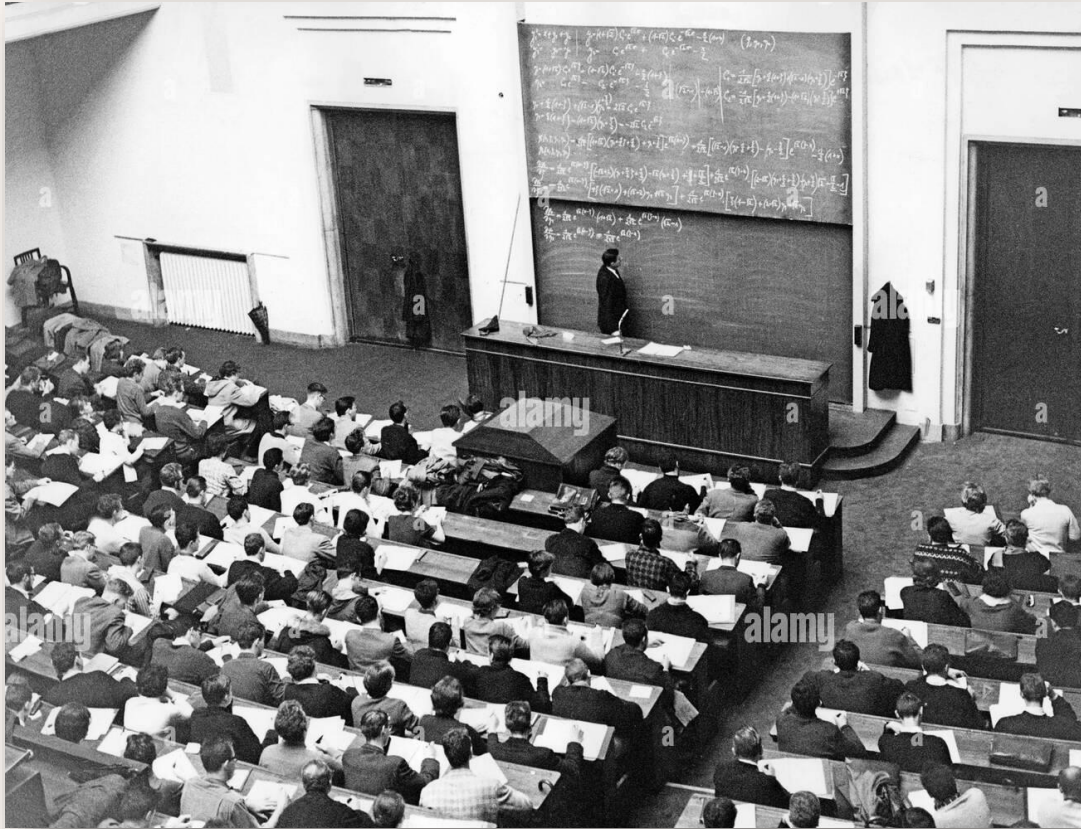# 11ᵀᴴ PUBLIC LECTURE

ENHANCING HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY THROUGH MINIMUM STANDARDS

DR. SUSANNA KARAKHANYAN

7TH INQAAHE PRESIDENT

(2016–2021)

