EMINENT

Towards the enhancement and harmonisation of HEIs Quality Assurance in Haiti in response to National and International developments

InPAQH Sup

ROADMAP OF THE NETWORK InPAQH-Sup

"INTERCONNEXION DES PARTENAIRES DE L'ASSURANCE QUALITE DANS L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR EN HAITI"

Haitian universities, the driving force behind improving quality assurance in the higher education system according to national and European standards (LMD)

APRIL 2022

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

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Document authors	Kerstin Schörg, AQ Austria (AQ), Document coordinator Yves Voltaire, Université Publique des Nippes (UPNiP) Christine Ariste, Université Publique des Nippes (UPNiP) Hila Douhouré-Sibailly, Université Publique du Sud aux Cayes (UPSAC) Marlène Sam, Ecole Supérieure d'Infotronique d'Haïti (ESIH) Jean-Élie Gilles, Université du Sud-Est Jacmel (UPSEJ) Hébert Lahatte, Université du Sud-Est Jacmel (UPSEJ) Albert Étienne, Université du Sud-Est Jacmel (UPSEJ)

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Contact information:
Institutional Project Management Office (OGPI) – University of Alicante
Website: www.ogpi.ua.es
EMINENT: www.eminent-haiti.eu

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INTRODUCTION

The title of the Erasmus+ project (2019-2022), abbreviated as "EMINENT", co-funded by the European Union and the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENFP), expresses well its purpose: ***"Towards the improvement and harmonization of quality assurance in higher education institutions in Haiti in response to national and international developments"***. It was carried out by a Consortium composed of the Université Publique du Sud in Les Cayes (UPSAC), the Université Publique du Sud-Est in Jacmel (UPSEJ), the Université Publique de l'Artibonite in Gonaïves (UPAG) Université Publique des Nippes (UPNIP), Ecole Supérieure d'Infotronique d'Haïti (ESIH), University of Alicante of Spain (UA), University of Cork of Ireland (UCC) and the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (AQ).

These partners have shown great perseverance and resilience in its implementation despite many unforeseeable adversities in the 2019-2022 context: paralysis and prolonged closure of the country's institutions, severe national political and economic crisis, street violence, waves of kidnappings in Port-au-Prince, Covid-19 pandemic, disaster caused in the deep south of Haiti by the August 14, 2021 earthquake. In fact, they have continued, as far as possible and with the necessary adjustments, the different work packages of the EMINENT Project. They have managed not only to operate a Quality Assurance

Unit in each of the five (5) Haitian universities of the EMINENT Consortium but also to create the national network ***"Interconnection of Quality Assurance Partners in Higher Education in Haiti" (InPAQH-Sup)***.

METHODOLOGY

This document is a “Roadmap” prepared with the participation of all EMINENT project partners using the “Confluence” collaboration platform. The experiences of the Haitian partners of the EMINENT consortium in conducting needs assessments, implementing quality assurance units (QAUs), and planning and conducting self-evaluation of a training program have been particularly taken into account in order to provide guidance to universities that want to become members of the network “Interconnexion des Partenaires de l’Assurance Qualité dans l’Enseignement Supérieur en Haïti” (InPAQH-Sup).

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE DOCUMENT

The main objective of this document is to highlight the importance of quality assurance (QA) in higher education. Furthermore, it aims to provide higher education institutions (HEIs) and stakeholders interested in quality assurance with an overview of the first steps towards internal quality assurance. It is mainly based on the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (GHE)" that are applied in the LMD (Bachelor, Master, Doctorate) system.

It has five (5) short chapters.

In the first chapter entitled "Why engage in quality assurance?" the situation in Haiti is explained and the results of the needs assessment and analysis conducted at the beginning of the EMINENT project are explained.

Then, in the second chapter, the national network ***"Interconnexion des partenaires de l'assurance qualité dans l'enseignement supérieur en Haïti" (InPAQH-Sup)***, established by the EMINENT consortium partners, is presented. This network aims to promote constructive exchanges between its members in teaching-learning, scientific research, inter-university solidarity and mobility of teachers and students, while contributing to provide Haitian society with modern and quality higher education institutions (HEIs) capable of providing appropriate responses to the needs of its population.

In the following chapter, the different objectives of internal and external quality assurance are stated. The essence of this chapter is the assertion that quality in higher education can only be achieved through internal university efforts. European standards and guidelines for quality assurance are also indicated.

The fourth chapter entitled “Getting Started with Quality Assurance” shows the steps to be taken to set up and operate an internal Quality Assurance Unit in a university.

Finally, the last chapter gathers some lessons learned and recommendations for future InPAQH-Sup members from the Haitian members of the EMINENT Consortium based on the challenges overcome in their experience of implementing a quality assurance system in the particular context of their respective universities.

CHAPTER 1
WHY GET INVOLVED IN QUALITY ASSURANCE?

