

# UK NARIC Annual Conference



This year's event was the biggest and most well attended that UK NARIC have ever held.

Over the two day event, more than 350 delegates attended and used the opportunity to find out about the latest developments in education internationally.

'The feedback from the event has been fantastic!' commented Dr Cloud Bai-Yun, 'and I am most proud of the efforts made by my colleagues and the most valuable content provided by our guest speakers.'

The first day of this year's conference focused on our members in the education sector, and the second on our members from the commercial sector, as well as those from Professional Bodies and Careers Advisory Services.

Professor Sir Peter Scott, Vice Chancellor of Kingston University opened the event. In his opening address, Sir Peter examined the challenges faced by institutions trying to internationalise, or globalise, their offering. He warned institutions that the future will not be like the past; there will not be continual growth. In order to survive in this globalised market place, institutions needed to embrace the fact that higher education is now becoming a tradable commodity; in this new environment HEIs need to be open to new ideas and different ways of thinking.

The morning continued with an overview of Tier 4 of the Points Based System (PBS) for immigration from David Ramsbotham, UK BA; he provided a timely overview of the PBS and reassured delegates that with the latest figures on the number of applications made and refused through the new system. Overall, the number of migrants applying is at the same levels as in 2007 and the refusal rates are comparable with previous years.

The newly appointed Chief Executive of the QAA, Anthony McClaran, took the opportunity to set out the objectives for the Agency over the next few months. During the final session of the morning, we were delighted to be able to introduce our first international panel of UK NARIC conferences, welcoming representatives from the China Academic Degrees & Graduate education Development Centre (CDGDC), the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE), the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. This session gave our delegates a unique insight into what is happening in education internationally.

The afternoon sessions consisted of seven different seminars, the most popular being a question and answer session on Tier 4 of the PBS.

The second day of the conference was opened by Jim Birch from the Engineering Council UK. In his speech, Jim raised the most important issue of professional qualifications and their recognition and challenged UK NARIC to devise a way in which the value of professional qualifications are better understood.

The morning continued with Katherine Latta from the UK's National Contact Point for Professional Qualifications (UK NCP), informing delegates about the work of the newly formed unit within ECCTIS Ltd. In her presentation, Katherine provided a detailed report on the implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive. This has encouraged UK NARIC to forge much closer working relationships with the sector with the view to developing better and coherent professional advice on professional qualifications.

The morning session was completed by Gary Argent from the AGR. He considered the challenges facing graduate recruiters in the UK. The graduate market has declined significantly over the

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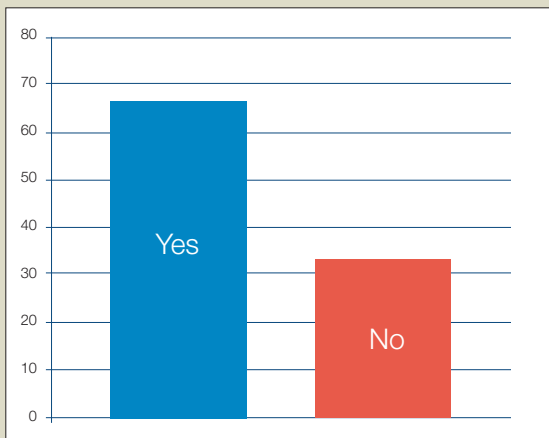
# What you really think of us!

Over the past twelve months, we have been gathering feedback from members about your thoughts on the services we offer. Just over a year ago we introduced the package system for membership. The ad-hoc feedback we have received from members has been that the packages are better than the old location based system and that members are particularly pleased with the way in which the packages can be bespoke to meet their particular needs. But this feedback has usually been at events or meeting; so what do members really think about UK NARIC?

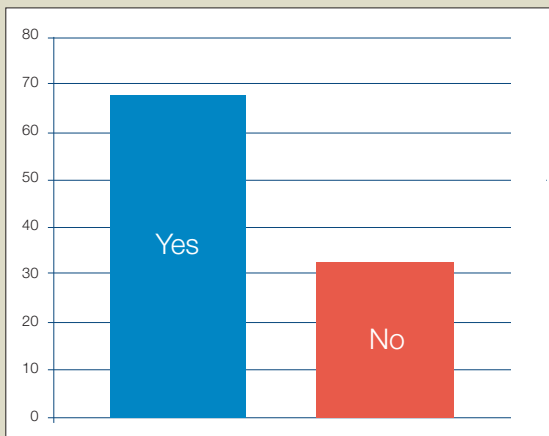
Well the answer is pretty much the same! The feedback has been very positive; but it also provides an interesting insight into the way in which member's usage of the service has changed over the past year.

The key aspects of the feedback we have received are that members feel that the packages offer a better service as well as value for money:

**Figure 1: Have the Membership Packages improved the service provided by UK NARIC?**



**Figure 2: Do the packages offer value for money?**



Most members were aware of the Customer Service aspect of our service, but 20% did not know about this before the packages were introduced! Of those who used the service the most highly rated aspects were the accuracy of the answer (77% positive response) and usefulness of the answer (78% positive response).

