

# Quality assurance of joint degree programs : What do Asian QA agencies learn from Europe? "

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# Introduction

- ◆ There are several types of cross-border tertiary education which involve internationalization in the home country, including twinning, franchising, joint and double degrees, distance education, branch campuses, the virtual university, and others.
- ◆ joint and double degree programs leading to a certificate issued jointly by the participating higher education institutions have been growing in popularity worldwide, particularly in Europe, Asia, and Australia

# Definition of joint degree

- ◆ “a single document nationally acknowledged as the recognized award of the joint programme and signed by the competent authorities representing the institutions involved in the joint degree” (By ECA)
- ◆ “there is only one diploma, no matter whether it is at Bachelor, Master or Doctoral level, being signed jointly by the rectors of all participating universities and recognized officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located”(by **EACEA**)

# Summary

- ◆ Upon completion of the study program, students will obtain **one joint qualification** signed jointly by all institutions involved in the program, including **local and foreign** institutions

# Development of joint degree programs

## ◆ in Europe

- ◆ In 2011, 84 % of European universities offered joint programs and 33 % of them awarded joint degrees.
- ◆ By 2012, almost European countries had implemented the legislation needed for joint degrees, and the total number of joint degree programs had reached 3000.

## ◆ In Asia

- ◆ joint degree programs have gained increasing popularity due to the growth of transnational higher education in the region since 2000.
- ◆ many Asian nations promote higher education internationalization through joint degree programs.
- ◆ Most joint degree programs in Asia are provided by prestigious universities, particularly in China and Singapore

# Characteristics of joint degree programs

- ◆ developed jointly by several institutions
- ◆ meet appropriate national quality assurance standards
- ◆ involve students from each participating institution physically taking part in the study program at other institutions
- ◆ produce learning outcomes recognized by all participating institutions
- ◆ have a jointly developed curriculum and cooperation on admission and examination
- ◆ faculty are encouraged to teach on the joint program
- ◆ the level of intensity of the linkage between the partner institutions
- ◆ joint promotion and marketing of the programme, a joint alumni association
- ◆ an appropriate language policy
- ◆ the joint management of grants or other financial resources of the programme



# Questions addressed

- ◆ When students are given more opportunities to study abroad to earn a foreign or a joint degree, how the quality can be assured and its qualification will be recognized within nation, region and cross region becomes an international agenda in many nations.

# Outline of Presentation

- ◆ Quality assurance
  - ◆ European model
  - ◆ Asian context
  - ◆ Quality assurance agencies' perspectives





# Projects for the quality assurance of joint degree programs in Europe

- ◆ the European University Association (EUA) initiated a project
  - ◆ called “the European Masters New Evaluation Methodology” (EMNEM) on joint Masters program from 2002 to 2004
- ◆ The European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
  - ◆ In 2006, ENQA launched Transnational Evaluation Project II (TEEP II)
- ◆ the Nordic Quality Assurance Network in Higher Education (NOQA) undertook an evaluation of joint Nordic Master programs in 2008
- ◆ European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)
  - ◆ developed a project entitled “Joint programs: Quality Assurance and Recognition of degrees awarded” (JOQAR) in 2010

# Comparison of national, joint, single, and international approaches of joint degree programs

Model	Evaluation activities	Advantages	Disadvantages	Examples
<b>National accreditation</b>	Individual procedure. Separate on site visit, multi final report, and various accreditation outcomes	Simple, cost saving	Multiple visits, multiple panels, even multiple decisions	Most countries adopted the models
<b>Joint accreditation</b>	Joint procedure. Multi-onsite visits , one single report and outcome	Common objective. Integrated program. Internationalization	Time consuming. Need more human resources and cost	ENQA's TEEP II and NOQA-joint evaluation
<b>International accreditation</b>	Individual procedure. Separate on site visit, multi final report, and single accreditation outcome	Common objective. Integrated program. Internationalization	Lack of diversity and differentiation. Reduce national QA agency capacity building and participation	AACSB, ASIIn, etc.
<b>Single accreditation</b>	Joint procedure. One onsite visit, one single report and outcome	Common objective. Integrated program. Time, human resources and cost saving	Take time to determine a coordinating QA agency	ECA's JOQAR Project-single procedures

# Major findings (1)

## ◆ Asian Practice

- ◆ An evaluation mechanism for joint degree programs has not been developed in any Asian nations. The major approach adopted by Asian institutions is national accreditation, and most joint degree programs are accredited by both the home and host countries
- ◆ The Master of Global Entrepreneurship and Management Program (MGEM) developed by IQS in Barcelona, Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei, and the University of San Francisco is a typical case
  - ◆ Accredited by AACSB individually

# Major findings (2)

- ◆ East Asian countries tended to stipulate national regulations for a joint degree program

# Asian regulations (2-1)

## ◆ China

- ◆ The 2003 law on “Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools”, allows the establishment of an international collaborative degree program or educational institution offered by “Chinese and foreign cooperators in running schools”.