The university is one of the foundations on which to build the future of Haitian youth and to rebuild Haiti and is, above all, a public service where "teaching and research aim at the advancement of critical knowledge", modernity and economic and social progress.

Haiti suffers from massive brain drain as students who manage to navigate the HE system and successfully complete their respective programmes tend to emigrate to other countries in search of gainful employment and economic opportunities, much to the detriment of intellectual capacity, knowledge, and skills maintained for the development of the country.

In this perspective, it becomes paramount to promote and foster the emergence of excellence in the higher education ecosystem through interactions between institutions, and beyond this core group of institutions, to encourage their links with all communities. Such an approach should aim at nurturing and growing a sustainable culture of quality assurance based on the establishment of structures for this innovative field in academia, for the benefit of its promoters, their partners and their direct and indirect beneficiaries, i.e. students, enterprises, and society at large.

At present there is neither a formal nor standardized instrument that is utilized by institutions to gauge critical QA mechanism related to programs, staff, faculty, and facility capabilities. However, stakeholders have recognized that this problem hinders the ability of Haitian HE institutions to meet international standards and positively alter their perception at a global scale. It is with this desire for change that the EMINENT project was designed, in the context of which a needs analysis was carried out at the beginning. The survey for the needs analysis covered the following areas:

- *Institutional Policy and Objectives*
- *Quality of offered Programmes*
- *Gearing Programmes towards Students*
- *Academic and Administrative Staff Improvement*
- *Management of Resources and Services*
- *Statistical analysis management and Standards*

The full results of the survey and the detailed analysis can be found in the document "QA practices, procedures and tools & SWOT", but one of the results in particular should be highlighted. Among others, the findings of the needs analysis illustrate that QA systems are not in place throughout the institutions surveyed. Developing a quality culture takes time and effort, as it is closely related to values, beliefs and a cultural element. Participation of all stakeholders in the implementation of QA processes and striving for a stronger quality culture appears to be essential, but still requires attention.

Also, aware of the importance and primacy of knowledge, and the virtues of developing quality assurance systems in universities around the world, the institutions behind the EMINENT initiative, a project

aimed at sharing information and good practice in higher education, strengthening learning methods and standards, and developing quality assurance policies and strategies, Quality assurance (QA) policies and strategies in Haitian higher education, supported by and working closely with European institutions that have been active in the field of quality assurance for years, established that it was crucial for them to set up a QA network at national, regional and even global level.

Thus, the creation of a network called InPAQH-Sup is a direct result of the awareness of its initiators of the need for such a commitment in view of the considerable amount of effort and work that needs to be done in order to acquire knowledge, skills and experience in this ever-changing field.

In order to facilitate the integration of the values inherent in the culture of quality assurance while pooling efforts to collect and disseminate information on QA theories, strategies, policies, lessons learned and funding and research, the promoters of the InPAQH-Sup network consider it imperative to:

- draw on the diverse input and experiences of EMINENT Consortium members, their partners and any other similar structures in the region and around the world to learn from the successes, failures and initiatives they have embarked upon to address the issues and challenges facing higher education institutions and their economic and social partners
- strengthen and advocate for the choice of the quality option as the sole compass for the role and responsibilities of higher education, lifelong learning and academic excellence;

- act in partnership and in an unequivocal and sustained effort with all stakeholders in the higher education ecosystem, both internal (students, faculty, households and employers), academic and external (academic entities, public authorities, etc.), nationally, regionally and globally.

For the institutions behind InPAQH-Sup, the development of the Haitian higher education ecosystem requires the continuation of the achievements made under the impulse of the EMINENT project. This implies the consolidation of the structures created within the members of the Consortium, but also the establishment of other systems at national and regional level. The challenge is to ensure, jointly, the identification of funding and support mechanisms in order to have, in the medium to long term, the technical expertise necessary to be able to carry out quality assurance activities such as evaluation (through the creation and use of integrated technological information systems), accreditation (through advocacy and strategic partnerships) and the approval of programmes and institutions in the Haitian system, by demonstrating an anchorage in the national, regional and global scientific and academic community.

In the following, the InPAQH-Sup QA network is described in more detail.

CHAPTER 2
WALKING TOGETHER IN THE InPAQH-Sup NETWORK

Mission and Vision

Founded on April 22, 2022, the "***Interconnection of Quality Assurance Partners in Higher Education in Haiti" (InPAQH-Sup)***, is a national network of Quality Assurance. Its mission is to promote constructive exchanges between its members on scientific research, university solidarity and teacher and student mobility, while contributing to providing Haitian society with modern quality higher education institutions (HEIs).

Its vision is to establish a Quality Assurance system at the base and the top of Higher Education and Scientific Research in order to respond to the real needs of Haitian society and to open up to the Caribbean region and the world.

Haitian Creole and French are the official languages of the Network. Other working languages may be used, if necessary, through translation.

