QUALITY ASSURANCE INITIATIVES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE GULF STATES

DR GARI DONN and MRS SAMYA TAROOM
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

g.donn@ed.ac.uk  S.A.M.Taroom@sms.ed.ac.uk
The Six Gulf States

- Bahrain
- Kuwait
- Oman
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates
Key Questions

Why have the Gulf States adopted Quality Assurance (QA) procedures?

Where are these QA procedures developed?

What happens when QA arrives in the Gulf?
FRAMEWORK OF PRESENTATION

HE in the Gulf States ➤
- IMPACT of globalisation ➤
- EMERGENCE of Centre and Periphery ➤
- ENTRY of Quality Assurance ➤
- CASE STUDY of QA in a Gulf State ➤
- CONCLUDING comments ➤
Globalisation and Education (1)

Recently, Education Policy in Gulf States has been driven by global economic and political pressures – especially by ‘the market’: skills and competencies needed for employment taught through education.
Globalisation and Education (2)

1. Education, historically, has been seen as within the realm of policy making of the nation state,

2. Current economic and global developments reduce the capacity of individual governments to direct and control that education policy making.
Emergence of Centre/Periphery

The Centre:
Countries and Companies defining ‘education’, market-led and selling educational products

The Periphery:
Countries purchasing ‘education’ products
Higher Education Institutions
Curriculum – English Language
Mathematics, Science, ICT Curricula
and
Quality Assurance procedures
Entry of Quality Assurance (1)

Quality Assurance (QA)
Generated in one country and transported to others in the Gulf
We ask: are the ‘usual’ procedures for and practices of QA adhered to (or even recognised) in the Gulf States?
Entry of Quality Assurance (2)

- Control: who should control the QA process?
- Objectives: what should be the objectives and aims of this policy?
- Procedures: how are the QA procedures set up?
- Areas: What are the domains covered by the QA procedures?
- Uses: how is the information gathered used?
A CASE STUDY

OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

IN THE GULF STATES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>FP+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>FP+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>148,318</td>
<td>49.53%</td>
<td>151,810</td>
<td>49.40%</td>
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<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>398,739</td>
<td>49.71%</td>
<td>415,836</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>593,366</td>
<td>48.30%</td>
<td>592,623</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>117,694</td>
<td>49.09%</td>
<td>118,711</td>
<td>48.90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>KSA</td>
<td>4,291,685</td>
<td>47.55%</td>
<td>4,355,658</td>
<td>47.62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>517,254</td>
<td>49.14%</td>
<td>536,614</td>
<td>48.91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,067,056</td>
<td>47.98%</td>
<td>6,171,252</td>
<td>47.98%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yearly growth</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: GCCGS (2009): +- Female percentage, *: Estimated values

Source: Abouammah, 2010
### Table 2: Number of universities in GCC States for four academic years

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growth relative to 2002</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: GCC web site; Mukerji and Jammel (2008); GCC Ministries of higher education web sites;
Major Concerns of QA Agencies in GCC Countries

- Curriculum and course structure (include learning, course file, skills, professional skills informative, etc.)
  - Academic staff qualifications and skills
  - Governance, management skills and strategies
  - Educational processes (teaching, learning, assessment and resources for students)
  - Institutional infrastructures (building, labs, efficient IT facilities, etc.)
  - Transparency and equity in academic and administrative activities.
Common Quality Audit Procedure Commonly Followed in the World

Internal Review Conducted by HEI

Self Study → Report

External Review by Team from Quality Agency

External Team Review → Audit Report
QA & Accreditation in KSA

1- Institutional Context
2- Quality of Learning and Teaching
3- Support for Student Learning
4- Supporting Infrastructure
5- Community Contributions

11 Standards within Five Domains (at the Institution and Programme Level)

Planning and Review Cycle

Mission

Defining and Reviewing Goals

Setting Objectives

Developing a Plan

Environment Scan

Action Plan

Implementing the Plan

Review each Five years

Performance Review

Monitoring Results

External Review

Self Study

Key Performance Indicators

National Qualifications Framework

Course and Programme Specifications
First cycle commencing 2008

HEP Licensure

HEP Accreditation Stage 1: Quality Audit

HEP Accreditation Certificate

HEP Standards Reassessment

HEP Accreditation Stage 2: Standards Assessment

Appeal

HEP Accreditation Terminated

HEP Accreditation Terminated after
1-2 years on Probation

Fail

Pass

4 years

≤4 years

Pass/End

KEY
Start/End
Process
Document
### Distribution of HEIs in Oman

[www.oac.gov](http://www.oac.gov)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Public Health Institute</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Private College</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Public College of Technology</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Public Institute</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Public College of Applied Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Private University</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Private University College</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Public University</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Public College of Banking and Financial Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Academic Affiliations

Academic programmes and affiliations with universities from the following countries:

- Uk
- USA
- Australia
- New Zealand
- Austria
- Holland
- Jordan
- Lebanon
Challenges

- Maintaining quality and Keeping unified standards between importer and exporter.
- Suitable infrastructure especially for technical and professional specializations
- Recognition and inclusion in national quality framework
- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Institutional quality capacity building
OAAA Efforts

Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) training workshops to the sector
Gradual development of procedures and policies after consulting with the sector
Hiring international consultation committee
Concluding Comments (1)

The selling of QA packages
- a valuable economic/political cargo for exporters – to the Gulf States
Although the six Gulf States are not usually seen as ‘developing countries’ their relationships to the providers of QA packages, Higher Education Institutions, programmes, curricula and resources, constitute a framework within which a specific form of ‘development’ takes place.
Concluding Comments (3)

Gulf States buy in an outdated package of QA educational products and reduce still further possibilities for their own Research & Development and their own indigenous Knowledge-based development.


References


Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA)

www.oac.gov