Challenges for single accreditation of joint programmes: the case of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management

Inga Juknytė-Petreikienė
Chair of Quality Assurance Committee of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management, Mykolas Romeris University
May 30, 2017, Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius, Lithuania

Introduction

The development and initial accreditation of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management was a really challenging activity, which required a lot of international effort and lasted almost 5 years. Even so, a joint programme while being a challenging form of provision, can also be extremely rewarding for all parties concerned – students, teachers, higher education institutions and employers.

Looking at the history of the Bologna Process it has really done a lot in respect of joint programmes' development and implementation within and outside the European Higher Education Area. Many European countries have by now included joint programmes in their national legislation. The question, however, is whether the introduction of joint programmes in national legislation is quite enough to meet the needs of single accreditation of joint programmes in practice. Unfortunately, quantitative and qualitative research data that would be useful is especially limited in relation to the particular challenges within the evaluation and accreditation procedures that are faced by quality assurance agencies and consortiums of joint programmes. However, it is still obvious that the most common practice regarding accreditation of joint programmes is that one joint programme has to undergo separate accreditation procedures in all the countries concerned. And now the challenge is not to agree upon the need of a single accreditation procedure – it was already done by endorsement of the European Approach in 2015. Now the challenge is rather to find ways within the national legal frameworks to carry out single accreditation procedures. Two years after Yerevan, accreditation of joint programmes still continues to face challenges due to different regulatory frameworks and legislation of European countries.

Differences of national legislation: the case of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management

The statement that "... problems are mainly rooted in the different national legislations in Europe and the still existing heterogeneity of QA regimes in the countries concerned" (Heusser, Dittrich, 2010:5), published by ECA and the statement that "The different emphases and national requirements created problems as regards the joint programmes in the different countries as well as in finding common denominators for joint evaluation" (Hiltunen, 2012:11) published in the ENQA workshop report are still relevant and if we would change the date of these statements to "2017", in some European countries it would be in line with reality. It could be grounded on the case of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management consortium

countries' existing legislation and other regulations in respect of the programmes' evaluation and accreditation procedures.

Our observations[30] on the national legal differences in the evaluation and accreditation procedure of the programmes proves that quality assurance agencies across Europe operate within different legal as well as cultural frameworks and that, in the view of the consortium, that they complicate and burden single accreditation of joint programmes in our consortium countries.

Ability to choose a foreign quality assurance agency for the accreditation of a programme

Not all European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management consortium countries allow the possibility to choose a foreign quality assurance agency for the accreditation of any programme, including joint (see table 1).

Table 1. **Ability to choose a foreign quality assurance agency (QAA)**

Lithuania	YES	for evaluation, EQAR-registered QAA
Latvia	NO	
Estonia	YES	but has to be agreed by national QAA
Netherlands	YES	EQAR-registered QAA
Spain	NO	

Sources:
Law on Research and Higher Education, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 30.04.2009.

Law on Institutions of Higher Education, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, entry into force 24.01.1997.

Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation, approved by EKKA Higher Education Quality Assessment Council on 01.04.2011, amended on 13.06.2012.

Dutch Higher Education and Research Act of 08.10.1992, passed by the Parliament of the Netherlands, entry into force 05.04.1993, last amended 01.09.2017.

Royal Decree 1393/2007 establishing the organisation of the official university courses, passed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, entry into force 30.10.2007, amended on 03. 06. 2016.

In Latvia, there is not accreditation procedure of study programmes and only study fields are subject to accreditation procedures. Under Latvian legislation it is not allowed to choose a foreign agency for initial accreditation or subsequent re-accreditation of a programme. Accreditation of study fields is done only by Latvian Quality Agency for Higher Education.

In Spain only national agencies are allowed to evaluate and accredit a programme. For the re-accreditation of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management, the consortium choice jointly selects a suitable EQAR-registered quality assurance agency, as it is stated in the European Approach "If some of the cooperating higher education institutions require external quality assurance at programme level (e.g. programme accreditation or evaluation is mandatory), then the cooperating institutions should select a suitable quality assurance agency from the list of EQAR-registered agencies" (EA, 2015:2), is limited. The consortium is obliged to select Spanish agencies in order to comply with Spanish legislation.

