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**Quality assurance of third mission
activities in Portuguese universities**

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EQAF 2018- 15-17 November, Vienna, Austria

Overview

- Background
- Research question
- Literature review
- Portuguese context
- Methodology
- Findings
- Conclusion
- Discussion questions

Background

Reforms of the
quality
assurance
system (Law
38/2007)

- Portuguese higher education institutions have been developing their own internal quality assurance systems and policies
- to improve the institutions' core missions: teaching and learning, research and activities related to community engagement.

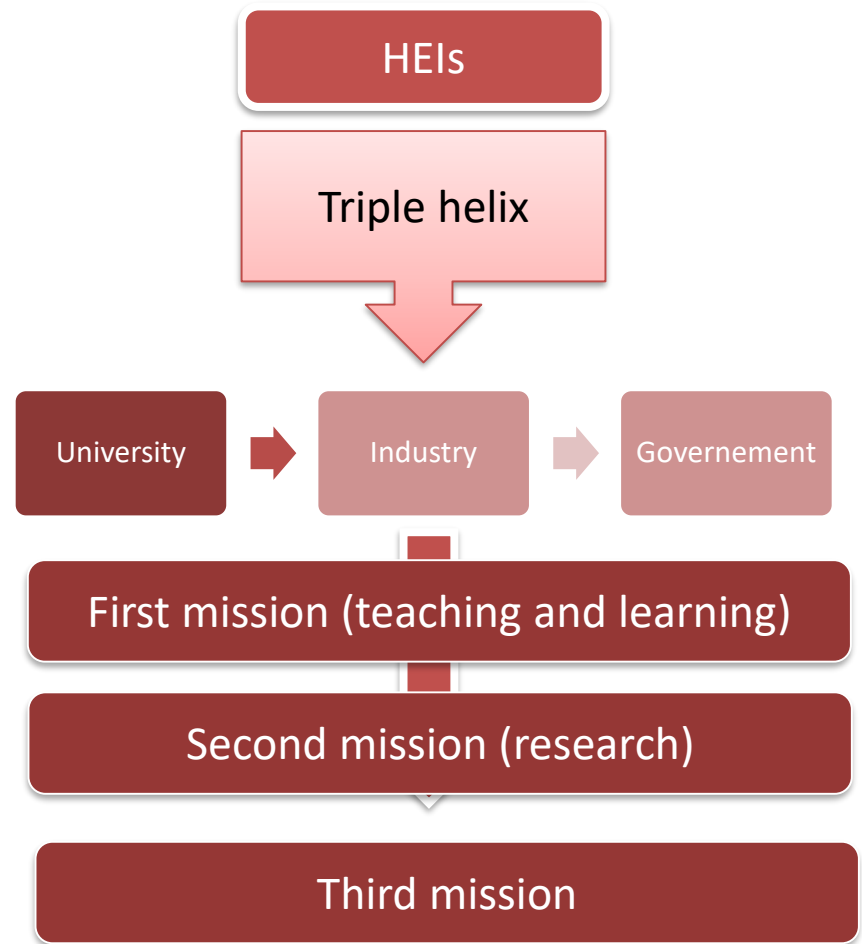
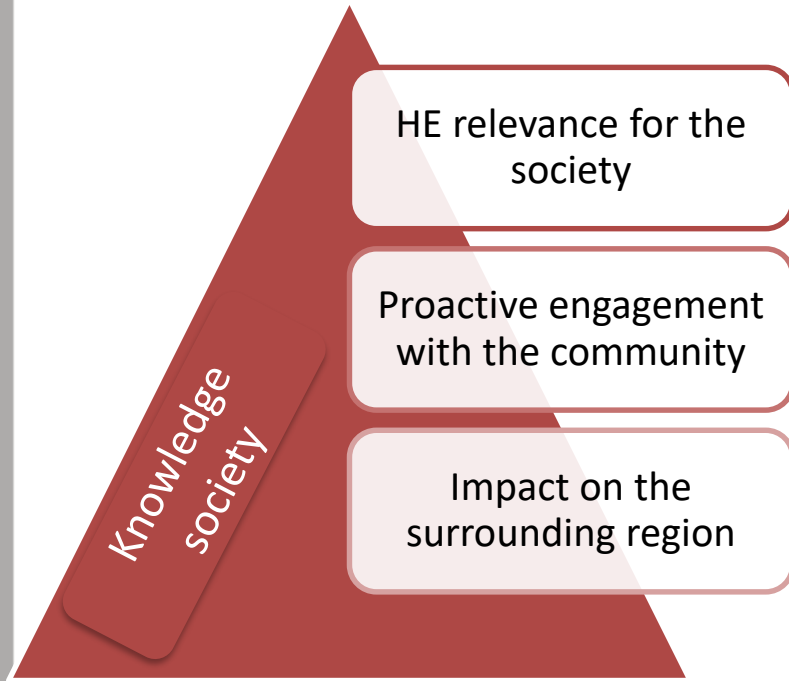
Core missions

- Do not receive equal attention in terms of their monitoring and improvement.
- HEIs far from achieving the integration of these different missions.
- Third mission appears to be the most neglected dimension.

Research question

- Within the remit of their quality assurance systems, do Portuguese institutions define and employ mechanisms and procedures for the quality assurance of declared third mission activities?