*'This is great to hear,' commented Ning Guan, Team Leader, Data and Information Development, 'we try to keep the data as up-to-date as possible and to get confirmation that the information we provide is accurate and useful is great!'*

## These comments are echoed by members:

*'...I find this a good service with information officers providing very knowledgeable responses with a welcoming personal approach...'*

*'...I have always found that any enquiries have been dealt with in an efficient and most helpful manner...'*

UK NARIC publications also fared well; with members indicating that they found the quality and usefulness of the information and 'very good'.

*'The Research and Data team work very hard at making sure that what we publish is as accurate as possible,' commented Jochen Pichler, Quality & Business Development Manager, 'country files are updated according to a published Information Development plan and this feedback confirms that we are covering the right areas of the world.'*

Similarly, UK NARIC's training sessions are also well received with the quality of the training and the knowledge of the trainers scoring the highest.

'This is really good news', said Rebecca Smith, Training Programming & Research Officer. 'The trainers all work hard to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the sphere of international education, currently developing additional new sessions, which no doubt will prove to be equally well received.'

## CFA Programme and Charter Gain Wider Recognition

UK NARIC have recently completed a project on behalf of the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute to benchmark the CFA programme and charter, the globally recognised investment management qualification and designation. Each level of the CFA programme has been compared against levels within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) as follows;

- CFA Level III and the CFA charter are comparable to QCF Level 7
- CFA Level II is comparable to QCF Level 6
- CFA Level I is comparable to QCF Level 5

Commenting for CFA Institute, Nitin Mehta, Managing Director, EMEA, said: 'The benefit of this benchmark is that employers, practitioners, educational institutions, regulators and the UK National Border Agency will be able to compare the levels of the CFA programme against the English Qualification and Credit framework. This provides an easily understood comparison against other qualifications and demonstrates to employers and investors the exacting standards needed to become a CFA charterholder'.

Commenting for NARIC, Dr Cloud Bai Yun, Head of UK NARIC said: 'Benchmarking the CFA programme and charter has proved to be a valuable exercise for both UK NARIC and CFA Institute. The study has not only furthered NARIC's understanding of their professional qualifications in finance, but also enabled the Institute to benefit from NARIC's extended international networks to market its provisions more effectively. This will be of real benefit to the Institute, ensuring that the rigour and high standards of the CFA programme and charter continue to be recognised'.

## Europass

UK National Europass Centre enjoyed success at the annual UK NARIC conference. The conference was sponsored by Europass and the team delivered a workshop on each day of the conference entitled 'Using Europass' and received some great feedback.

The workshop explored the tools that Europass offer, and the benefits to both students and organisations alike that use them. For follow up on the workshop or for further information please email: [info@uknec.org.uk](mailto:info@uknec.org.uk).

As well as sponsoring the UK NARIC conference, the team has also attended various workshops and exhibiting at some great events. Just recently Europass held a workshop at The Careers Europe annual conference and received incredible scores on feedback from everyone in the group.

The Europass team recently attended the EU Coordination group meeting, hosted by the Europe Unit where discussions took place on various government papers.

The other events Europass have attended either as an exhibitor or as a delegate are:

- ECOTEC event-Cardiff
- Chairing the Quality of Mobility taskforce
- Diversity Careers Show
- EURES European Job day
- Learning by Leaving conference in Sweden – Organised as part of the EU presidency – focussed on a response to the Green Paper on Youth Mobility
- Thematic Networking Group – delivering a presentation on the REFNILLO project (Recognition of Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Learning: Learning Outcomes)

The Europass team are also proud to be Chairing the Quality of Mobility taskforce and are taking part in a sharing of best practice on inclusion of underrepresented groups as part of the EU Programmes Coordinators Group.

Next year Europass is keen to continue the great momentum that they have been gathering this year and increase awareness of the portfolio, as well as examining its usefulness to providing solutions to employment and facilitating recognition.



## UK NCP | NATIONAL CONTACT POINT for PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In November, UK NCP co-hosted the second day of the UK NARIC annual conference. Jim Birch of the Engineering Council gave the opening address, followed by Katherine Latta introducing the work of UK NCP. We were also delighted to have Shaun Robertson from the Institute of Chartered Accountants host one of the workshops in the afternoon.

UK NCP has also been working hard to collect statistics on behalf of BIS and the European Commission regarding applications for recognition that were made in 2008. The statistics will in due course be available on the Commission database of regulated professions.

A new website to replace [www.europeopen.org.uk](http://www.europeopen.org.uk) is set to launch in the near future. The new address will be confirmed through [www.europeopen.org.uk](http://www.europeopen.org.uk) so please keep an eye on the site for announcements!

## What's new

After a few months' busy research, a number of key updates have been made on our three main databases: International Comparisons (IC), Vocational Comparisons (VC) and Teaching Comparisons (TC). The following country files have been fully or partially reviewed and updated, following desk based research:

- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bahrain
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Cambodia
- Canada
- China
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Eritrea
- Finland
- France
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Holy See
- Hungary
- India
- Iran
- Ireland
- Italy
- Kuwait
- Latvia
- Lesotho
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Macao
- Malaysia
- Malta
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Nepal
- The Netherlands
- Nigeria
- Northern Ireland
- Oman
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- Singapore
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Switzerland
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- UAE
- Wales
- West Bank & Gaza
- Zambia

In addition to this, the HEI lists for 33 countries have been fully or partially updated, including Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Chile, China, Egypt, England, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Oman, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Sudan, USA, Wales, Zambia covering more than 1200 institutions. 145 qualifications and / or comparability statements have been added or changed largely as a result of the latest information gathered through desk based research and information provided by overseas authorities.

