 - NOKUT informs about and helps to further develop the quality of studies and educational institutions in Norway
- **NOKUT is the national agency for recognition of foreign education**
 - Formal recognition decisions
 - HEd and TVE
 - Inform about education systems and qualifications, both foreign Norwegian

Sorry for being Eurocentric!

But I am 😊

so
Interrupt

and
ask questions when you want!

Lets stop for a minute..

- Quality assurance of recognition procedures
- Historical division:
 - QA
 - Recognition
- Recognition as part of the HEIs internal QA system (often neglected)
- Recognition as part of the HEIs external QA system (often neglected)
- Recognition as tool to achieve strategic ambitions
 - Internationalization
 - Attractiveness
 - Being part of the global academic community
 - Etc. etc. etc. etc. etc.

ESG (European standards and guidelines for QA in the EHEA) 2015 / ENQA – revision 2015

ESG 1.4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Standard:

Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

ESG 2015, from Guidelines 1.4

- ***From Guidelines 1.4:***
- It is vital to have fit-for-purpose admission, recognition and completion procedures, particularly when students are mobile within and across higher education systems.
- It is important that access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.
- Institutions need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on student progression.

ESG 2015, from Guidelines 1.4

- ***From Guidelines 1.4:***

- Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progression in their studies, while promoting mobility.

Appropriate recognition procedures rely on:

- institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.

LIREQA – integrating academic recognition and quality assurance



- The project:
aims to contribute to fair recognition by developing recommendations to demonstrate how to practically further develop linkages between academic recognition and both internal and external quality assurance
- Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Lithuania
- AIC – Academic Information Centre, Latvia
- ANECA – the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain
- AQU Catalunya – Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency, Spain
- CTI – Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur, France
- ENQA – European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- NOKUT – Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, Norway
- Nuffic – the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education, The Netherlands
- UNIBASQ the Agency for the Quality of the Basque University System, Spain
- The project's Advisory Board included President of Intergovernmental Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee; representatives of ESU and EUA; and former member of the NARIC Advisory Board.
- http://www.skvc.lt/uploads/documents/files/LIREQA_recommendations_final_web.pdf

LIREQA recommendations

- Recommendations to
 1. higher education institutions
 2. external quality assurance agencies
 3. the ENIC/NARIC centres
 4. the stakeholders

LIREQA recommendations to HEIs (1)

- Higher education institutions should establish and/or analyse and streamline their recognition procedures using the Lisbon Recognition Convention, its subsidiary texts, the European Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions (EARHEI Manual)¹⁵, and other tools developed by the ENIC/NARIC networks
- Higher education institutions should make the streamlined recognition procedures subject to regular monitoring and review as part of their internal quality assurance system.
- Higher education institutions should actively promote opportunities for all types of recognition, publish clear and easily accessible information about it, and ensure prompt communication with the learner during the recognition process.

LIREQA recommendations to HEIs (2)

- Higher education institutions should ensure and support reliable and consistent recognition decision making with an appropriate institutional infrastructure.
- Higher education institutions should liaise with the national ENIC/ NARIC centre for information and capacity and consider how the services of credential evaluation provided by the ENIC/NARIC may best fit in with their own procedures.
- Higher education institutions should cooperate with the recognition community of other higher education institutions to share information, knowledge, and good practice.

LIREQA recommendations to external QAA

- 2.1. Quality assurance agencies should include recognition in regular external quality assurance procedures as appropriate in the context of the higher education system in place and the relevant agency's profile.
- 2.2. External quality assurance procedures should evaluate if recognition is included in internal quality assurance and if recognition is in compliance with the LRC.
- 2.5. Quality assurance agencies should promote dialogue and contribute to dissemination of good practices in recognition.

Partner countries:

France

Italy

Mexico

Norway

Panama

Uruguay

WP 6

Recognition and QA

<http://www.recolatin.eu/>

WP6 - ambitions

Quality assurance aspects on recognition procedures in HE institutions.

Related to QA aspects with HE institutions.

- Target groups: NARIC centres + ministries and other official bodies of Latin American countries + universities (EU and Latin America)
- mapping different QA procedures
- drafting guidelines to identify quality assurance aspects related to accreditation/recognition procedures of institutions and programmes
- organize peer-reviews

Activities

- Presentation, article, survey, dialogue and reports (guidelines and recommendations) – identification of challenges / increased awareness
- Survey:
 - What rights to an academic evaluation/recognition of accomplished competences/qualifications do the students and applicants to your institution have?
 - What can the recognition lead to (admission, exemption of subjects, credit transfer)?
 - How are applicants and students informed about their right to an evaluation/recognition?
 - What processes/procedures for evaluation and recognition exist?
 - Who/which units of the institution are responsible for the evaluation/recognition?
 - How do the applicants document their competences/qualifications (certificate, interviews, work experience, etc.)?
 - How does the institution document the evaluation that has been done (archiving, decision, grounds, legal basis, etc.)?
 - What are the main elements in the recognition/evaluation procedure?
 - Which procedures of quality assurance for evaluation / recognition exist?
 - Do you have bilateral or multilateral agreements on evaluation/recognition on national or institutional level?

