

JOINT QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR CAMPUS ASIA PILOT PROGRAMS AMONG THREE COUNTRIES IN EAST ASIA

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Abstract

CAMPUS Asia is based on the concept of the governments of China, Japan, and Korea jointly expand quality-assurance exchange among the national universities in these countries. In the framework of this initiative 10 pilot programs were selected in 2011, and the three governments decided to support these programs for a five-year period.

HEEC in China, NIAD-UE (Currently NIAD-QE) in Japan and KCUE in Korea jointly established the China-Japan-Korea Quality Assurance (QA) Council in 2010 to support CAMPUS Asia through QA of the programs. The Council decided to conduct monitoring for the pilot programs twice in the five-year period.

The first monitoring was conducted in 2013, when the three agencies independently monitored the programs. After that, the monitoring criteria and methods of each country were comparatively analyzed and the QA agencies jointly established a common framework for QA including principles, criteria and process, and jointly conducted the second monitoring in 2015. Monitoring results were compiled in a report featuring the examples of good practices in the international cooperative academic programs.

Based on the monitoring experience gained through the establishment of a common QA method, the three QA agencies formulated joint guidelines including monitoring procedures and criteria. This paper covers the results of joint monitoring and the content of the joint guidelines.

Outline

Introduction

The increasing globalization of higher education worldwide has brought the initiatives to assure quality in international cooperative education into the foreground in recent years. Northeast Asia is no exception. QA agencies in China, Japan, and Korea, i.e., the Higher Education Evaluation Center of the Ministry of Education (HEEC) in China, the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE; Currently the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE)) in Japan, and the Korean Council for University Education (KCUE) in Korea, have been committed to cooperate in a joint effort to monitor CAMPUS Asia programs. CAMPUS Asia is based on the concept of the governments of China, Japan, and Korea jointly expanding quality assurance exchange among the universities in three countries. The monitoring took place twice during the five-year period from 2011 to 2015. This paper focuses on the structure and format of the second monitoring in 2015 and outlines the projected plans for further monitoring of subsequent international collaborative programs involving both the original three countries and other countries.

Background and Monitoring Procedures

The governments of China, Japan, and Korea launched a trilateral initiative called CAMPUS Asia (Collective Action for Mobility Program of University Students in Asia) in 2011 to promote exchange and cooperation with quality assurance (QA) among the three countries' universities. Under this framework, 10 pilot international cooperative academic programs were selected in 2011, and the three governments decided to support those programs for a five-year period.

To support CAMPUS Asia by way of QA, HEEC, NIAD-UE, and KCUE set up the China-Japan-Korea Quality Assurance Council. The Council decided to conduct the CAMPUS Asia monitoring on the pilot programs twice in the five-year period.

The purpose of the CAMPUS Asia monitoring is not to confirm that programs realize a level of minimum quality but rather to pick out good practices from the standpoint of educational quality while getting a picture of the current state and initiatives of monitored programs and to widely disseminate those good practices throughout the higher education community not only in the three

countries but in other countries as well. As the selected 10 consortiums are all composed of flagship universities in the three countries, it was considered that the approach focusing on minimum QA might be ineffective. In this context, it was agreed that monitoring would be designed with a view to (1) identify good practices of high quality in transnational education and common issues, (2) disseminate them, and (3) develop common guidelines regarding QA of transnational education for QA agencies.

