

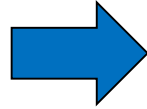
# Quality assurance in higher education: where do we go from here?

**Dr. Susan Harris-Huemmert**

***5th Central European Higher Education (CEHEC) Conference***

Corvinus University of Budapest / Yehuda Elkana Centre for Higher Education at the  
Central European University (CEU)

11th-12th April 2019



# Sorbonne (1998), Bologna (1999) & Prague (2001)

- Increase **conformity** in European higher education
- Two „**main cycles**“ of degrees
- System of **credits** (ECTS)
- Promote **mobility** (students & staff)
- Promote **European cooperation in QA**  
(accreditation processes)

# Causa higher education

- **Communities** dedicated to the **learning** and **personal development** of their members, especially students
- **Sources of expertise** and **vocational identity**
- **Creators, testers,** and **sites** for the **evaluation** and **application of new knowledge**
- **Contributors to society and nations**

Watson et al. (2011, 1-28)

# What *else* is higher education?

- **Repositories** and **generators of knowledge**
- **Equips graduates** for **employment**
- **Offers rational** and **timely criticism** in public policy, social and economic life
- **Remains large and influential bodies** in civil society and the state
- **Creates graduates** for cohesive and tolerant communities

# Kinds of institution

Organized anarchy  
(Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972)

*No goals, goals  
alongside each other*

Loosely-coupled system  
(Weick, 1976)

*Some parts good,  
others less so*



Professional bureaucracy  
(Mintzberg, 1983)

*Academic hierarchies,  
little middle management*

*entrepreneurial*

*supercomplex*

# What is quality?

„Quality in higher education is a bit like love: not tangible, yet present. You can experience it, yet not quantify it. It remains fleeting, so you have to *consistently* and *repeatedly* engage with it.“

Müller-Böling, 1997, 90, own translation

# Quality: DIN EN ISO 9000FF (2005, p.18)

Degree in which a set of inherent properties meet requirements

= poor, good or excellent

In contrast with ,being applied to', *inherent* signifies being permanently part of, in particular as a constant characteristic.

**Quality management** includes **politics, goals, planning, direction, assurance and improvement.**

(DIN EN ISO 9000:2005, p.21)



# So that makes management easy, right?

We are *engaging with*

- a) something we can't *really* determine, but yet know it's there;
- b) a *moving* target;
- c) fluctuating leaders;
- d) and changing legislation.



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# *European regulation in quality assurance*



Established 2000 for European cooperation in QA

- to **represent its members** at the European level and internationally, especially in political decision making processes and in co-operations with stakeholder organisations;
- to **function as a think tank for developing quality assurance** processes and systems further in the EHEA, and beyond;
- to **function as a communication platform** for sharing and disseminating information and expertise in quality assurance among members and other interested parties, and towards stakeholders.

# Areas of focus in HE



# Rankings

***International:***



U-MULTIRANK

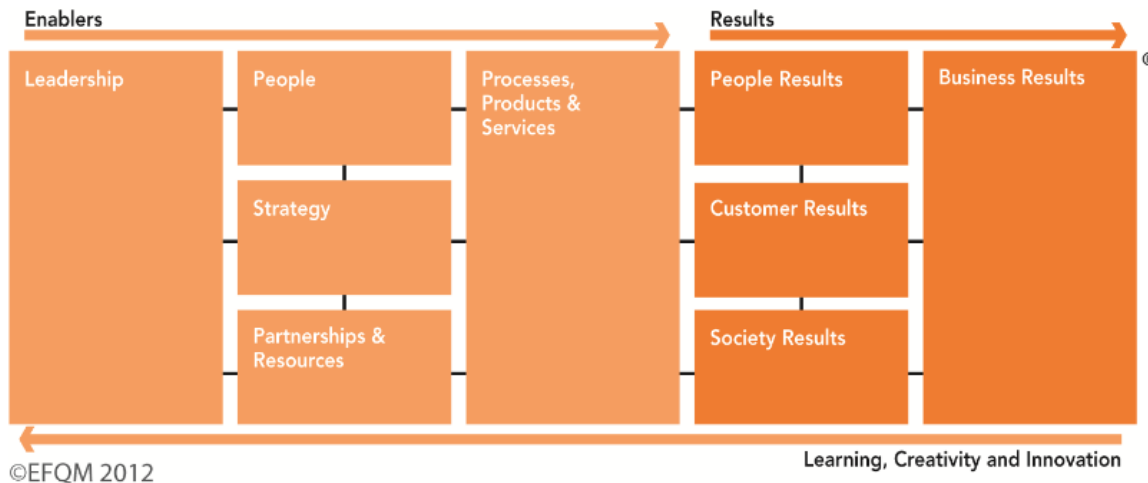


the multidimensional ranking of  
higher education institutions

***National, e.g. Germany:***



# Models of QM



*European  
Foundation of  
Quality  
Management  
(EFQM)*

## EFQM **RADAR** Logic

**Results**

Where do we want to go?