Context of its Creation

InPAQH-Sup was founded by a Consortium composed by the Université Publique du Sud in Les Cayes (UPSAC), the Université Publique du Sud-Est in Jacmel (UPSEJ), the Université Publique de l'Artibonite in Gonaïves (UPAG), the Université Publique des Nippes (UPNIP), the

Ecole Supérieure d'Infotronique d'Haïti (ESIH), the University of Alicante of Spain, the University of Cork of Ireland and the University of the South of Haiti, the University of Cork from Ireland and the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QA) in the framework of the Erasmus+ project EMINENT "Towards the improvement and harmonisation of quality assurance of higher education institutions in Haiti, in response to national and international developments". This project is co-funded by the European Union and MENFP from 2019 to 2022.

Main Objective of InPAQH-Sup

The main objective of InPAQH-Sup is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of teaching-learning, scientific research, and community services in Haitian higher education institutions so that they can be an effective engine for the sustainable integral human development of the Republic of Haiti.

Specific Objectives of InPAQH-Sup

- To pool the collection, processing, analysis and sharing of reliable information on quality assurance practices and policies in member universities;
- To promote good practices in the integration, maintenance and continuous improvement of quality in Higher Education in Haiti;
- To facilitate research on quality assurance practices and policies in higher education and their effectiveness in improving the quality of higher education in Haiti;
- Promote the creation of QA units in Haitian HEIs;

- To provide advice and expertise to assist in the creation of quality assurance bodies in the two major regional blocks of the country (Grand Nord and Grand Sud);
- Assist in the development and use of a credit transfer system to facilitate mobility both within and outside Haiti;
- Identify sources of funding to support member HEIs in their activities;
- Expressing the collective views of member HEIs on issues related to the quality of higher education through contacts with international bodies and other means;
- To work with other specialised bodies on QA and accreditation issues;
- Become a member of other regional and international networks. And, where appropriate, represent Haiti in other international networks and bodies.
- To contribute, beyond access to education, to the provision of quality education for all and to the continuous improvement of the quality of the Haitian education system.

The 3 categories of Members

InPAQH-Sup has three (3) categories of members: permanent members, associate members and supporting members. They all adhere to the philosophy, values, principles, statutes and regulations of InPAQH-Sup.

Permanent Members	Haitian public and non-public Institutions of Higher Education (IES) recognized by the MENFP , Statutes and regulations of InPAQH-Sup
Asociate Members	Institutions in foreign countries, such as networks with the same objectives, HEIs, quality assurance agencies, accreditation agencies, audit agencies
Supporting Members	Haitian, foreign and international organisations, institutions or individuals who hav a major interest in Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education

The Benefits of becoming a Member of the Network

The advantages of becoming a permanent member, associate member or supporting member of InPAQH-Sup are numerous. We will just list a few of them:

- Opportunities to share among members the lessons learned in setting up and running a quality assurance system, a quality assurance unit and a programme self-evaluation system in a higher education institution;
- Opportunities to share good practice in quality management and quality assurance in a higher education institution among members;
- Opportunities to share experiences of collaboration with national and international external quality assurance agencies;

- Pooling of resources and synergy, particularly in the network of Regional Public Universities (UPR) and the member universities of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), so that higher education institutions become an effective engine for integral and sustainable human development in Haiti.

To better walk together in the InPAQH-Sup network, it is now important to present the determinants, components, and mechanisms of quality assurance. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3
GETTING FAMILIAR WITH QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Need for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Higher education has been undergoing a revolution over the last fifty years or so, marked by transformations of unprecedented scale and diversity. Globally, student enrolment has increased from 68 million in 1991 to 159 million in 2008. In East Asia and the Pacific, enrolment increased from 14 million in 1991 to 49 million in 2008 (UNESCO, 2010). Quality assurance in higher education is now a priority for many countries. Post-secondary education needs to prepare graduates with new skills, a broad knowledge base and a range of competencies that enable them to access a more complex, interdependent and changing world. Organisations around the world are working to define these goals in terms that can be understood and shared across borders and cultures. Globalisation, regional integration and the ever-increasing mobility of students and teachers have increased the urgency of adopting internationally recognised standards between and within nations. The explosive growth of both traditional and new providers raises new questions about quality standards. (Bouzid & Berrouche 2012). Finally, access to the Internet and to information and communication technologies (ICT) opens up immense prospects for higher education to accomplish its mission while working to bridge the digital divide between social strata and peoples.

All current research in this area confirms that the economy's need for higher education graduates is growing, leading to the emergence of what is now called the 'knowledge economy' with increasing demands for high qualifications. According to some estimates in the United States, the proportion of jobs that will require higher education in the future ranges from 70 to 90% (Lawrence E. Gladieux et al. 1999). Generally speaking, "higher level jobs", representing jobs that require higher education and a higher level of skills, tend to have an increasing weight in total employment.

What about Quality Assurance?

Quality assurance refers to a continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, ensuring, maintaining and improving) education systems, institutional management, and programmes.

Quality assurance of higher education systems usually includes 2 sides - internal and external quality assurance.