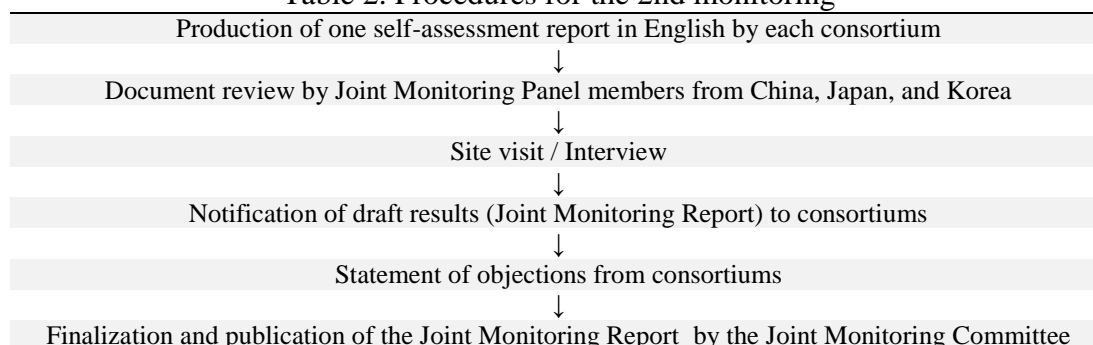
The first monitoring was conducted in 2013, when the three agencies independently monitored the programs in accordance with their own country’s legislation, QA requirements, and methodology. After that, the monitoring criteria and methods of each country were comparatively analyzed and the three QA agencies jointly established a common framework for quality assurance including principles, criteria (see Table 1), process, etc., and conducted the second monitoring in 2015. At the time of the second monitoring, a CAMPUS Asia Joint Monitoring Committee and CAMPUS Asia Joint Monitoring Panel made up of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean academics and experts with knowledge in the internationalization of higher education and joint programs as well as representatives of QA agencies were established. The Joint Monitoring Committee was the decision-making body for conducting the monitoring. The Monitoring Panel was set up under the Committee to carry out the actual process.

Table 1. Joint Criteria for the 2nd monitoring

Criteria	Sub-criteria
1. Objectives and Implementation	1.1. Achievement of Objectives
	1.2. Organization and Administration
2. Collaborative Development of Academic Program	2.1. Curriculum Integration
	2.2. Academic Staff and Teaching
3. Student Support	3.1. Students Admission
	3.2. Support for Learning and Living
4. Added-value of the Collaborative Program (Outcomes)	4.1. Student Satisfaction
	4.2. Credit Transfer and Degree Awarding
5. Internal Quality Assurance	5.1. Self-assessment
	5.2. Continuous Quality Improvement

The process for the second monitoring is shown in Table 2. First, the 10 consortiums were asked to produce self-assessment reports. Each consortium was asked to write one self-assessment report in English in light of the joint monitoring criteria, with sufficient coordination among the participating Chinese, Japanese, and Korean universities. Panel members from the three countries carried out document studies of the self-assessment reports submitted. Following the document studies, joint site visits by Chinese, Japanese, and Korean panel members were conducted on three out of 10 consortiums. Events when the representatives from the universities of all three countries gathered together and set the timing for site visits. As the joint site visits were conducted for one consortium in each of the three countries, the panel members carried them out together in all three countries. As for the remaining seven consortiums, panel members conducted site visits or interviews at the universities in their own country and the results were shared among the panel members in all three countries. The draft joint monitoring report was ultimately approved and the Joint Monitoring Committee finalized the monitoring results.

Table 2. Procedures for the 2nd monitoring



After the monitoring activities, good practices were identified with a focus on cooperation as a consortium, the added-value obtained in an international cooperative academic program, progress since the first monitoring, and sustainability after completion of the pilot program period. Examples of good practices from all 10 pilot programs were compiled by criteria and put into a Joint Monitoring Report accompanied by an outline of important points related to the respective good practices in an international academic cooperative program and hopes for further initiatives (see Table 3).

The CAMPUS Asia Joint Monitoring Committee published *Useful Tips on How to Design an International Cooperative Academic Program: CAMPUS Asia Pilot Program Joint Monitoring Report* in October, 2016, as a result of the collaboration of the three countries involved.

In the publication, good practices identified are described and explained in terms of the following categories, which correspond to the criteria for the second monitoring and major interests in the first monitoring: objectives for international cooperative academic program, organization and administration for international cooperative academic program, curriculum integration, academic staff and teaching, students admission, support for learning and living, student satisfaction, credit transfer and degree awarding, and internal quality assurance.

While the reader is advised to refer to the publication for more details, the notable findings include: Development of various methods for measuring student satisfaction and Establishment of a foundation for credit transfer through prior adjustment in the participating universities or the home university and through deliberation among the participating universities of a conversion method for credit transfer / limit management in credit transfer / recognition of research activities (credits for research activities) / coordination among participating universities regarding a grading system / establishment of a grade confirmation system common across participating universities / issuance of certificates of completion / and policy on double degree awarding.

