

Regional  
Quality Assurance Framework  
Qualifications Framework

*QA-QL-QA-QL-QA-QL*

*Commonalities and differences  
some conclusions*

*European Standards & Guidelines (ENQA (E4)) / ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAFHE)*  
*ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (QARF) / European Qualifications Framework*

- Evolution - glossary - principles - standards and guidelines (process).....  
referencing processes
- QA one element to work in tandem with Qualifications framework (A/E)
- Clarity & Transparency; trust; external stakeholders; national reform;  
Transparency tools
- Flexible enough to accommodate diversity - not prescriptive but indicating a  
real threshold (A/E) – a sound point of reference for all to sign up to.
- Harmonisation and transparency not standardisation (A/E)
- Individual Cultural orientation and values maintained in regional frameworks  
(A&E)

*European Standards & Guidelines (ENQA (E4)) / ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAFHE)*

*ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (QARF) / European Qualifications Framework (EQF)*

- National Regulatory priorities prevail - National Policies impact – protectionism! Implementation is key ( E)
- Formal structures are required and need to be adopted
- Initial **commitment** and buy-in at agency, political, and institutional level to develop
- ongoing commitment to evolve and improve – work is never complete. HE is a complex business expected to satisfy many economic and social needs in a national and transnational context. QA needs to become an efficient tool to facilitating reform and enhancement.

# Issues to be considered – further work

- Planning for **future** institutional operating context – future HEIs??
- **Other** ‘Non state’ commercial **qualifications** (ICT)
- Influences on ‘student centred learning’ QA
- National **public policy** versus regional ambitions, standards/principles
- Quality of National system dictates reference to regional and level of associated trust - National systems should be **accessible, understood, and transparent to all**. Gaps and shortcuts may undermine all efforts.
- Regional and national QA systems should undertake **impact analysis** – set clear performance indicators at an early stage of development.
- First stage of framework development is **preparatory** - stage two requires real **visibility** at the national level.

# Conclusions

## *National-Regional-National-Regional- National*

- Regional quality assurance does not alleviate the pressure on National QA systems and HE institutions to react, resolve, respond, deliver reform and improve. However regional frameworks establish **formal parameters - reference points and lead to further convergence**
- Other parallel regional frameworks may not be a threat - are more likely to converge than clash (Bologna/EQF).
- Clarity on **common language** is a part of the developmental process.
- **Capacity building** is key to both regions ASEAN/Europe. National bodies need to develop effective practice. Regional frameworks reflect the sum of the parts. (e.g. Dublin descriptors – short cycle quals)
- **Smart and efficient QA/qual criteria** and tools can deliver if all the parties are committed to ongoing development/ sharing effective practice
- National/Regional **formal endorsement** is critical for QA and Qualifications

# Conclusions

## *National-Regional-National-Regional- National-Regional*

- QA and qualifications systems are under more pressure with reduced funding and resources
  - Qualifications are expected to deliver jobs; alleviate social and economic shortcomings and become exportable commodities for ambitious internationalisation policy approaches
- **Implementation** is key and the experience of reflection and analysis is a valuable source of information..
- **collaboration** and sharing effective practice is key. (EFFECTIVE IS CONTEXT)
- National Framework (whether QA or qualifications) is the vital link to the Regional Framework – National Framework should in turn be influenced by the Regional Framework parameters (regional is a catalyst for national)
- National Frameworks can influence Regional Frameworks
- National Frameworks can be **all embracing** facilitating QA systems for all types of provision, qualifications (VET – HET – professional alignment and more)
- **Development is on going – continuous improvement**

# Action?

- DIRECT DIALOGUE BETWEEN EQF AND ASEM
- INTER REGIONAL SHARING OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE [ IN REAL TIME]
- CONCRETE SOLUTIONS MAY BE MORE ACHIEVABLE BETWEEN REGIONS  
*- Case studies on NFQs, Referencing; ENQA reviews against ESG Guidelines; New innovative approaches by ASEAN and new national QA and qualifications frameworks emerging*
- INTER REGIONAL SHARING OF EXPERTS –COMMON POOL INVOLVED IN META DEVELOPMENTS IN QA & QUALIFICATIONS
- INTER REGIONAL SHARING OF DEVELOPMENTS MAY ALLEVIATE RESOURCE INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES OF COUNTRY TO COUNTRY OR AGENCY TO AGENCY AND INVOLVE OTHER REGIONAL ACTORS.