Higher Education in the 1970s

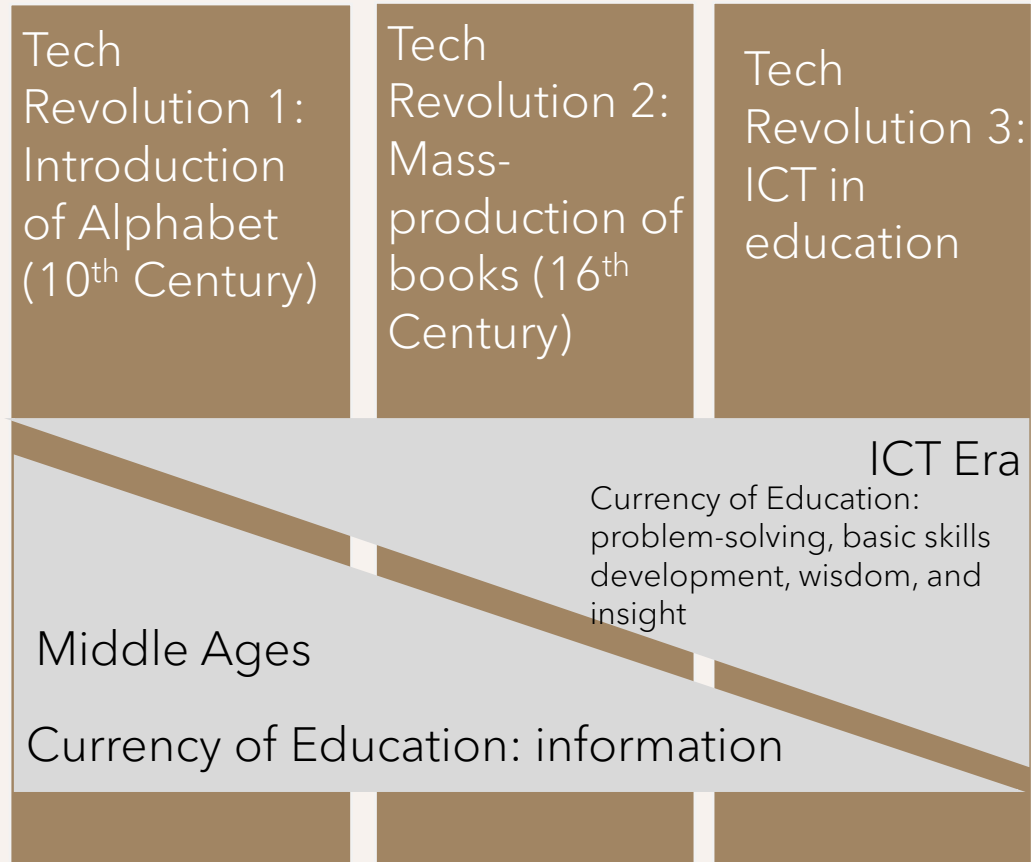Higher Education in the 2020s

Learning Paradigm Shift

Due to the learning paradigm shift and as evidenced by student abilities, they learn 50% less in a degree program than their predecessors did 50 years ago.
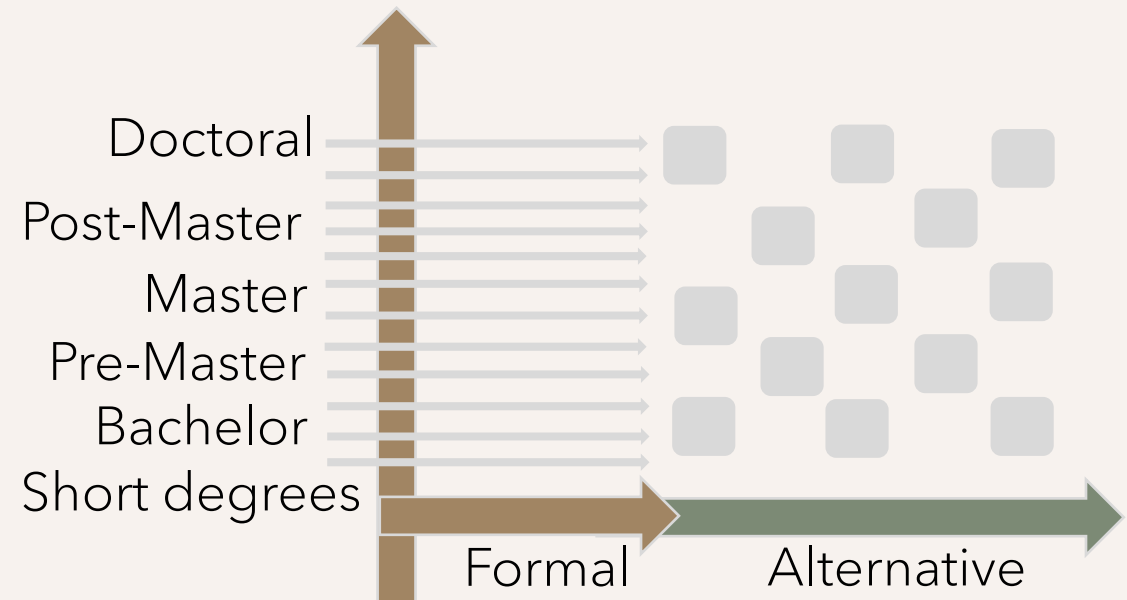~Bok, 2017, Harvard University

Performance test scores of entering and exiting students demonstrate insignificant learning gain in transferrable skills across all the countries in the sample (CAE & OECD, 2021)

Higher Learning | Disruptions, Diversification, Differentiation

Shift in currency of education

Tech Revolution 1: Introduction of Alphabet (10th Century)

Tech Revolution 2: Mass-production of books (16th Century)

Tech Revolution 3: ICT in education

ICT Era

Currency of Education: problem-solving, basic skills development, wisdom, and insight

Middle Ages

Currency of Education: information

Program diversification: vertical and horizontal

Doctoral
Post-Master
Master
Pre-Master
Bachelor
Short degrees

Formal   Alternative

Rapidly increasing demand for flexible learning pathways

Key issues in keeping up with the trends...

Curriculum

- Time-based curriculum
- Theory dominated
- Inadequate TLA
- Limited opportunity for first hand exposure to reality and stakeholder engagement

Faculty

- Lack of training academic staff
- Promotion and valuation based on research
- Inadequate compensation & incentives policy
- Limited industry exposure

Regulators

- No clarity in the expectations from HE
- TL not a priority on gov. agenda
- Regulations prevent industry meaningful engagement
- Infringed academic freedom and autonomy

HEIs

- Insufficient investment in updating programs
- Non adequate capacity to face the challenges and disruptions
- Lack of data driven decision making
- Limited stakeholder engagement
- Dire need to re-imagine the approach to leadership and management to embrace the changes

Industry & Prof. associations

- Lack of trust and understanding between HEIs and industry
- Prof. associations concerned with professionals rather than professions
- Lack of subject specific criteria

Education Systems

- Lack of systemic approach to education changes across all the levels
- Lack of system-wide data to guide decision-making.

Key issues in keeping up with the trends...

