



- 3: Jeanette Purcell of AMBA had been contacted and the EQUAL Chairman would follow up with her.
- 4: ASFOR will continue to follow up the discussion about ISO 9001 with the Ministry for Universities to extend the recognition for EQUIS and its respect for diversity.

**Actions:**

- EQUAL secretary to follow up with invoices 2003-2004 - GH
- Follow up with AMBA – CG

### **3. EQUIS update**

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Some of the European schools that recently applied for EQUIS might not achieve accreditation immediately. Applications from outside Europe come for the moment from schools that are more likely to achieve the accreditation immediately.

Regarding the efforts to get recognition for EQUIS from the national accreditation systems, it might be too early to expect concrete results. Many of the national systems are still fairly new and tend to look at entire universities. Also, in order to get recognition from some of these systems, there needs to be student involvement in the process and the reports have to be made public. EQUIS does not fulfil these requirements.

Regarding the professional indemnity issue, the problem is that there is no contractual relationship between peer reviewers and efmd. In view of AACSB's experience, it was recommended to pursue solving this issue. They have an umbrella agreement and carry professional indemnity for committee members, staff, Executive Board members and peer reviewers. So far, AACSB has never had a claim.

Before, EQUIS used to provide a list of potential peer reviewers that could be reviewed by the EQUAL associations. At the initial stages of EQUIS this EQUAL input was very valuable. Now, the peer reviewers are selected among the deans or former deans of EQUIS accredited schools and possibly associate deans provided they have a broad experience. With the growing number of EQUIS accredited schools the pool of potential reviewers grows too. For the corporate reviewers, apart from efmd's corporate network, some of them are recommended by schools.

The EQUIS team shares the EQUAL Board's concern that the teams should be balanced geographically, but also between experienced and new reviewers. It is not current practice, not only within EQUIS, but also with other accreditation systems, to publish the list of reviewers.

Regarding research, Julio Urgel drew the attention of the EQUAL Board to the fact that EQUIS takes into account other forms of research than what is published in top-rated journals. It is up to the school to prove that the contribution to knowledge is relevant to the key values and goals of the institution.

The survey of which Peter Lindstrom presented preliminary results at the efmd meeting for Deans & Directors General could become the basis for an evaluation questionnaire of the EQUIS process that had been suggested by the EQUAL Board. The timing needs to be carefully planned, because when a school completes the questionnaire immediately after a visit, they may not yet be able to evaluate the full impact and value of the process.

The EQUIS team is now managing up to 30 accreditation processes per year with the same resources. The work is becoming more complex, because apart from new applications, the re-accreditation is now well underway and several schools are also re-applying after initial non-accreditation.

The international expansion of EQUIS continues.

A special task force will start thinking about the German market that is still quite confused. The problems in this market go beyond Business and Management education.

## **4. Working parties**

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### **4.1 Internationalisation**

Julio Urgel presented briefly the additional work done on the document regarding internationalisation and invited comments. In the document there is also a list of indicators that are included in the EQUIS criteria. The purpose of document is to provide a clearer definition of what an international school is and how you measure internationalisation.

The assessment teams need guidance regarding what level of internationalisation would be insufficient. Also for other areas such as faculty and research such guidance would be useful. The suggestion was made to work with a number of profiles of what would meet or not meet the criteria, in order to clarify the standards. Such profiles would make documents like this more operational and would take us on the road to benchmarking.

In some countries or regions it may be more difficult for institutions to become international. Although it is important to understand this, EQUIS cannot become less rigorous. The mission of EQUIS is to increase the quality of institutions everywhere and to add value through the quality improvement process so that institutions that are not up to the standards cannot possibly be accredited. Also, it may be that in some countries the EQUIS criteria are not in accordance to the mission of most schools. But in that case national accreditation may be a better choice.

In general schools are expected to reach a reasonable quality level in all three areas (overall high quality, internationalisation, corporate links) and to reach excellence in at least one of these areas.

#### **Actions:**

- Provide comments on document on internationalisation to Julio Urgel – all EQUAL Board members

### **4.2 Faculty Development**

Paul Verhaegen provided a short summary of the work done so far, as presented during the efmd Meeting for Deans & Directors General. So far, 69 deans and 392 faculty members had responded. The goal was to reach 1000 responses. Paul Verhaegen requested that the EQUAL Board members go through the questionnaire and results in order to give advice on the kind of information that would be interesting to analyse for EQUIS and for each of the associations. It was suggested checking the differences between age groups, gender, years of work experience, etc.

