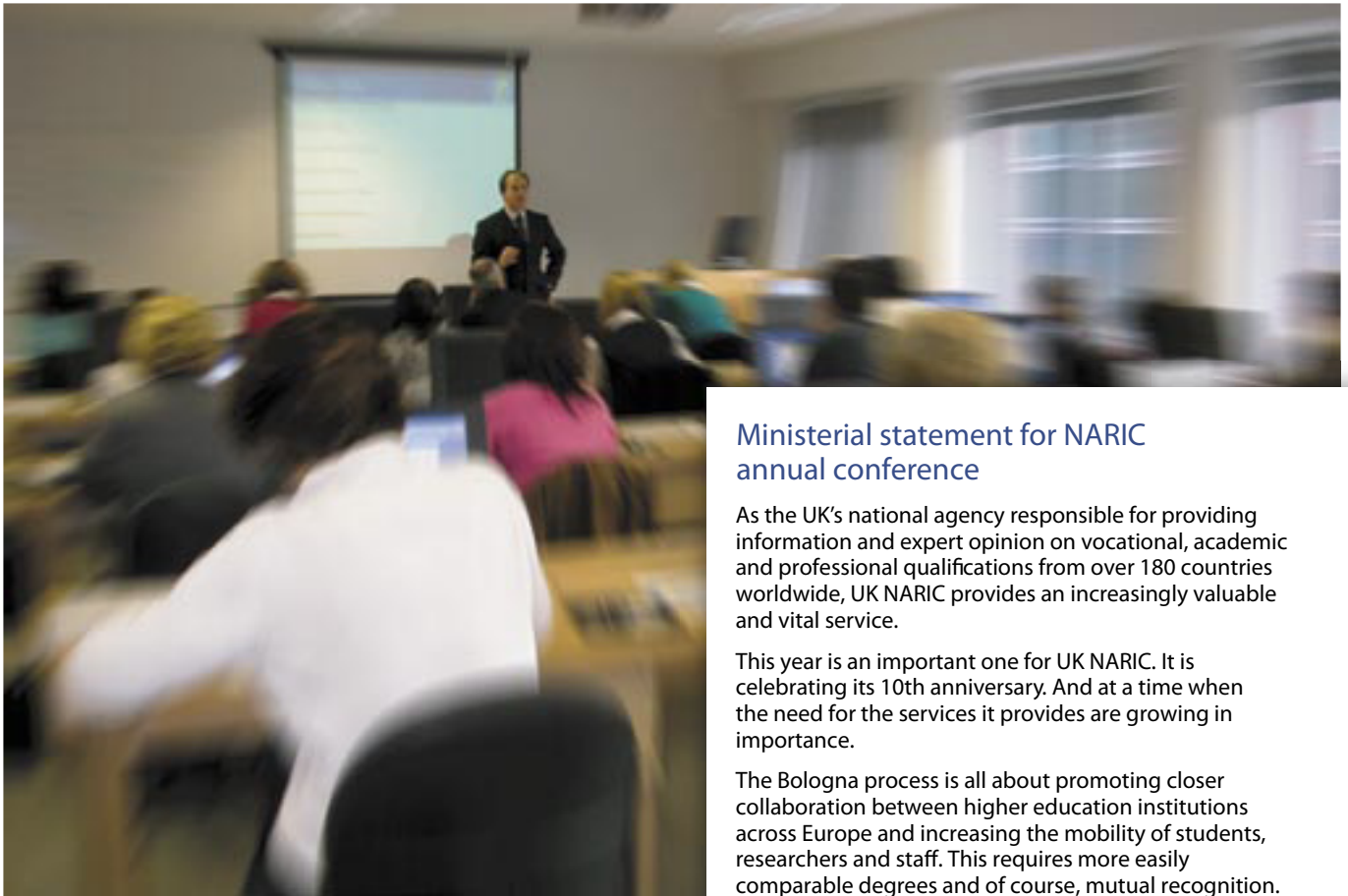


10 years of UK NARIC



This year, as you may have noticed, we are celebrating our 10 year anniversary since we took over the management of UK NARIC services in 1997. Over the past 10 years we have grown substantially, now serving over 700 member organisations and over 70,000 members of the public a year.

We marked the occasion at our annual conference at the City Inn Hotel, Westminster earlier this month. The event was well attended with over 150 delegates.

The event was also marked by a statement, shown right, from Bill Rammell, MP, Minister of State, Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education.

More information about the conference can be found on page 2.