It is obvious that for the real implementation of the European Approach it is necessary to make changes in national legislation in all Bologna Process involved countries, allowing higher education institutions to request evaluation and/or accreditation from suitable EQAR-registered agencies other than national, if not for all study programmes, at least for joint programmes it should be permitted.

Recognition of accreditation in the event the programme is evaluated by a foreign agency

In the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management consortium countries only in the Netherlands is accreditation of the programme directly accepted if the agency is EQAR-registered. In Lithuania,

30 Special thanks goes to the representatives of the consortium for contributing to the comparative study of legislation of consortium countries: Prof. Iveta Mietule, Maiko Martsik, Prof. Myriame Bollen, Assoc. Prof. Claribel de Castro Sanchez

Estonia and Spain approval by the national agency is mandatory, while in Latvia there are no regulations as yet (see table 2).

This is accompanied by the requirement, for instance, in Spain and Latvia, to submit a description of the curricula and additional documents of the programme only in the national language (!); in other words, the documents will need to be translated. The Spanish and Latvian partners of our consortium for the initial accreditation of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management had to translate the description of programme curriculum and other documents, including the consortium agreement (!). It is quite an unjustified, disproportionate requirement in the framework of a joint programme developed by an international consortium, imposing an additional workload on the programme administration and academic staff. Therefore, we would like to see the necessary amendments in the operational procedures in respect of language, for accreditation of the joint programme, implemented by an international consortium.

Also, recognition of initial accreditation is accompanied by the requirement, for example in Lithuania and Latvia, to submit a description of the programme in the country approved programme description form, in other words the documents will need to be overwritten, copy-pasted and supplemented by additional information. It leads to unproductive duplication of efforts required from higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies as well. It creates hundreds of hours of additional unjustified work.

Taking into account the statement of the European Approach "Dependent on the national legal framework, the external quality assurance decision should come into force or be recognised in all countries where the programme is offered, as agreed in the Bucharest Communiqué" (EA, 2015:2), we, as stakeholders of the European Higher Education Area call for an increase in the mutual trust amongst ENQA-accredited and EQAR-registered agencies and their decisions on the quality of joint programmes and revision of national requirements that hinder direct recognition of results and decisions of initial accreditation of ENQA-accredited and EQAR-registered agencies without raising any additional requirements to translate documents into the national language or submit them in different forms in each consortium country.

Table 2. **Recognition of accreditation of foreign QAA: direct or needs to be approved by national QAA**

Lithuania	Needs to be approved by national QAA
Latvia	There are no regulations
Estonia	Needs to be approved by national QAA
Netherlands	Direct NVAO decision, in case of EQAR-registered QAA
Spain	Needs to be approved by national QAA

Sources:
Law on Research and Higher Education, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 30.04.2009.

Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation, approved by EKKA Higher Education Quality Assessment Council on 01.04.2011, amended on 13.06.2012.

Dutch Higher Education and Research Act of 08.10.1992, passed by the Parliament of the Netherlands, entry into force 05.04.1993, last amended 01.09.2017.

Royal Decree 1393/2007 establishing the organisation of the official university courses, passed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, entry into force 30.10.2007, amended on 03. 06. 2016.

Differences in duration of the evaluation and accreditation procedure until the final decision in respect of programme accreditation

In the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management consortium countries the duration of the evaluation and accreditation procedure in the case of the initial programme accreditation varies from 3 months to 1 year (see table 3), and in the case of the subsequent re-accreditation of the programme the duration of the evaluation and accreditation procedure varies from 5 months to 1 year (see table 4).

