

# Qualitätssicherung im internationalen Hochschulraum

Eine Fallstudie und Vergleichsanalyse von  
sechs nationalen Hochschulsystemen  
(*AUT, CAN, FIN, GER, UK, US*)

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# Outline

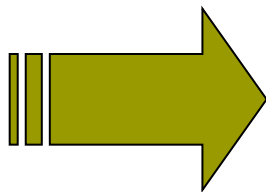
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- Part I Introduction
- Part II Theoretical Part
- Part III Research Design
- Part IV Country Reports
- Part V Expert Interviews
- Part VI Comparison and Future Challenges

# Part I Introduction

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- Diverse external dynamics – transparency and legitimacy – internationalisation
- Quality assurance (QA) on the main agendas of higher education (HE) policies



*What are the **further developments** of the respective HE system and how will **quality assurance** emerge successfully an **international HE area**?*

# Part II      Theoretical Part

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- 1      Higher Education Systems under Transformation
  - 1.1      The Evolution of Higher Education Systems
  - 1.2      The Concept of Massification
  - 1.3      The Concept of Diversification
  - 1.4      Privatisation of Higher Education
  - 1.5      Internationalisation of Higher Education
  
- 2      Quality Assurance in Higher Education
  - 2.1      Definitions of Quality and Quality Assurance
  - 2.2      Quality Assurance Systems and their Critics
  - 3.3      Quality Assurance in an International Perspective

# Part III Research Design

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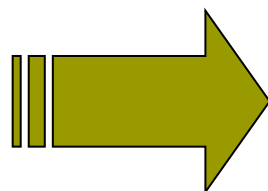
- Case-study approach
- Expert interviews
- Qualitative content analysis
- Comparison at four levels:
  - a) **international**      international perspectives
  - b) **descriptive**      country reports
  - c) **discursive**      national perspectives
  - d) **analytical**      theoretical framework
- Recommendations and future challenges

# Part IV Country Reports

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## Country reports

- Austria
- Finland
- Germany
- UK
- United States
- Canada



**Peer review  
process**

## Content

- Facts & Figures
- Higher Education Reforms
- Governance and Funding
- Quality Assurance

# Part V Expert Interviews

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## Interview guide

- personal information
- feedback on the respective country report
- main challenges in terms of QA in HE
- future developments and trends in the field of QA in HE

Related to the

- respective national (for national experts) or
- international (for the group INTER) situation

## Return rate

Country	Sent questionnaires (1)	Feedback (2)	Received questionnaires (3)	Articles or policy papers (4)	in total (3) + (4)
AUT	18 (27)	5 (27,8 %)	6 (33,3 %)	-	6 (33,3 %)
GER	32 (50)	6 (18,8 %)	9 (28,1 %)	1 (3,1 %)	10 (31,2 %)
FIN	13 (22)	7 (53,8 %)	5 (38,5 %)	-	5 (38,5 %)
UK	28 (43)	6 (21,4 %)	6 (21,4 %)	2 (7,1 %)	8 (28,6 %)
US	26 (28)	2 (7,7 %)	2 (7,7 %)	3 (11,5 %)	5 (19,2 %)
CAN	18 (24)	7 (38,9 %)	3 (16,7 %)	2 (11,1 %)	5 (27,8 %)
INTER	19 (29)	-	6 (33,3 %)	11 (61,1 %)	17 (94,4 %)
<b>in total</b>	<b>154 (223)</b>	<b>33 (24,4 %)*</b>	<b>37 (24 %)</b>	<b>19 (12,3 %)</b>	<b>56 (36,4 %)</b>

\* This percentage has been received from a total sum of 135 as the international experts have not been asked for feedback on the country reports.



- Comparison at four levels:
  - international perspectives
  - country reports
  - national perspectives
  - theoretical framework
    - concept of massification: country reports
    - concept of diversication: category *unified vs diversified*
    - concept of privatisation: country reports, OECD data
    - concept of internationalisation: categories *internationalisation* and *QA in the international HE area*

## A) International perspectives

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- complexity of cross-border education
- trust and transparency (*degree mills*)
- shift towards institutional approaches
- involvement of all stakeholders
- focus on students – learning outcomes
- increased importance of the labour market
- increased financial resources and cost effectiveness of the QA system

...to go beyond bureaucracy and establish a vivid quality culture!

## B) Country reports

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- a very complex picture on multiple approaches
- European countries: shift towards institutional audits/reviews of internal QA procedures
- Historical perspective:
  - U.S.: longest history in QA (accreditation)
  - followed by the UK: strong focus on research evaluation and accountability procedures
  - FIN, GER and AUT: more comprehensive QA procedures within the last decades
  - Canada: different approaches in their provinces (strong emphasis on accreditation)

...great efforts to implement their individual QA system along with their economic, social and cultural setting!

## C) National Perspectives

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### Future transformation processes

**AUT:** establishment of a single QAA (consultation process in 2009)

**GER:** shift towards system accreditation next to programme accreditation in 2007

**FIN:** shift towards audit procedures (completed by 2011)

**UK:** a shift towards *Research Excellence Framework* (after RAE 2008)

**U.S.:** new system of *Accreditation 2.0* (recommended in 2006)

**CAN:** *Ministerial Statement on QA of Degree Education in Canada* (2007)

### QA in the international HE area

- ▣ importance of internationalisation
- ▣ growing need of comparability, mobility, cooperation and transparency within and through QA in HE

...QA as an essential asset to operate at international level!

## D) Theoretical Concepts and Assumptions (2)

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### Diversification

**Proposition:** Higher education is becoming increasingly diversified concerning types of higher education institutions or programmes, binary vs. unitary systems, cross-border providers, new type of students etc.

**Assumption:** The larger the uniformity of the higher education system, the lower the level of diversity of the quality assurance approach.

*(...) tendency of increased diversification is visible though some kind of unification could bring more coherence and co-ordination among the countries (...). Hence, a comprehensive higher education system with coherent quality assurance mechanisms can more easily compete within an international higher education area. (pp.321f)*

# D) Theoretical Concepts and Assumptions (4)

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## Internationalisation

**Proposition:** Higher education is developing within an international higher education area along different co-operations, networks and projects.

**Assumption:** The more influence of internationalisation and globalisation in a higher education system or higher education in general, the more pressure is put on the efficacy of quality assurance procedures.

*(...) the move towards quality assurance in an international higher education area is visible (...). National quality assurance systems have been developed, have been and still are in the process of transformation and change and do not only face national complexities within the differences at system, institutional and programme level but also have to deal with an international dimension. (p.328)*

## Recommendations

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1. A balance between *over-diversification* and *over-homogenisation*
2. Increased comparability and transparency
3. More orientation towards the different perspectives of stakeholders
4. Support of the international dimension of QA

...to establish a functioning QA system to compete within an international HE area!

...though...

...not one single approved solution of a QAS

...national peculiarities vs. international challenges

Danke für Ihre  
Aufmerksamkeit!



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