



DRAFT PROPOSAL
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**Dissemination, implementation and review process of
the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines on quality provision in cross-border higher education**

Third drafting session
17-18 January 2005, Paris

In the UNESCO/OECD draft Guidelines on quality provision in cross-border higher education (Guidelines), it is suggested that UNESCO and the OECD survey developments in countries regarding implementation of the Guidelines and assess the Guidelines in light of developments in cross-border higher education and report to UNESCO Executive Board and the OECD Council respectively. This process can be broken down to three aspects that are closely related to each other: 1) dissemination of the Guidelines, 2) actual implementation of the Guidelines, and 3) reviewing the Guidelines. A note on strengthening the capacity of national systems of quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications has been prepared as a reference document for the 3rd Drafting Meeting.

As a mechanism of co-ordination for all the three aspects mentioned above, it is suggested that one or several “national co-ordinator (s)” are needed.

The purpose of this note is to explore possible roles of the national co-ordinator (s) as well as possible processes of:

- 1) Dissemination of the Guidelines
- 2) Implementation of the Guidelines
- 3) Reviewing of the Guidelines

The bodies responsible for the implementation will discuss the details for the Guidelines (Education Committee in case of the OECD, the Executive Board in case of UNESCO) once UNESCO and the OECD adopt the Guidelines. The possibility of setting up a smaller inter-Secretariat Steering Committee for this purpose could also be considered.

1. Co-ordination mechanism: National co-ordinator (s)

The primary responsibility for implementing the Guidelines rests with the stakeholders themselves especially at the national level. The mechanisms for ensuring the implementation of the Guidelines could also vary from country to country. However, given that there are several stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Guidelines, it could be useful to have “national co-ordinator(s)”. Such national co-ordinator(s) will be associated with all the stakeholders concerned, whether governmental or non-governmental, and facilitate close co-operation and co-ordination of the efforts of the various stakeholders to implement these Guidelines. The “national co-ordinator(s)” could be based at governmental or non-governmental level. Countries may also choose to closely link the national co-ordinator(s) to the national information centres on the recognition of qualifications: an obligation of all State Parties to the UNESCO

regional recognition conventions. The key issue for the coordinator is the continuity of his/her involvement to assure sustainability of the process.

The roles of the “national co-ordinator(s)” should be:

- To co-ordinate the dissemination efforts of the Guidelines between different stakeholders at the national level as well as at the international level.
- To co-ordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines at the national level, by enhancing the communication among different stakeholders and promote the understanding of the Guidelines.
- To co-ordinate the evaluation process of the implementation of the Guidelines by gathering information on national experiences with the Guidelines;
- The national co-ordinator(s) could facilitate the international co-operation among national agencies in order to increase their mutual understanding, which is one of the objectives of the Guidelines.
- The national co-ordinator(s) could also co-ordinate the national inputs to the survey and assessment tools at the international level.

In order to increase visibility, accessibility and transparency, it is suggested that information including the contact details of the “national co-ordinator(s)” be published on the websites of UNESCO and the OECD.

2. Dissemination

To facilitate the implementation process, dissemination in order to raise the awareness and understanding of the Guidelines will be crucial. This should include awareness raising of the Guidelines at events that will take place before the official adoption of the Guidelines by UNESCO and the OECD.

(1) National level

The main responsibility of dissemination lies at the national level. Given that there are several stakeholders involved in the dissemination at the national level, it is suggested that the national co-ordinator (s) should play a role in the co-ordination in this field.

(2) International level

In addition, dissemination could take place at the international level. “National co-ordinator(s)” should also play an important role in facilitating communication between countries. There are several events that are planned by NGOs, governments and IGOs. Some events that could possibly serve as such platforms are listed below.

- 21-25 February 2005 11th General Conference of Association of African Universities: Cross-border provision and the future of higher education in Africa, Cape Town, South Africa
- 29 March-1 April 2005 INQAAHE Conference, New Zealand

- 24-30 April 2005 Education International, Global Action Week
- 19-20 May 2005 Bologna Bergen Summit 2005 (Conference of European Education Ministers part of the Bologna Process), Bergen, Norway
- 24-25 May 2005 Regional Committee Meeting for the Asia and Pacific Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications, China
- 10-15 July 2005 IAUP Triennial Conference, Thailand
- 5 October 2005 Education International, World Teacher’s Day

In addition, both UNESCO and the OECD envisage having an active role together with governments, the international and regional networks and associations of higher education institutions/providers, students, quality assurance and accreditation agencies, recognition of qualifications agencies to make the Guidelines “visible”.