**Approaches**

How do we get there?

**Deploy**

Our chosen means of getting there.

**Assess**

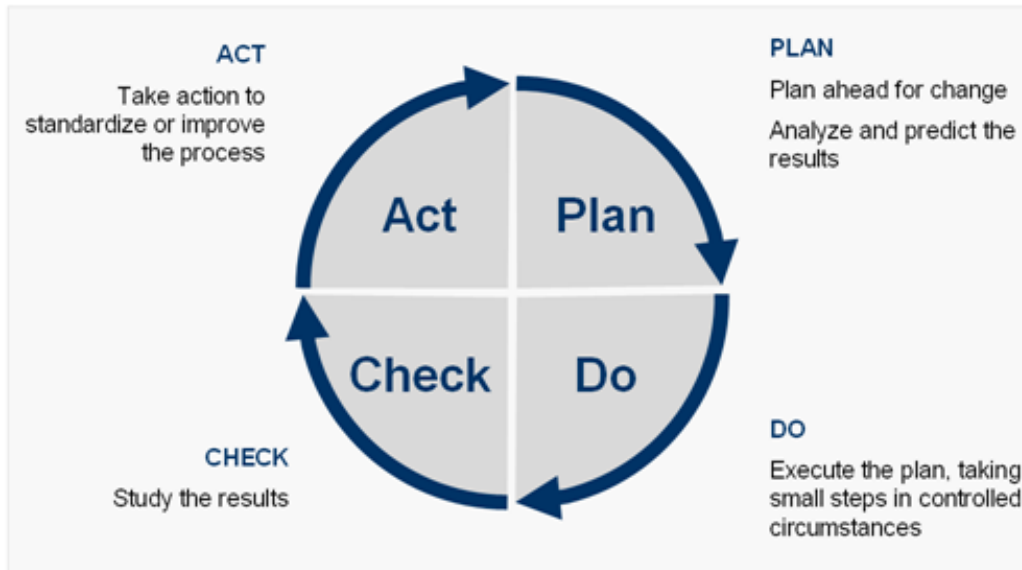
Our check of how we are getting there.

**Refine**

Our fine-tuning, to improve our means.

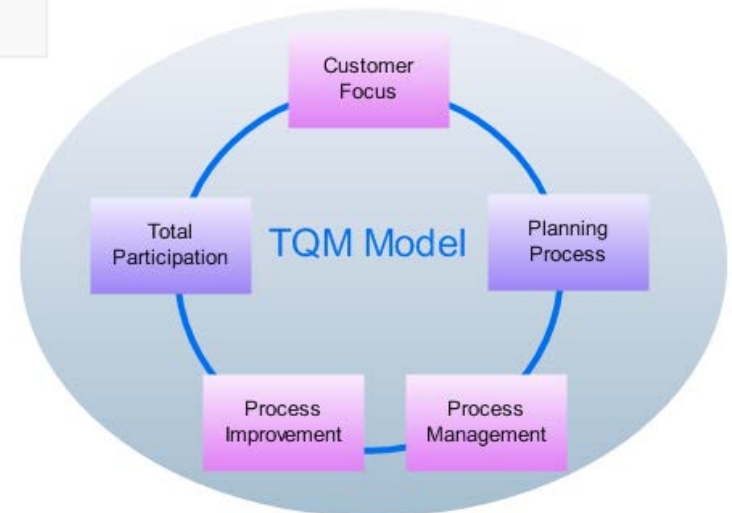
# Models of QM

Deming Cycle



## PDCA

## Total Quality Management - TQM



# Case study: Germany



## Programme accreditation

of *individual or clustered* **degree courses**  
for checking *minimal* standards are maintained