So, we have discussions on the "two-speed" EU policy, as described by some politicians; and I would say we have a "multi-speed" European Higher Education Area: in some countries procedures of programmes' evaluation and accreditation are faster, and in some countries slower. The consequence of such variation is that the same joint

Table 3. **Possible duration of the evaluation and accreditation procedure until the final decision (not including appeals procedure) in case of launching the new programme**

Lithuania	Up to 3 months
Latvia	Up to 4 months
Estonia	Up to 5 months
Netherlands	Up to 6 months
Spain	Up to 1 year

Table 4. **Possible duration of the evaluation and accreditation procedure until the final decision (not including appeals procedure) in case of programme re-accreditation**

Lithuania	Up to 8 months
Latvia	Up to 6 months
Estonia	Up to 5 months
Netherlands	NVAO decides on accreditation within 3 months; evaluation starts in the previous year
Spain	Up to 1 year

programme in different consortium countries is legalised at different times. It leads to a situation where some consortium partners can't start the admission of students and implementation of joint programme right after the national accreditation, and are forced to wait for the legalisation of the programme in other consortium member countries. It is especially a stressful situation for consortiums in cases where development and implementation of joint programmes are funded by some public programmes as projects, which are strictly limited in time.

Thus, for the implementation of the European Approach on the ground it is vitally important to avoid different speeds of joint programme evaluation and accreditation in different European consortium countries.

Fee for evaluation and accreditation procedure of joint programme

In the case of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management, in Spain and in Lithuania evaluation and accreditation of any programme are

Table 5. **The price for initial accreditation of programme**

Lithuania	State paid
Latvia	2 761 EUR
Estonia	6 870 EUR
Netherlands	18 000 EUR
Spain	State paid

Sources:
Price list for paid services of Academic information centre, Cabinet Regulation No.409, Republic of Latvia, adopted 14 July 2015

Initial assessment of study programme groups. Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education homepage.

NVAO Guidelines for initial accreditation applications, the Netherlands, 16.12. 2015.

Table 6. **The price for programme re-accreditation**

Lithuania	State paid
Latvia	Study field: 1 programme – 11 502 EUR; 2 programmes – 12 479 EUR; 3 programmes – 13 245 EUR; etc.
Estonia	6 870 EUR
Netherlands	NVAO fee: 820 euro; HEI hires agency for evaluation (approx. 18 000 euro)
Spain	State paid

Sources:
Price list for paid services of Academic information centre, Cabinet Regulation No.409, Republic of Latvia, adopted 14 July 2015

Initial assessment of study programme groups. Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education homepage.

NVAO Guidelines for initial accreditation applications, the Netherlands, 16.12. 2015.

paid by the state. Except for cases where the programme is evaluated by a foreign quality assurance agency, Lithuanian higher education institutions have to pay from their own funds. In Latvia, Estonia and the Netherlands higher education institutions always pay from they own budgets. The prices vary from 2 761 EUR to 18 800 EUR (see tables 5 and 6).

In the case of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management, for initial evaluation and accreditation to the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) for the evaluation procedure was paid – 2 000 EUR, to Latvia for licensing the programme 2 200 EUR and to the Netherlands for accreditation of the programme – 15 600 EUR. In total, 19 800 EUR was paid for initial accreditation of the

European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management.

Undoubtedly, this issue is relevant to all consortiums of joint programmes. We believe that the payment for a single accreditation of a joint programme should be single; the consortiums should not be obliged to pay twice, three or four times for the accreditation of the same joint programme for each country. The single accreditation procedure means reducing the workload of several quality assurance agencies in respect of evaluation and accreditation of the programme and means cost savings (!). Therefore, it is vital to discuss and search for a general mechanism in the European Higher Education Area in respect of the single fee which could be shared by all consortium partners for the single accreditation of a joint programme. It should be addressed at political level within the Bologna Process and governments must reach a political agreement, and not wait several years.

Differences in possible accreditation term(-s) for each consortium country

All the challenges presented above may be more or less managed by an international consortium. In spite of the challenges mentioned, the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management is now a reality, and is demonstrably successful for students and other stakeholders of the programme. However, the main pitfall that hinders single accreditation (to be precise the words subsequent re-accreditation should be used) of the joint programme is differences in the possible accreditation term(-s) for each consortium country.