Literature review



Literature review

Third Mission

Theory



Practice

Lack of proper incentive structures
(at both the national and institutional level)

Academic resistance
(perceived as non-academic or illegitimate)

Latecomer
(Compared with the other dimensions)

Need to develop methods and indicators which could measure the performance and the impact of activities related to knowledge transfer, entrepreneurship or alliances with industry

Portuguese context

QA pays primary attention to teaching and learning and student experience

European accreditation agencies starting to address this gap

New standards and guidelines concerning third mission

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Guidelines address all institutional processes

IQAS make reference to all processes

Focused on teaching and learning



Methodology

Self-assessment reports submitted with a view to institutional assessment and accreditation (2017)

- Third mission activities
- Organisation of internal quality assurance system

Quality manuals

- Additional information on the coverage of the internal QA system

Qualitative analysis

Third mission activities

QA mechanisms and procedures

Findings



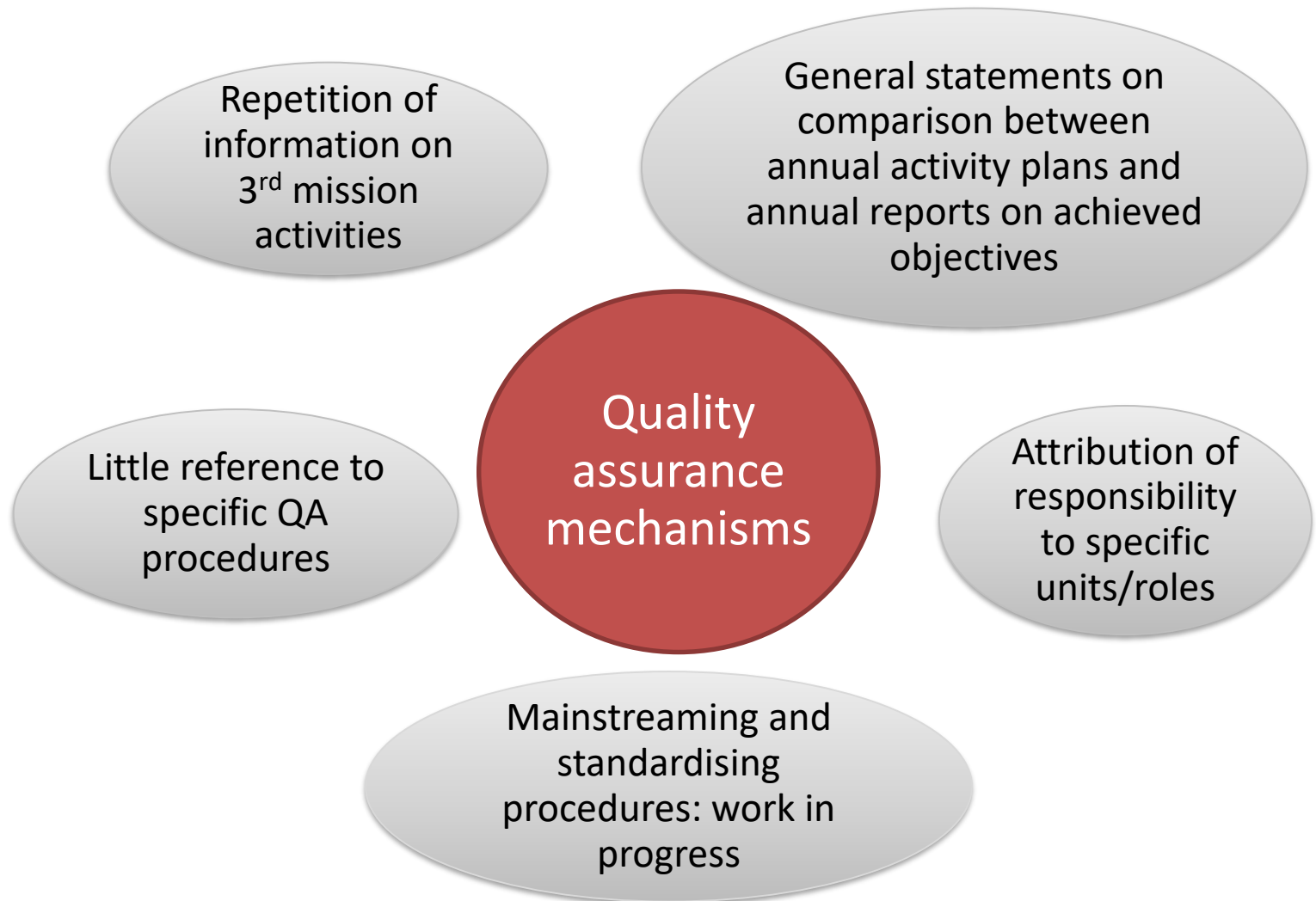
Findings

The clinics provide not only oral health care (dentistry), for adults and children, but also appointments and treatments, and complementary diagnostic tests in the area of Nutrition, Physical Therapy, Psychology, Speech Therapy, Cardiology and Pulmonology. These activities allow an exchange of experiences and increase the range of training opportunities, facilitating and completing the overall preparation of students, as well as developing an important social support action to the inhabitants of the Municipality and neighbouring areas.

As a consequence of its research work, [University] has established wide-ranging strategic partnerships with companies. Furthermore, in order to establish contact networks and facilitate the development of partnerships, [University] regularly participates in technology transfer networks and in brokerage events and sector fairs.

Findings

Third mission – a principle or a reference point underpinning the QA system



Conclusion

Although the third mission is apparently embraced by the analysed Portuguese institutions, the quality assurance of this core activity is still in an embryonic stage of development.



3rd mission a latecomer

Indicators and methods to assess performance and impact still underdeveloped



Integration of the different processes in one QA system

Expansion beyond teaching and learning

Discussion questions

What is the practice in different countries (represented by the audience) regarding the quality assurance of third mission activities? Can you share any good practices in this sense?

What incentives could help HEIs to develop mechanisms to assure the quality of third mission activities?

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Thank you