Fiji Higher Education Commission

Qualifications Recognition Across Different Modalities

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Presentation outline

• FHEC

• FHEC Processes of Qualifications Recognition

• Issues of qualification recognition

• Possible ways forward
BACKGROUND

• Higher Education Advisory Board - 2008

• Fiji Higher Education Commission - 2010

• Fiji Qualifications Framework - 2003

• FQF launched on 24th February 2012
Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN FIJI

- Early Childhood Education
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Vocational Schools
- HEIs (including 3 universities)
- Employment / Non Formal Sector / Subsistence
- Technical Colleges

Ministry of Education
Processes: How FHEC does it?

EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Recognition
Registration
Programme Accreditation
Quality Audit (Against Standards)

INSTITUTIONS

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination
Fiji – HE Scene

80+ HEIs

• 3 Universities
• 1 University College

USP pioneer ODL late 1970’s

Medical School ODL - 2000
FIJI QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Education & training provided by schools, industry, TVET and higher education institutions including universities

- Schools Sector
- VET Sector
- Higher Education Sector

SCHOOLS SECTOR

- Certificates
- Diplomas

TVET SECTOR

- Certificates
- Diplomas

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

- Diplomas
- Post-Grad Dip
- Post-Grad Cert
- Bachelors Degrees
- Graduate Dips
- Grad Certs

Doctorates
Masters

National consistency in recognition of outcomes
National quality assurance systems & mechanisms
Flexibility of movement/credit transfer

Meeting socio-economic planning needs

Primary & secondary Education

International recognition and equivalences

Standard for qualifications that are industry relevant - nationally & internationally

Prelatory trade courses offered at F4, F5 and F6
School leaving examinations and TVET entrance requirements
Recognition of traditional knowledge & skills
Professional licensing & maintenance requirements
Recognition of Qualifications Accreditation onto FQR

- Levels 1-6
  Fiji Qualifications Council
- Levels 7–10
  Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications
AUTONOMY OF UNIVERSITIES

- Fiji’s universities have been established by individual statutes.

- To varying degrees these empower them to approve their own qualifications.

- This power is not fully consistent with the statutory responsibilities of the Higher Education Commission.
FORMATION OF CAUQ

- The Vice-Chancellors negotiated a procedure with the FHEC whereby they took joint responsibility for the approval of programmes from Level 7 and above.

- This involved the formation of a Committee for the Approval of University Qualifications (CAUQ).
MEMBERSHIP OF CAUQ

Members of the Committee are
• the Vice-Chancellors of all universities recognised as such by the FHEC,
• the Director of the FHEC in attendance,
• an independent Chairperson.

The Committee is serviced by the FHEC.
FUNCTIONS OF CAUQ

• To approve and accredit university programmes & qualifications. (Minimum requirement is that procedures for approval are consistent with the criteria used by FHEC on the FQF.)

• To promote the development of sound programmes of study in the university sector.

• Provide advice and comment on academic developments to relevant interested parties.
OPERATING PROCEDURES

- Each university has agreed to submit all programmes and qualifications to the Committee and to recognise the decisions of the Committee.

- Decisions are made by consensus as a general rule.

- Sub-committees are established to evaluate proposals and report to CAUQ.

- The Committee may grant approval, refuse approval or defer a decision pending further information.
EVALUATION SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-committees to consider individual programmes or groups of programmes are established by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Chair.

Membership is as follows;

• Senior academic manager external to the applying university (Chair)
• Senior academic in the discipline involved
• Academic staff member from the applying university
• Industry representative
REPORT TO CAUQ

Lead evaluator completes report to Committee with a recommendation:

• Qualification be approved.
• Qualification be declined.
• Further information be sought.

The intention is that every endeavour is made to resolve any issues at the time of the evaluational visit.
FINAL DECISION

The full Committee makes a formal decision based on the report received from the evaluators.

• Qualification be approved.
• Qualification be declined.
• Further information be sought.

It is expected that the recommendation will be endorsed by FHEC unless there is evidence that proper process has not been followed.
Way Forward

TRUST AND RESPECT

FHEC

HEI’s

Government

Stakeholders
(Industry, Professional Assoc., Licensing Bodies, Students, Government)

TRUST AND RESPECT
Issues of Qualifications Recognition – across different delivery modalities

Sovereignty of the local over the regional – how far is this shifting amongst ASEAN?

Common Platform vs Comparability in Diversity.

Mutual Respect and Trust – Sovereignty and Quality Issues.

Political Interference needs to be managed.
Issues of Qualifications Recognition – across different delivery modalities

Credit points / credit hour -- time with the lecturer;

Abstract concepts; mock trials; practicals – not possible away from lecturer;

Outcomes-based education vs content / time-based;

Content vs Competencies;

Generic vs Specific (content blind);
Way Forward

ASEAN/SEAMEO

Stakeholders (Bricks mortar institutes, Industry, Professional Assoc, Licensing Government/Accrediting Bodies)

AN/MEO

HEI’s

Government/Accrediting Bodies

Stakeholders (Bricks mortar institutes, Industry, Professional Assoc, Licensing Government/Accrediting Bodies)
Suggestions to consider

We know the Reasons to do it …

Don’t Trivialize the opposition!

India and China don’t recognize ODeL, others?

Make available the list of degree-mills in your country.

Define types of ODL, ODeL and state which are more acceptable and why.
Suggestions to consider

Terrain – increasing costs – Bricks and Mortar institutes.

ODeL course development process – include content academics.

What Business of Education are you in bandwagon, child centred – personalized vs one size fits all?

Education for change …
“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela (Madiba),
July 18, 1918 - December 5, 2013
Ubuntu: (Human kindness) I am, Because of you
Thank You!

Vinaka Vakalevu!