In our consortium countries the possible accreditation term(-s) for initial accreditation of the programme is as follows: in Lithuania the possible accreditation term if the evaluation is positive is the length of the programme plus 1 year, e. g. if the programme total length is 3 years, the programme will be accredited for 4 years; in Latvia a new study direction initial accreditation has an indefinite term (but does not permit the granting of state recognised diplomas) and licensing of the new programme is limited by the actual accreditation of a particular study direction, in other words: the accreditation of the programme is valid until the end of accreditation of the study direction. In Estonia accreditation is up to 7 years, because

Table 7. **Possible initial accreditation term(-s)**

Lithuania	Length of the programme + 1 year
Latvia	Initial accreditation has an indefinite term
Estonia	3 or 6 or 7 years (HEI)
Netherlands	2 or 6 years
Spain	4 years + interim validation after 2 years

Sources:
Procedure for the External Assessment and Accreditation of Study Programmes, approved by the order of the Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 29.07.2011.

Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation, approved by EKKA Higher Education Quality Assessment Council on 01.04.2011, amended on 13.06.2012.

Universities Act, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Estonia, entry into force 18.02.1995.

Standard of Higher Education, passed by the Government of the Republic of Estonia, entry into force 01.01.2009

Dutch Higher Education and Research Act of 08.10.1992, passed by the Parliament of the Netherlands, entry into force 05.04.1993, last amended 01.09.2017.

Royal Decree 1393/2007 establishing the organisation of the official university courses, passed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, entry into force 30.10.2007, amended on 03. 06. 2016.

Table 8. **Possible re-accreditation term(-s)**

Lithuania	3 or 6 years
Latvia	2 or 6 years (study field)
Estonia	3 or 6 or 7 years (HEI)
Netherlands	2 or 6 years
Spain	4 years + interim validation after 2 years

Sources:
Procedure for the External Assessment and Accreditation of Study Programmes, approved by the order of the Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 29.07.2011.

Law on Institutions of Higher Education, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, entry into force 24.01.1997.

Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation, approved by EKKA Higher Education Quality Assessment Council on 01.04.2011, amended on 13.06.2012.

Universities Act, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Estonia, entry into force 18.02.1995.

Standard of Higher Education, passed by the Government of the Republic of Estonia, entry into force 01.01.2009

Dutch Higher Education and Research Act of 08.10.1992, passed by the Parliament of the Netherlands, entry into force 05.04.1993, last amended 01.09.2017.

Royal Decree 1393/2007 establishing the organisation of the official university courses, passed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, entry into force 30.10.2007, amended on 03. 06. 2016.

the accreditation of a new programme is linked to the accreditation of an institution, in other words, the accreditation of the programme is valid until the end of accreditation of the institution. In the Netherlands, a new study programme might be accredited for 2 years as conditional accreditation or 6 years if the evaluation is positive, while in Spain a new Master's programme might be accredited for a maximum of 4 years with an obligatory interim review after 2 years, done by a national agency (see table 7).

And in the case of programme re-accreditation, the possible term(-s) are the same as in the case of initial accreditation, except for Lithuania and Latvia. In Lithuania, the programme might be accredited for 3 years as conditional accreditation or 6 years if the evaluation is positive. In Latvia, the study direction might be accredited for 2 years as conditional accreditation or 6 years if the evaluation is positive (see table 8).

What are the consequences of such variations across the European countries in possible accreditation term(-s) for the joint programme implemented by an international consortium?

The situation in the case of our consortium is as follows: The European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management's initial accreditation was done by ECA in 2015 in coordination with the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) and an accreditation for 6 years was issued. The programme description followed by the necessary documents together with the Assessment report done by an ECA composed assessment panel were submitted to other national quality assurance agencies of consortium countries.

Although the programme was evaluated positively by all national quality assurance agencies, the agencies issued several national accreditations for different periods (see table 9) and therefore relinquished the ability to have the next single re-accreditation of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management due to different national legal contexts, in other words, due to differences in the possible accreditation term(-s).

In Lithuania, the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management as a new programme was accredited for 3 years, in Latvia it was accredited for 4 years until the expiry of accreditation of the study field to which the programme belongs. In the Netherlands, the programme was accredited for 6 years.

