Students in Quality Assurance Processes

13th May 2022

Mgr. Damir Solak - Steering Committee of the ESU's QA Pool

ESU'S QUALITY ASSURANCE
STUDENT EXPERTS POOL

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Fighting for students' rights since 1982

EYF

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

The European Students' Union (ESU), Mundo-Madou. Avenue des Arts 7/8, 1210 Bruxelles

Agenda

1. Introduction of the speaker, ESU and its partners

2. What is QA?

3. Student voice – importance, obstacles, possibilities for improvement

4. What does the ESU QA Pool do?

Round table/Discussion

- What stakeholders' group you belong to?

- Have you ever had experience in internal QA?

- Have you had experience with external QA?

- Where do you find information about QA?

Who am I?

- Steering Committee member of the ESU's QA Pool (since 2022)

- Ph.D student at Faculty of Law, Masaryk University

- Vice President of SK RVŠ (Czech NUS)

- Evaluator at NAÚ

Croats in ESU

- Hrvatski studentski zbor
- Pegi Pavletić, Executive Committee Member, former HSZ delegate in the Board
- Borna Nemet, Human Rights and Solidarity Coordinator, former HSZ delegate in the Board

HSZ
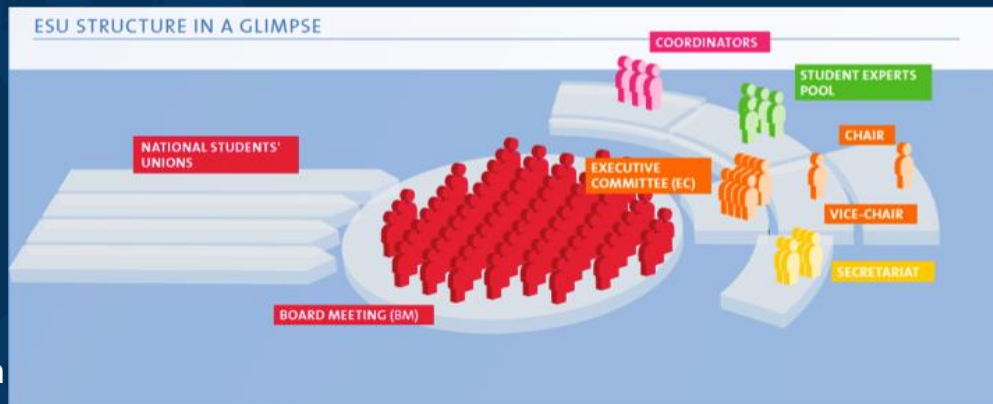HRVATSKI STUDENTSKI ZBOR

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What is the European Students' Union?

- Umbrella organization of 45 national students' unions from 41 European countries
- We represent approximately 20 million students from all levels of education
- Our members are student-run, autonomous, representative and operate according to democratic principles

ESU in numbers
- 1 President and 2 Vice-Presidents
- 7 Executive Committee members and 3 coordinators
- 2 Pools of experts: Quality Assurance Student Experts' Pool, Pool of Trainers
- 20+ ongoing projects
- 2 annual Board Meetings and 2 annual European Students' Conventions
- Numerous events held in collaboration with our board members and partners

ESU STRUCTURE IN A GLIMPSE

COORDINATORS

STUDENT EXPERTS POOL

NATIONAL STUDENTS' UNIONS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

CHAIR

VICE-CHAIR

SECRETARIAT

BOARD MEETING (BM)

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What do we do?

Mobility and Internationalisation

Quality of higer education

Public responsibility financing and governance

Social Dimension

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What is the European Students' Union?

ESU's partners

- European Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- Bologna Follow Up Group
- Council of Europe
- E4 Group: ENQA, EURASHE, EUA, ESU
- UNESCO
- European Youth Forum
- Global Student Forum
- Quality Assurance agencies (at national and/or international level)

What do we mean by student representation?

Stakeholder participation in governance can be characterised as these "steps".

Also its worth to remember that achieving certain level of participation does not always mean that its achieved for good.