Internal quality assurance - a quality assurance system is a means put in place by an institution to enable it to confirm to itself and others concerned that the necessary conditions have been put in place for students to achieve the standards the institution has set for itself (Donald Ekong, 1998).

On the other hand, external quality assurance refers to the actions of an external body which may be a Quality Assurance Agency or another body different from the institution, which assesses its operation or that of its programmes in order to determine whether it is meeting the standards that have been agreed on.

The objectives and roles of quality assurance

The objective of insurance is, among others, to strengthen the internal management capacity of institutions for quality improvement.

Other major purposes of quality assurance are accountability, control, compliance and improvement.

What are those purposes in detail?

Accountability: Higher education institutions are taking responsibility for the service they provide and the public money they spend.

Control: Quality Assurance ensures the integrity of the higher education sector, in particular making it difficult for poor or rogue providers

to continue operating and making access to the sector dependent on the fulfilment of criteria of adequacy.

Compliance: Quality Assurances ensures that institutions adopt procedures, practices and policies that are considered to be desirable by funders, governments and professional bodies for the proper conduct of the sector and to ensure its quality.

Improvement: Quality Assurance should encourage adjustment and change for continuous improvement of higher education institutions.

External quality assurance processes are designed to ensure effective control of higher education systems or demand compliance with governmental expectations that is why they are not necessarily the best at encouraging improvement in teaching and learning. On the other hand internal quality assurance processes focus a lot more on improvement.

One of the reasons why internal quality assurance is best suited to initiate improvement is the benchmark for the quality assessment. Within internal quality assurance the benchmark for assessment is the mission and vision of the HEI itself, while within external quality assurance the benchmark for the assessment is a set of (external) standards and criteria.

Ensuring the quality of services ensures the longevity of the institution. The (internal) Quality Assurance system leads the managers to take into account many of the institution's components and improve them regularly when necessary. These are

- Infrastructure
- The governance of the university (administrative and pedagogical)

- System of control and good management
- The immediate environment
- The financial aspect of the institution
- The financial conditions of the students
- A contingency plan for the life of the institution
- A plan for the future of the institution that aims at the expansion of progress, and visions for the world

The EMINENT project focuses on the development of internal quality assurance as the best driver for improvement.

In addition to the various functions of quality assurance, it is above all important to establish what is meant by quality.

Why is it that important to define quality? External and internal quality assurance are not completely free in their actions, they are working within the definition of quality. This implies that external quality assurance and internal quality assurance have to move along with the changing meaning of quality as a result of changing trends in higher education. That is why, rapid or continual change in the design of national policies regarding Quality assurance are a threat, to quality assurance activities.

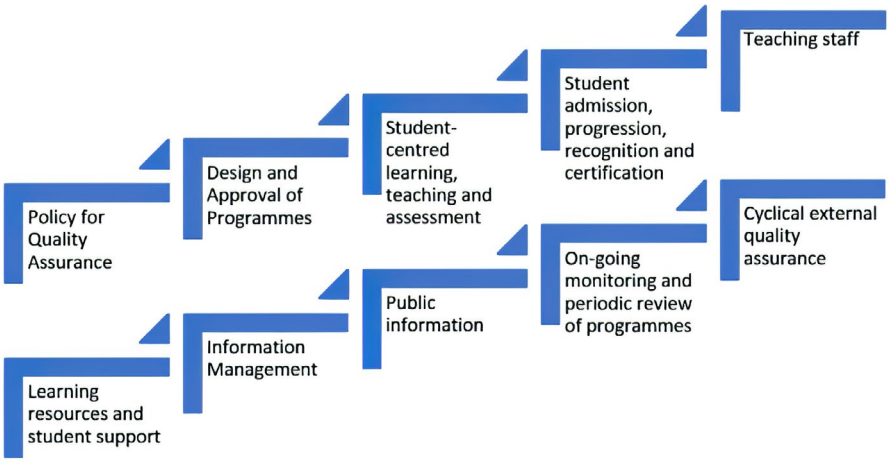
Without a settled meaning of quality, quality assurance has no practical relevance, because the only function is to guarantee and enact the meaning of quality. In an ideal situation, the definition of quality would be a result of negotiations among key stakeholders including the funders (government), users of the products/programs (students), users of outputs (employers), and employees of the HEI (academics). An important goal for the future is therefore, to jointly define and strive for quality in the Haitian higher education sector.

For the purposes of the EMINENT project, ***the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*** were referred to. The ESG are a set of standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance in higher education. The ESG are not standards for quality, nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented, but they provide guidance, covering the areas which are vital for successful quality provision and learning environments in higher education (ESG 2015, p. 6)

The ESG are based on the following four principles for quality assurance:

- Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance;
- Quality assurance responds to the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, programmes and students;
- Quality assurance supports the development of a quality culture;
- Quality assurance takes into account the needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society. (ESG 2015, p.8)

The European standards for quality assurance are comprised of three parts (Internal Quality Assurance, External Quality Assurance, Quality Assurance Agencies). Within the framework of the project, the focus was on Part 1: Standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance. This comprises ten standards in the following areas:



Periodic Self-Evaluation of a Training Program

For each of the ten (10) areas of internal quality assurance there is a reference and guidelines.