Frankenstein's Monster Effect

Core values of higher education

1988: Magna Charta Universitatum originally signed by 388 rectors on the 900th anniversary of the University of Bologna reflected the fundamental values of the university tradition

Equitable access, accountability, institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and social responsibility

Scholars at Risk (2017)

informed by international human rights law, UNESCO instruments, and related civil society statements

Values such as respect, empathy, equality, and solidarity must be core to the mission of universities, colleges, and technical institutes in the future.
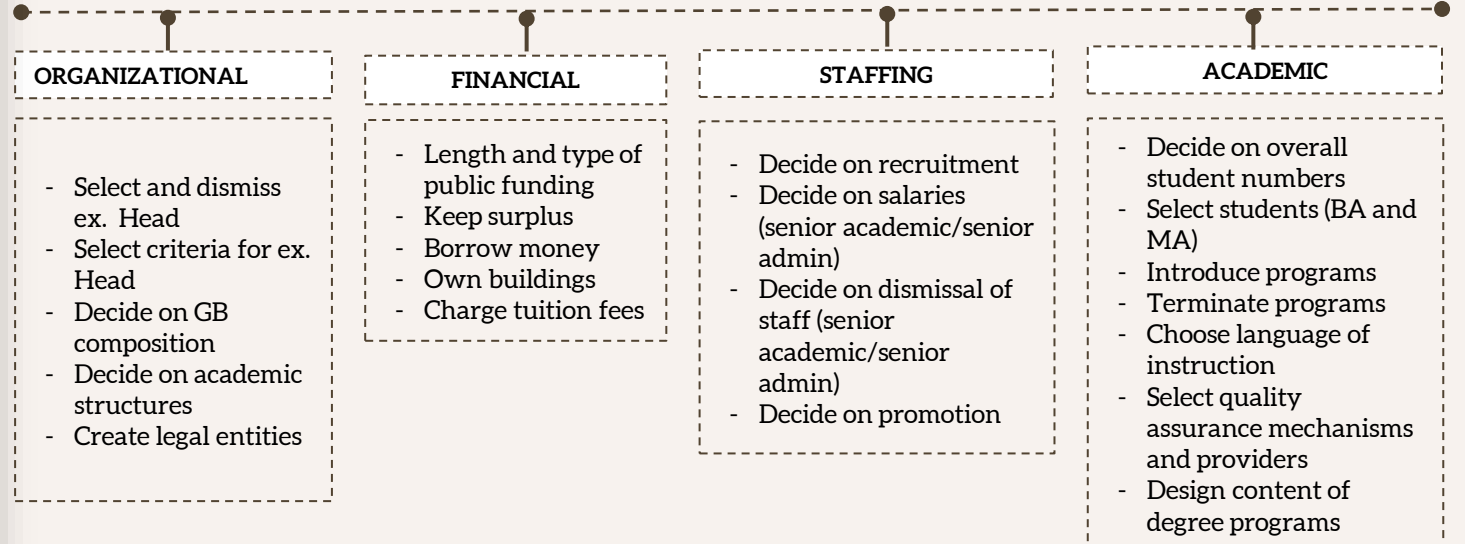
UNESCO, Futures of Education 2022

Autonomy vs. Accountability: maintaining the balance

CRUCIAL for SUCCESS:

Need to well-balance autonomy with accountability

AUTONOMY

ORGANIZATIONAL

- Select and dismiss ex. Head
- Select criteria for ex. Head
- Decide on GB composition
- Decide on academic structures
- Create legal entities

FINANCIAL

- Length and type of public funding
- Keep surplus
- Borrow money
- Own buildings
- Charge tuition fees

STAFFING

- Decide on recruitment
- Decide on salaries (senior academic/senior admin)
- Decide on dismissal of staff (senior academic/senior admin)
- Decide on promotion

ACADEMIC

- Decide on overall student numbers
- Select students (BA and MA)
- Introduce programs
- Terminate programs
- Choose language of instruction
- Select quality assurance mechanisms and providers
- Design content of degree programs

ACCOUNTABILITY

To whom
- The government
- Students
- The public at large

Tools:
- External evaluations
- Transparent performance
- Reporting tools, scorecards
- Ets.

TOWARD EDUCATION FOR ALL

A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND TRAINING

SDG4: Quality Education

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Access, equity, quality, and democracy (Ministry of Education and Culture, December 1992).

Goal 4 of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to "ensure *inclusive* and *equitable quality education* and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"

Recognition of qualifications: the UN Conventions

Regional

Region (Year)	Legal instrument	Point of Contact
LAC (2019)	Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean	UNESCO Santiago
Africa (2014)	Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States (Addis Convention)	UNESCO Dakar
Asia and the Pacific (2011)	Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education	UNESCO Bangkok
Arab States (1978)	Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States	UNESCO Beirut
Mediterranean Region (1976)	Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and European States Bordering on the Mediterranean	Mediterranean Recognition Information Centres (MERIC) Network
Europe and North America (1997)	Lisbon Recognition Convention	ENIC-NARIC Networks

Global
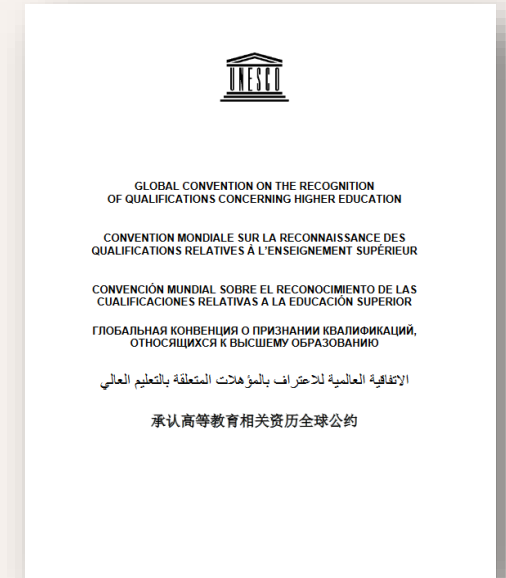
The Global Convention received its 20th ratification on 5 December 2022, and entered into force on 5 March 2023.
As of January 2023, 21 countries have ratified.

https://www.cicic.ca/1408/unesco_regional_conventions_on_the_recognition_of_qualifications.canada

A suit of tools is required to make it work...