Student Participation:
innovative practice guide

Student Rights Charter
Board meeting ESU80
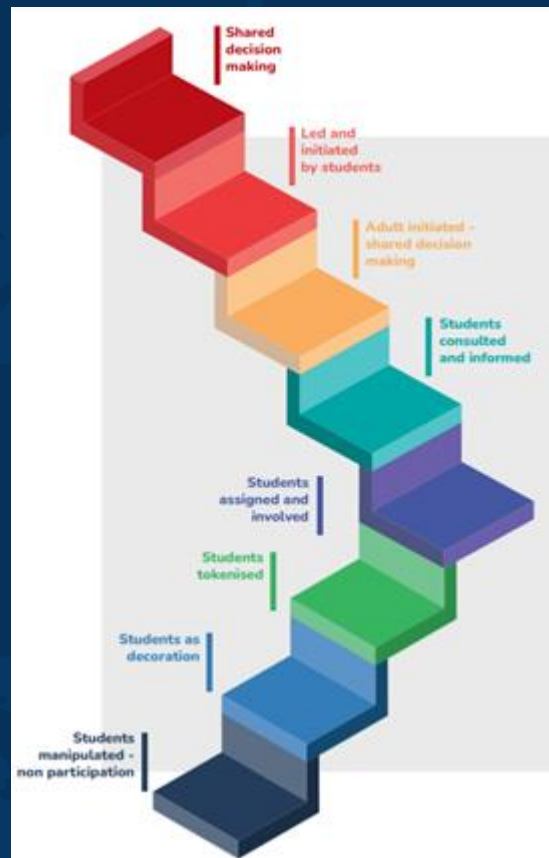
BFUG and EHEA

- 49 countries + European Commission
- Belarus and Russia suspended
- Co-presidency
- Consultative members – **ESU**, CoE or EUA…
- Ministerial Conference once in two years (Rome 2020)
- Croatia since 2001, national authority is MZO

E4 Group

- ENQA – European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (QA Agencies – AZVO)

- EUA – European University Association (Collective members - Rektorski zbor + individual members)

- EURASHE – European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (Professional Higher Education – e. g. - Vijeće veleučilišta i visokih škola)

- ESU - European Students' Union (national students' unions such as Hrvatski studentski zbor)

What is QA?

- An ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving) the quality of a higher education system, institutions, or programmes (AZVO definition)

- Internal QA conducted continuously through consultation with all involved stakeholders, including students, based on a quality culture developed within HEIs

- External evaluations conducted periodically through review panel (including a student member with equal rights as the other members)

- Internal X External

- Many different stakeholders are involved

- HEIs, academic stuff, **<u>students</u>**, national and international QA Agencies, employers, graduates....

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What can an external QA review influence?

Review of programs:
- subjects
- internships
- final exams
- literature
- academic staff
- mobilities

Review of institutions:
- organisation system of the institution
- facilities (equipment of libraries, laboratories...)
- student support services
- strategy and vision of the institution
- international cooperation

Student involvement in QA on various levels

Level of the QA Agencies
- Participating in the co-leadership
- Managing / co-managing the QA pools
- Partnering with the agency in organising trainings and promoting Student participation in QA processes

External QA
- Students role should be taken equally in the panel reviews, similar to the working conditions
- Certain criterias regarding student matter should be directly assessed by the students

Internal QA:
- Promoting of the culture of quality should take place from the beginning of the study cycle
- Students should be encouraged to be critical and reflective regarding their programmes, curriculum planning, evaluation and study conditions
- Students should know the results of evaluations, and the regular updates should be given to the students

Standards

- ESG – Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2005)

- E4 Group

- Revision in 2015

- Translated in many languages – including Croatian (by AZVO)

- Some countries use their own accreditation standards

- Part 1: Internal QA
- Part 2: External QA
- Part 3: QA Agencies

2.4. Vanjski stručnjaci

Standard:
Vanjsko osiguravanje kvalitete provode povjerenstva vanjskih stručnjaka koja uključuju i studentske predstavnike.

Smjernice:
Srž je vanjskog osiguravanja kvalitete širok raspon ekspertiza vanjskih stručnjaka koji doprinose radu agencije raznolikim perspektivama, uključujući perspektive visokih učilišta, znanstveno-nastavnog osoblja, studenata i poslodavaca/struke.

Kako bi se očuvala vrijednost i dosljednost rada ovih stručnjaka, oni:
- se pažljivo biraju
- raspolažu odgovarajućim vještinama i kvalificirani su za obavljanje zadatka koji im je povjeren
- dobivaju podršku u vidu odgovarajućih edukacija i/ili uputa.

Agencija osigurava neovisnost stručnjaka provedbom mehanizma izbjegavanja sukoba interesa.

Uključivanje međunarodnih stručnjaka u vanjsko osiguravanje kvalitete, primjerice, njihovo sudjelovanje kao članova stručnih povjerenstava, poželjno je jer dodaje još jednu dimenziju razvoju i provedbi procesa.