In the context of the EMINENT project, the consortium has agreed to give priority to two of them: “Student-centered learning, teaching and evaluation” and “Periodic program monitoring and evaluation”.

In the first area, the aim is to ensure that learning, teaching and evaluation of learning in a training program are learner-centered. This is achieved through the use of learning outcomes in the design, development and approval of the program. For this purpose, it is important to define the competence framework of the profession or the graduate’s exit profile in the form of the program’s learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences). The program learning outcomes express the overall learning to be achieved at the end of a program and guide the more specific learning outcomes and their level within the modules. The

modules are pedagogically aligned with the knowledge, skills and competencies required in the competency framework. Each teacher has to build their syllabus taking into account the learning outcomes, in terms of cognitive knowledge, know-how, behaviour and skills in complex life situations, indicated in the pedagogical program by competences. The evaluation of learning is carried out according to methods that measure the degree of development of the skills and competencies acquired by the student. The evaluation of the teaching is also carried out in order to continuously improve it.

In the second area, the competent authority selects a program of study for self-evaluation. The purpose of the self-evaluation is to examine the extent to which the general arrangements for the design, implementation and operation of the programme enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme. For this purpose, a committee composed of representatives of internal (students, faculty, program managers) and external (partners, contractors) stakeholders is formed. It identifies the areas to be examined and develops a self-assessment plan to examine, with appropriate evidence, the various aspects of program development, validation, dissemination of information, and implementation. This exercise also takes into account the results of some aspects of benchmarking the performance of a competing program in terms of curricular content, market trends, demand for agents in a field, and societal needs. After the completion of this participatory exercise, the recommendations and decisions taken by the competent authorities for the reform of the program are published. Their implementation and continuous monitoring of their application is done by the relevant bodies and stakeholders.

After this overview of internal quality assurance, a question arises: how do you get started with quality assurance in a higher education institution?

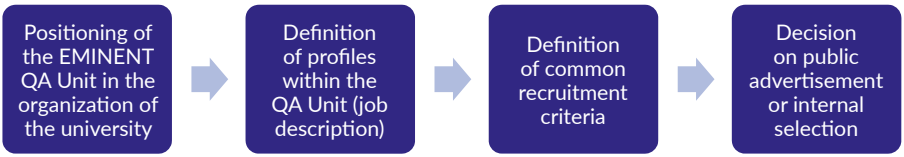
CHAPTER 4
GETTING STARTED WITH QUALITY ASSURANCE

Institutional Set up of QA Units

As shown before, internal quality assurance is the best way to achieve improvements. However, this requires a unit that coordinates quality assurance tasks. The first step on the way to an internal quality assurance system is therefore to set up a quality assurance unit (QA Unit) and to recruit staff for the QA Unit.

Within the framework of the EMINENT project the following process was used to accomplish this first step:

STEP 1: Positioning of the QA Unit within the university's organization



The area of responsibility of the QA representatives does not have a uniform definition for all universities. The assignment of these QA representatives can be regulated differently or can take place at different organizational units. However, competencies and assignments must be defined clearly.

Possible positioning in the HEI structure (that are widely used):

- Executive department (assigned to the President, Rector, Vice-President, Vice-Rector, Chancellor)
- Integration into an administrative unit with a superior
- As a "center model" incorporated into the structure of the HEI (outsourced unit with its own management, e.g. Centre for Quality Development)

All of the universities of the EMINENT project have chosen to have the quality assurance unit headed by a coordinator, who reports to the rector. The universities of the UPR network decided that the coordinator will have the rank of a dean and to also have a deputy coordinator. In order to set up the QA unit, the MENFP authorised the universities of the UPR network to do so.

STEP 2: Definition of profiles within the QA Unit

In order to be able to define the recruitment requirements for the employees of the QA unit, the profiles/roles of these employees have to be defined beforehand. The following points should be defined/considered (no exhaustive list):

- Purpose of the position/role
- Position of the role within the team, department and HEI
- Reporting duty (to whom?) and other key interactions (dissemination of information)
- Key areas of responsibility (essential main tasks) and the deliverables expected
- Short, medium and long-term objectives
- Scope for progression and promotion

- Required education and training
- Soft skills and personality traits necessary to excel

A definition of the role (job description) should be an accurate representation of the track record required to perform the role, not an impossible wish list of every skill that may be useful.

STEP 3: Definition of common recruitment criteria for QA Units

Already with the job description/definition of the position, requirements were formulated to the personnel, in the next step it is to be specified now which are obligatory and which would be only a nice addition.

Something to reflect on:

Quality assurance needs motivated actors. The quality assurance officers play a decisive role in the first place - decisive because, in addition to the purely content-related activities, the mentality of these persons make a significant contribution to success.