A presentation with further results would be prepared for the efmd Annual Conference. The EQUAL Board thanked Paul Verhaegen and Lars Moratis for all the work done so far.

#### **Actions:**

- Provide feedback on survey and advice on the kind of information that should be analysed – all EQUAL Board members

### **4.3 Franchise & offshore programmes**

In preparation for the EQUAL Board meeting, Jonathan Slack had provided several documents. Although the QAA document is wordy and UK centric, it provides useful background.

The remark was made that there was no clear distinction in the document between offshore and franchising. In the case of offshore programmes, the main institution keeps control over the operations, while in the case of franchising, the programme is entirely delivered by the franchisee.

When assessing the quality, there are some logistic implications such as whether each campus should be visited. It would be useful to determine under which circumstances it would be useful to visit the different campuses.

**Actions:**

- further comments on the draft documents of Franchise & offshore programmes – all EQUAL members

## **5. Undergraduate Management Education**

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A range of comments were made on the paper:

a) Chapitre made two remarks:

- They would like to include information on competencies and skills for functional and sectoral Bachelors.
- The competencies included in the document for Bachelors are ambitious. The difference with the Master programmes is not clear.

Chapitre would find it difficult to apply this document as it is now to French schools.

b) ABS wished to add “liberal education”. Also, there would be a need to better describe what is meant by “business environment”.

c) RABE commented that the distinction between Bachelor and Master programmes is not clear, since EQUAL has not published content guidelines on Master’s level. They would also find it useful to specify the entry requirements.

d) Other suggestions of subjects that should be included were:

- Basis cognitive knowledge
- Economics
- Accountancy

Should a difference be made between university and polytechnic type bachelor programmes?

A reference to ECTS may be useful.

It is important to check whether what is mentioned in this document is consistent with the Tuning project outcomes. Other documents that define Bachelor/Master levels or level descriptors should be checked.

The difficulty is that the Bachelor programme contents are highly regulated and defined on a national level and therefore agreeing on one document will be difficult. A document can provide interesting input and can hopefully lead to a common view.

The EQUAL Board agreed that it was difficult to produce a document on this subject to which all associations would agree. Therefore, it was decided to produce a general document for consideration without need for formal agreement by associations, rather than guidelines.

**Actions:**

- Final remarks on the undergraduate document – all EQUAL members
- Check Tuning project outcomes – GH, JS

## **6. Doctoral Degrees**

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ABS has approved the document.

Chapitre commented that PhD's can only be awarded by Universities and that the Chapitre members would only be interested in the DBA.

ASFOR, as an association of private schools, has little interest in these guidelines, but think it may be an interesting guideline to universities who have the right to award doctoral degrees.

The comment was made that publications are not necessarily required in all countries.

For the doctoral guidelines, the same decision was take as for the undergraduate programmes. The document would not be published as guidelines but rather act as an information document.

### **Actions:**

- Final remarks on the doctoral document – all EQUAL members

## **7. Possible EQUIS think tank developments**

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As main points on the agenda for 2004, the EQUAL Board agreed to focus on the following issues:

- internationalisation
- faculty
- franchise and offshore programmes

## **8. Financial results 2003 and budget 2004**

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The projected financial results of 2003 as well as the budget for 2004 were approved. Because more has been done by members of the EQUAL Board and because we have not used any outside consultants, we have not spent all the budgeted amounts. The positive result will be transferred to the budget of 2004.

## **9. Any other business**

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The next two EQUAL Board meetings will take place at the efmd offices on 30 March 2004 and 5 October 2004.

Summary of the **main actions** to be undertaken:

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- EQUAL secretary to follow up with invoices 2003-2004 - GH
- Follow up with AMBA – CG
- Provide comments on document on internationalisation to Julio Urgel – all EQUAL Board members
- Provide feedback on survey and advice on the kind of information that should be analysed – all EQUAL Board members
- further comments on the draft documents of Franchise & offshore programmes – all EQUAL members
- Final remarks on the undergraduate document – all EQUAL members
- Check Tuning project outcomes – GH, JS
- Final remarks on the doctoral document – all EQUAL members

Actions from previous meetings:

- Print paper on Master's degree titles – GH
- Identify other European Associations in countries not represented in EQUAL and new players in the accreditation market – GH
- Collect and circulate information on national educational and accreditation systems – GH
- Set up working group on glossary of terminology for benchmarking: Julio Urgel, Chairman, GH
- Develop questionnaire on implementation of Bologna – Julio Urgel
- Continue work on faculty survey - Paul Verhaegen and Lars Moriatis (Erasmus University)

*Griet Houbrechts, 10 March 2004*