

# Approaches to quality assuring TNE: *a comparative perspective*

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ECA-NVAO Seminar “Quality  
Assurance of Cross-Border Higher  
Education”

The Hague, 15 December 2016



# Structure of the presentation

- Approaches to out-bound TNE:
  - *UK, Australia, USA, Germany*
- Approaches to in-bound TNE
  - *China, Dubai, Singapore, Hong Kong*
- Inter-agency cooperation: QACHE

# UK: landscape

Degree-awarding bodies do not need to obtain external approval to engage in TNE activities

TNE can take any form that suits institutions (DL and collaborative provision the most popular)

In a context of institutional autonomy and marketization of HE, TNE is seen primarily as a commercial activity

TNE is a significant aspect and the main area of growth of UK HE

# UK: quality assurance

QAA monitors TNE to ensure the quality and standards of UK HE are safeguarded **wherever** these are delivered

Twofold approach:

- Institutional reviews (comprehensive in scope and leading to formal judgement)
- In-country reviews (country-based, sampling provision, and enhancement oriented)

Inter-agency cooperation is a high priority given the scale and spread of UK TNE

# Australia: landscape

No prior approval required for self-accrediting universities

Any type of TNE allowed

Third-party arrangements are the most common type

Commercial motive is a key driver

TNE is smaller in scope and spread than the UK

# Australia: quality assurance

TEQSA assesses the equivalency of quality and standards of TNE provision to home provision

TNE is looked as part of HEI's national reviews only

- no complementary TNE review process due to more limited spread

In-country visits take place only if triggered by concerns on the basis of a primarily risk-based QA approach

- no enhancement oriented

TEQSA committed to inter-agency cooperation, but less urgent than for QAA

# US: landscape

Commercial driver, but also supporting outward mobility and bringing US-style HE experience overseas

Three main types of TNE:

- ✓ Study abroad centres
- ✓ American universities: foreign HEIs delivering American style HE
- ✓ Branch campuses

Precise data about US TNE are not readily available, but it is less extended than UK TNE

# USA: quality assurance

A federal devolved context, where different accreditation agencies have different policies for TNE

## Key common features:

- ✓ all TNE provision is regarded as substantive change and needs to be accredited by the relevant accreditation agency – *American universities will also have US accreditation*
- ✓ after initial accreditation TNE arrangements might no longer be reviewed, unless concerns are triggered or picked up as a sample
- ✓ third-party arrangements are not accepted



# Germany: landscape

TNE is for most part **publicly funded** through DAAD

No commercial motivations, but national policies aimed at

- ✓ fostering the internationalization of German HE providers
- ✓ promoting German cultural relations and education policy
- ✓ supporting international capacity development

Cooperative approach and high degree of engagement

Same types of TNE as the USA: study abroad programmes / German-backed universities / branch campuses

Focused on more resource-intensive disciplines than UK/Aus/USA

# Germany: quality assurance

A federal devolved context, where different accreditation agencies have different policies for TNE

## Key common features:

- ✓ GAC's rules apply to all accreditation bodies and programmes leading to German degrees, regardless of where these are delivered
- ✓ GAC's rules allow for flexibility to accommodate context of delivery
- ✓ All TNE projects are accountable to DAAD as their funder, and DAAD carry out periodic quality control, including QA requirements
- ✓ DAAD funded projects should strive to become self-funding and sustainable

# China: landscape

TNE seen as a way to facilitate knowledge transfer and develop local HEIs' capacity ...and cannot be for-profit

Only partnerships are allowed: TNE is referred to as Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools (and programmes!) - CFCRS

- ✓ foreign HEIs to **commit resources** / deliver at least **1/3 of programmes**
- ✓ **jointly-developed courses** are favoured
- ✓ **limits on numbers of CFCRS/TNE** foreign HEIs can enter into
- ✓ priorities **subject and geographical areas**
- ✓ **whole period of study** in China favoured