## Stats

The number of individual enquiries received by UK NARIC has declined over the last four months compared to the same period in 2008. On average, 1900 statements of comparability were issued in the last four months to individuals from countries worldwide. The majority of enquiries received from individuals relate to professional employment; undergraduate education is the least common purpose of enquiry representing less than 5% of the total number of enquiries received from individuals. India, Pakistan, Poland and South Africa remain top of the country league, followed by Australia, USA and Nigeria.

In recent months over 80% of enquiries received from subscribing organisations have been submitted from the Higher Education sector. Here India, China, UK and USA remain top of the country league.

## Where have we been?

Research in the last three months has been mainly desk based. New information and data is being reviewed and processed in order to appear on UK NARIC products in the near future.

# Training: External events UK

We are pleased to announce that the following sessions will be taking place over the next few months. Morning sessions run from 09.30-12.30 and afternoon sessions from 13.30-16.00.

DEGREES OF DECEPTION – COMBATING EDUCATION FRAUD		
Leeds Metropolitan University - Rose Bowl, Leeds	06/01/2010	Morning
Engineer's House, Stothert Room, Bristol	27/01/2010	Morning
Scottish Health Service Centre, Edinburgh	21/04/2010	Morning
EVALUATING INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS		
Leeds Metropolitan University - Rose Bowl, Leeds	05/01/2010	Morning
Engineer's House, Stothert Room, Bristol	26/01/2010	Morning
Wellcome Trust Conference Centre, Cambridge	02/02/2010	Morning
Scottish Health Service Centre, Edinburgh	20/04/2010	Morning
USING UK NARIC's INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS		
Leeds Metropolitan University - Rose Bowl, Leeds	05/01/2010	Afternoon
Engineer's House, Stothert Room, Bristol	26/01/2010	Afternoon
Wellcome Trust Conference Centre, Cambridge	02/02/2010	Afternoon
Scottish Health Service Centre, Edinburgh	20/04/2010	Afternoon
EDUCATION IN EASTERN EU MEMBER STATES		
Wellcome Trust Conference Centre, Cambridge	03/02/2010	Afternoon
EDUCATION IN INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH		
Leeds Metropolitan University - Rose Bowl, Leeds	06/01/2010	Afternoon
EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST		
Engineer's House, Stothert Room, Bristol	27/01/2010	Afternoon
Scottish Health Service Centre, Edinburgh	21/04/2010	Afternoon
EDUCATION IN ENGLISH SPEAKING AFRICA		
Wellcome Trust Conference Centre, Cambridge	03/02/2010	Morning
EDUCATION IN CHINA		
City University, London	17/02/2010	Afternoon

We are also finalising the remaining schedule for 2010 and we will publish this as soon as it's been confirmed. We plan to hold sessions throughout the UK as well as in Australasia, Canada, Ireland and mainland Europe.

For more information on UK NARIC training courses or if you would like to host your own event please contact our training department on e. [training@naric.org.uk](mailto:training@naric.org.uk) or t. **+44 (0) 871 330 7303**.

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past year or so with a 24.5% reduction in the number of vacancies available. However, recruiter's confidence is returning with 92% expecting to fill all their spaces. The hot topics for recruiters include reducing the risks of employing the wrong person and how migrant workers can benefit organisations. One of the key issues for employers was being able to understand the abilities of individuals from outside the UK; and it was acknowledged that UK NARIC data played a central role in this area.

The pre-lunch session continued with a session considering Tier 2 of the PBS, presented by Peter Jukes of UK BA. An overview of this skilled route was delivered and an indication of the number of applications that have been received. It was clear that the new system had helped to improve the way in which migration is managed.

Mark Franks presenting the work of the Migration Advisory Committee including an insight into the Tier 2 recommendations and possible recommendations associated with Tier 1; these included linking qualification level and earnings.

The afternoon session offered a variety of different seminars and

workshops with a notable interest on qualifications in relation to Tier 2 of the PBS.

The post-conference analysis provided us with the most positive feedback of this year's delivery. 'The Annual Conference is an important part of our calendar,' commented Tim Buttress, Head of Policy & Communication, 'and this year's event really showed the impact of the work that we do. We brought together UK BA, the Migration Advisory Committee, the AGR, professional bodies, employers, careers advisers as well as higher and further education professionals. It is wonderful to see the different ways in which our knowledge, experience and data are used to help all of these different sectors.'

If you would like more information on any of the presentations please contact [communications@naric.org.uk](mailto:communications@naric.org.uk).

## Feedback

If you have any comments about the service that we provide, or any of the articles in this edition of NARIC News, please contact us on [feedback@naric.org.uk](mailto:feedback@naric.org.uk)

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