- + effort every 8 years
- less need for ongoing engagement
- costs

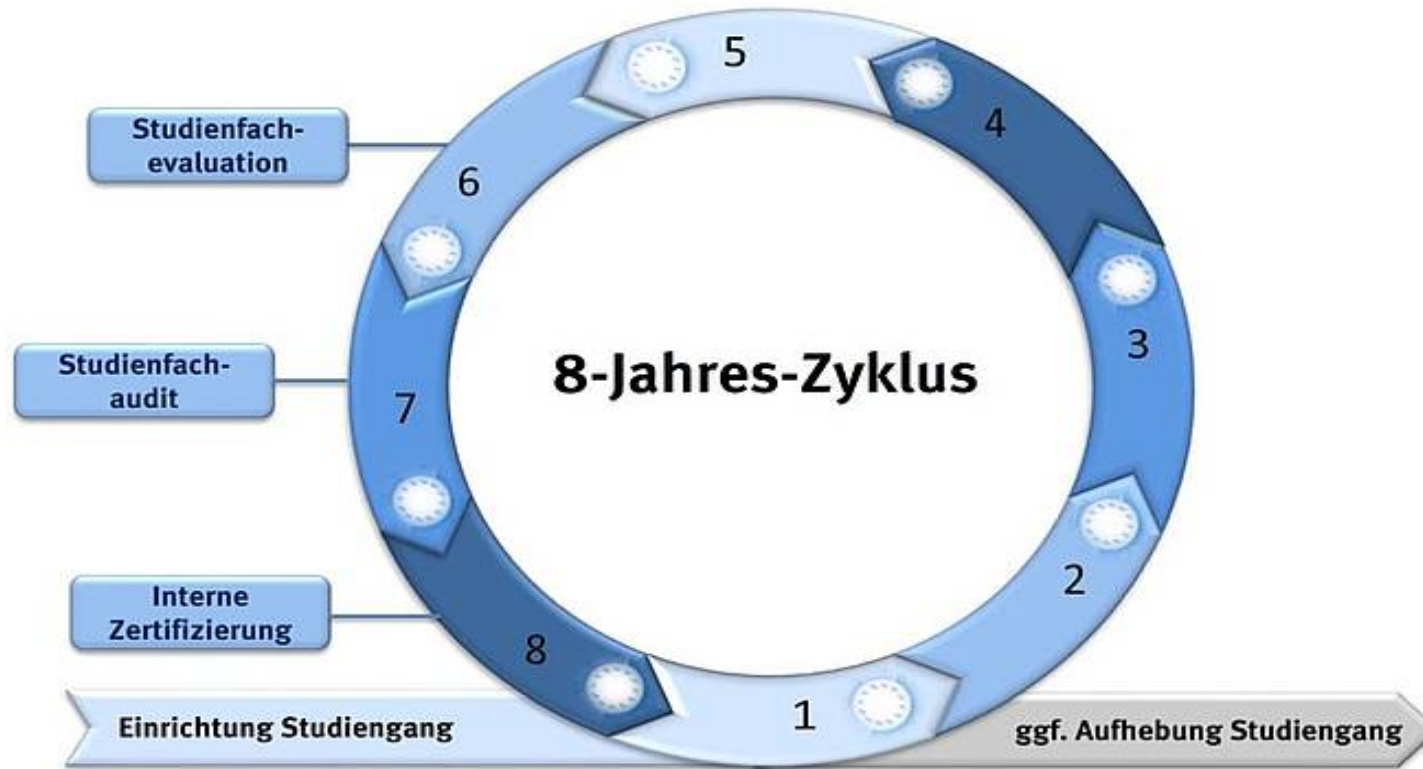
## System accreditation

of **entire quality management system**

- + institution free to choose system that fits
- + autonomous choice of „checks“
- + self-accreditating
- + costs
- long and intensive preparation (ca. 8 years)

