THE EMLE EXPERIENCES WITH THE EUROPEAN APPROACH

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PEER LEARNING ACTIVITY (PLA) ON THE EUROPEAN APPROACH FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE OF JOINT PROGRAMMES

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The European Master in Law & Economics (EMLE) as a case study

EUROPEAN MASTER
IN LAW & ECONOMICS

With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

- A one-year master programme (60 ECTS)
- A Joint International Programme (JIP), according to EA definition
- An EMJMD

- 70 – max. 105 participants each year
- Topic: the economic analysis of law
- Directorate & EM Coordinator = Rotterdam (RILE at ESL, EUR)
- Partners: from EU and non-EU countries

The EMLE Accreditation History

2004 – 1st Accreditation (NL)

Re-accreditations:
2009 (NL), 2013 (JOQAR), 2019 (European Approach)

Accreditations:
from 2004 onwards several times in Belgium, France, Germany, Poland

For other EMLE partner universities, especially in Austria, Spain, Italy:
National accreditation was not needed: automatic accreditation and/or self-accreditation by the HEI

Apart from this, we have two non-EU partner universities, in India and Israel

EMLE's timeline for the EA procedure

- The pre-phase of orientation (incl. selection of a QA Agency)

- Start / first announcement to the QA Agency (NVAO): 12 July 2018

- Official application and submission of the SER: 11 October 2018

- Site visit: 15 February 2019

- Final Report by Review Panel: 1 April 2019

- Official and final decision QA Agency (NVAO): 7 May 2019

- Next: to be recognized in all relevant countries – which will take some time, hopefully max. 1 year: this is under procedure now

- Total time involved: roughly 1,5 to 2 years

The EA Status per EMLE partner

Partner uni	Country	EA allowed?	Remarks	Decision Status
Rotterdam	Netherlands	Yes	--	7 May 2019
Aix/Marseille	France	Yes	Conditional	?
Barcelona	Spain	Yes	As an EMJMD	?
Ghent	Belgium	Yes	--	12 Aug 2019
Haifa	Israel	--	Non-EU	--
Hamburg	Germany	Yes	If Joint Degree	1 Oct 2019
Mumbai	India	--	Non-EU	--
Rome	Italy	No	--	--
Vienna	Austria	Yes	As a public uni	?
Warsaw	Poland	Yes	If Joint Degree	?

Experiences with the European Approach from an EMLE partner's point of view (1)

Procedure of recognition by the German Accreditation Council

After successful accreditation of EMLE by NVAO:

- Address the request for national accreditation according to the European Approach directly to the German Accreditation Council

- Required documents:
  - Accreditation decision by NVAO (based on European Approach)
  - Panel report by NVAO
  - Self Evaluation Report by EMLE

Experiences with the European Approach from an EMLE partner's point of view (2)

– Informal confirmation that:

- Requirements of § 10 (1) MRVO (specimen decree) are met (Award of a joint degree and other criteria)
- University of Hamburg is aware that the applicability of § 33 MRVO is subject to the review opinion and the final decision of the Accreditation Council after completion of the assessment procedure
- This confirmation is required according to § 33 Abs.1 Nr.1 MRVO

→ Recognition of the accreditation decision of NVAO according to § 33 MRVO (specimen decree)

Experiences with the European Approach from an EMLE partner's point of view (3)

Pros and cons of the Process

- Easy, cost-efficient and relatively fast process

- Additional requirements of the German Accreditation Council after accreditation was granted (according to § 33 Abs.1 Satz 2 Nr. 7 StudakkVO)

  - English and German translation of the NVAO accreditation decision
  - German translation of the NVAO report
  - Each country has its own additional requirements for accreditation in the framework of the European Approach as well as different regulations of their national accreditation agencies (harmonisation of additional requirements desirable)

Experiences with the European Approach from an EMLE partner's point of view (4)

However, the German Accreditation Council is open and flexible:

- Self-translation is possible
- No translation by a certified translator necessary
- Translations can be done either by the consortium (director) or the respective partner university

The German MRVO (specimen decree) currently requires the translations, but the Accreditation Council has noticed our concerns regarding this requirement and will examine them positively during the next revision of the MRVO

Obstacles / missing in the EA procedure (1)

- A clear and structured guideline – for all involved, but at least for the Consortia – was and is still missing:
  - how to start;
  - how to continue;
  - even how to finish;
  - at all steps: whom to address & who has to take initiative: the leading Consortium partner or the leading QA Agency?

