

HAQAA Initiative



Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation

A consortium consisting of the University of Barcelona (coordinator), the Association of African Universities (AAU), the European University Association (EUA), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

About

What is the HAQAA Initiative?

The HAQAA (Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation) Initiative, funded by the European Union in partnership with the African Union, has been established to support the development of a harmonised quality assurance and accreditation system at institutional level, national, regional and Pan-African continental level.

Main objectives

- To contribute and support the harmonisation of higher education programmes and the creation of a revitalised, distinctive, attractive and globally competitive African higher education space, through enhanced intra-African collaboration.
- Specifically to support the development of a harmonised quality assurance and accreditation system at institutional level, national, regional and Pan-African continental level.

General Approach of HAQAA

- Enhancing continental collaboration in quality assurance across and between regional networks
- Linking together/building upon regional initiatives and political priorities
- Capacity Building for both internal and external QA at the institutional, national and regional level
- Promoting good practices/ sharing experiences in a multilateral way: Europe-Africa, Africa-Europe, Africa-Africa, Africa-other world regions



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Main outputs

- The realization of a unique, **continental Training Course on 'A Common Language for Higher Education in Africa'**. This brought together nationally nominated representatives responsible for the national development of their QA systems and entailed both practice sharing from Europe and training on/providing sensitization to the PAQAF. The notion of "PAQAF ambassadors" arose from this dynamic group of individuals. In addition to three physical training events, participants also conducted Personal Action Plans aimed at improving specific elements of their own QA systems.
- The development of the **African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA)**, a major guiding document that outlines common standards for institutional quality assurance and external quality assurance conducted by external QA bodies and accrediting agencies. The document is in four languages and has been extensively consulted across diverse stakeholder groups.
- The further promotion of one of the tools of the PAQAF- the **African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM)**- and support for institutional self-assessment, via **15 visits to universities in five African regions**, selected for their diversity. The evaluation visits were designed to validate the AQRM survey that the institutions completed and provided concrete advice for improvement.
- The development of a **methodology to assess, externally, QA agencies in Africa** in order to guarantee their transparency and ensure that they uphold common and internationally agreed principles and practices: The methodology utilizes Part C of the ASG-QA. It was tested on four established QA agencies in Africa (Senegal, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Mozambique) which agreed to under-go a self-assessment and receive an evaluation by an international panel. Four additional countries which do not yet have agencies but are in the process of establishing them also received 'consultancy visits' by experts teams, inspired by the ASG-QA (Cameroon, Togo, Mali and Morocco).
- General visibility for an awareness of the PAQAF and its components** has been generated through a HAQAA Initiative website, the creation of a database and the consistent follow-up with the Training Course participants, the Advisory Board, participation in international conference and events and the preparation of input for Africa-EU summits, the publication of a number of outputs (the ASG-QA, the outcome reports of the Training Course and the AQRM exercise), the organization of a consultation event in Addis Ababa for the ASG-QA and a final conference in Dakar Senegal and the general exploitation of the media channels and networks that the partners of the implementing consortium use.



Working methodology

- The HAQAA Initiative has been a complex endeavor that has required working at various levels within the African context (institutional, national, regional and continental) and in conjunction with many diverse and important stakeholders active at these different levels.
- The complexity of the initiative required a **dynamic and inclusive governance structure** in which major stakeholders were included in shaping all products and outcomes, so as to ensure their African ownership;
- An **Advisory Board** of major African regional higher education organisations from different linguistic groups was convened and met officially 7 times throughout the three-year contract and was also invited to important events, to ensure their constant and constructive input;
- A **Technical Working Group** of seven African experts from different regions and linguistic groups was tasked with developing the African Standards and Guidelines for QA (ASG-QA) and the review methodology for assessing QA agencies, two major outputs of this contract and key contributions to realising the PAQAF of the African Union;
- The implementing consortium worked closely with both the EC and the African Union Commission to ensure that the initiative was consistent with and optimally contributing to African Union political objectives and particularly the PAQAF.



What is PAQAF?

'PAQAF'- The **Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework**, which the AUC has had endorsed via its committees and its Council, is an overriding framework for a number of commitments related to quality assurance activities in Africa. The implementation of the Addis Convention and AQRM are part of it, as are commitments to develop African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, an African Credit Transfer System and a continental register for quality assurance agencies and national bodies. As many aspects of PAQAF have not yet been developed, the HAQAA Initiative is seen as a means to contribute to its implementation.



Contact Information

For more information on any of the above activities, please contact: nfontg@ub.edu

You may also register in the African QA database and request the HAQAA Initiative newsletter at:

<https://haqaa.aau.org/>



This initiative is implemented on behalf of the European and African Union Commissions by:



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