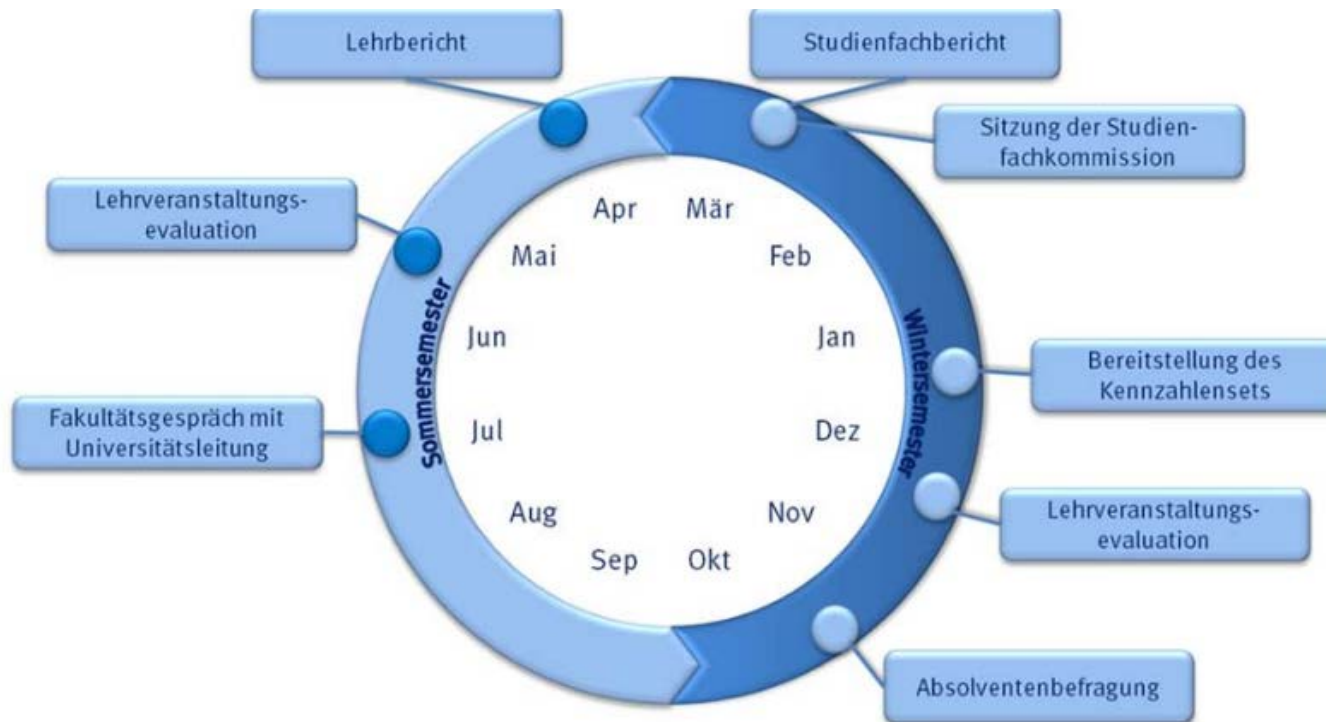
# University of Würzburg

Bavaria, 2018





# Annual monitoring



# University of Frankfurt

Hesse, 2016



# Case study: Great Britain



Royal Charter. NO programme accreditation  
(only in *private* HEIs)

**Quality Assurance Agency (QAA):** Independent body for standards and quality in HE

**Quality Code** for HE



**Subject Benchmark Statements**

# Case study: Great Britain

## Types of review

Higher Education Review (private providers)

Annual Monitoring

**Quality and Standards Review**



**Office for Students  
(OfS)**

# Case study: Great Britain

## Research Excellence Framework



REF 2021  
Research  
Excellence  
Framework

- To provide **accountability** for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment.
- To provide **benchmarking information** and establish **reputational yardsticks**, for use within the HE sector and for public information.
- To inform the selective **allocation of funding** for research.

**Expert review**, 34 subject-based units of assessment (UOAs).

**Output** (publications); **impact**; and **environment**

# Case study: Great Britain

## Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF, 2017)

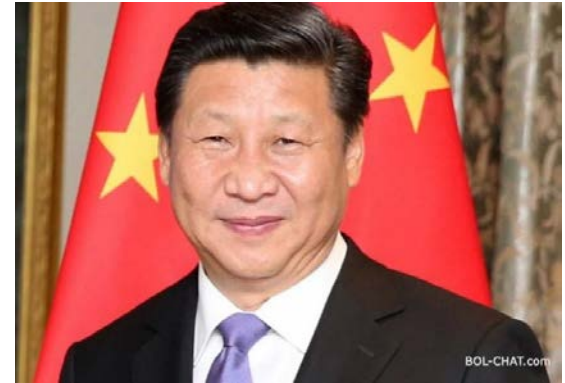
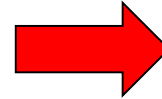
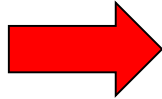
Based on statistics, e.g. dropout, student satisfaction and graduate employment rates (**National Student Survey-NSS**)

### Six core metrics:

1. Teaching on my course
2. Assessment and feedback
3. Academic support
4. Non-continuation
5. Employment / further study
6. Highly-skilled employment / further study



