

Enhancement of Mutual Understanding and Information Provision in Higher Education – Japanese Efforts –

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1. What is 'mutual understanding'?

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Definition in the context of international quality assurance - NIAD-UE's view

Mutual Understanding:

To understand each country's/region's higher education and quality assurance systems and background information of these systems, and to share the sense of diversity among partners in order to make international collaborative links and activities work

1. What is 'mutual understanding'?

The necessity of mutual understanding

- UNESCO/OECD *'Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education'*

Guidelines for quality assurance and accreditation bodies (c)

'Establish links to strengthen the collaboration between the bodies of the sending country and the receiving country and enhance the mutual understanding of different systems of quality assurance and accreditation. This may facilitate the process of assuring the quality of programmes delivered across borders and institutions operating across borders while respecting the quality assurance and accreditation systems of the receiving countries;'

1. What is 'mutual understanding'?

- Respond to global challenges, typically:
 - ✓ ensuring the quality of cross-border provisions, i.e. double degree programs, branch campuses, etc.
 - ✓ eliminating degree/accreditation mills
- Enhance the quality of QA in every country/region



Aiming at strengthening sustainable partnerships in the international QA community based on a solid foundation of mutual understanding

2. NIAD-UE's initiatives: Information Package Project

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Purpose ~ spirits of UNESCO-OECD guidelines

- To provide an information tool with overseas partners to help them understand the jargons and basic information on Japanese higher education system including QA mechanism
- To encourage Japanese universities to present legitimate information internationally on their institutional performance and quality of research and teaching

2. NIAD-UE's initiatives: Information Package Project

NIAD-UE's idea - Information provision taking into account the following elements would lead to high-level understanding for partners:

- **Consistent information** - authorized at organizational-level
- **Reliable information** - published as an official resource
- **Integrated information** - not fragmented
- **Updated information** - periodically reviewed and updated

2. NIAD-UE's initiatives: Information Package Project

Components

- Glossary
- Overview on higher education system and QA system in Japan
- General Principles and the Evaluation Standards for NIAD-UE's QA practice

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2. NIAD-UE's initiatives: Information Package Project

Concepts

- 'Packaging' – Easy to access legitimate information on higher education system on the whole and to carry out data upgrading on regular basis
- Encourage other countries to produce a similar information tool
- Pilot works carried out by NIAD-UE: The overview on higher education and QA systems in other countries (UK, US, AUS, Netherlands, China, Korea etc.) to enable various stakeholders in higher education to understand different systems in different countries. The project organized in

2. NIAD-UE's initiatives: Information Package Project

cooperation with the government of each country, QA agencies, and embassies in Japan

- NIAD-UE has full responsibility for the project to ensure the coherence of products
- Timely updating of the components under cooperative structures

3. Japanese information provision policy on quality of higher education: challenges and future

3. Japanese information provision policy on quality of higher education - challenges and future

Discussions at Ministerial Council

The necessity to present information on the quality of higher education to various stakeholders:

- For universities to achieve accountability to the public as public organizations to meet public interests
- To demonstrate the contents and standards of higher education activities to students as clients
- Providing information to international higher education community for enhancing international mobility of students as well as academicians

3. Japanese information provision policy on quality of higher education - challenges and future

Current situation in Japan

The School Education Law and the Establishment Standards stipulate the disclosure of institutional information to ensure accountability to the public and encourage proactive internal QA. Nearly all the universities observe the Laws and comply with the Standards.

However,

some progress is necessary with respect to information provision to international higher education community, and development and use of national platforms/database.

3. Japanese information provision policy on quality of higher education - challenges and future

Future directions of the governmental policy

- Greater emphasis on the universities' initiatives to furnish information
 - ✓ Re-defining necessary items by laws and regulations
 - ✓ Developing guidelines or reference points
- Making full use of existing platforms
 - ... Strengthening links between UNESCO Portal and Japanese higher education database/websites
- Provision of information on the names and attributes of academic degrees and definition of technical terms related to higher education in order to enable to compare Japanese qualifications with international qualifications

3. Japanese information provision policy on quality of higher education - challenges and future

Samples of institutional information which universities should furnish

proposed by the Working Group for Quality Assurance System, Division of Universities, Central Council for Education, MEXT

1. **Objectives of education, teaching contents and learning outcomes:** Goal for students' capacity building, the type of academic degrees conferred, target for learning outcomes, standards for student assessment
2. **Students:** admission-related information, progression rate, retention rate, jobs acquired by students on graduation

3. Japanese information provision policy on quality of higher education - challenges and future

3. **Organization**: Institutional basic information (purpose of foundation, location, contact details), academic staff structure, the number of academic staff
4. **Financial aspect**: Tuition fee, enrollment fee, scholarships, bursaries, other financial support
5. **Student support**: Learning support, student life support, career guidance, facilities for students (e.g. library)

Thank you for your attention

For further information:
www.niad.ac.jp

NIAD-UE

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