What kind of skills do you need?
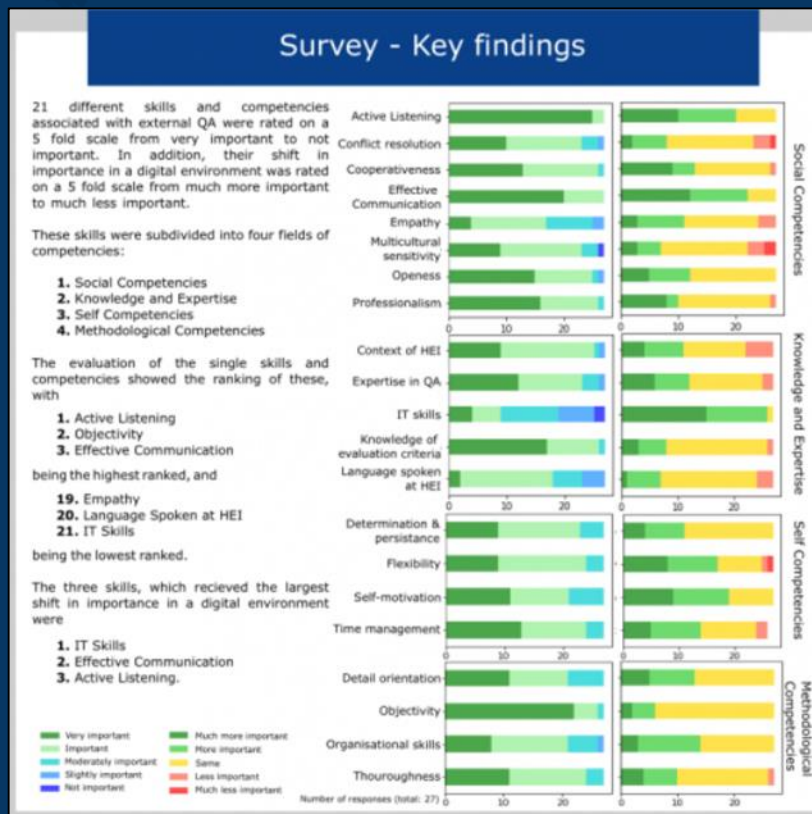
- According to ESU's own research

- **Social competencies** – Active listening, Effective communication and Professionalism

- **Knowledge and expertise** – Knowledge of evaluation criteria, Expertise in QA

- **Self competencies** – Time management and Self-motivation

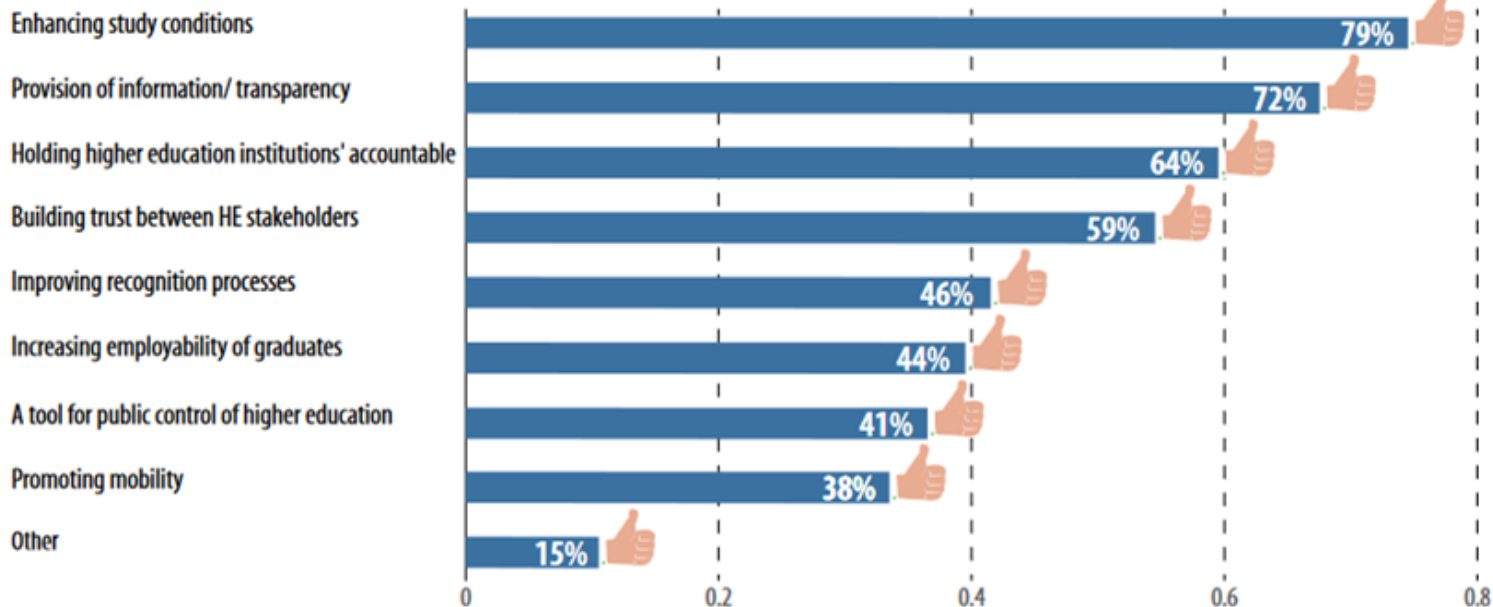- **Methodological competencies** – Objectivity