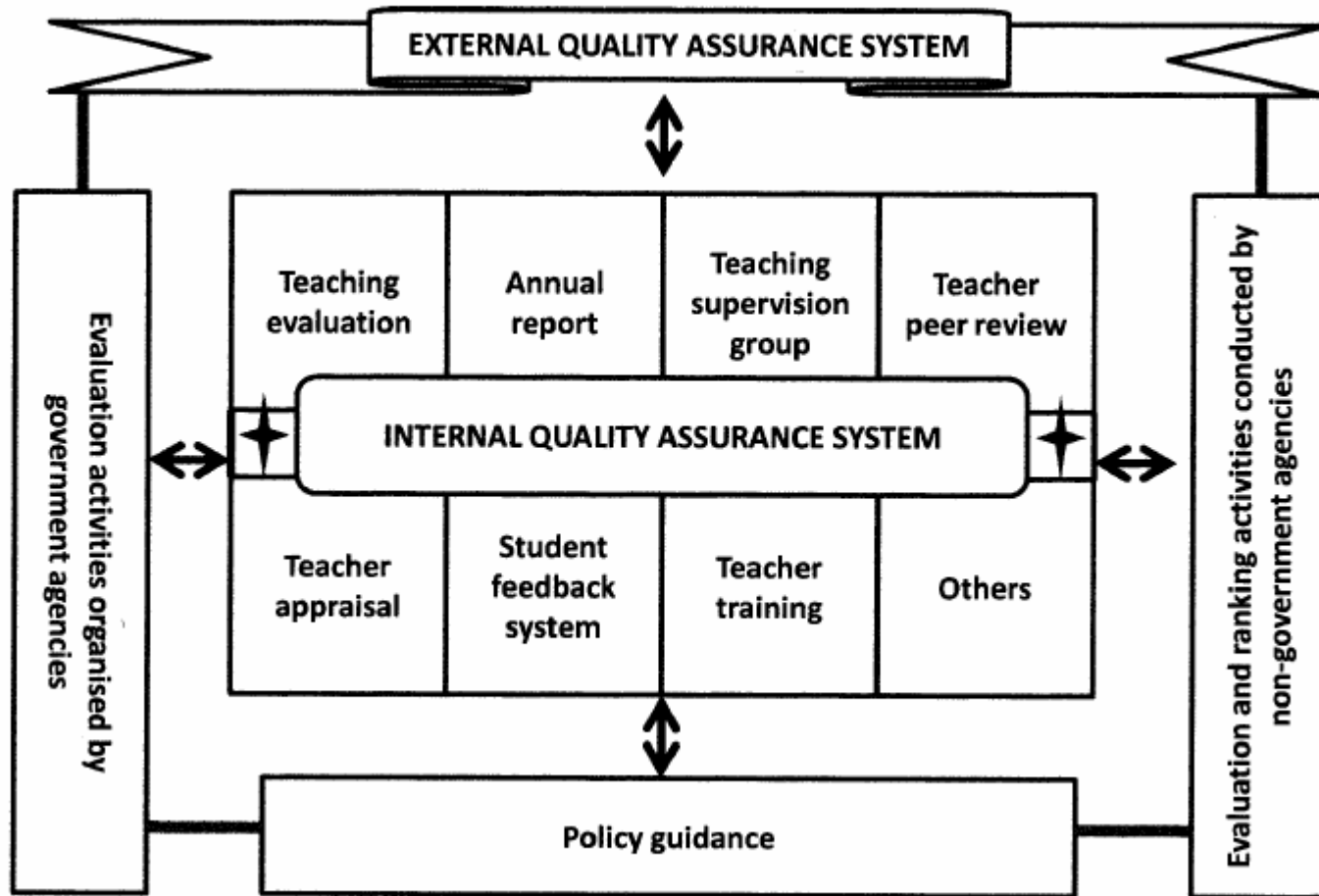
# Case study: China



Self-regulation; de-centralisation (1985); multiple funding sources; competition; „elite“ notions; huge expansion.