Ministerial statement for NARIC annual conference

As the UK's national agency responsible for providing information and expert opinion on vocational, academic and professional qualifications from over 180 countries worldwide, UK NARIC provides an increasingly valuable and vital service.

This year is an important one for UK NARIC. It is celebrating its 10th anniversary. And at a time when the need for the services it provides are growing in importance.

The Bologna process is all about promoting closer collaboration between higher education institutions across Europe and increasing the mobility of students, researchers and staff. This requires more easily comparable degrees and of course, mutual recognition.

The UK NARIC is clearly instrumental in our universities' and colleges' ability to develop links with their European counterparts. Without the groundwork which is provided by UK NARIC, the opportunities for student mobility would not exist. And transparency and recognition of education and skills are becoming even more important in the increasingly sophisticated education and training provision we have today.

Indeed, the internationalisation of education and an increasingly mobile workforce mean that the work around recognition plays a vital role in ensuring not only the acceptance of achievement but also, more importantly, the standards of achievement.

I know UK NARIC is held in high esteem by those who make use of its services on a regular basis. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them on their work over the last ten years and to wish them well for the next ten.

Bill Rammell

10th Annual Conference

Our Annual Conference was an opportunity for us to thank our members for your continued support over the past 10 years. The event was the best attended annual conference for the last few years and delegates were treated to a fantastic range of speakers.

The scene for the day was set by Barry Sheerman (MP for Huddersfield and Chair of the Education and Skills Select Committee); he encouraged delegates to grasp the 'amazing opportunity' within the internationalisation of education and also as a result of the Bologna Agreement and that UK should be encouraged to seek partnerships overseas; these opportunities should not just be limited to education, but they should involve education institutions, Government departments and private sector players. He also paid tribute to the work done by UK NARIC and stated '...in a global economy UK NARIC are doing something fundamental...we couldn't work without them'.

Cloud Bai-Yun (Head of UK NARIC) then gave an overview of how we, and the services we provide, have developed over the past 10 years; in 1997 there were four staff, now there are 40; in 1997 we received 10,000 enquiries, now we receive over 70,000; in 1997 there was only one database available, now there are six. These changes have been in response to the evolving needs of our members. An insight was also given into the way in which we evaluate qualifications from overseas as well as the challenges and objectives that face UK NARIC over the next period.

The third plenary session was delivered by Neil Robertson (Head of Unit, Skills for Life Strategy Unit, DIUS) who welcomed the plans for the next period, and issued challenges to UK NARIC;

1. Help employers understand the gaps in individuals' knowledge, qualifications and skills to ensure that they, and the UK as a whole, can realise the benefits of employing them and also ensure that they do not waste money retraining individuals when they already have the skills and/or experience.
2. Understand government targets and help others understand how individuals from within the UK and overseas can help us achieve these targets.
3. With the increased mobility of the workforce ensure that crucial skills are recognised for particular vocations, such as teaching.

Neil summed up the contribution that UK NARIC made to the transparency and recognition of vocational qualifications and skills, 'in a world when the transparency of skills has never been so important, UK NARIC offer quiet, solid and robust answers in a most complex area of work'.

The final plenary was given by Yves Beaudin (National Coordinator, CICIC), giving an overview of the ENIC/NARIC network and work undertaken in the past year. This helped put the work of UK NARIC into perspective on the European and international stage.

In the afternoon sessions were run on the new European states, the latest development in Europass and Transnational Education.



Stats

The last three months have seen a steady increase in the number of enquiries submitted to UK NARIC from countries worldwide. In particular, the total amount from top countries India and Pakistan topped 8000 enquiries received since July.

The number of enquiries from Australia has been overtaken by enquiries from the USA, Poland, South Africa and Nigeria, and the USA now sits comfortably in third place behind India and Pakistan in the UK NARIC country league, with the number of Polish enquiries also continuing to rise steadily.

The majority of enquiries still relate to entry into the teaching profession, and employment remains the most common purpose of enquiry, representing over 70% of enquiries received.

