NIAD-UE
Towards Enhancing Mutual Understanding of Diverse QA Systems 30 September 2010

“AN OVERVIEW, CHALLENGES AND VISION OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION-MALAYSIA”

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Deputy CEO-QA
Malaysian Qualifications Agency
Outline

- Malaysia today
- National Strategies
- Legal framework - Establishment of HE institutions and approval of programmes
- Development of Quality Assurance
- Malaysian Qualifications Agency
- Quality Framework
  - Malaysian Qualifications Framework
  - Quality Assurance systems - Principles
  - IQA and EQA - Programme Accreditation/Audit
  - Collaboration with professional bodies and other agencies
- Challenges
Malaysia

• 28.3 million people
• 53 years of independence (1957)
• Multi racial-culture-religion-”Malaysia truly Asia”
• Federal/Parliamentary system with a constitutional monarch
• To be developed nation by 2020
• Human capital development-several key Ministries – Education, Higher Education and Human Resource
• “Moving for upper middle income to higher income nation”
Main Legal Framework on Higher Education and Training (Higher Education Providers)

- **Education Act 1996**
- **Universities and University and Colleges Act 1996 (Amended 2009)** (regulate public universities)
- **Private Higher Educational Institutions Act 1996 (Amended 2009)** (Regulate private higher education)
- **National Higher Education Funding Act (1997)** (Student Loans)
- **Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA Act 2007)** (succeeded Lemabag Akreditasi Negara)
- **National Skills Development Act (2006)** (Ministry of human Resource - Malaysian Skills Qualifications)
National Dev. Policy & Plans - INNOVATIVE HUMAN CAPITAL”

Background

- 10th Malaysian Development Plans –Thrust 2
- Raising Capacity Knowledge and Innovation and Nurture First Class Mentality
  - Developing and retaining a first world talent base
  - Improving education quality and accessibility
  - Creating tertiary education international standing (regional hub)
  - Nurturing quality R&D and Enhancing scientific and innovation capabilities
- Fostering a society with strong values
- Role of private sector enhanced

Main / Key Players in education and training

- Strong Legislative Framework

- Primary and Secondary Education schools (M of E)
- Higher Education (M of HE)
  - 61 Universities (public/private- 5+ foreign branch campuses)
  - 400 Private H E Colleges
  - Polytechnics/Community Colleges
    - 1,026,553 students (85K international)
  - 31.4 %of 17-24 yrs youth- in higher education 2009
  - 23.4 % labour force with tertiary education
- Skills Training (Ministry of Human Resource)
- Professional bodies
- Public Service Commission
- Industry & Others
Evolution in the Malaysian Quality Assurance System in Higher Education

Pre 1996
- Ministry of Education-regulatory body
- QA internal matter of institutions
- Qualifications-
diversity-public/private
- Recognition by specific authorities

1996 - Massification of HE policy
- 6 Legislations for Reforms
- 1997 QA body (LAN) for private providers
- Beginning of formal QA

1998 - 2007
- Repositioning QA
- Maturing & Consolidation
- Development of a qualifications framework
- 2004 Ministry of Higher Education
- Establishment of MQA 2007

2008 - 2015
- MQF be upheld by QA processes
- Phase 1 Transition & Implementation
- Programme accreditation
- Institutional Audit
- Rating (SETARA)
- International engagements
Policy on Quality Assurance

• A single QA body for all higher education providers
• From national to global best practices
• A shift from regulatory to a developmental and enhancement approach
• Fitness of purpose to fitness for specified purpose(s)
• Objective, fair, transparent, collaborative & professionalism
• Accreditation - Voluntary (compliance by other factors)
• Strengthening link - internal quality assurance with external quality assurance (institutional responsibility for Q)
• Strengthening students’ learning outcomes
• External Peer evaluation
Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) 1/11/2007

- “A globally authoritative agency on quality assurance in higher education”
- “Quality assuring higher education”
- A statutory body—a Council, Accreditation Committees, the Agency and external assessors
- Strong collaborations with local stakeholders
- Main functions
  - Guardian of the Malaysian Qualifications Framework
  - External quality assurance
    - Programme accreditation
    - Institutional audits
  - Maintains a Register Of Accredited Qualifications
  - Rating of universities
MQA’s Principle Policy Statement

“Quality assurance is an ongoing process and it is the responsibility of all parties involved. Thus, it is of utmost importance for MQA to continuously review its quality assurance practices to ensure their relevancy, reliability, adaptability and effectiveness to address the ever changing environment within which higher education operates. To enhance their quality provisions through the self-review and internal assessment processes as well as the external audit conducted by the MQA.

