Higher Education Quality Assurance in Vietnam and Improvement for Better Collaboration

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1. Higher Education context in Vietnam

- Vietnam has economic relations with large number of states and regions in the world (over 230 states and regions) and Vietnam is also member of ASEAN, APTA, ASEM, WTO…

- Higher education is a main tool to prepare highly-qualified human resources to meet socio-economic development in Vietnam and the needs to collaborate with other countries in the world.
1. Higher Education context in Vietnam

- Higher education system has a large scale and diversity (number of HEIs, students, ownership, language…)
  - 214 colleges and 207 universities in 2012-2013
  - Over 2 million students.
  - 80% is public and 20% is non-public HEIs.
  - Large number of courses but with small proportion delivered in English and other languages.

- Joint training programs is increasing day by day
  - 412 programs (from 78 HEI in VN with over 200 HEI from 30 countries) are registered with MOET and authorised universities (non-registered programs are not recognised in Vietnam)
2. Quality Assurance in Vietnam

- Quality awareness is started from HEIs in early years
  - Quality debates were since 1990s in HEIs.
  - CEQARD (1995 in VNUHN), CETQA (1998 in VNUHCM)...
  - QA Division (2002 in HE Dept).
    - VNU Center for Education Accreditation (Sept 2013)
    - VNU HCM Center for Education Accreditation (Dec 2013)
2. Quality Assurance in Vietnam

- Follow Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Network (APQN) Chiba principles

A Framework for Higher Education Quality Assurance Principles in the Asia Pacific Region

IQA

A: Internal Quality Assurance
- A quality assurance culture is created, defined, supported, and promulgated.
- Quality assurance aligns with and is embedded within the institution's unique goals and objectives.
- Internal quality management systems, policies and procedures are in place.
- Periodic approval, monitoring and review of programs and awards.
- A strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality is developed and implemented.
- Quality assurance of academic staff is maintained.
- Appropriate and current information about the institution, its programs, awards and achievements is made publicly available.

B: Quality Assessment
- Quality assurance activities (at institutional and/or program level) are undertaken on a cyclical basis.
- Stakeholders participate in developing the standards and criteria for assessment.
- Standards and criteria are publicly available and applied consistently.
- Formal procedures are in place to ensure reviewers have no conflict of interest.
- Assessment would normally include:
  1. institutional self-assessment;
  2. external assessment by a group of experts and site visits as agreed;
  3. publication of a report, including decisions and recommendations;
  4. a follow-up procedure to review actions taken in light of recommendations made.
- An appeals mechanism is available.
  Inclusive of different foci
  - Institution
  - Program
  - Institution and program

EQA

C: Quality Assurance Agencies
- Are independent and have autonomous responsibility for operations – judgements should not be influenced by third parties.
- Written mission statement, goals and objectives are clearly defined.
- Human and financial resources are adequate and accessible.
- Policies, procedures, reviews and assessment reports are fully and clearly disclosed to the public.
- Documentation that states standards used, assessment methods, processes, decision criteria and appeals processes are clear.
- Periodic review of activities, effects and value.
- Cooperates with other agencies and key players across national borders.
- Undertake research and provide information and advice.
  Inclusive of different forms:
  - accreditation:
  - audit

QAA
3. Results of QA development in Vietnam

Strengths:

- A strong system of legal documents for QA
  - Standards, procedures, guidelines approved by MOET.

- Government support QA activities at system level and in public HEIs
  - Finance and human resources
3. Results of QA development in Vietnam

**Strengths:**

- **At institutional level**
  - Majority of HEIs has IQA units, efforts to develop quality culture.
  - 339 HEI has completed self evaluation reports but only 40 HEI has received external evaluation (by VN QA experts).
- **At programme level**
  - 100 programs has completed self evaluation reports but only 14 programs has received external evaluation (by VN QA experts).
  - 19 programs has completed self evaluation reports, using AUN criteria, and were assessed by AUN experts.
3. Results of QA development in Vietnam

**Weakness:**

- Quality awareness is still low in HEIs.
- Quality assurance at program level is still not well-developed.
- Number of assessed/ accredited programs is still very limited.
- Student mobilisation is still limited
- VN HEIs could not collaborate with well-known universities because of low quality of teaching
4. New policy on HE Quality Assurance

- Higher Education Act 2012
- Decree of foreign cooperation and investment in the field of education
  (73/2012/NĐ-CP dated 26 Sept 2012)
Higher Education Act 2012

Article 49. Objectives, principles and subjects of HE accreditation

1. Objectives of HE accreditation
   - a) To ensure and improve the quality of HEI;
   - b) To define the level that meet missions and objectives;
   - c) Accountability for HE quality;
   - d) To provide information for students and employers.

2. Principles of quality control of higher education
   - a) Independence, objectivity and legal compliance;
   - b) Honesty, openness and transparency;
   - c) Equality, compulsory, periodical.

3. Subjects
   - a) Higher education institutions;
   - b) Training programs.
Higher Education Act 2012

Article 50. The responsibility of HEIs in quality assurance

- To establish IQA unit.
- To develop and implement IQA plan.
- To maintain QA conditions.
- To publicise QA conditions, academic and research results, accreditation results
Higher Education Act 2012

Article 51. Duties and powers of the HEIs in HE quality assurance

- To be assessed by accreditation agencies
- To publicise information and accreditation results
- Has a right to choose accreditation agencies
- Has a right to complaints with authority organisation about inadequate decisions, conclusions of accreditation agencies.
Article 52. Accreditation agencies

- Accreditation agencies have duties to assess and recognise HEI that meet accreditation standards.
- Accreditation agency can be established if it has a project that is suitable with the government’s plan of accreditation network and can operate if it meets minimum requirements of infrastructure, finance, and human resources.
- Minister, MOET has a power to approve accreditation standards.
Higher Education Act 2012

Article 53. Using the results of HE Accreditation

- Results of accreditation are used to defined HEI status (in term of quality), position and reputation of universities; autonomy, self-responsibility, investment…
Decree of foreign cooperation and investment in the field of education

Article 4. Education Accreditation

1. HEI has joint training program and HEI has foreign investment has periodically apply for accreditation

2. Authorised accreditation agencies are agencies, established, allowed to be established by MOET, MOLISA and foreign agencies that recognised by MOET, MOLISA.
Project “Development of accreditation system for HE and secondary professional education in the period 2011 – 2020”

Content:

- To establish 3 accreditation agencies by 2015 and allow to establish non-public accreditation agencies in the period 2016-2020
- To accredit HEIs in the period 2015 and both HEIs and program during 2016-2020
5. Quality enhancement for better collaboration

- Applying high standards for VN programs
  - All programs must be accredited against Vietnam standards, AUN standards
  - Encourage programs to be accredited by other international accreditation agencies
- Import programs from overseas must be accredited by accreditation agencies well-recognised in the world or region.
5. Quality enhancement for better collaboration

- Running joint training programs must be accredited periodically by Vietnam or international accreditation agencies that recognised by Vietnam.

- Encourage VN HEIs to run bilateral student exchange programs with foreign universities

- Sharing information of quality assurance system, accreditation results in websites for transparency.
Thank you very much for your attention.