Quality is only partly achieved through the application of different techniques and methods. However, the attitude of the employees is of essential importance.

Irrespective of the organizational structure, all QA representatives must have “basic attitude of the long breath”: with a lot of perseverance and tact, the QA representatives manage to win further actors and stakeholders, to turn them into participants and to inspire them to (continuous) participation. The QA representatives have to deal repeatedly

with the question of how the motivation for cooperation can be kept high.

STEP 4: Decision on public advertisement or internal selection

After the organizational embedding of the planned QA unit has been determined, the roles of the positions have been defined, and the requirements for the staff of the positions have been determined, it is time to decide whether the positions should be advertised publicly or whether there may already be staff available at the HEI who meets the requirements. This decision is made by each of the PC HEIs individually and of course a "mix" is also possible i.e. some of the positions are filled internally others are advertised publicly.

The universities of the EMINENT project decided to carry out a joint tender.

Mission, Vision and List of services of the QA Unit

The next step, after the institutional establishment of the QA unit, is to draft the mission, vision and list of services of the newly created QA unit.

The **mission** expresses the purpose and reason for the existence of an organization and the benefits it should provide.

A mission is primarily addressed to external stakeholders and contains the purpose of an organization, i.e. what the organization stands for and how it wants to be seen by the stakeholders. The mission of a university or unit thus describes its mission for the stakeholders.

A mission is primarily directed at external stakeholders and contains the purpose of an organization, i.e., what the organization stands for and how it wants to be perceived by its stakeholders. The mission of a university or unit therefore describes its function for the stakeholders.

The **vision** is primarily directed inwards towards the members of the university and describes what should be achieved in the future, in particular it describes the long-term development as orientation for the realization of the mission and the definition of the strategy(s). A vision is a long-term goal for the next five to ten years.

The vision should

- be feasible in the foreseeable future (5 to 10 years),
- be simple and clear,
- represent a challenge for the entire unit (university),
- reflect the fundamental goals and aspirations of the unit (university) and its staff,
- can be translated into binding strategies and concrete strategic goals,
- be sustainably supported by the management,
- a certain direction.

Within the framework of the EMINENT project, all universities formulated a mission, vision and list of services for the newly created QA Units. One of the tasks of the QA units is to conduct a self-diagnosis of the state of quality assurance in the institution concerned.

Self-Diagnosis of the QA process at selected Faculties

I. Self-diagnosis, definition of the concept

The quality approach is based on the principle of the Deming Wheel or continuous improvement cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act). The institution or structure that wishes to implement it must follow this logic by setting up a quality assurance system, which will enable them to:

- draw up a quality assurance manual, in which all the operating procedures of the structure will appear. This manual will serve as a reference;
- monitor and control what is actually being done and what should be done, through the use of scorecards and the benchmark;
- use the results of the monitoring and evaluation indicators to improve the quality assurance system in place.

In order to write the Quality Assurance Manual, the facility must first conduct a self-diagnosis.

a. Definition

According to AFNOR, the French standards organisation, “Self-assessment consists of measuring the level of performance achieved by identifying the strong and weak points. By positioning this level on a scale of progress, it enables the company to situate itself and evaluate the path to progress.”

In other words, the self-diagnosis is the stage that will enable the organisation wishing to embark on a quality approach to take stock of its overall operation: on the basis of the reference framework(s) chosen, it will establish a comparison between what should be done (specified in

the reference framework) and what is actually done in its organisation. The existence of gaps or not in the different areas analysed, such as management style, staff management, production processes of goods or services offered for example, will determine whether the organisation is functioning well, and whether it could function better depending on the objectives assigned to it.

This exercise is carried out by the organisation itself, hence the use of the prefix "auto", from the Greek autos meaning self, and it requires the use of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, based on the benchmarks ratified by the institution concerned.

The main objective of the self-diagnosis is therefore to trigger a process of continuous improvement, as these results will serve as a basis for building the quality assurance system of the facility.

b. The benefits

The practice of self-diagnosis before implementing the quality approach of an organisation brings several advantages:

- the results will be a decision-making tool for defining the quality policy and its various plans;
- it creates dialogue between the stakeholders;
- it initiates collaborative, participatory and consensual work.

This list is not exhaustive, but we will limit ourselves to those aspects which seem to us to be the most important.

c. Who is concerned by the self-diagnosis?

As far as organisations are concerned, all types of structures are concerned: private, public, associations, political parties, etc. and both those that produce goods and those that produce services. For self-diagnosis is the first necessary step in setting up a Quality Assurance policy.

As far as stakeholders are concerned, all those who are internal (directors, managers, and all those who work in an organisation that intends to implement a Quality Assurance policy) and those who are external (partners, sponsors, collaborators, etc.), are concerned by the self-diagnosis, for different reasons:

- to do one's own work better;
- to achieve the objectives set by the hierarchy;
- to understand why there are problems in the organisation and to know the solutions;
- to check whether the goods and/or services offered really correspond to the needs of the community;
- etc.

