GRONINGEN DECLARATION NETWORK

Groningen Declaration

Annual Meeting | Melbourne, Australia 2017
26 – 28 April

EXTENDING ENGAGEMENT

Welcome, from the Host

On behalf of the host organising committee for the sixth annual Groningen Declaration Meeting I am delighted to welcome you to Melbourne, the world's most liveable city.

The capital of the state of Victoria, Melbourne is a vibrant, multicultural metropolis offering visitors a wealth of rich experiences that you will be sure to remember long after you return home.

Melbourne has a much deserved reputation for its restaurants, bistros, cafes and bars that reflect the city's eclectic mix of cultures. You can enjoy fine dining, reasonably priced casual meals, truly memorable coffee or a quiet tipple in a unique laneway bar.

A cultural hub, Melbourne's lively arts precinct buzzes with theatre, exhibitions, concerts, festivals and live music in the city's many pubs and bars. Don't miss one of the social highlights of this year's meeting - a private visit and tour of the Indigenous Art Collection at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Melbourne is also a city passionate about sport with world-class facilities that draw thousands of spectators to events, including the ANZAC Day clash, an annual Australian Rules football match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground which many meeting delegates will attend.

The city's excellent transport system, with free trams in the CBD, means that you can easily access the range of attractions on offer. In fact, you can walk to most destinations.

It's no wonder that Melbourne has been named number 1 as the world's most liveable cities in a poll measuring 140 cities worldwide conducted by the Economist Group, publishers of The Economist magazine.

I urge you to make the most of your time in Melbourne.

Neil Robinson
Chair, Groningen Declaration Meeting Host Committee
Deputy Head, University Services and Registrar, The University of Melbourne

Greetings, from the GDN President

Dear Participants[1],

As president of the Groningen Declaration Network, I would like to salute you most cordially at the head of this report of the GDN Sixth Annual Meeting that took place in Melbourne, Australia, 26 - 28 April 2017.

This introduction is actually based on my word of welcome at the second day of the meeting in Melbourne. Let me swing back to my words back then:

"This introduction is special to me and to those who know me, because surprisingly, I am reading this *off a piece of paper*, having written it *with a pencil*. That may seem alright, as the world has not yet come to a clear conclusion on how we can preserve electronic documents for the generations to come. Let me invite those with technical inclinations, to join me after our sessions, to discuss this issue with me over one or two of their favourite drink(s).

This meeting is not just special for having given me the opportunity to return to a country that I am very attached to, or to this wonderful city that I discovered I had not forgotten how to walk after nine years. Nor is it special for finding ourselves today in an established, older university, although for me, as a university person, it feels like being at home, my home uni being much younger than today's host university.

The thing that makes this meeting really unique is that it is the first time that it takes place under the recently established *stichting Groningen Declaration Network.* For those of you that struggle, like I did, with the harsh guttural sounds of the words *stichting* and *Groningen*, feel free to happily gloss over those.

This meeting marks both an end and a new beginning.

The end of a stage led by people that shared a vision, born out of the mind of a man with a special charming gift, a strange capability for remembering where all the dots are and, more surprisingly, what the accompanying names are, and then, connecting these dots in a tightly knit network that has made us visit five continents in the lapse of six years, and enchanted sixty-five institutions and organisations the world over -- that person has gathered nicely numbered crowds all around working toward a shared, common aim. Thank you, Herman de Leeuw.

But I also said that, today, we are marking a beginning, the start of a path on uncharted territory, with a group of friends, turned into a foundation that will need some support from its community – but that is the theme for another conversation.

So, now, please enjoy the conference, enjoy the activities our local hosts have organised for us, enjoy Melbourne and, please, do not forget to thank our sponsors and all the people that have made this city and country such a wonderful place to be.

Thank you all! I wish you all an unforgettable meeting. Make great connections, have fun, and learn something new during the process!"

Victoriano Giralt
President, Groningen Declaration Network, and Chief Information Officer, Universidad de Málaga

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[1] The GDN, as a foundation under Dutch law, legally cannot have *members*, so all those with an interest in the GDN have to be called *participants*.

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Task Force Updates

Closing Address

Wednesday, 26 April 2017

Welcome to Melbourne!

Wurundjeri woman, Michelle Mills greeted the GDN delegates with the traditional "Welcome to Country" – recognizing the Aboriginal people as the First Australians and the traditional custodians of the land.

Launch of My eQuals©

Professor Andrew Vann, Vice Chancellor of [Charles Sturt University](#) acknowledged the panel of distinguished guests and speakers. He then introduced the [short video presentation](#) of [My eQuals©](#) to celebrate its successful launch.

Universities across Australia and New Zealand partnered to pilot the student-centric repository for credential safekeeping, request services and delivery. The platform was designed by [Digitary](#), a sponsor and signatory of the Groningen Declaration Network.

