

INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION - EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

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**Promoting quality in international
student services: the French
experience**

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Index

1. International student services: definition
2. Quality of international student services: sociopolitical context
3. The European Quality Charter for Mobility: ten principles
4. The French quality charter: why it was introduced
5. Institutions involved in the creation and implementation of the charter
6. The French quality charter: what it does and what it is
7. Selected indicators
8. What the charter is NOT
9. How to make it work as a tool to boost the quality of services in HEI
10. Going one step further: quality assurance

1. International student services: definition

- Pre departure information and counselling
- Application and enrolment procedures
- Assistance with visa formalities
- Assistance in finding accommodation and going through arrival formalities
- Orientation and integration activities
- Assistance with language learning
- Academic assistance and tutoring
- Career guidance
- Alumni networks

2. Quality of international student services: sociopolitical context

- Context of international student market and competition
- Changes in international student population
- Awareness of international student needs as different from local ones
- EU: Intensifying mobility as a part of the Lisbon strategy

3. The European Quality Charter for Mobility: ten principles

[Link to the European Quality Charter](#)

- information and guidance
- learning plan
- personalisation
- general preparation
- linguistic aspects
- logistical support
- mentoring
- recognition
- reintegration and evaluation
- commitments and responsibilities

4. The French quality charter: why it was introduced

- A new policy to promote French HE abroad
- A rising concern with quality in HE – the case of French HEI
- Need to improve coordination between stakeholders

5. Institutions involved in the creation and implementation of the charter

- French Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs
- French Ministry for Higher Education and Research
- Conferences of HEI
- Government agencies : CNOUS, CampusFrance

6. The French quality charter: what it is and what it does

- 74 quality and performance indicators covering all stages of an international student's experience
- Applies to scholarship holders only in the first stage
- Defines who does what
- Defines broad standards in the provision of services
- Sets goals to be achieved by stakeholders

[Link to the French quality charter](#)

7. Selected indicators

I. Before departure

The CampusFrance Agency shall:

- I.1.11: Train the university co-operation attachés and CampusFrance office managers to promote the French higher education opportunities,

III. During the stay

The French HEI shall:

- III.1.50: Pay particular attention to non-French-speaking students likely to experience the greatest difficulties with settling in and the highest risk of academic failure by offering them linguistic assistance and academic support suited to their situation from among the available training. It shall offer classes in a foreign language, especially in English, to ensure that the language barrier is not an impediment to learning.

8. What the charter is NOT:

- A contract
- A regulatory framework (Dutch Code of Conduct, Australian Code of Practice)

9. How to make it work as a tool to boost the quality of services in HEI

- The limitations of the charter as far as HEI - are concerned
- Awareness raising actions:
 - Information and communication
 - Training seminars
 - Research and benchmarking
 - Promotion of good practices, awards
- Evaluating the quality of international student services

10. Going one step further : quality assurance

- A continuous process of quality improvement
- Definition of standards: a collaborative, not a top down process
- Internal evaluation and external evaluation by an independent agency

Thanks for your attention!