Soft regulations

Systemic capacity:
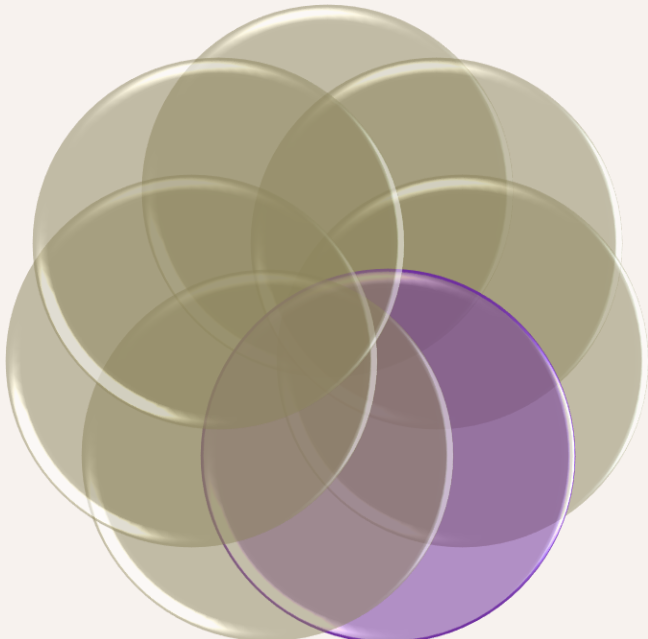human resource,
enhanced
communication
and understanding

National Policies,
Legal & Regulatory
Frameworks

Learning
environments

Funding
mechanisms

Education values:
skills and
competencies

*Performance
Standards (including
minimum)*

As with many other things, there is a surprising amount of prejudice against quality control,

but the proof of the pudding is still in the eating.

Kaoru Ishikawa

(1915-1989), Japan

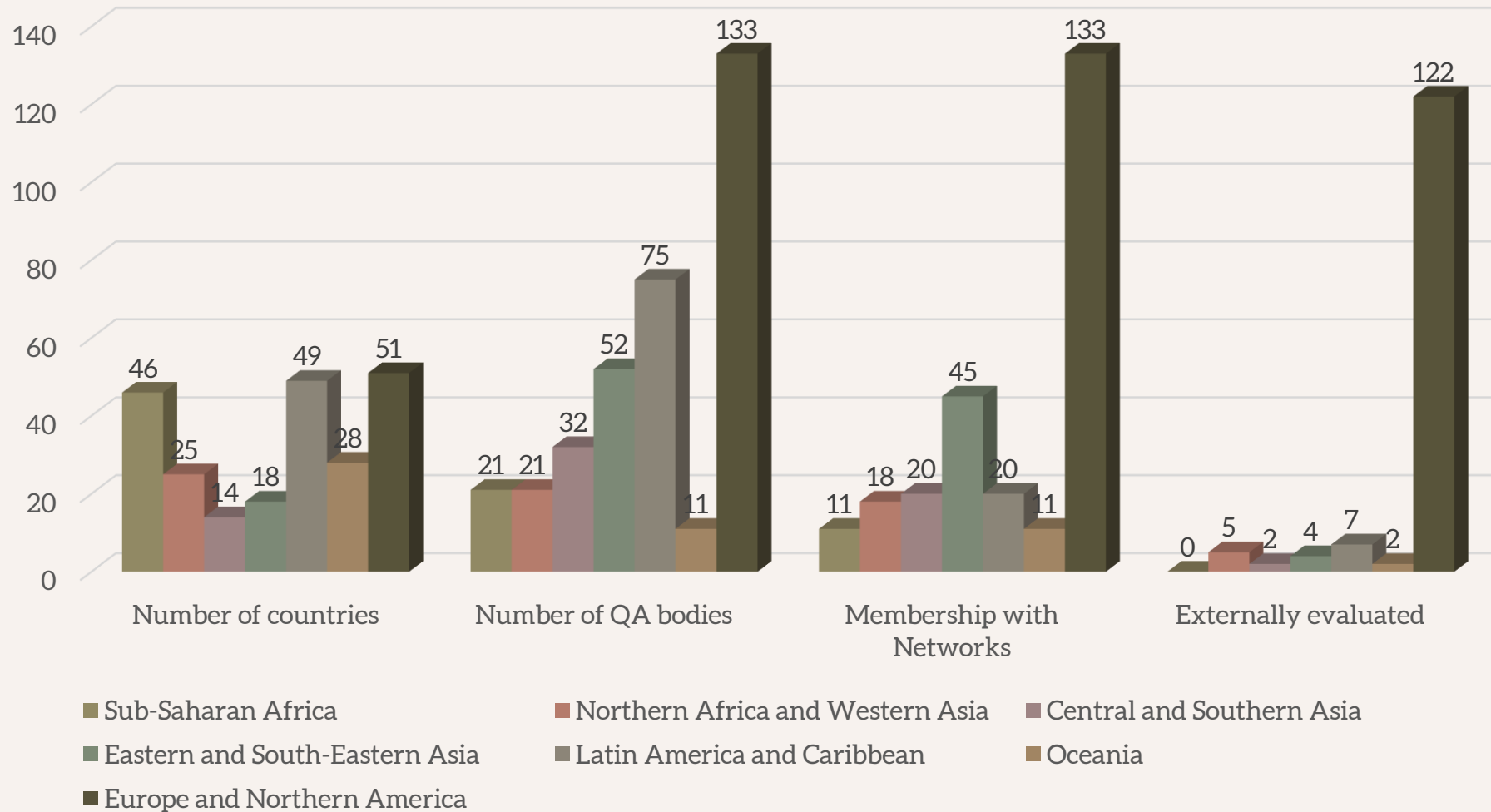# The External Quality Assurance Evolution and Landscape