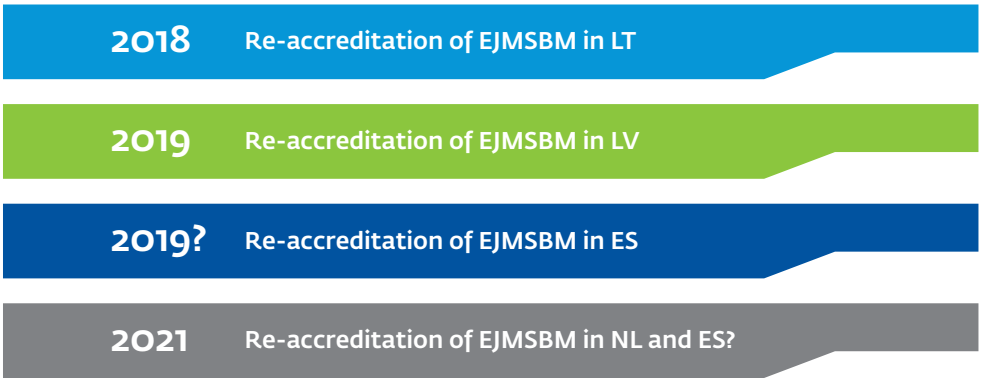
The situation in Spain is still unclear. The programme is officially registered; however, no official document with the term of the programme accreditation validity has been issued. The National Agency of Spain (ANECA) has not yet officially stated by e-mail that accreditation done by NVAO is recognised, including the term of accreditation of 6 years. Also, the answer to our enquiry was that the programme is not subject to interim review after 2 years under the Spanish legislation; everything that concerns the process of re-accreditation will have to follow the Dutch procedure.

However, since the accreditation decision is a statutory act and, thus bound to national

Table 9. **National accreditations of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management for different periods**

Consortium partner and country	Agency	Decision on accreditation	Term of accreditation
Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania	Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC)	3 years	01.06.2018
Rezekne Academy of Technologies, Latvia	Higher Education Quality Agency (AIC)	4 years	04.06.2019
University of Salamanca, Spain National University for Distance-Learning Education, Spain	Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)/Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León (ACSUCYL)	4 years or 6 years?	?
Defence Academy of the Netherlands	Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)	6 years	28.05.2021

Figure 1. **Re-accreditation deadlines of Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management in different consortium countries**



legal requirements, we are waiting for official confirmation from the Spanish Ministry of Education that in Spain the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management does not have to be bound to the national legal requirements in respect of its accreditation period. Until we receive confirmation, we will experience uncertainty in respect to the programme accreditation term in Spain.

Consequently, in our case until 2021 in accordance with the national criteria of each country we will have to do several joint self-evaluation reports as the programme is joint (see 1 picture). The first joint self-evaluation report will have to be done by the middle of 2018 for re-accreditation of the Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management in Lithuania, the second joint self-evaluation report will have to be done by the middle of 2019 for re-accreditation of the Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management in Latvia; perhaps the third joint self-evaluation report will have to be done by the middle of 2019 for re-accreditation of the Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management in Spain, in the event it is accredited for 4 years, and the fourth joint self-evaluation report will have to be done by 2021 for re-accreditation of the Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management in the Netherlands and perhaps in Spain, if it is accredited in Spain for 6 years? And we will have several visits in different consortium countries, we will receive several reports of different assessment panels, and we will have to follow up recommendations of several different expert panels which might be even contradictory to one another (!).

Furthermore, the following re-accreditation terms in each country will be different due to the differences already presented in the possible accreditation term(-s) and re-entering of the cycle from which there is no way out. The starting date of the re-accreditation differs per country and therefore the need for the next accreditation differs as well.

Hence, the main pitfall of the next single re-accreditation is the differences in accreditation deadlines per country. In order to be able to implement the programme, the consortium is burdened with separate countries' accreditation procedures, and self-evaluation reports need to be written almost every year.

Also, there is a hypothetical risk that multiple accreditation decisions do not point in the same direction. In Spain the accreditation decisions are of a binary nature (positive or negative) whilst in other consortium countries there is also another possibility – conditional accreditation (see table 10). This means that in one country a decision could be conditional, whilst in another country it could be either positive or negative, depending on how serious the shortcomings are perceived by that national quality assurance agency. Conflicting different decisions and/or recommendations can place the joint programme at risk.

