QAA's Approach to TNE

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Structure of presentation

- QAA's approach to transnational education

- Current and forthcoming TNE activity

- Key challenges and top tips for TNE providers
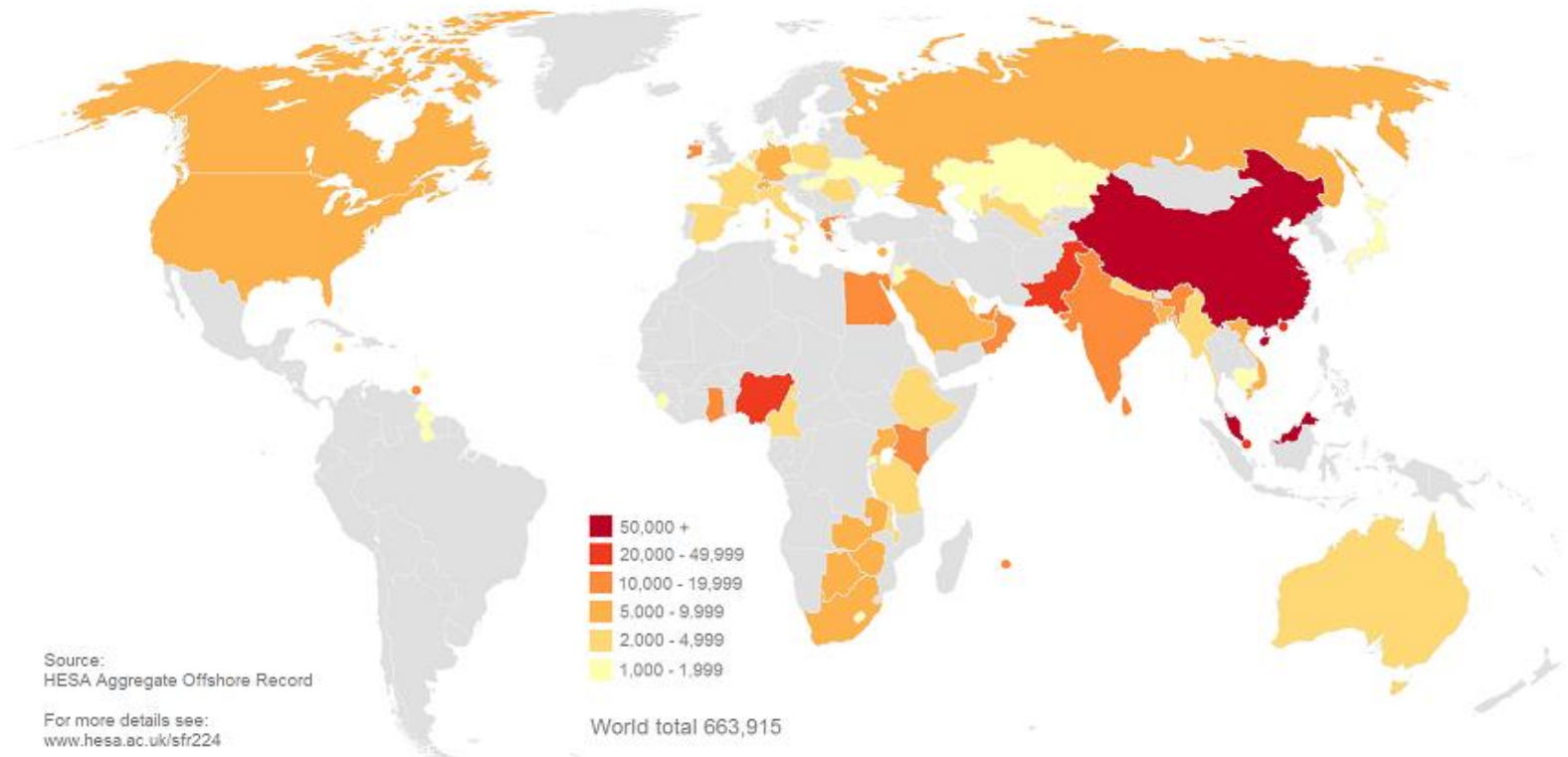
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QAA's mission

To safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK HE *wherever* it is delivered

- ✓ We develop reference points setting out expectations for UK HE (*The UK Quality Code for Higher Education*)

- ✓ We undertake institutional peer-reviews to check HE providers meet those expectations
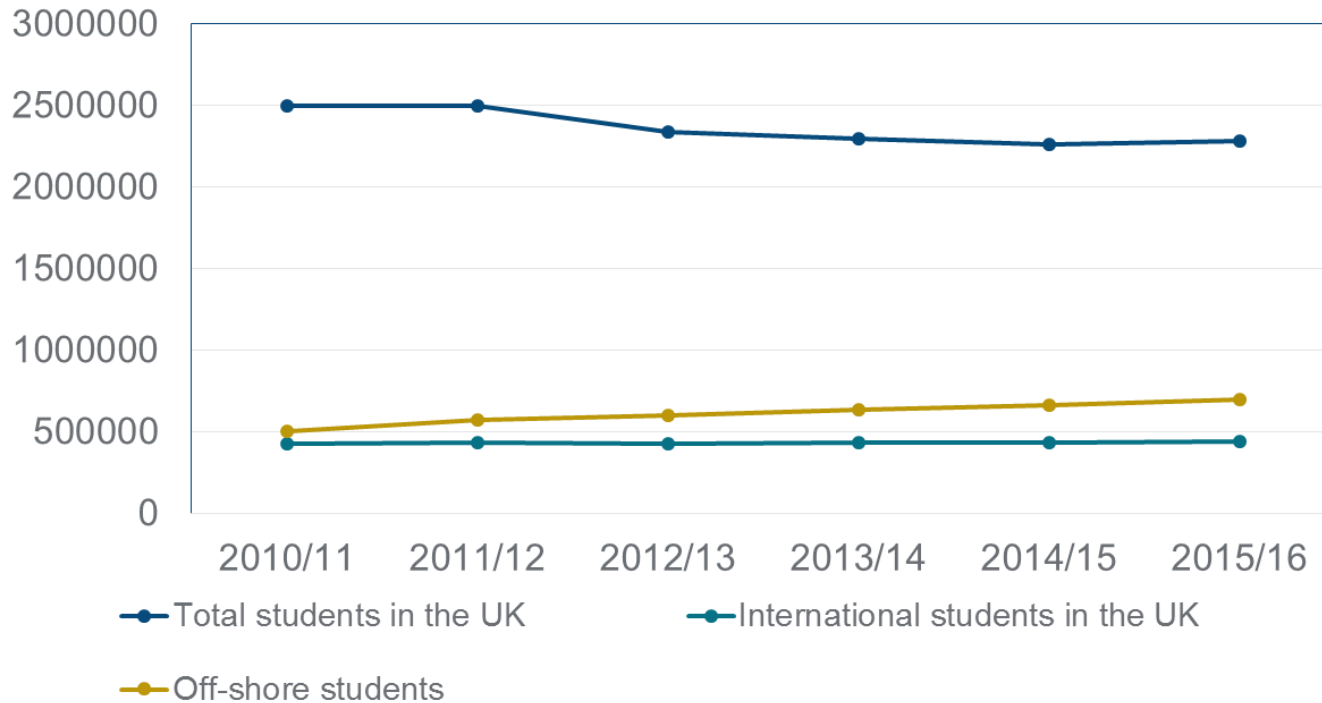
Both reference points and peer-reviews cover TNE

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Over 80% of UK universities are involved in some form of TNE, delivered all over the world

Transnational students studying wholly overseas for a UK HE qualification in 2014/15

50,000 +
20,000 - 49,999
10,000 - 19,999
5,000 - 9,999
2,000 - 4,999
1,000 - 1,999

Source:
HESA Aggregate Offshore Record

For more details see:
www.hesa.ac.uk/sfr224

World total 663,915

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TNE is the main area of growth

Snapshot of UK transnational education (2015-16)

701,010 TNE students:

74,965 studying within the European Union (EU)

626,045 outside the EU

Top 10 countries for UK TNE (2015-16, student numbers)
i)   Malaysia (78,850)
ii) China (65,200)
iii) Singapore (49,970)
iv) Pakistan (46,640)
v) Nigeria (35,015)
vi) Hong Kong (29,220)
vii) Sri Lanka (20,910)
viii) Oman (19,895)
ix) Egypt (19,840)
x) Ghana (17,370)

Source of data: HESA (2015-16)

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The autonomy of UK Degree-awarding bodies

UK degrees must be awarded by legally approved degree-awarding bodies (Recognised Bodies)

Degree-warding bodies are recognised, but not owned by Government. They are autonomous and independent:
- They are self-accrediting
- They retain the ultimate responsibility for the quality and standards of their degrees
- They can partner with further education colleges and private providers, at home or overseas, for the delivery of their HE degrees.

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The quality assurance of UK TNE

<u>Institutional reviews</u>: comprehensive in scope

<u>TNE Review</u>: complementary in-country review process focused on

- how institutional policies and processes are implemented in practice
- better understanding the TNE student experience
- disseminating good practice across the sector / enhancing UK TNE
- re-assuring international stakeholders / safeguard UK HE reputation

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A country based approach

TNE Review is carried out on a <u>country-by-country</u> basis

- Malaysia (10), Singapore (11), China (12), UAE (13), Caribbean (14), Greece/Cyprus (15), Ireland (17), Hong Kong (18), Malaysia (19)

It is more cost-efficient than an institution-based approach, given the scale and spread of UK TNE

It allows to get an in-depth understanding of the features / challenges involved in operating in particular countries

It allows to establish stronger links with host country QA bodies to lessen burden on providers and agencies too

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A partnership approach

We regularly seek to cooperate with host country agencies to avoid regulatory gaps and overlaps:

- striving to lessen the burden on providers and ourselves, and implement a risk based approach

- given the scale and spread of UK TNE, it's imperative for QAA to rely on host countries' agencies' intelligence and cooperation

- bilateral strategic partnerships (MoUs)

- multilateral initiatives (QACHE Toolkit, Quality Beyond Border Group, Cross Border Quality Assurance Network)

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Chapter B10 Quality Code

Managing Higher Education Provision with Others:

*degree-awarding bodies have ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, **regardless** of where these opportunities are delivered and who provides them*

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The TNE Review process

✓ Selection of target countries

✓ Survey of UK TNE activity in selected country

✓ Selection of TNE provision to be looked at

✓ Selection of review team

✓ Information request to selected provision

✓ Desk-based analysis of submitted information

✓ Review and case studies visits

✓ Review reports, case studies and overview report

✓ Follow up activity

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Three-year programme (2017-19)

TNE Ireland 2017 (key host country in Europe)

- concerns raised by QQI, strengthening cooperation with QQI
- support growth of quality UK TNE post-Brexit and local policy developments

TNE Hong Kong 2018 (5th largest host country)

- progressing innovative cooperation with HKCAAVQ, joint-review activity and recognition of HKCAAVQ accreditation decisions

TNE Malaysia 2019 (largest host country)

- progressing cooperation in joint-review activity
- addressing local concerns on double degrees

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Key challenges and top tips (I)

Cultural distance:
- reciprocal clarity about the nature of a partnership
- understand each other cultures of teaching, learning and quality assurance / induct UK and partners' staff

Geographical distance:
- minimise its impact on communication and contact
- invest in IT and be prepared to travel

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Key challenges and top tips (II)

Adequate and specialist staff capacity
- train staff and plan resources from the start

The student experience and the student voice
- ensure necessary resources and support services are made available
- have procedures in place to collect and respond to students' views
- contextualisation / localisation of curriculum

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Key challenges and top tips (III)

Regulatory jungles
- understand local operating environments and keep abreast of regulatory changes

Due diligence and thorough planning
- get it right from the start

Have a clear strategy and prioritise
- do not overstretch
- have a central oversight of all TNE provision

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Thank you

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