Evolution:

- Late 19th century: the USA
- 1930th Japan
- 1960th: the UK, Philippines
- 1980th: massification globally
- 1965: evaluation of evaluators in the USA by US Department of State
- 1991: first global network establishment

CHEA
1996

CANQATE
2004

RIACES
2003

ENQA
2000

CEENQA
2001

ANQAHE
2007

APQN
2003

AfriQAN
2009

SAQAN
2015

INQAAHE
Since 1991

The International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

Quality Assurance: the global landscape (UNESCO WHEC, 2022)

Out of the approximate 345 QA bodies operating worldwide, around 142 have been evaluated externally or have been recognized by regional or international quality assurance networks.

Around 258 QA bodies are members of a regional or international networks (Karakhanyan & Stensaker, 2020), re-calculations as per SDG regions in 2022.

Source: INQAAHE Study on **Global Trends in Higher Education Quality Assurance: challenges and opportunities in internal and external quality assurance** (Karakhanyan & Stensaker, 2020), recalculated as per SDG regions in 2022.
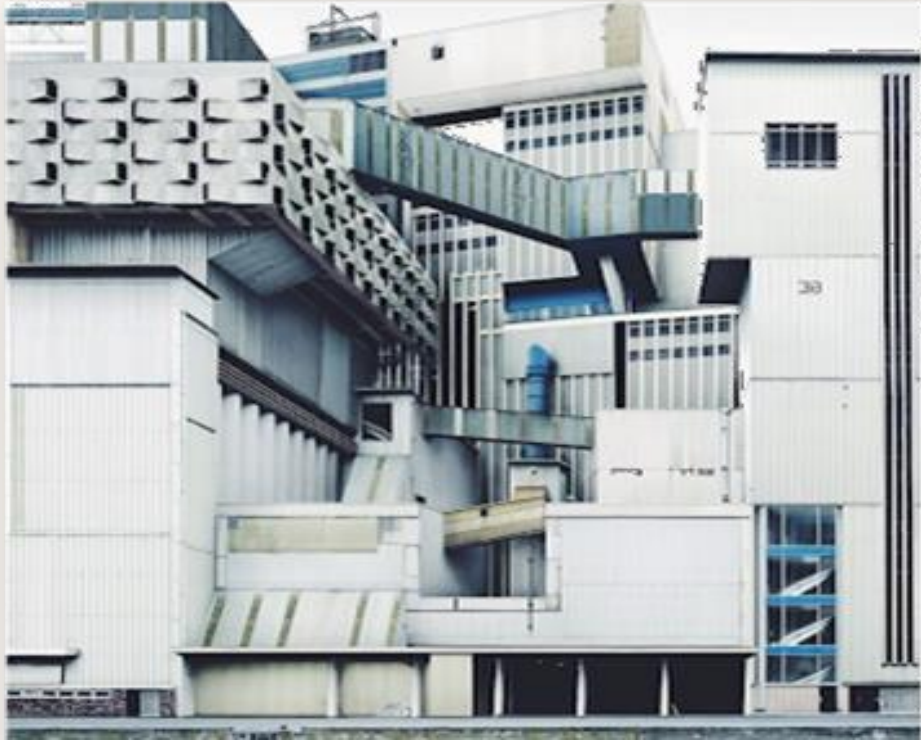
Performance standards: a wider mission...

