WP5

QA REPRESENTATIVES AND STAFF SITE VISIT
at University of Macerata (UNIMC)
3-6 April, 2017

uniMC — università degli studi di macerata

Short Report

On 3-6 April 2017 a study visit from QA representatives and staff from Armenian partner institutions within the ESPAQ project took place at Macerata University (deliverable 5.3), with the aim of a better understanding and good practices exchange in engaging the students in QA at the institutional level.
The following participants attended the event:

- ASPU: Kristine Tanajyan, Anna Hakhumyan
- NPUA: Gor Vardanyan, Yerem Petrosyan
- YSAFA: Nune Minasyan, Lusine Shakhazizyan
- NUACA: Garnik Margaryan
- ANSA: Sargis Asatryants
- ASUE: Anna Pakhlyan
- ANQA and MoES could not participate due to a problem with the VISA

Two learning outcomes were previously established for each day, in order to follow a common objective (possibly consistent with the other study visits), and to be finally able to compare the results with the expectations.

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espaq — Enhancing Students Participation in Quality Assurance in Armenian HE

Project Name: Enhancing Students Participation in Quality Assurance in Armenia HE - ESPAQ

DAY1 - 3rd April

Learning outcomes: Getting acquainted about the National QA system and student services; becoming familiar with quality procedures in e-learning course

After a Welcome and Introduction, the University and Department was presented by Simone Betti, scientific responsible of the ESPAQ project. Then Andrea Dezi introduced the Italian QA system and the Procedures of quality management, including complaints procedures.

Lorella Giannandrea and Laura Fedeli made a presentation on the project "I-Care": tutoring and counseling in the QA system of the University of Macerata, with a view on Quality management and student services in e-learning courses.

I-Care allow students for a regular career and support for exams. Every students must fill in the questionnaire and have a compulsory interview. Senior tutors support teachers and facilitate the meeting. There is also a special online services for not-attending students. The student's profile is provided on the platform and traces the student's activities during the project.

E-Learning is adopted in 5 departments. The very first course was run in 2000, and it was a successful experience. A quality label was gained for e-learning courses, and quality aspects must be followed to be a good service in e-learning: UNIQUe Certification. Distance learning at UNIMC is supported by the CSIA (University Innovation Centre) which in 2012 replaced the E-learning, Multimedia and Information Service Centre. UNIMC organizes yearly a post-lauream course to train online tutors who are expected to become aware of, manage and select tools to work in an online environment according to specifically designed learning paths and to the context.

After a discussion and sharing of opinions with Armenian participants, facilitated by Roberto Righi, ESPAQ Project Manager, a guided tour of Macerata old town was organised.

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DAY 2 - 4th April

Learning outcomes: Learning about examples of monitoring and quality indicators in university system; becoming acquainted on self assessment, evaluation and students participation in QA activities

A Presentation of the university quality system (PQA, NdV) and MIA – Integrated Monitor – Monitoring System of indicators of didactics was carried out by Giovanni Gison and Fiorenzo Formentini from the Office Planning, innovation and management control. G. Gison underlined how the need to have available data concerning courses of study, student careers and the results of educational activities meets a series of institutional aims of the ANVUR. Some figures were represented, especially concerning the number of enrolled students to several courses, the number of graduates, the average marks, the students from other regions and from abroad.

F. Formentini introduced the University Quality System (PQA, NdV, bodies, university procedures, student involvement), more specifically describing the the Quality management model which includes: Self Assessment, Periodical Assessment, Accreditation.

Roberto Righi facilitated the translation in English and animated the discussion with the participants, who were keen to know more on the figures provided by the speakers, and how to possibly apply the system at local university level.

Stefano Polenta and Mara Cerquetti presented the QA in degree courses, specifically regarding self evaluation and student participation. A planning cycle of a degree course was introduced. The website "Universitaly" provides all the courses information on teachers, knowledge, learning outcomes, etc., as a helpful tool for students. Questionnaires and assessment framework of the didactic processes were explained, together with the way of analyzing and using a self-assessment report.

A final discussion was facilitated by Mara Cerquetti and Roberto Righi, who stimulated the audience to make questions to the speakers, and compared the different systems in Armenia and Italy.

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DAY 4 - 5th April

Learning outcomes: Gathering knowledge on examples about students participation in QA system; learning how to analyse HE courses

Roberto Lambertini and Fabrizio D'Aniello talked about the students' participation in the QA system of the University of Macerata. In particular the Joint committee of teaching staff and students (CPDS) was introduced to the participants. It consists of a number of 10-14 members according to the number of students in the department, divided equally among teaching staff and students, and its aim is to draw up proposals to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching structures, forwarded to the assessment body. CPDS analyses and makes proposals concerning the qualification of teaching staff, transmission methods for knowledge and skills, materials and teaching aids, laboratories, lecture rooms, and equipment with regard to the potential achievement of teaching aims at the required level. Moreover it analyses the validity of methods to ascertain the knowledge and skills acquired by students with regard to expected learning results. The CPDS works with the following sources: SUA-CDS sheets (Educational aims, student experience, educational results, course organization and AQ); Review reports; Student questionnaires. Two students explained their experience as members of the expert panel.

Andrea Dezi examined a degree course highlighting the process of quality, since the draft structure of the course towards the refine of the curricula, according to the feedback received by students, in the perspective of quality assurance. A. Dezi also explained how the feedback and suggestions are filtered and possibly accepted in the review of each course.

DAY 4 - 6th April

Learning outcomes: Getting an overview of practices on QA at EU level; Becoming familiar with research evaluation in QA systems

During the morning session a roundtable with QA representatives, QA staff and foreigner professors was organised with the participation of Simone Betti, in order to analyse and discuss:
1: Practices concerning the evaluation of HE and Students' participation in QA systems
2: Practices concerning Research evaluation in different QA systems
The topics touched items such as existence of a periodical QA assessment of the study courses, methodology used for the evaluation, impact on the University system's funding, participation of students in the QA assessment, indicators used to evaluate the quality of HE, kind of scientific products that are evaluated, etc.

In the afternoon the participants were involved the Welcome Day of the International Seminars' Week, with the participation of the Rector, the Delegates and the foreigner Guests from several countries. The International Seminars' Week has the objective to promote the internationalization policies to provide an Intercultural opportunity both for students and scholars to stimulate debates concerning research approaches.
The Armenian participants had the chance to introduce themselves and their institutions.

The participants were provided with an evaluation questionnaire, in order to express feedback and suggestions about the study visit. The comments were overall positive and highlighted the importance of exchanging of practices and experiences, for the improvement of the QA system in Armenia.
All the expected learning outcomes were achieved during the visit.