



# Benchmarking and Quality Assurance of internationalization, an introduction

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# QA in relation to Internationalisation

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The QA of internationalisation strategies

The shifting role of internationalisation in QA of HE

The way QA and Accreditation Agencies interpret and use internationalisation in the QA and Accreditation Process



# The QA of internationalisation strategies

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This theme was dominant in the 1990s when institutions of higher education wanted to assess the quality of their internationalisation strategies.

Examples of instruments used are:

- **Internationalisation Quality Review (IQR)**
- **Indicators for Mapping & Profiling internationalisation (IMPI)**

They looked more at the quality of the internationalisation policy of an institution and were based more on inputs and outputs than on outcomes!



# The way QA agencies interpret and use internationalisation in the QA process

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Increasingly QA agencies look at ways how to measure the contribution of internationalisation to the overall quality of the institution, as part of accreditation processes of programs and institutions.

Rankings are also an example that look at international dimensions to assess the position of the institution or discipline.

Inputs and outputs are more dominant than rationales and outcomes/impacts in rankings and most accreditation processes:

*Number of international students, number of students studying abroad, number of international faculty, number of publications with international co-authors, number of collaboration agreements!*



# The shifting role of internationalisation in QA of HE

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In the past two decades there has been a gradual shift in focus towards the role that internationalisation can play in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and the overall mission of higher education institutions.

Examples are:

- **The Comprehensive Internationalization Framework of the American Council on Education (ACE),**

**<https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Internationalization/CIGE-Model-for-Comprehensive-Internationalization.aspx>**

- **The Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation (CeQuint) of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA), focusing in particular on the impact of internationalisation on teaching and learning.**

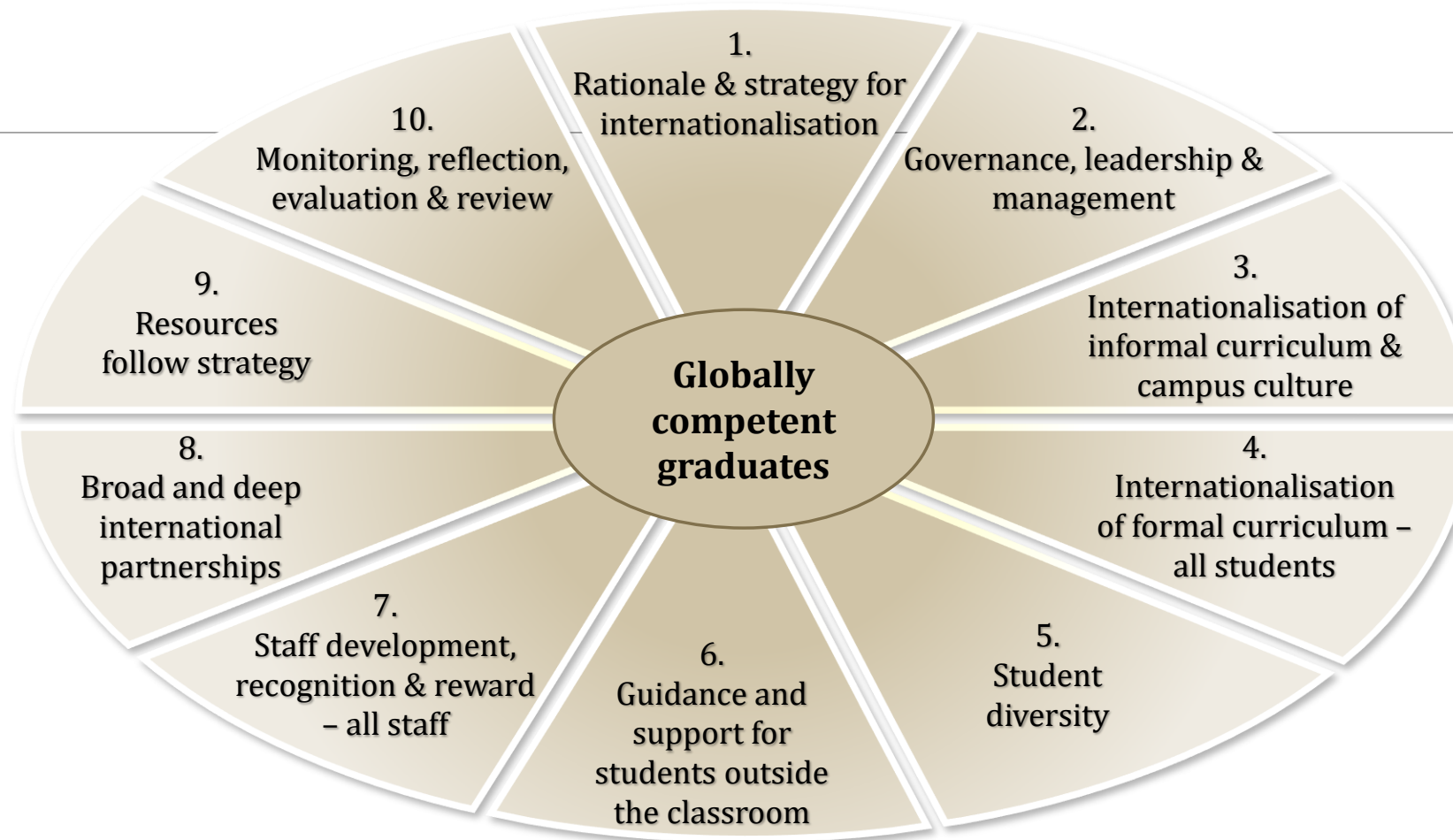
**<https://cequint.eu/>**

Where the first looks more at the institutional level, the second has both a program and institution option.

*Although these instruments are more comprehensive, they still focus more on the international dimension and strength of the institution, than on international indicators for measuring the quality of the institution.*

# Guidelines on good practice.

## 10 key elements of student-centred, integrated internationalisation



From: Jones, E. (2013) *The Global Reach of Universities: leading and engaging academic and support staff in the internationalisation of higher education*. In Sugden, R., Valania, M. & Wilson, J.R. (Eds) *Leadership and Cooperation in Academia: Reflecting on the Roles and Responsibilities of University Faculty and Management*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.



# Cross-border benchmarking can take different forms

## – some examples

- Sets of descriptors for evaluation at different levels
- Surveys providing feedback
- Guidelines on good practice
- Collaborative working at subject or institutional levels, such as through the European University Alliances





# Main challenges in assessing the contribution of internationalisation to the quality of programmes and institutions

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**Outputs are context related**

**Outputs do not say much about the quality**

**Internationalisation is still too much perceived as mobility and the quantitative dimensions of that mobility**

**Internationalisation is a broad container field and needs to be placed in a contextual analysis of quantitative and qualitative indicators**

**Internationalisation can be quite different by type of institution, by location and by program: not one model that fits all**

**Most frameworks and indicator lists do only address education but not the two other missions of HE: research and service to society**





# Recommendations for discussion

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**The relationship between QA and internationalisation has to be shifting from QA of internationalisation towards internationalisation in enhancing the QA of higher education!**

**Avoid the focus on 'internationalisation' as the generic subject, but use indicators such as of ACE and CeQuint as reference for assessment!**

**Focus not only on education but also on research and service to society, as they are strongly connected to and cannot be isolated from the education mission of HE!**

**Use inputs and outputs as illustration of trends, not as outcomes, and focus on the qualitative impact of international dimensions.**

**Use cross-border benchmarking as a valuable instrument**



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Thank You