PROPOSAL

Title: **Euro-Mediterranean perspectives on the complex shifts between external and internal QA of teaching and learning, at strategic and practical levels: Enhancing Quality Assurance Management (EQuAM) in Jordanian universities.**

Abstract:
EQuAM (Enhancing Quality Assurance Management) is a collaborative project involving European and Jordanian universities and QA agencies. It links successful aspects of the Bologna Process to the development of policy and practice in Jordan. Despite significantly different contexts, shared expectations have been identified, leading to QA Guidelines. These target issues specifically faced by university leaders, academics and students, addressing their different roles, responsibilities and expectations. An accompanying White Paper provides necessary political support. Drawing on the ESG and the Jordanian (HEAC) Quality Standards the Guidelines have demonstrated an immediate impact in the first Pilots. The success of the project's approach . starting with identification of shared expectations rather than comparing procedures/criteria . will be discussed, along with some emerging answers to issues for further inter-regional collaborations such as: can the ESG be applicable in widely different contexts? How to move from very compliance and input driven QA approaches to something else - institutional responsibility and quality culture?

Background

EQuAM (1) (Enhancing Quality Assurance Management) is a joint project between European and Jordanian universities and QA agencies funded until October 2015 through TEMPUS. It builds specifically upon work within JISER-MED (2) (Joint Innovation and Synergies in Education and Research, and also Arabic for ±bridgeq), an IEMED paper on enhancing quality, promoting mobility and employability (3) , and is contributing to the development of the strategic international goals of the Arab European Conferences on Higher Education (AECHE) (4).

The main European partners in EQuAM include the Universities of Barcelona, Montpellier, Tallinn and Rome Sapienza, ANECA (the national QA agency for Spanish HE), AQU (the QA agency for Catalunya) and ENQA. Jordanian partners include Princess Sumaya University of Technology (PSUT), the Hashemite University, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Yarmouk University, Tafila Technical University, Mutah University, the Jordanian Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC) (5) and the Association of Arab Universities (AAU) (6).

A summary of the QA higher education (HE) in Jordan

Jordanian HE is overseen by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and includes 10 public and 21 private universities with a total of 285,000 students. The universities vary considerably in size, mission and priorities but all required General Accreditation at institutional level, and *ex ante* Specific Accreditation for programmes. Evaluations for General and Specific Accreditations are undertaken by the Jordanian HEAC with the Higher Education Council as the decision making body. The extensive criteria for accreditation are currently predominantly ±inputqbased. HEAC can, however, be considered, in part, an evaluator of ±outputsqsince it is responsible for the National Testing Centre. Each year a sample of graduates from specific programmes across universities sit general and subject-related evaluations (Competency Tests).

In line with general international policy developments, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of more, and more ±explicitq internal QA (IQA) within HEIs. Consequently, all Jordanian universities should now have a ±Quality Assurance Bureauq(QAB). There are wide