Countries showing the greatest percentage increase in enquiries July - November 2007 when compared to July - November 2006 (minimum 100 enquiries) are:

1.	Pakistan	71.14% increase
2.	Hungary	63.22% increase
3.	Philippines	51.15% increase
4.	Portugal	41.10% increase
5.	Turkey	34.31% increase

What's new

In accordance with the editorial work schedule, recent updates to our products have been made to the following countries:

- Colombia
- Lebanon
- Hong Kong
- New Zealand
- Surinam
- Tunisia

Higher Institution Listing changes and revisions have been made to the following countries:

- Brazil - a comprehensive listing of the approximately 3000 recognised degree awarding institutions now appears on the Brazil country profile. These are classified into each of the five major categories of institution: universities, university centre single-faculties, integrated faculties and centres for technology and appear according to regional state.
- Peru - includes approximately 300 public and private teacher training institutions. Also includes higher schools with the arts.
- Cuba

- Colombia
- Czech Republic - A revised list that includes all recognised private education providers from 2006, including overseas institutions whose degree programmes have been in the country.
- Cyprus - New listing that includes the first three private universities.
- Panama

A revised appendix for the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has been made which includes information on the new Associates degree, detailed information on assessment and changes in curriculum.

Following the appeals committee meeting in October, the pre 1990 Iraq Bachelor degree in medical and engineering fields was given British Bachelor degree standard comparability, largely as a result of evidence provided by individuals to highlight the high standards of university education at that time.

Comparing Hong Kong HKCEE and HKALE with the GCSE and A level examinations

UK NARIC have recently conducted an analysis of grades achieved in Hong Kong secondary examinations relative to those awarded at GCSE and GCE A level examinations.

In this study, the results were based upon the percentage of students achieving specific grades i.e. the grade distribution, rather than a subjective, content-based review.

The subjects are considered broadly comparable in terms of volume of study at both levels. In Hong Kong at the advanced level, students usually take four to five subjects. This is higher than the average number of A levels being taken in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but a review of volume indicates the syllabus and examinations are closer to A levels than AS levels. Therefore, it is legitimate to state that the HKALE is broadly comparable to a GCE A level. UK NARIC are adapting their comparison advice accordingly.

No differentiation relating to the subject studied has been made. Whilst some studies suggest a higher standard of mathematics and science assessment relative to those in humanities, this is not reflected in the above grading comparison.

The outcomes of this study are the following:

As demonstrated above, in both cases UK NARIC have found that, in terms of mark distribution, students achieving a C grade in the Kong Hong qualification would usually achieve an A grade in the comparable UK qualification.

HKALE vs. GCE A level	
Hong Kong Grade	UK Equivalent(s)
A	A
B	A
C	A
D	B
E	C/D
F	D/E
U	U

HKCEE vs. GCSE	
Hong Kong Grade	UK Equivalent(s)
A	A*
B	A*, A
C	A,B
D	B,C
E	C,D
F	E, F and G
U	U

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

Where we have been

Over the past few months UK NARIC staff have been gathering information about qualifications, skills, education systems and institutions on a number of countries. This information is fed into the editorial process and used to update the UK NARIC websites.

The countries visited since July:

- China
- France
- Germany
- The Netherlands
- Singapore
- Switzerland

We have also received visits from representatives from the following countries since July:

- Canada
- China
- Germany
- South Africa

Training

Training events 2007

2007 has been a busy but successful year for the UK NARIC training team. We have offered more than 50 courses in the UK and abroad and trained more than 800 delegates which is almost twice as many as in 2006.

We have travelled all over the UK as well as to Auckland, Melbourne and Sydney; our last two destinations were Edinburgh and Dublin.

In-house events 2008

We are currently busy putting the finishing touches to our training schedule for next year but can already confirm the following events to be held in our Cheltenham offices. Morning sessions run from 09.30 - 12.30 and afternoon sessions run from 13.30 - 16.30.

Key sessions and schedule of dates 2008	March	June
Essential Guide to Using the UK NARIC Database <i>Highly recommended for new subscribers, new staff</i>	11 am	
Essential Guide to Evaluating Academic and Vocational Qualifications	11 pm	24 am
Essential Guide to Identifying Genuine and Fraudulent International Documents	12 am	24 pm
Expert's Guide to Education English Speaking Africa	12 pm	26 am
Expert's Guide to Education in China	13 am	25 pm
Expert's Guide to Education in India, Pakistan & Bangladesh	13 pm	25 am
Expert's Guide to Education in the EU Accession States		26 pm

Other external events 2008

Whilst we have not yet decided which of our sessions we are going to offer; we can nevertheless reveal that we are planning to visit London in May next year and Scotland and Ireland towards the end of 2008. Please feel free to send us your feedback on courses you would like to see delivered to training@naric.org.uk.

Further external events are still being discussed and will be advertised in our upcoming training newsletters.

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

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