**Dialogue and reports (guidelines and
recommendations) – identification of challenges**

Findings #1

1. Simplify and streamline the procedures and documentation requirements for recognition.
Rather than focusing on *how* to regulate, the university should ask *why* something is regulated. The justification for procedures and requirements should be subjects for reflection.
2. Systematize feedback processes involving students, academic and administrative staff
3. HEIs should define what it means to be prepared for studies

Findings #2

1. HEI should make the (streamlined) recognition procedures subject to regular monitoring and review as part of its internal quality assurance system.
2. HEI should monitor results and quality of recognition decisions. Examples could include e.g. analyses of the difference between the performance of:
 1. academic staff with domestic vs. foreign education (number of publications, research grants, staff and student surveys etc.), or
 2. students with domestic vs. foreign education (completion, achievements, progression, dropout rates, student and staff surveys etc.).
3. HEI should consider horizontal evaluation of similar / identical recognition decisions across the university.

Findings #3

- HEI should develop a process for regular evaluation of accomplishment, including establishment of legal and administrative basis for such monitoring as necessary.
- HEI should define KPIs (*key performance indicators*) for recognition:
 - turnaround time of applications,
 - consistency of decision-making,
 - communication of substantial differences (including information about what the applicant should do to qualify for recognition when the decision is negative),
 - transparency of the recognition process, public information provision.

General recommendations #1

- Recognition procedures and criteria should be transparent, coherent, reliable, and non-discriminatory.
- The decision-making process should ensure coherence between decision-makers across the institution
- The procedures should be flexible enough to incorporate various special cases, such as refugees or people in a refugee-like situation with insufficient or no documentation.
- There should be a possibility to appeal all recognition decisions.

General recommendations #2

- The institutional infrastructure should encompass:
 - Institutional strategic support for recognition activities, including clarification on allocation of responsibilities.
 - Knowledgeable and trained staff that are given opportunities to network and learn.
 - Access to appropriate external instruments for reliable decision making, such as databases or professional networks.
 - Internal information management resources, which would allow the collation and sharing of relevant information, such as a shared database of previous recognition decisions, samples of documents, and information on various education systems, etc.

Parting shot!

QA/QE

- View recognition in all its aspects as a tool for
- Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement

Strategic



NOKUT

Thank you for your attention!

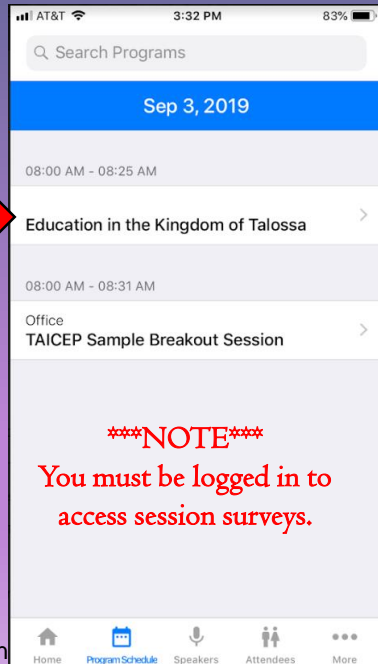
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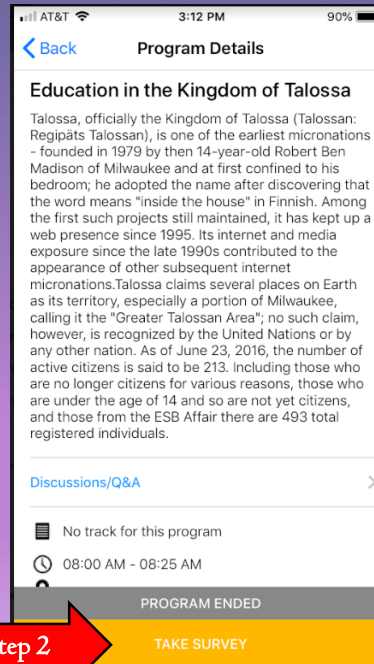
“Take Survey” Button Available 10 Minutes Before Session Ends

“Submit” (*Then... go find coffee!*)

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