The following section outlines the different stages of self-diagnosis through the experience of the Université Publique du Sud aux Cayes (UPSAC), a member of the InpacSu network.

II. The different stages of self-diagnosis: The experience of UPSAC

1. Choice of reference system(s)

Before starting the self-diagnosis process, it is important to choose the reference framework on which it will be based. Within the framework

of the EMINENT project, the European partners made available to the Haitian partners the audit guide of ANECA (Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación) in Spain, itself inspired by the ESG, the European Quality Assurance reference framework.[1]

These documents allowed us to build the questionnaire that was used to collect data for the needs analysis.

Each structure is free to choose the reference system that suits it. It is best to use local standards. If the facility also wants to align itself with international standards, it is recommended to add one or more international standard to its list of choices. In the event that local standards are missing, the facility can rely solely on the international document(s).

The important thing in choosing the repository(s) is not the number, but rather the consideration of its feasibility and application.

2. Construction of the collection tool

Each institution determines the data collection tool it will use for its needs analysis based on the following criteria:

- The availability of its financial resources
- The availability of its material resources
- The availability of its human resources
- The time allotted

1. It is important to note that these standards were chosen due to the lack of documents specifying quality standards in education in Haiti. As these documents are currently being drafted, it will be up to each entity integrating a quality assurance management system into its structure to add them to the set of basic reference documents for its system.

- The target population (number)
- The quality of the data sought

Taking into account these different constraints, UPSAC opted for the questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed using four (4) of the seven (7) evaluation criteria proposed by the ANECA guide, in order to reflect the reality of the Faculty. These are the following criteria:

- Criterion 1: How does the institution ensure the quality of these programs?
- Criterion 2: How are the programs student-oriented?
- Criterion 3: How does the institution ensure and improve the quality of its teaching staff?
- Criterion 6: How does the institution promote information about the degree?

Some questions highlighting key points of the ESG framework have been added.

3. Data collection

Different groups representative of the UPSAC population were formed to answer the questionnaire:

- The first group represented the population of the deanship of the selected Faculty, namely the Faculty of Education. It was composed of the Dean, a representative of the teachers, two (2) representatives of the students, and two (2) representatives of the deanship.

- The second group represented the general administration of UPSAC with the Rector, the Secretary General, and the Quality Assurance Management Unit with the Unit Coordinator.

Each of the groups met to answer the questionnaire together, through an exchange of views. The selected answer was the one that was shared by the most people. There was often not unanimity, but all answers were objective.

Again, at this stage, it is up to each institution to determine the size and selection criteria of its sample.

4. Analysis of the results

The choice of data processing and analysis method is again up to each organization. The most important thing is the interpretation made of the data, according to the criteria chosen. For UPSAC:

- The criteria that received the most negative and/or mixed responses, reflected the need to intervene to improve and correct the existing. This is done by drafting the necessary documents for the functioning of the Faculty, and by setting up a system of monitoring administrative and academic practices to ensure the effective application of these documents.
- The criteria and points that did not appear in the questionnaire but which are present in the referentials reflected a need to create the non-existent in the near future (2 to 3 years after the establishment and effective operation of the quality assurance system in the Faculty)

These results, taken criterion by criterion, will allow the writing of the Quality Assurance Manual, which will be the reference for the quality assurance system of your facility.

Drafting of the QA Handbook

To better carry out quality assurance work in an institution of higher education, it is very useful to write a quality assurance manual that describes its quality management system in a participatory way. This document facilitates the communication of information about the quality assurance system. It serves as a framework for meeting the requirements of the quality improvement process. It also confirms management's commitment to quality assurance.

The manual should include, but not be limited to: the institution's quality assurance policy and management's commitment to its implementation; an overview of the quality assurance system and the quality assurance unit; procedures for self-assessment of training programs and the implementation by stakeholders of actions taken to improve the quality of a program as a result of the self-assessment.

CHAPTER 5
LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The crises of recent years and the relentless advances in technology are proof for higher education institutions as well as for all actors in the Haitian higher education ecosystem (students, faculty, employers, researchers, regulators, households, and partner institutions) that they need to engage in an innovative approach to continuous improvement that will allow them to achieve permanent and sustainable actions aimed at improving the quality of education. The crises of the last few years and the continuous technological progress are proof for the institutions of higher education as well as for all the actors belonging to the Haitian higher education ecosystem (students, faculty, employers, researchers, regulators, households and partner institutions or not) that they need to engage in an innovative approach of continuous improvement that will allow them to carry out permanent and sustainable actions aiming at modernizing all the processes of management and organization of the whole ecosystem in order to avoid repeated dysfunctions and to reinforce their positioning as actors generating value and development.

Internal and external quality assurance is carried out within the framework of the definition of quality, for example by the legal bodies of the higher education system. During the course of the EMINENT project, two presidential decrees were passed, but their development is unclear at present.