- ❑ Equal access to quality education

- ❑ Safeguarding students

- ❑ Trust & credibility - consistency, reliability and validity in evaluations

- ❑ Recognition of qualifications

- ❑ International comparability and competitiveness

Methodology & Design Matter
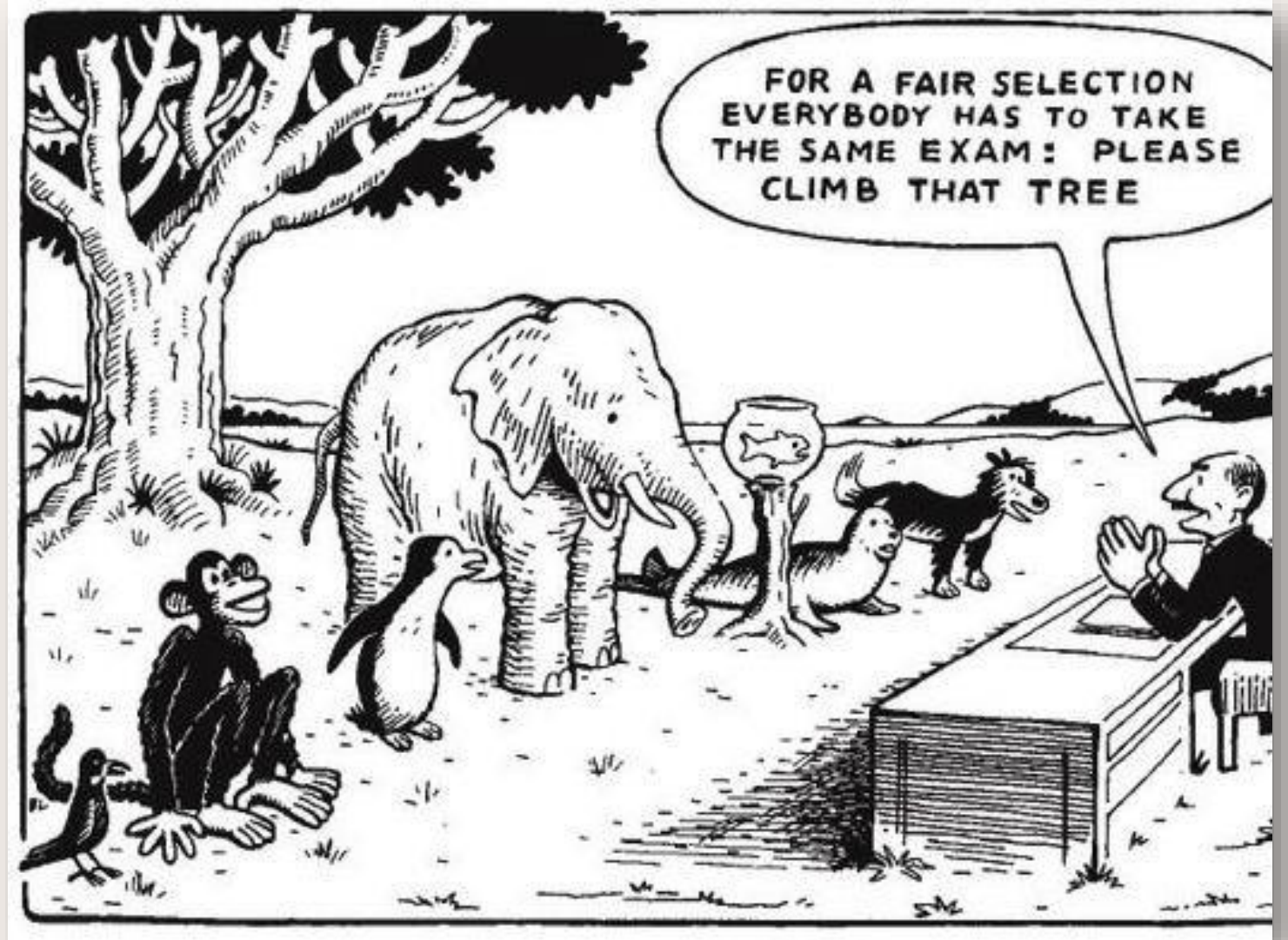
Frankenstein's Monster Effect

One of the top 10 most elegant
buildings globally

Dubai Museum of the Future
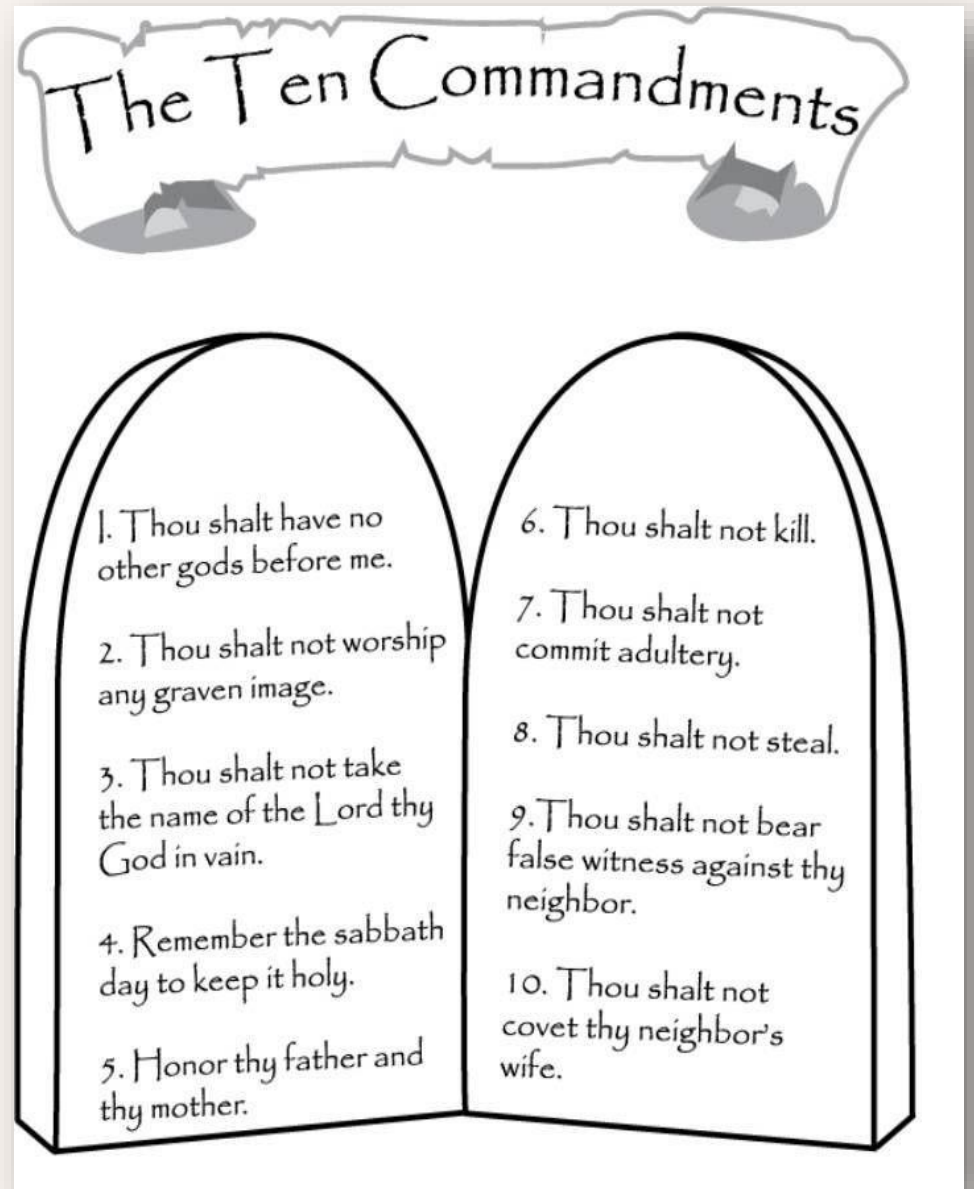
One size does not fit all!