In the spirit of shared responsibility and balancing the demands of autonomy, flexibility and accountability, the MQA looks forward to continuous collaboration with all stakeholders in enhancing the quality of higher education in Malaysia.”
Quality Framework

• Based on nationally greed policy, criteria and quality standards

• The Guidelines
  – Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF)
  – Codes of Practices- Programme Accreditation (COPPA) and Institutional Audits (COPIA) assist implementation of MQF
  – Programme (Discipline) Standards
  – Professional Programme Accreditation Manuals
  – Guide to Good Practice (GGP)
## Current Education and Training System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MQF Level</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Technical &amp; Vocational Education &amp; Training</th>
<th>Malaysian Skills Qualifications (NOSS)</th>
<th>Pre University Education</th>
<th>Years learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma</td>
<td>Advance Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Certificate (3)</td>
<td>Certificate (3)</td>
<td>Certificate (3)</td>
<td>Higher Secondary/STPM / Foundation (1-2 yrs)</td>
<td>12-13 years of pre-university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Junior Secondary (3 years) (PMR)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate (1) (More flexi entry)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary (6 years)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Quality Assurance Framework

External and Internal Quality Audits

External Quality assurance Programme Accreditation
Institutional audits

MQF implementations
By QA processes

Results
Feedback & Support

Internal Quality Assurance system –self assessment and CQI

MQA

Institution

Applies for Accreditation or institutional audit

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Malaysian Qualifications Framework

- Development 2002-2005
- Classifies and develops qualifications on set criteria-nationally approved, benchmarked internationally and promotes OBE
- Why?
  - Need point of reference, promotes understanding and guides programme and qualifications design and delivery, deals with diversity and issues of parity of qualifications, supports flexibility, mobility, recognition and lifelong learning- quality of programs, institutions and graduates
- Covers skills, technical/vocational, academic and professional qualifications, public and private
Malaysian Qualifications Framework

3 key features- Levels, Credits & Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Descriptors of Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge, Values attitude and professionalism, Problem solving and scientific skills, Managerial and entrepreneurial skills, Communications, leadership and team skills, Information management and lifelong learning skill, Social skills and responsibilities, Practical skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Masters (40)</td>
<td>(40)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Post Grad C/D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Bachelor (120)</td>
<td>(120)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate C/D</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (40)</td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Diploma (90)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Certificate (60)</td>
<td>(60)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Certificate (skills)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Certificate (Skills)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Credits- Student learning time
1 credit = 40 notional hours
17 week semester
Collaboration with Professional and Skills Qualifications Bodies

• Ensures compliance with MQF – similar processes

• Statutory professional bodies regulating professional practice
  – Accreditation and recognition of programmes and qualifications (supported by MQA Act 2007)

• National Skills Development Act 2006
  – Skills qualification accreditation (supported by MQA Act 2007)
  – Department of Skills Development
Quality Assurance Standards-
9 Main Areas

Policies, Processes and Practices
• Institutional vision, mission, goals, LOs16 strategies
• Programme design and delivery
• Assessments (student performance)
• Student selection and support services
• Academic Staff
• Educational Resources-research
• Programme Monitoring and Review
• Governance, Leadership and Administration
• Continual Quality Improvement NB – Culture of self improvement - Periodic Internal Quality Audit

Institutional Submission guided by S. 3 COPPA and GGPs

Benchmarked and enhanced quality standards

Quantitative and qualitative assessments by peers

Grant accreditation (with or without specific conditions or denial (may appeal)
External Quality Assurance

• Programme accreditation
  • Programme maintenance audits (programme self assessment report through internal quality audit and accreditation by external peer review)
  • Professional programmes jointly with professional statutory bodies

• Institutional Audits
  - focus, comprehensive or thematic (Internal quality audit for self assessment portfolio and audit by external peer auditors)
  - Assessing effectiveness and achievement of Institutional goals and strategies & implementation
Institutional Internal Quality (IQA)

- The 9 areas of quality assurance standards forces their incorporation into the institutional policies and systems
- Improves institutional quality systems
- Area 9 – mandatory to establish IQA systems and unit to incorporate CQI practices
- All 9 areas of QA requires appropriate structures, policy, processes resources and mechanisms
  - Internal audit for self assessment in programme or institutional audit
  - Plan, implement, review and improve cycle
  - Clear and strong requirements of linkages with internal and external stakeholders
Initiatives

• Development of policies, Codes, Guide to Good Practices, and Programme Discipline Standards
• Series of capacity building activities
• Programme Accreditation - compliance with MQF 2009 onwards
• Enhancing the Malaysian Qualifications Register
• Academic Performance Audits - 58 universities
  – A health check and moving forwards
• Certification of 8 universities — self accrediting status (institutionalise strong central QA systems)
• 2nd SETARA (Rating) exercise - Teaching and Learning
• Collaborations and net working
Importance of Strategic Alliances

Government’s expectation that higher education to be nationally & internationally recognised

– Collaborations with local stakeholders
– International engagements - QA bodies (MOU/C) sharing, building capacity, regional assessors bench marking, and seeking mutual acceptance of each others processes and decision
– Key player in ASEAN Quality Network & Islamic countries
Challenges and Solution Concerning QA Initiatives

• Balancing policies and quality standards – continuous discussions with authorities & providers e.g. foreign programmes, entry criteria, offshore operations, codes and guidelines

• Effective implementation of MQF and QA codes – collaborations and capacity building activities of IQA with higher education providers, participation in codes and other Guidelines and training assessors, monitoring and feedbacks

• Societal understanding and support – outreach programmes to various sectors
Challenges and solution - QA initiatives

(Change is the only permanent feature today)

- Improving students quality literacy and responsibility - workshops and active participation
- Public –Private dichotomy - costs, recognition and acceptance of differences, negotiations and clear policies directions
- Phase 1 - Transient period — changing roles, increase responsibilities and expectations of government, learners and employers, maintaining confidence, international accreditation, communications and building share vision and responsibility
- Phase 2 – 2015 -2020 Higher institutional autonomy and accountability for quality, less external, periodical institutional audits - regional qualifications framework
Nurturing Confidence through quality

THANK YOU

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