# China: quality assurance

## Pre-approval:

HE CFCRS approved by the MoE (sub-degree at provincial level)

CEAIE helps the MoE in screening new applications for CFCRS

CEAIE liaise with sending countries to prevent fraudulent applications

## Post-approval:

CFCRS are monitored by CDGDC. This is done through desk-based analysis, possibly followed by a site visits if concerns are detected

Inter-agency cooperation is high on the agenda of both agencies – UK/China Beijing Statement

# Dubai: landscape

Main drivers have been importing quality foreign provision

- to meet the needs of a growing knowledge economy (alternative to oil production) and a huge expats population (90%),
- and develop a HE hub

Not interested in collaborative partnerships, Dubai wants 'undiluted' foreign provision: hence branch campus is the type of TNE in Dubai

Has the highest concentration of branch campus in the world (new OBHE IBCs report says China is largest host)

# Dubai: quality assurance

Most TNE providers operate within free-trade zones exempted from federal regulations (CAA accreditation)

KHDA's institutional authorization / programme registration

- ✓ **Equivalency model:** based on home countries' QA expectations
- ✓ **UQAIB:** panel of international experts
- ✓ **Desk-based exercise** (although site visits are a possibility)
- ✓ **Programmes already delivered at home 'only'** - now relaxed for TNE providers with track record to meet local knowledge/skills needs

Inter-agency cooperation a high priority - reliance on home country's QA agencies / QBBG

# Singapore: landscape

Main drivers have been

- addressing skill gaps and unmet demand
- developing local HE capacity
- creating a HE hub

No type of provision is discouraged or encouraged,

- collaborative partnerships with private providers by far the most common type (mostly UK degree-awarding bodies)

Moving towards enhancing quality and improving relevance of TNE provision to local economical and social needs

# Singapore: quality assurance

All TNE arrangements with private education institute (PEIs) must be approved by CPE

- foreign providers are bona fide and in good standing
- quality and standards are comparable to the home campus
- graduates receive equivalent recognition, treatment and privileges
- programmes must already delivered at home and have same title

Desk-based assessment carried out by CPE officers, and more mechanistic / less QA-oriented than KHDA's UQAIB

But from this year all PEIs offering TNE must obtain CPE's Edutrust certification within 2018



# Hong Kong: landscape

Main drivers have been

- addressing skills gaps and unmet demand,
- developing local HE capacity
- Less interested in creating a HE hub than Dubai and Singapore

No type of provision is discouraged or encouraged

- collaborative partnerships with private providers the most common type, but also substantial partnerships with public universities
- by far most partnerships are with UK degree-awarding bodies

# Hong Kong: quality assurance

All TNE (non-local) programmes must be registered with the Education Bureau

- NLPs with public HEIs just need to be notified to the Bureau

HKCAAVQ provides advice to the Bureau about private NLPs registration (desk-based exercise):

- foreign provider is bona fide and in good standing and quality and standards of NLPs comparable to similar programmes at home

HKCAAVQ also offers voluntary accreditation against local standards (HKQF)

- accredited NLPs are listed in the HK qualification register and treated as local programmes (e.g. state student loans)

# Lessons learned

Different **drivers, conceptions, landscapes,** and **approaches** to quality assurance and regulation of TNE

Cross-border HE calls for cross-border QA ...**but** how is this possible in the context of such differences?