Too Broad

Challenging to Measure

Specific & Measurable

□ Specific
□ Measurable
□ Achievable
□ Realistic and anchored within
□ Time Frame

The Ten Commandments

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not worship any graven image.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

4. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.

5. Honor thy father and thy mother.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

A balanced approach...

Universal standards are crucial to promote recognition, portability and transferability of credentials.

On the other hand, higher education providers need to have enough autonomy to perform their mission at the expected level of quality.

~ Prof. Bjørn Stensaker, UNESCO WHEC 2022

Multiple Measurement Methods:
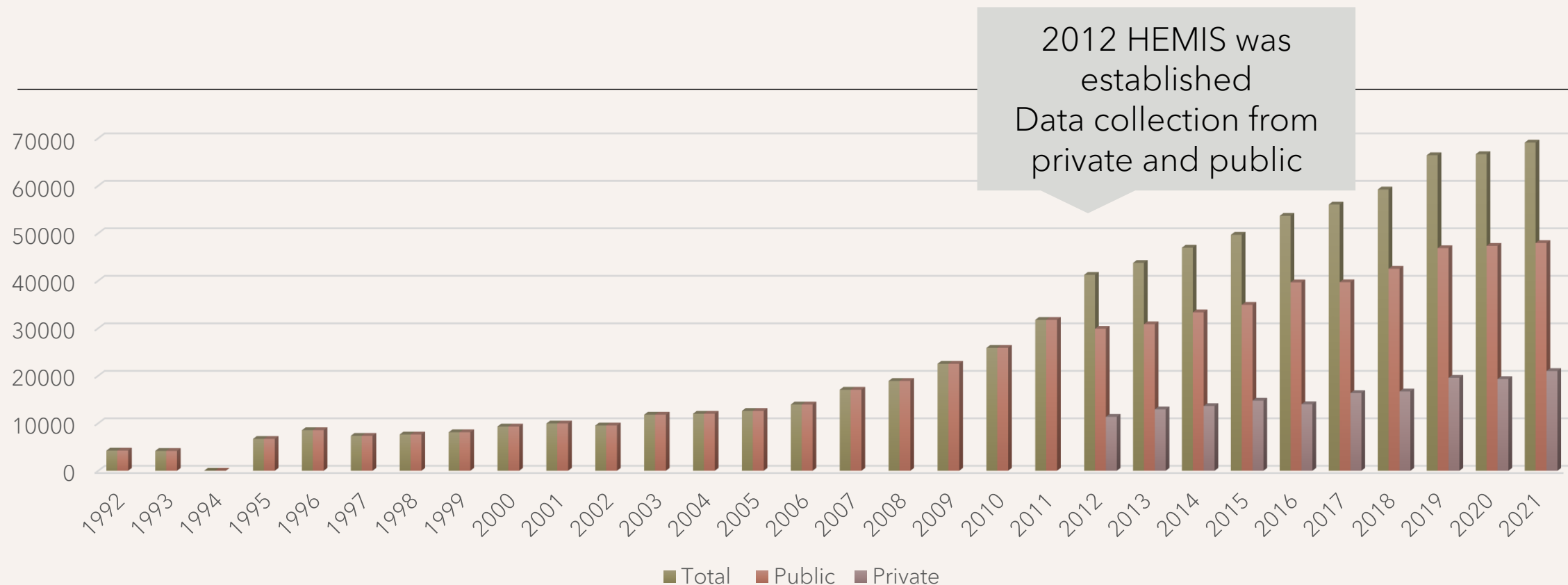## diversity of mechanisms, purposes and use cases

Entry

❑ Initial Licensure: minimum requirements to start operations
❑ Initial Accreditation: minimum requirements to start admissions

Full-fledged performance

❑ Institutional Licensing
❑ Program Accreditation
❑ Self-accrediting HEIs
❑ Professional accreditors
❑ Risk-based reviews – reviews based on multiple measurement metrices
❑ Accreditation of short-learning programs
❑ Rankings
❑ Ratings

HE system is characterized by a steady growth, massification, and diversification