Table 10. **Possible accreditation decisions**

Lithuania	Positive/conditional/negative
Latvia	Positive/conditional/negative
Estonia	Positive/conditional/negative
Netherlands	Positive/conditional/negative
Spain	Positive/negative

Sources:
Procedure for the External Assessment and Accreditation of Study Programmes, approved by the order of the Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 29.07.2011.

Law on Institutions of Higher Education, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, entry into force 24.01.1997.

Universities Act, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Estonia, entry into force 18.02.1995.

Standard of Higher Education, passed by the Government of the Republic of Estonia, entry into force 01.01.2009.

Dutch Higher Education and Research Act of 08.10.1992, passed by the Parliament of the Netherlands, entry into force 05.04.1993, last amended 01.09.2017.

Royal Decree 1393/2007 establishing the organisation of the official university courses, passed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, entry into force 30.10.2007, amended on 03. 06. 2016.

These represent a significant burden on higher education institutions and the consortium, and hamper the effective and efficient implementation of the joint programme.

Undoubtedly, many more examples from other consortiums can be given. The Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management is just one example which can easily be complemented by other examples. Since the conference is attended by representatives from other consortiums, I'm sure that tomorrow during the group discussion sessions we will hear of other examples in differences of accreditation periods.

A comparative study of consortium countries' legal requirements for programme accreditation shows that the differences in the possible accreditation term(-s), differences in nature of decisions (positive/conditional/negative), and diversity in higher education systems (with a focus on programme or study field or institutional accreditation) set by the national legislation of each country are the main obstacles for implementation of the European Approach. Although the European Approach provides a solution by stating that "The joint programme should be reviewed periodically every 6 years, which should be specified in the published decision. If there is an accreditation decision it should be granted – if the decision is positive – for a period of 6 years" (EA, 2015:6). However, the reality shows that 2 years after Yerevan there are no changes on the ground in the national legislation of European countries in respect of single accreditation of joint programmes. Implementation of the European Approach is impossible without revision of national legislation, regulations and policies that inhibit the single accreditation of joint programmes. The solution requires some exceptions in the national legislation of each country in respect of joint programmes' single accreditation.

Conclusions

A number of projects have been initiated to investigate and tackle problems with the setting up, quality assurance and recognition of joint programmes. Much has been done through the initiatives of European associations in higher education: EUA, ENQA, ECA, EQAR, etc. Those projects (EUA, 2006; ECA, 2010; 2013; ENQA, 2012; EC, 2012; JOIMAN Network, 2012; EQAR, 2014; etc.) have shown that progress has been made and that there are many regulations and tools in place which can be used to facilitate the process of single accreditation of joint programmes. However, even though the European Approach was endorsed by Education ministers on paper, in most countries, in practice (!) quite a few obstacles still exist.

It is necessary, considering the experiences of EHEA stakeholders from different national contexts and fields of activities, to continue discussion of these issues:

- What challenges are faced by stakeholders of European Higher Education Area in evaluation and accreditation of joint programmes from their point of view?
- What particular steps are necessary by quality assurance agencies and European associations in higher education promoting the debate on single accreditation together with other key national and international stakeholders in the Bologna Process?
- What kind of amendments on the ground have to be made in a national legal and operational/procedural framework for the implementation of the European Approach in the time remaining until the first re-accreditation of European Joint

Master's programme in Strategic Border Management and the next Bologna Process Ministerial Conference in Paris in May 2018?
- What issues need to be addressed to Education Ministries and/or Parliaments of the European Higher Education Area?

Therefore, the work on implementation of the European Approach needs to be continued and problems can be overcome only by a joint effort of all stakeholders involved (higher education institutions, students, quality assurance agencies, associations, governments) and by adequate political and legislative actions. Implementation of the European Approach, however, requires coordinated actions by ministries, quality assurance agencies and international consortiums of joint programmes.

