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Added Value of Institutional Cooperation: Quality Agency Perspective

Fitness for purpose – effectiveness of the processes at work in the institution or program in fulfilling its objectives and mission:

- *a **value for money approach*** – (implicit) focus on how the inputs are effectively and efficiently used by the processes and mechanisms involved
- the ***value-added approach*** – results are evaluated in terms of changes obtained through various educational processes (*e.g.* teaching and learning processes).
  - ***quality as transformation*** – quality as a process of change, adding value to students through their learning experience (learner-centeredness).

(Vlăsceanu, Grünberg, Pârlea; 2007)

Fitness of purpose – adequacy of quality-related intention of a higher education institution:

- *quality as threshold,* e.g. for obtaining accreditation
- *quality as consumer satisfaction*: quality perceived as closely linked to the growing importance of the external expectations of consumers (students, families, society at large) and other stakeholders (employers, governments).

(Vlăsceanu, Grünberg, Pârlea; 2007)

➢ Internationalization as the "process of integrating an international or intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution" (Knight, 1994)

➢ Internationalization at the national/sector/institutional levels is defined as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight, 2003)

- Measuring "internationalisation at home" and "internationalisation abroad" through assessment of traditional QA review objects:
    - study programmes
    - institutions

- Engaging in follow-up activities and providing consulting

"It would be nice if all of the data which sociologists require could be enumerated because then we could run them through IBM machines and draw charts as the economists do. However, not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."

William Bruce Cameron (1963) "Informal Sociology: A Casual Introduction to Sociological Thinking"

"Although conceptually linked, quality and internationalisation may be seen as two if not conflicting at least unrelated targets with different territories." (González & Robert Wagenaar, 2003)

Authors (Knight, De Wit) identify four broad categories of rationales for internationalisation:

*   Political rationales,

*   economic rationales,

*   social and cultural rationales,

*   academic rationales.

To name a few challenges as seen in SKVC work:

- Expansion of international student body at HEIS at all costs to compensate for the decline of local student population
    - 98% of foreign qualifications are recognized, yet... Growing number of established forgeries and suspects (as much as 30% of *Senior School Certificates* from Nigeria are suspected forgeries)
- External quality assurance of joint programmes (one procedure? one degree?) – on the way to <u>joint internal QA procedures</u>!
- Pursue for branding involves costs (not compensated by the state) of finding the right accreditation agency and costs of working with it
- Limited publicity of review results (as practiced by some agencies listed on EQAR today) – at a disadvantage of students

On the **institutional level** – majority of challenges relate to strategic management, then administration of studies, development of research activities

Internationalisation within **study programs** – challenges for and within:

- Facilities and learning resources (facilities, equipment, learning materials)
- Curriculum
- Programme management (administration of the programme, internal quality assurance)
- Competencies of teaching staff

Quotes from external review reports written by international panels:

"In the subject descriptions' recommended literature, more foreign authors should be used. This would help internationalise this programme and help ensure it is in the 21st century."

"The evaluated programme has some unique aspects with its Economics and Politics specialization being taught in English, its wide range of international links, the option for students to obtain double degrees and with its finance/mathematics focus."

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Quotes from external review reports written by international panels:

"The development of the base for the practical training is constantly pursued to improve the quality of the practical training. There are actively working dental units and oral care/pre-clinical units with phantom heads etc. There is a variety of instruments and dental equipment."

"There is still a pretty serious *lack of anything other than Lithuanian sources in the programmes of subjects*. The EAT [External Assessment Team] considers that both teachers and students have to be encouraged to use international sources of material to back up their work. "

"The experts had the opportunity to review the college's learning resources and would like *to see more books in the library to bring it up to international standards*. They would also like to see more international texts in the various subjects."

"The mobility rate of students in the last 3 study years is sufficient. The positive aspect is that the number of outgoing students is growing. The number of outgoing teachers is more stable this allows for the assumption that there will be greater feedback for the programme in the future."

"With regard to weakness, the lack of integration of exchange programmes and the mobility of international students is an area which is currently underdeveloped. At this point, the use of the ERASMUS programme could be improved both for students and teachers. The limitations of language could be overcome through creative approaches to different type of exchange, for example guest workshops, and an emphasis on exchange between practically oriented courses."

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Lithuanian Law on Higher Education and Research (2009).
Article 49. Medium of instruction

The medium of instruction in state higher education institutions shall be the Lithuanian language. Other languages may be used in teaching if:

1. the content of a study programme is linked to another language;
2. lectures are delivered or other academic events are headed by teachers from foreign states;
3. studies are carried out pursuant to joint study programmes or study programmes on completion of which a double qualification degree is awarded and a part of these programmes is carried out in other countries, non-state higher education institutions in which the medium of instruction is a language other than the Lithuanian language, or conform to the cases set out in paragraph 1 or 2 of this Article;
4. studies are carried out according to study programmes designed for studies of foreign nationals or in the case of study exchange.

The Law does not prohibit teaching in foreign languages!

Internationalisation –
both the precondition and outcome of success (and quality)

- Quality Assurance and Accreditation: A Glossary of Basic Terms and Definitions compiled by Lazăr Vlăsceanu, Laura Grünberg, And Dan Pârlea. Bucharest, 2007.
- Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales by Jane Knight. Journal of Studies in International Education, 2004, 8:5.
- Quality and European Programme Design in Higher Education by Julia González & Robert Wagenaar. *European Journal of Education,* Vol. 38, No. 3, 2003.
- Internationalisation of Higher Education in Europe and its assessment, trends and issues by Hans de Wit. NVAO, 2010.
- Republic of Lithuania. Law on Higher Education and Research. 30 April 2009, No XI-242. Vilnius
- Database of study programme review reports, accessible via www.skvc.lt

Thank you!