

## QuaG project

### EAQUALS project experience report, August 2012

This report focuses primarily on our experience of reviewing the Quality Guidelines (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, English version) with a view to using them in the workshops to be organised later this year, and preparing a questionnaire for interested EAQUALS members.

We found the orientation of the Guidelines towards international ventures in education and the provision of educational services abroad worthwhile and, in our experience, unique. As EAQUALS is intrinsically an international organisation we recognize many of the recommendations in it as activities that EAQUALS members are engaged in, or may in the future become involved in.

The Guidelines are, in our view, well organised, and the changes made for the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition are positive. They make the differences between the requirements in ISO 29990:2010 and the recommendations presented in the table clearer. However, the translation from German caused us a few problems, and this has led to a wholesale revision of the text in English so that it can be better understood by those attending the workshops in the UK and Romania, and by EAQUALS members who download it. In the process we took note of the following features:

- The Goals and Application areas are quite complex but clear and enable readers to orientate themselves within the document.
- Chapter 3 on the 'forms of transnational education' is a useful list, although it might be useful to indicate that it is not intended to be exhaustive. There are forms of international education that are a mixture of various different modes. One of the forms listed we did not easily recognize: 'twinning', which in English is generally used to describe relationships between institutions which are not formal and are based on the exchange of experience and people (often students).
- Chapter 4 on principles of co-operation is quite formal and covers a wide range of valid issues. We wondered whether it would be good to use the contents of it to create a shorter 'code of conduct' which could be used by organisations seeking to enter collaborative relationships. If so, it might be good to divide it into sections relating to general issues particularly those relating to students and clients, the countries and cultures where the operations take place, relationships between partners, human resources matters and so on.
- 'Intercultural competencies' (chapter 5) is a large, complex and contentious area. Those of us involved in the QuaG project do not have direct experience of training in this area. We found the list of topics to be covered quite comprehensive, and thought that it might be useful to include suggestions on ways in which awareness-raising and training in this area could be successfully handled in professional development.
- The recommendations contained in the lengthy table in chapter 6 provide a very useful checklist. Clearly, it is easier to find strong recommendations for some of the requirements in ISO 29990 than for others, and some of the recommendations are repetitive or appear to focus on specific issues to the exclusion of others. For example, 'gender' is mentioned 8 times, but 'disability' is not mentioned at all. This aspect of the recommendations along with other ideas that partners may have will need to be reviewed later on in the project.

In general, we believe that the Quality Guidelines will have a positive effect on international relations and ventures in the world of education and look forward to seeking the opinions of others in the workshops being planned.