Both UNESCO and OECD will use a number of dissemination tools of the Guidelines, such as relevant events, UNESCO and OECD Websites, OECD Policy Brief and preparation of Q&A on the Guidelines.

Furthermore, UNESCO has many relevant platforms that could be useful channels for dissemination such as:

- Higher Education NGO Collective Consultation Network to the UNESCO
- UNESCO/NGO Student Forum (an online network)
- Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications,
- UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge
- World Conference of Higher Education (WCHE) Follow-Up Committee

In addition, UNESCO’s regional and field offices as well as the regional committees for the application of the recognition conventions could have an important role to play in the implementation process. For example, some of the events planned could be used as part of the dissemination process of the Guidelines.

- 6-8 April 2005 9th NGO Collective Consultation, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
- 27-29 April 2005 UNESCO Regional Seminar on the Implications of WTO/GATS on Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific, Seoul, Republic of Korea
- 16-17 June 2005 International WCHE Follow-up Committee

3. Implementation

The main responsibility of actual implementation of the Guidelines rests with the stakeholders themselves. The primary responsibility will rest at the national level, although international co-operation among various stakeholders will be crucial. The national co-ordinator (s) should co-ordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines at the national level, by enhancing the communication among different stakeholders and helping enhancing the understanding of the Guidelines.

4. Review

The primary responsibility for the actual implementation of the Guidelines rests with the stakeholders themselves. However, it is clear that both UNESCO and the OECD will have a key role in ensuring the successful implementation of the Guidelines. The main means for this will be the review of the Guidelines. There are two aspects to the review of the guidelines: 1) survey and assessment of the actions taken by the stakeholders, and 2) possible revision of the Guidelines.

1) Survey and assessment tools

One important aspect could be the survey of the developments in quality provision in cross-border higher education at the national and international levels as well as the assessment of the Guidelines themselves in light of these developments. There are several possible tools to survey the developments such as a questionnaire, a workshop or a conference, a wide consultation process and the OECD thematic review on tertiary education, an electronic forum on the Guidelines. Once the text of the Guidelines is finalised, it is suggested that these tools be elaborated in more details and put forward to the bodies responsible for the survey of the implementation of the Guidelines (Education Committee in case of the OECD and Executive Board for UNESCO).

It is suggested that the survey of the implementation of the Guidelines could include examination of the level of dissemination and awareness raising of the Guidelines.

a) Questionnaire

A questionnaire to survey the implementation of the Guidelines could be developed jointly by UNESCO and OECD and distributed to all countries. The national co-ordinator (s) could have a role in co-ordinating the national response to the questionnaire. The responses could be used to evaluate the progress of the implementation and the results could be reported to UNESCO General Conference and the OECD Council.

b) Consultation process

A wide consultation may be conducted with various stakeholders in regards to the effectiveness of the Guidelines as well as the functioning of the national co-ordinator(s). The consultation could be done through networks such as UNESCO/NGO consultation on higher education which includes stakeholders such as university associations, student associations and academic staff associations. Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC) and Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) could also be important partners. An Electronic forum on the Guidelines based on UNESCO's positive experience in this area could be created to promote community of interest, stimulate a policy debate on the Guidelines and thus contribute to their implementation.

c) Workshop, conference

A workshop or a conference could be held to review and discuss the progress of the implementation. The responses to the questionnaire as well as the outcome of the consultation process including feedback from the electronic forum could be used as background reports to such a workshop or a conference. Existing platforms such as UNESCO Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications could be used for this purpose.

d) OECD thematic review of tertiary education

It is foreseen that quality assurance and internationalisation will be included as key policy areas in the OECD thematic review of tertiary education. Since not all countries are participating in the thematic review, this could be used only as a supplementary tool for countries that participate in the review. However, this could allow a more in-depth evaluation of the implementation in addition to the questionnaire.

2) Possible revision of the Guidelines

The above-mentioned tools for survey and assessment of the actions taken by the stakeholders could form an important input and platforms for the possible revision of the Guidelines. Based on the results of the questionnaire, consultation process, etc. a discussion could take place on whether or not the Guidelines are up-to-date in light of the development in cross-border provision of higher education.