The criterion 4 has been instrumental in identifying the good practices above, and it is to be appreciated that the quality of the program is brought to greater attention than in the first monitoring.

Future Perspectives

At the First Trilateral Education Ministers' Meeting held in Seoul, Korea in January, 2016, the Ministers of Education from China, Japan, and Korea expressed their intention to increase financial support for CAMPUS Asia, which became a full-fledged program following the termination of the pilot period in 2015. Seventeen programs altogether including nine new programs were selected in fall 2016. With a long-term outlook, they decided to keep discussing the feasibility of expanding the CAMPUS Asia across the Asian region at large.

Keeping in mind the inclusion of other Asian countries in CAMPUS Asia in the future, the three QA agencies formulated joint guidelines based on their experience gained through establishment of a common quality assurance method. The content of the joint guidelines include general principles, implementation system, procedures, criteria and viewpoints, and considerations at the time of conducting monitoring.

The second objective is to be a good reference for other QA agencies when they conduct monitoring/evaluation of international cooperative academic programs, especially when conducting with partner agencies in other countries, and for institutions of higher education when they carry out internal quality assurance of international cooperative education.

Table 3. Joint Monitoring Report (excerpt)

Criterion 1. Objectives and Implementation

1-1. Achievement of Objectives

GP I. Joint establishment of original program goals and basic framework

The goals of the academic program must be clearly articulated based on sufficient discussion among the participating universities at the stage of program design. For international cooperative academic programs in particular, it is expected that **goals and a basic framework are jointly established through international cooperation with the foreign universities to a level that combines the participating universities' features and strengths and that could not be accomplished by a single university.**

An outline of important points related to GP I in an international academic cooperative program

The goal of the **Program for Core Human Resources Development: For the Achievement of the Common Good and a Re-evaluation of Classical Culture in East Asia** program (hereinafter referred to as the "**Common Good** program") is to train human resources who have a deeply cultivated understanding of the cultural and social background of the three countries of Japan, China, and Korea, developed through the process of students themselves searching for the common "good" in East Asia. The three universities have formed jointly an East Asian global education program in the humanities with Okayama University providing original courses and fieldwork on study of the common good, Jilin University providing courses on international relations, such as "East Asia's Common Interests," and Sungkyunkwan University providing courses on East Asian classics and traditions. Additionally, the consortium offers a unique program by using common textbooks jointly developed.

Examples of good practice identified in the CAMPUS Asia pilot programs through the monitoring

i **Bold font** shows the abbreviation of the CAMPUS Asia pilot program name. Refer to the list on page 4 regarding the participating universities in each program.

• Hopes for Further Initiatives

In light of the current circumstances of the CAMPUS Asia pilot programs, the following are the main expectations for future initiatives in regard to Achievement of Objectives.

- **Clear articulation and sharing of the significance of three-way exchanges among Japan, China, and Korea**
 - Establishment of objectives that further clarify and maximize the unique features of a CAMPUS Asia program: indicating why it is a trilateral exchange instead of a mere bilateral exchange
- **Continuous analysis of the achievement of goals and targets**
 - Joint establishment of methods to verify the progress of plans in advance; in this regard, analysis of human resource development in light of the goals and objectives through continuous follow-up of graduates, surveys of employers, and other means

A list of matters for which the monitoring committee encourages CAMPUS Asia pilot programs to make further development on the whole (matters that have already been conducted by some programs are also included)

Conclusion

In the future, international cooperative academic programs are admittedly likely to increase among universities around the world as well as in China, Japan, and Korea. Accordingly, cross-border cooperation among QA agencies will be increasingly necessary. We hope that the joint report and the joint guidelines will not only contribute to the development of the CAMPUS Asia programs but also provide some insights as a reference point for universities considering the establishment of international collaborative academic programs and for QA agencies that would conduct quality assurance activities in cooperation with agencies in other countries.