This context, as well as the fact that quality can only come from the activities of higher education institutions themselves, suggests that they, with the support of the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training (MENFP), are the driving force behind the improvement and harmonization of quality assurance not only in the higher education sector but throughout the Haitian education system. Moreover, this was the wish of the participants in the National Conferences on the Quality of Education in Haiti (April 8-9, 2014) and the First Haitian Conferences on Higher Education (April 10-11, 2014), which advocated for an integrated approach to act on the different dimensions that determine and guarantee the quality of education.

The InPAQH-Sup National Network provides an excellent opportunity to discuss quality assurance measures and experiences among stakeholders and organizations and to learn from each other.

Now, based on the lessons learned in our efforts to transform the Haitian reality and increase the level of quality assurance in the founding universities of the InPAQH-Sup network, here are some recommendations that we formulate for universities wishing to join this network or the quality assurance debate:

1. Quality Assurance is a long process of continuous improvement, which requires committed and available human resources. In particular, the coordinator of the technical service known as the Internal Quality Assurance Unit must be able to listen to the various actors and help them produce quality instruments to improve their skills and production.

2. It would be interesting to foresee a budget allowing for the remuneration of the members of the Quality Assurance Committee who will work closely with the Quality Assurance Unit.
3. It is always important to make it clear that this process is not set up to negatively sanction what has already been accomplished within the university structure, but to help go further and do better. It is also important to remember that the light bulb was not invented by improving the candle.
4. Because the institutional culture of each university has its own characteristics, an "off-the-shelf" quality assurance system cannot and should not be used. Starting with basic conceptual ideas, discussions by responsible persons in working groups, commissions, councils, management meetings and university meetings promote the development of consensus objectives and concept.
5. The role of the institution's leadership is critical to the successful implementation of the quality assurance policy and strategies. The rectorate must support the implementation of the quality assurance system in a way that is visible and credible to students and faculty.
6. It is particularly important to involve those who may be affected at an early stage, to seek an exchange with them and to involve them actively in the design of the quality assurance. In addition to the representatives of the committee, this includes not only teachers and students from all departments, but also employees from the various administrative areas and external stakeholders (entrepreneurs, employers, professional associations, chambers of commerce and other civil society organizations).

7. Do not skip the preliminary step of self-diagnosis of quality assurance needs. It creates awareness and provides information that can stimulate motivation for stakeholders to engage in a quality assurance process.
8. In building quality assurance, institutional crises and disasters bring their own set of often unpredictable misfortunes, but they always present opportunities for stronger and more supportive rebuilding. They offer leaders and academic stakeholders, among others, the opportunity to be resilient and rise to the challenges of improving the quality of education.
9. The quality assurance process is not easily implemented in a context of open tension or conflict. Rather, it requires a climate of peace, dialogue, open collaboration, cooperative learning, critical openness, and willingness to change.
10. Resistance to change, whether overt or subtle, on the part of any of the stakeholders can block the quality assurance process. Open dialogue with freedom, transparency and communication will keep the quality assurance process moving forward.
11. Do not hesitate to start small, with a small team according to the means at hand. After all, it is by trying to do that we learn the best (learning by doing). Don't compare yourself to those who live in a more comfortable environment and have more resources. Each university organization has its own reality, its own challenges, its own victories on the different paths of quality assurance in higher education.
12. Training sessions for stakeholders on the objectives and mechanisms of quality assurance facilitate their mobilization to participate in the periodic self-assessment of a program.

13. Benchmarking of recognized competitive models of educational offerings provides insight into market trends and allows for their consideration in curriculum reforms. However, the implementation of decisions made on the basis of the results of the self-evaluation requires not only available resources but, above all, courage.
14. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) facilitate the participatory process of internal quality assurance. However, the Quality Assurance Unit must also engage in continuous quality improvement of e-learning and e-teaching.
15. Equitable language planning and the integration of cultural values of communities with respect for human rights are essential factors for the effectiveness of any internal and external quality assurance process.

CONCLUSION

The commitment to quality assurance in the Haitian higher education system represents an important contribution to the pursuit in the Republic of Haiti of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations in 2015 in its Agenda to "eradicate extreme poverty worldwide. (SDG1.1)" by the year 2030.

Indeed, the 4th of these goals invites to take adequate means to **"Ensure equal access to quality education for all and promote lifelong learning opportunities. (MDG4**). In addition, the third target of this goal states: **"By 2030, ensure that all women and men have equal access to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university education.**

Reaching this target, achieving this goal and obtaining the results of individual and collective well-being expected in the current context of Haiti represent a major challenge and require the mobilization of all national resources and skills.

Fortunately, from now on, to walk together on this difficult road, a new engine is available to all actors who want to engage in the fight for the construction of a culture of quality assurance, namely: the network **"Inconnexion des partenaires de l'assurance qualité dans l'enseignement supérieur en Haïti" (InPAQH-Sup network).**

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