2012 HEMIS was established
Data collection from private and public

Legend: Total | Public | Private

Since its establishment in the 1980s, the system has grown 17 times
Overall student population: 69,095 out of which 47,942 are enrolled in public and 20,990 in private HEIs

HE in Namibia: the landscape
Data source: HEMIS, 2021

- ❏ Total # of students: 69,095
- ❏ Total # of HEIs: 18
- ❏ Number of public HEIs: 3
- ❏ 3 HEIs qualify as comprehensive HEIs: 2 public and 1 private, which cover 77.67% of student population
- ❏ Total number of programs: 672
- ❏ Number of doctoral programs is 44 with 0,5% of doctoral students (of overall student population)
- ❏ Number of Programs with less than 10 students: ~ 190 (28%)
- ❏ Out of 18 HEIs 7 have less than 70 students

Type	# & % of Students		Scope	# of HEIs
Comprehensive University	53,672	77,67%	More than 4 field specific areas across all qualifications levels	3
Institute	6,367	9%	75% (or more) in 1 field specific area. Post-graduate diploma as the highest qualification.	2
College	7,966	11.5%	More than 1 field specific area. Post-graduate diploma as the highest qualification. Post-graduate diploma is not more than 10% of the offer	6
Specialized College	694	1.3%	75% (or more)of programs are in 1 field of study Postgraduate diploma is not more than 10% of the offer	7

Key Principles

A robust HE quality assurance system is imperative to ensure the integrity of qualifications and the maintenance of academic standards in the country.

What's in it for us?

The benefits of the minimum standards evolve around:

- Safeguarding the students, the academic, and administrative staff by ensuring sustainable operations of HE providers in Namibia

- Ensuring consistency and transparency in external evaluation of HEIs, hence sustainable performance

- Supplement and complementing the current QA standards and guidelines by providing a robust baseline for higher education operations.

The Minimum Standards

Institution	Programme	Research	Resources
Institutional Designation/ Nomenclature	Admission & Enrolment	Research Capacity	Infrastructure & Facilities
Governance & Administration	Curriculum		Finances
Internal Quality Assurance	Academic & Admin Staff		Student Support Services
	Progression & Graduation		
	Records Management & Teach Out		

You are infinite potential
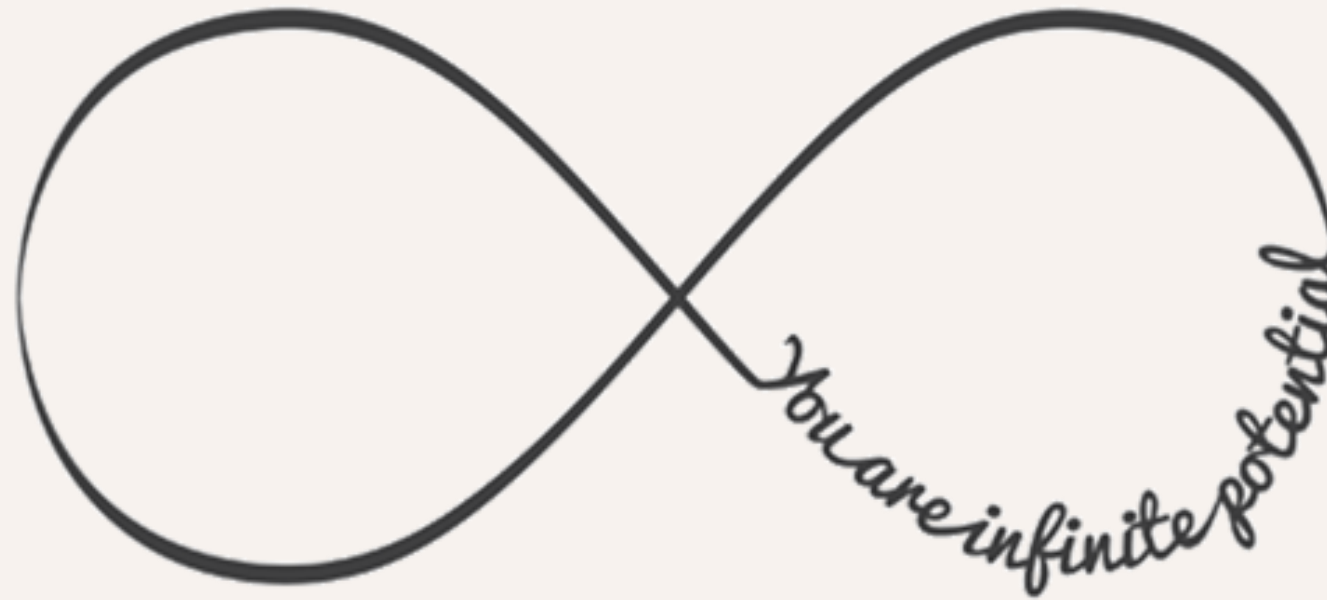
Embrace meaningful change

"To improve is to change; to perfect is to change often"

— Winston S. Churchill

INQAAHE 17th Biennial Conference 2023

Roadmap to Enabling Quality in Tertiary Education 2030

- **Fostering quality of flexible learning pathways**

- **Digitalization of teaching and learning without compromising quality**

- **Quality assurance of cross-border education**

- **Core values and quality of tertiary education**

INQAAHE CONFERENCE 2023 (iqaa.kz)

May 29-June 1, 2023 | Astana, Kazakhstan

THANK YOU