Development of QA among EHEA from the students' perspective

- Bologna with student eyes - publication by ESU: a reality-check of what has been agreed upon by national governments within the Bologna Process

- 2020: data has been collected by surveying ESU's members (national unions of students)

- Areas of interest: student participation in governance, the social dimension, quality assurance of higher education, recognition, mobility and internationalisation, structural reforms, student-centered learning, financing of higher education

- 2022 Edition coming soon

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BWSE - 2020 Edition

What is the purpose of Quality Assurance?

Purpose	Percentage
Enhancing study conditions	79%
Provision of information/ transparency	72%
Holding higher education institutions' accountable	64%
Building trust between HE stakeholders	59%
Improving recognition processes	46%
Increasing employability of graduates	44%
A tool for public control of higher education	41%
Promoting mobility	38%
Other	15%

Internal and External QA – findings through BWSE

- Almost all NUSs involved in internal QA, 87 % in external

- 46 % involved with voting rights in internal QA

- 23 of 28 unions reported that student are present in the governance of QA Agencies

- 53 % of the unions consulted on the decisions taken on the national level

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EHEA country with no ESU member

No information available

There is no Experts' Pool with student involvement

An Experts' Pool with student involvement is being implemented

Yes, the student-involved Experts' Pool is run by the agency(ies)

Yes, the student-involved Experts' Pool is run together by the agency(ies) and the NUS

Yes, the student-involved Experts' Pool is run by the NUS

Map 6.2.
Structured student expert pools play a crucial role as a platform where students and QA agencies can cooperate

Obstacles to student involvement

- Mainly lack of information, promotion and QA-learning opportunities

- No institutional support (e. g. permission to skip lectures)

- Review recommendations and implementation of requirements invisible to students

- Not being seen as a full member of the community

- Fast turnover of students and lack of continuous QA topic discussions/learning/peer-support opportunities

- Lack of transparency

On what to focus on?

- Starti the engagement from the first year of studies

- Recognize their time and effort

- ECTS, flexible timing, individual study plans

- Training for student experts

- Showing the results, while changing or discussing the programmes

- Making quality of education a topic itself within the policies

- Organise actions which are encouraging participation (feedback events)

- Co-creating the surveys and survey analysis with students

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What is the ESU QA Pool and how is it organized?

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https://www.esu-online.org/quality-assurance-student-experts-pool/

ESU QA Pool

PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Balanced by region and field of study
- ✓ Run by students
- ✓ Selecting the most competent students every year
- ✓ Bringing student experiences together
- ✓ Enhancing the role of students in quality assurance

- Since 2009
- 66 members from different European countries
- On-site and on-line trainings organised in cooperation with respectable QA Agencies
- Involvement in QA reviews
- Opportunity to attend external QA events
- Skills development
- Networking with students all around the EHEA

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QA Pool Steering Committee

- Overseeing the work of the pool
- Launching calls, day-to-day work
- 5 Members – 1 Presidency member, 1 EC member, 3 Members from the Pool selected each year
- Jakub Grodecki
- Stanimir Boyadzhiev
- Irina Duma, Ana Gvritishvili and Damir Solak

Call for QA Pool Members

European Students' Union

JOIN OUR
QA STUDENT EXPERTS' POOL

CALL FOR 90 MEMBERS

Deadline: 15th May, 2022, 23:59 CEST

Fill out our application form
and upload the necessary documents

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Call for QA Pool Members

Criteria:
- Higher education students or recent graduates (only when re-applying)
- Previous experience in QA (reviews)
- Experience in student representation
- Excellent command in English
- Regional (0 members from Croatia now), study level and gender balance

Beneficials:
- Language skills in other languages (German/French/Spanish etc.)
- Support letter from QA Agency, student union

How to apply?
- On-line application form
- CV in Europass format
- Proof of enrollment
- Motivation video/letter

Questions

- How can we ensure the equal participation of students in QA processes, both internally and externally?

- How can students influence the enhancement of the quality culture?

- Who does provide the trainings and education in QA for you?

- Do you think that your voice is respected enough?

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What can we do?

- How do you see students being more easily trained in QA at your institution or on a national level? Do you see us, as ESU playing a part in this?

- As professionals, do you face any obstacles to training students/ conducting QA that you would like to see changed?

Let's stay in touch!

qapoolsc@esu-online.org
damir.solak@esu-online.org
www.esu-online.org

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