QA framework for quality of HE and allocation of performance-based funding

# Case study: China's QA



Li, Y. (2009)



# Case study: China

2003-2007

## Education Revitalisation Action Plan

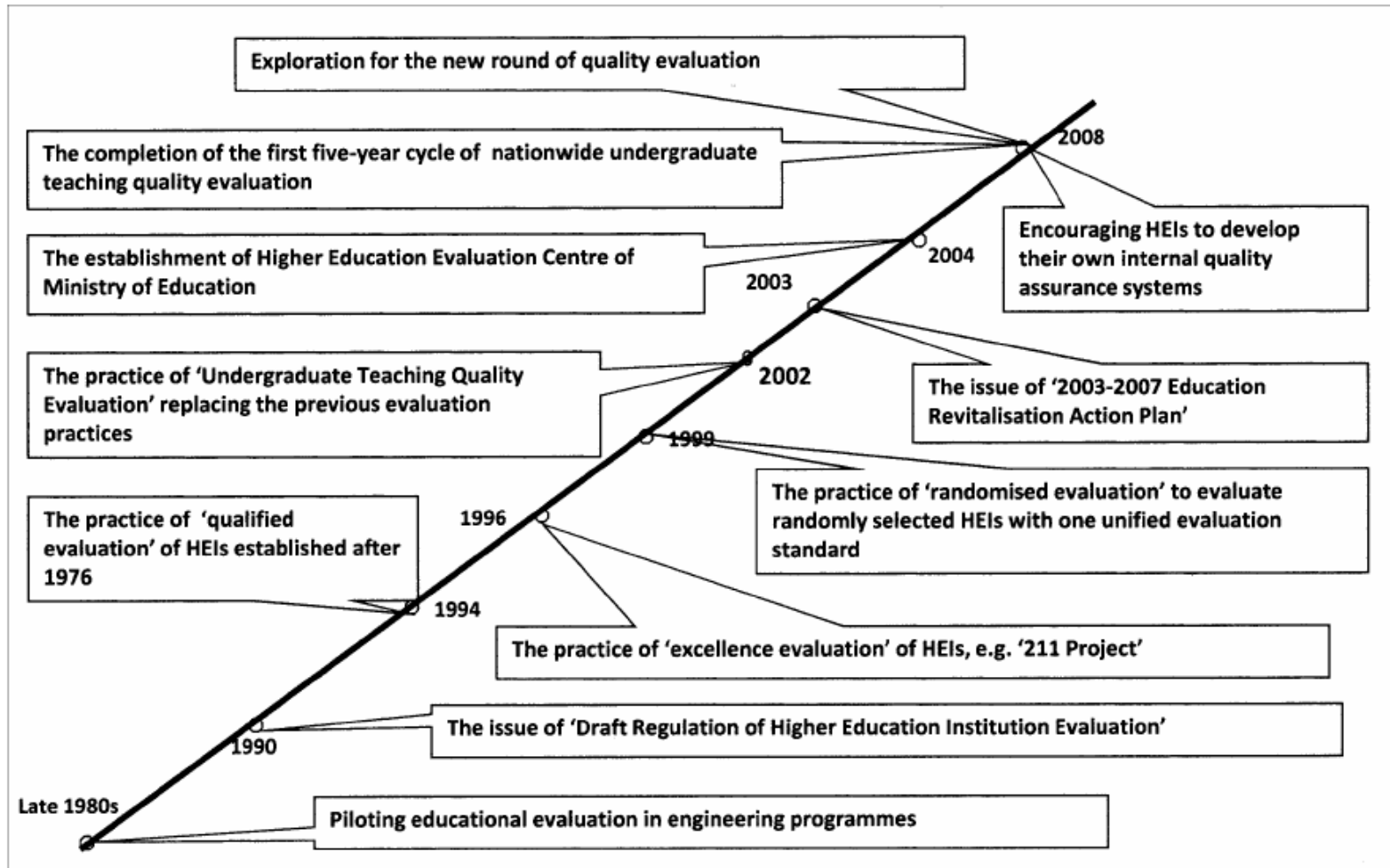
1. teaching QA
2. establish agencies
3. periodic review of teaching quality
4. links betw. program evaluation & professional qualifications & certificates
5. evaluation standards & indicators
6. data bank on college teaching
7. develop analysing & reporting system

2004

## Higher Education Evaluation Centre (HEEC)

Pool of experts, given training by MoE.

# Case study: China



Li, Y. (2009)

# Where do we go from here?

1. Self-selected systems work, but need maintenance
2. Quality of teaching not well established, in spite of evaluations.
3. Centralised data helpful (e.g. NSS)
4. „Mandarins“ as advisers should be used more
5. QA becoming more strategic (Germany!)
6. Data sets needs better interpretation & support
7. Institutional/departmental review useful, but what about impact?