- The steps to be taken after the final decision by the QA Agency, regarding the recognition per country:
  - what to do then, in all the relevant individual countries?
  - whom to address, per country?
  - to be initiated and controlled by whom: the leading Consortium partner or the QA Agency?

Obstacles / missing in the EA procedure (2)

- The long timeline:
  - from the start to the first final decision,
  - followed by the recognition decisions per country,

* This takes roughly 1,5 to 2 years (hopefully not more)
* Some EA decisions are ‘under conditions’

- The still remaining additional ‘problems’ per country during the procedure of implementing the EA (after the 1st decision), despite the fact that all EHEA Ministers signed the EA-document in Yerevan in 2015

- The national regulations, at least in some EU countries, still ‘ignore’ the special needs of Joint International Programmes and/or neglect the existence of the EA; the EA is still not allowed / not implemented in all EU / EHEA countries

Obstacles / missing in the EA procedure (3)

- The awareness of the EA is still limited / too low, both among JIPs, inside the HEIs and in the outside world

- An overview of all successful EA procedures – with all the differentiations – was missing, but from July 2019 it is on the EQAR website

- However, this is not an overview of the ‘best practices’, the actual status of all starting & running procedures, conditions, contacts, and so on….

Recommendations how to run the EA procedure (1)

- Read carefully the text of the European Approach (October 2014, approved May 2015 in Yerevan)

- Check in EA, Section A, whether the EA should or may be applied:
- If (one or) some of the cooperating HEIs require external QA at programme level, EA should be applied
- If all of the cooperating HEIs require external QA at institutional level and have self-accreditation status, EA may be used

-But even if not obliged, please consider using the EA

- Visit the ECA-website:

http://ecahe.eu/home/about/projects

And then: ImpEA (2017-2020)

- Visit the ImpEA-website:

http://impea.online

Recommendations how to run the EA procedure (2)

The most important and helpful for EMLE was:

- the EQAR-website: https://www.eqar.eu – Knowledge Base

You will find: information on the EA, but country specific information as well, for all EHEA Countries

At that EQAR-website:

- select and visit the countries of the Consortium, one-by-one

- read carefully all information per country

Bring together all the Consortium partners in some tables, including relevant information per partner / country

Recommendations how to run the EA procedure (3)

Using the country specific information from the EQAR-website:
Bring together all your Consortium partners in some tables, including information per partner / country on the next questions:

*Is EA allowed? Under which conditions?

*What is the accreditation status?

*External QA: needed at programme or at institutional level?

*Which are the relevant External QA Agencies?

*Actual accreditation: what is it, and valid until when?

*What is the degree and qualification?

Recommendations how to run the EA procedure (4)

- Based on this basic information, check the eligibility of the Consortium and its partners (EAQAJP, Section B1.1)
  * If YES, continue…..
  * If NO, please ‘repair’, or stop this procedure….

- Select jointly a suitable EQAR-registered QA Agency (EAQAJP, Section C0)

- Start thinking about the planning of the single site visit for the review panel: where, when, whom to attend? (EAQAJP, Section C3)

Recommendations how to run the EA procedure (5)

- Start working at the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) (EAQAJP, Section C1)
- For the SER: make use of the ImpEA template
- Start in time collecting all relevant information to be included in the SER, either in the main report or in the annexes
- Be honest and transparent in all aspects of the information to be provided, both in the SER and in the site visit interviews

Conclusions

For a JIP / EMJMD Consortium, to ‘run’ the European Approach various obstacles exist:

- Hopefully the EQAR website, the ImpEA pilot project and several PLA projects will provide clear guidelines in the near future
- This should be done in cooperation and should not result in several guidelines next to each other, but in combined guidelines, to avoid a variety in information/guidelines

- Despite the EA being approved by the EHEA ministers (Yerevan, May 2015), the EA is not yet allowed or not implemented fully in several EHEA countries, or allowed only ‘under conditions’
- The full implementation of EA, by all EHEA countries, is urgently needed

- The challenge is to solve all obstacles: step by step!

Info & Contact

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