

A Comparison Study of the Self-Accreditation Systems in Taiwan and Other Three Countries/Areas in the Asia-Pacific Region

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Abstract

Taiwan's accreditation system for higher education has launched for a new era in 2012. It is the first time the self-accrediting status has been approved for institutions by the Minister of Education (MOE) in Taiwan. According to the announcement of the MOE, these self-accrediting institutions can accredit their own programs without going through the national accreditation agency, Higher Education Evaluation & Accreditation Council of Taiwan (HEEACT). On the other hand, the programs provided by the non-self-accrediting institutions are still required to be accredited by HEEACT. The goals of this study are two folds: (1) comparing the levels of accreditation status and accreditation standards developed by the 28 self-accrediting institutions and by HEEACT, and (2) analyzing the differences and similarities between the self-accreditation system in Taiwan and other three countries (Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Australia). Results showed that most institutions (89%) developed the levels of accreditation status similar to HEEACT. It also showed that 16 institutions (57%) developed the similar accreditation standards to HEEACT, and only 2 institutions (7%) developed completely different framework and standards from HEEACT. The self-accreditation system in Taiwan is similar to other three countries in two ways: (1) the list of university self-accreditation status is decided by the government;

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(2) the self-accrediting institution is required to be reviewed by the external quality agencies. Taiwan is different from other three countries for: (1) the self-accreditation standards are developed by the universities, not by the external QA agency; (2) the self-accreditation is authorized for program evaluation only, not for institutional evaluation; (3) the self-accreditation process is divided into two stages and reviewed by two organizations, not just one external agency. Although the self-accreditation is just a start in Taiwan, it is hoped that the institutions can be facilitated to self-monitor and self-improve their programs by implementing the self-accreditation system.

Keywords: Self-accrediting Institutions; Accreditation Standards; Program Evaluation; Higher Education