## ◆ South Korea

- ◆ does not have specific regulations and laws for joint degree program
- ◆ the Higher Education Law stipulates that “higher education institutions can operate joint degree or double degrees with foreign higher education institutions.”

# Asian regulations (2-2)

- ◆ Taiwan
  - ◆ No specific Laws
  - ◆ under the “Regulations Regarding the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Academic Credentials for Institutions of Higher Education” in 2012 , including joint degree programs.
- ◆ Hong Kong
  - ◆ developed regulations for non-local qualifications under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualification Ordinance (AAVQO/ Cap 592)
  - ◆ A qualification jointly awarded by a self-accrediting institution and a non-self -accrediting institution may be entered into the Qualification Register if it is accredited by the HKCAAVQ



# Asian regulations (2-3)

- ◆ In 2014 Japan revised “Guidelines for Building International Joint Diploma Programs Including Double and Joint Degree Programs”
  - ◆ to allow Japanese universities (including junior colleges: the same shall apply hereinafter) to organize academic programs with foreign universities jointly referred to as "International Cooperative Curricula (ICC) Scheme") to confer joint degrees

# How to demonstrate the Jointness (QA interviewees)

- ◆ “it should at least include joint faculty, joint curriculum, joint management and joint supervision.”
- ◆ “shared programme and learning objectives by all partners”
- ◆ “shared QA policy by all partners’,
- ◆ “ same student selection policy”,
- ◆ “same student assessment policy”,
- ◆ “shared awarding policy to be recognized internationally”

# Challenges

- ◆ Designing a joint curriculum
- ◆ Assessing common student learning outcomes
  - ◆ “The hardest parts for institutions are curriculum design and learning outcomes. Regulations for credit recognition system, grading policy and academic calendar are all different among participating institutions.”
  - ◆ “Designing curriculum and learning outcomes for students from different systems with different backgrounds are not easy. The negotiation procedure would be time consuming and complicated.”

# Major findings (4)

- ◆ Asian governments have started to remove national obstacles, but challenges remain
  - ◆ mutual recognition of Asian quality assurance agencies' review outcomes has not been reached yet
  - ◆ it is not easy to compose an international panel and recruit experienced reviewers to assess a cross-region joint degree program
  - ◆ an external review will take time and sufficient funding.

# Major findings (5)

- ◆ NIAD-UE is exploring the development of a single procedure of accreditation for joint and double degree programs with the Chinese Higher Education Evaluation Center (HEEC), the Korean University Accreditation Institute (KUAI) and the Korean Council for University Education (KCUE)

# LESSONS LEARNED IN ASIA





# Major findings (6)

- ◆ ECA's single accreditation mode has just started to be implemented in some European joint degree programs on a pilot basis
  - ◆ With the concept of “jointness” - one self-study report, one onsite visit and one final report - the model has begun to be accepted by institutions and quality assurance agencies


# Major findings (7)

- ◆ Currently, international accreditation is the only mode adopted by some business joint degree programs.
  - ◆ it mainly relies on whether institutions are willing to apply for it or not
  - ◆ not all fields of study are suitable for this mode of assessment
  - ◆ It is really a decision of the institution to undertake an accreditation from an international accreditor
  - ◆ European quality assurance agencies do not think that international accreditation will be a good solution to the quality assurance of joint degree programs.

# CHALLENGES



# Major findings(8)

- ◆ Having sufficient funding to support external quality assurance activities
  - ◆ Accreditation validity period, appeal procedures
  - ◆ Difficulty of getting a good chair
  - ◆ varying national legislation
  - ◆ different quality cultures
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# CONCLUSION



# Conclusion (1)

- ◆ Worries about building an integrated quality assurance system for joint degree programs continue
- ◆ Cooperation between APQN and ECA started
- ◆ Collaborations between governments
  - ◆ NIAD-UE , HEEC and KCUE



# Conclusion(2)

- ◆ Joint degree programs have brought advantages to students as well as challenges to government, institutions and quality assurance agencies
- ◆ Developing a good quality joint degree program will need a joint effort
  - ◆ by varying stakeholders to implement a quality assurance mechanism and develop an external assessment system
- ◆ the ECA method is the most effective and efficient at present.
- ◆ Due to different national legislation on the requirements to be complied with for degrees in each country, qualification recognition appeared to be another challenge to joint degree programs in Europe and Asia.

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Thank you for your attention

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