References

Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation, Approved by EKKA Higher Education Quality Assessment Council on 01.04.2011, Amended on 13.06.2012. Retrieved from http://ekka.archimedes.ee/en/

Dutch Higher Education and Research Act of 08.10.1992, passed by the Parliament of the Netherlands, entry into force 05.04.1993, last amended 01.09.2017. Only in Dutch. Retrieved from http://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005682/2017-09-01

European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (2015), Retrieved from https://media.ehea.info/file/2015_Yerevan/73/1/European_Approach_QA_of_Joint_Programmes_613731.pdf

European Commission (2012). Handbook of Excellence – Master Programmes, EMQA – Erasmus Mundus Quality Assessment 2012. Brussels.

European Consortium for Accreditation. (2010). Joint programmes: Too many cooks in the kitchen? The Challenges for Accreditation, Recognition and Transparency of Joint Programmes. A Conference publication.

European Consortium for Accreditation. (2013). Assessment Framework for Joint Programmes in Single Accreditation Procedures. ECA Occasional Paper. The Hague.

European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education. (2014). Recognising International Quality Assurance Activity in the European Higher Education Area (RIQAA). Final Project Report.

European University Association (2006). Guidelines for Quality Enhancement in European Joint Master Programmes.

Heusser R., Dittrich K. (2010). Introduction. Joint programmes: Too many cooks in the kitchen? The Challenges for Accreditation, Recognition and Transparency of Joint Programmes. A Conference publication. European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education.

Hiltunen K. (2012). Joint Master's programmes – joint evaluations: a Nordic challenge. Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. Workshop Report 19. European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

Initial assessment of study programme groups. Retrieved from: http://ekka.archimedes.ee/en/

JOIMAN Network. (2012) Guide to developing and running joint programmes at Bachelor and Master's level. Bologna.

Law on Institutions of Higher Education, passed by the Latvian Parliament, Entry into force 24.01.1997. Retrieved from https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=37967

Law on Research and Higher Education, passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 30.04.2009.

NVAO Guidelines for initial accreditation applications, the Netherlands, 16.12. 2015. Retrieved from https://www.nvao.com/quality-assurance-systemsthe-netherlands/accreditation-programme-assessment

Price list for paid services of Academic information centre, Cabinet Regulation No.409, adopted 14 July 2015. Retrieved from https://likumi.lv/ta/id/275564-nodibinajuma-akademiskas-informacijas-centrs-maksas-pakalpojumu-cenradis

Procedure for the External Assessment and Accreditation of Study Programmes, approved by the order of the Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Lithuania, entry into force 29.07.2011. Retrieved from https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.404519

Royal Decree 1393/2007 establishing the organisation of the official university courses, passed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, entry into force 30.10.2007, amended on 03. 06. 2016. Retrieved from https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2007-18770.

Standard of Higher Education, Passed by the Estonian Government 18.12.2008 no 178, Entry into force 01.01.2009 (RT I 2008, 57, 322). Retrieved from https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/528122016005/consolide

Universities Act, Passed by the Estonian Parliament 12, 119, Entry into force 18.02.1995 (12.01.1995, RT I 1995). Retrieved from https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/528122016005/consolide

FRONTEX
EUROPEAN BORDER AND COAST GUARD AGENCY

Single Accreditation of Joint Programmes – Turning the Bologna Guideline into Reality

Conference Report 2017

May 30–31, 2017
Mykolas Romeris University
Vilnius, Lithuania

MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY

European Joint Master's in Strategic Border Management

SKVC

FRONTEX
EUROPEAN BORDER AND COAST GUARD AGENCY

Single Accreditation of Joint Programmes – Turning the Bologna Guideline into Reality

Conference Report 2017

May 30–31, 2017
Mykolas Romeris University
Vilnius, Lithuania

International conference

Single accreditation of joint programmes – turning the Bologna guideline into reality

May 30–31, 2017, Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius, Lithuania
http://jpsa2017.mruni.eu/

Conference Report, 2017

Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities st. 20, LT-08303 Vilnius, Lithuania
Phone (+370 5) 271 4625
e-mail: roffice@mruni.eu
www.mruni.eu

Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC)
A.Goštaugo g. 12, LT-01108 Vilnius, Lithuania
Phone (+370 5) 211 3694
e-mail: skvc@skvc.lt
www.skvc.lt



Plac Europejski 6
00-844 Warsaw, Poland

T +48 22 205 95 00
F +48 22 205 95 01
frontex@frontex.europa.eu
www.frontex.europa.eu

Warsaw, January 2018
© Frontex, 2018

Edited by Inga Juknytė-Petreikienė, Aurelija Valeikienė, Anemona Peres, Viktorija Pokule
Designed by Foxrabbit Designers

Print version:
TT-07-17-135-EN-C
ISBN 978-92-9471-118-2
doi:10.2819/323067

ePUB:
TT-07-17-135-EN-E
ISBN 978-92-9471-064-2
doi:10.2819/788740

PDF:
TT-07-17-135-EN-N
ISBN 978-92-9471-063-5
doi:10.2819/852439

Contents

Foreword #5

1. INTRODUCTION #7

Welcome address #8
Inga Žalėnienė, Vice-Rector for Education and Research, Mykolas Romeris University

Opening speech #10
Françoise Profit, Head of Bologna Follow-Up Group Secretariat

Opening speech #13
Giedrius Viliūnas, Vice-Minister for Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Lithuania

Opening speech #14
Henrik Wärnhjelm, Head of Training Unit, Frontex, EU Agency

2. PLENARY CONTRIBUTIONS #15

European Joint Master's in Strategic Border Management – a reflective history #16
Anemona Peres, Project Manager of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management, Frontex, EU Agency

Challenges for single accreditation of joint programmes: the case of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management #35
Inga Juknytė-Petreikienė, Chair of Quality Assurance Committee of European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management, Mykolas Romeris University

3. CONFERENCE SESSIONS #45

3.1 Accreditation practices of joint programmes around European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management #46

Accreditation Practices of Joint Programmes in Lithuania #46
Nora Skaburskienė, Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), Lithuania

Accreditation Practices of Joint Programmes in Latvia #49
Andrejs Rauhvargers, Head of the Higher Education Quality Agency (AIC), Latvia

Accreditation Practices of Joint Programmes in The Netherlands #52
Mark Frederiks, Coordinator of International Policy at Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO), The Netherlands

Accreditation Practices of Joint Programmes in Spain #55
Sandra Marcos Ortega, Head of International Relations and Institutional Quality Department of Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León (ACSUCYL), Spain

Accreditation Practices of Joint Programmes in Estonia #58
Lagle Zobel, Lawyer of Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA), Estonia

3.2 Two years after Yerevan: progress so far #60

University perspectives to quality assurance of joint programmes #60
Tia Loukkola, Director, Institutional Development of European University Association (EUA)

The View of EQAR #63
Colin Tück, Director of European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) Secretariat

Implementation of the European Approach:
Steps to be taken at European level #67
Achim Hopbach, former President of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Director, Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation, Austria

European Consortium for Accreditation:
Challenges / Perspective / Initiatives #71
Jürgen Petersen, Chair of European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) in higher education secretariat

Developments in recognition of joint programmes #75
Allan Bruun Pedersen, Vice–President of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee Bureau, Senior Adviser of ENIC/NARIC, The Danish Agency for Science and Education

4. GROUP DISCUSSIONS SESSIONS #77

Overview of the first day's discussion #78
Aurelija Valeikienė, Deputy Director, Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC)

Summary of the 1st round discussion regarding the challenges, problems and obstacles for single accreditation of joint programmes in European Higher Education Area #81

Summary of the 2nd round discussion on actions needed to implement one single accreditation of the European Joint Master's programme in Strategic Border Management #82

5. CONCLUSIONS #85

Single Accreditation of Joint Programmes: Turning the Bologna Guideline into Reality – Concluding Remarks #86
Aurelija Valeikienė, Inga Juknytė-Petreikienė, Achim Hopbach

Annexes #93

Annex: Contributors #95

Annex: Steering Committee of the Conference #102

Annex: Agenda of the Conference #103

Annex: About Conference Organisers #106