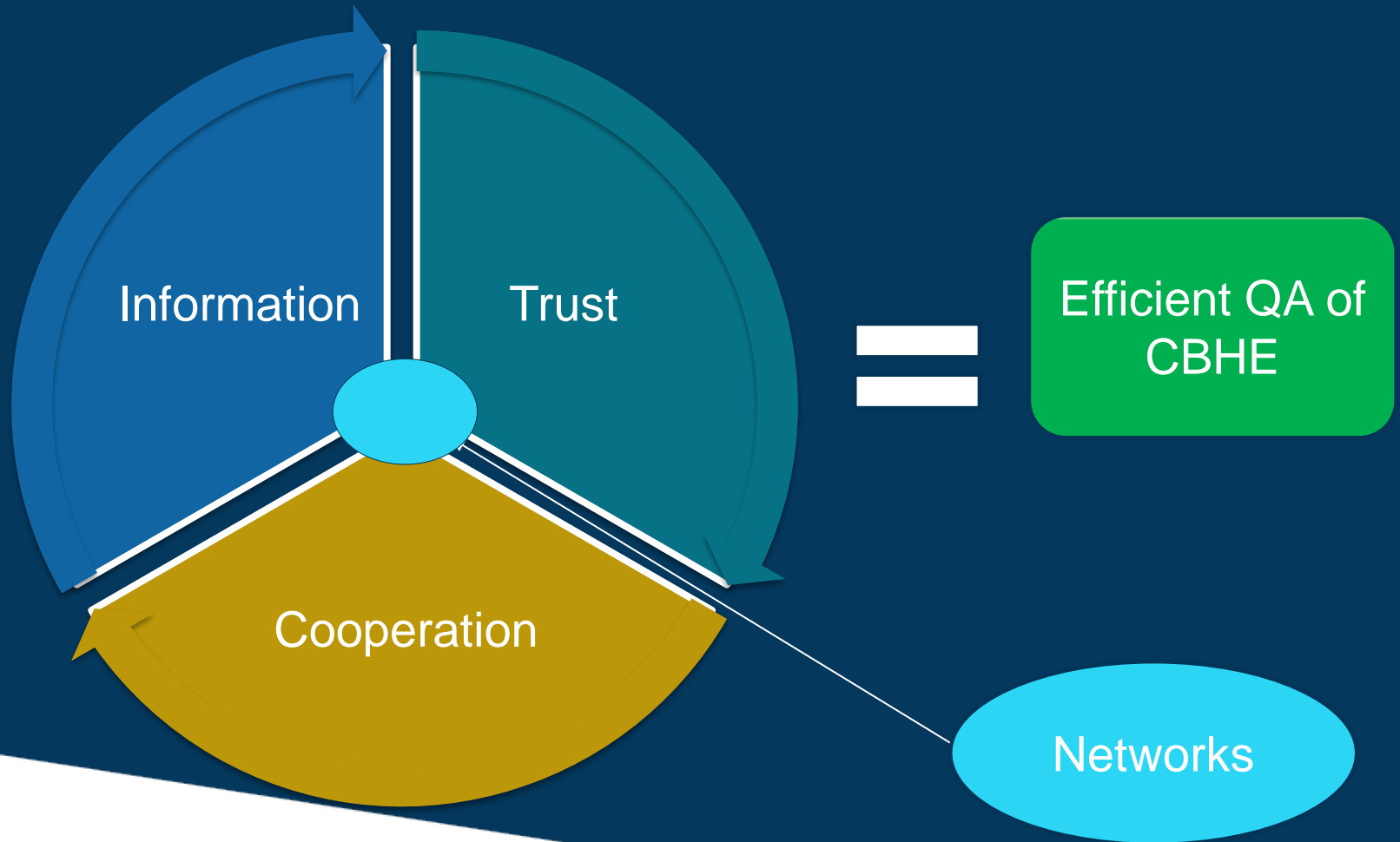
**Cross-border cooperation in quality assurance!**

# The QACHE Toolkit



Offers practical guidance on how QA agencies, **regardless** of their different approaches and different contexts in which they operate, can improve ***information sharing, build reciprocal trust, and start cooperating*** in the quality assurance of TNE.

# The QACHE virtuous circle



# An emerging shared view

It is essential to cooperate across borders to

- address the QA challenges posed by TNE, and
- fully harness the opportunities it offers for meeting unmet demands for quality and relevant HE provision

Agencies share the view of their role as facilitators, not inhibitors, of quality and relevant TNE

# Thank you



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