The panel of speakers included:

- **Professor Margaret Gardner,** Vice-Chancellor, [Monash University](#)
- **Professor Margaret Sheil,** Provost and Acting Vice Chancellor, [The University of Melbourne](#)
- **Professor Stuart McCutcheon,** Vice Chancellor, [The University of Auckland](#) (via video)
- **Anthony McClaran,** CEO, [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)](#)

As GDN's Annual Meeting Host and Executive Board Member, **Neil Robinson** welcomed delegates to The University of Melbourne, and congratulated all participants of My eQuals' pilot and launch.

Official Opening of the Sixth Annual Groningen Declaration Network Meeting
Senator Scott Ryan, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cabinet

Senator Ryan, representing the Minister for Education and Training of the Commonwealth Government of Australia, acknowledged the great success of My eQuals – recognizing that the new online platform will give students access to their authentic, digital academic records anytime, anywhere. In addition, Senator Ryan expressed the importance of working

globally to support student mobility. He noted that the Australian Government is participating in the draft of [UNESCO's Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications](#). This ambitious international treaty is expected to introduce binding commitments to address fraud through improved information-sharing and verification systems like My eQuals and other similar tools developed in the spirit of the Groningen Declaration's ideals.

President of the Groningen Declaration Network **Victoriano Giralt**, Chief Information Officer at the [University of Málaga](#), offered a brief welcome and appreciation to **Neil Robinson** and The University of Melbourne as hosts. Victoriano then summarized the status of GDN, noting its transformation to an international membership-based, non-profit organization incorporated in the Netherlands under Dutch Law, with the common aim to "connect the dots" across the globe to support the transition away from paper.

Professor Barney Glover, Chair of [Universities Australia](#) and Vice Chancellor of [Western Sydney University](#), warmly welcomed the delegates, and offered a bit of background on the culture and uniqueness of Australia. He introduced the plenary speaker Anthony McClaran, one of the founding visionaries of My eQuals.

Opening Plenary
Anthony McClaran, CEO, [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)](#)

With a background in admissions, quality assurance and fraud detection, **Anthony McClaran** was early to support the mission of My eQuals. He noted the importance of "credential portability" to support student mobility and the economic impact drawn from it. Australia welcomes more than 640,000 international students in the higher education industry annually – generating approximately AU$21 billion each year.

TEQSA recently adopted an International Engagement Strategy, enabling the organization to enhance Australia's international effectiveness in higher education regardless of the location of delivery (including online). To date, TEQSA has signed memoranda of understanding and cooperation with 13 international quality assurance agencies in countries as diverse as Papua New Guinea and China.

In support of the project, Anthony discussed the challenges of qualification and credential security. While government and peak body assistance is vital, *sector-driven initiatives* are just as – and arguably even more – important. As we have seen, services such as My eQuals are ensuring the higher education

sector actively meets ever-changing expectations and needs of students, institutions and employers.

Recently, TEQSA's challenges of assuring the quality of online education has led to work with APEC, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. This international collaboration is helping to build confidence in the region, both in TEQSA's approach to online quality assurance and the implementation of similar risk and standards-based approaches. In such confidence lies the basis of trust that underpins mobility – and it is therefore a key way in which quality assurance agencies can help build an educational environment that supports GDN's goals.

Showcase Session I - National Update Track

India's C-NAD: An Update

P. S. Reddy, Managing Director and CEO, Central Depository Services (India) Limited

Since 1998, questions have been posed as to why academic records cannot be digitized in the same way that occurs with business documentation. CDSL Ventures Ltd, a subsidiary of Central Depository Services in India has fully digitized 15 million business records over the last 10 years. The Indian Government supports this initiative, as digitized academic records will be extremely helpful for policy planning in this large democratic country. Progress toward full digitization of academic records has been slower than desired, however, due to India's governance structure which includes the Central (or Union) Government, 28 state governments and seven union and national territories.

Key Takeaways

- The University Grants Commission has mandated that all universities must join the National Academic Depository (NAD) which was initially established to combat fraudulent academic certificates degrees.
- The aim is to create a one-stop academic depository for academic institutions, students and verifiers.The depository is intended to be a lifetime record-keeping destination for academic institutions.
- Data analytics, provided by the depository, will enhance transparency in policy formulation.
- The NAD will eliminate fake/forged certificates, and reduce reputational risk by providing verification anytime, anywhere.
- It is a "green" initiative, saves resources, reduces costs and streamlines processes.
- Data "belongs" to the university while the individual owner is the student. Employers can log on to the

system using an order number to verify records. Students use the same method.
- More than 1.5 million records have been uploaded, but not all universities want to upload existing records.
- This is a major project in a country with a population of 1.3 billion, and where 2.6% or 34 million students are enrolled in higher education.
- An added complication is uploading secondary school records to the NAD: There are 259 million students enrolled in senior secondary education in 1.5 million schools which report to 55 school boards.

ARUCC Groningen and Student Mobility Task Force

Charmaine Hack, President, ARUCC
Andrew Arida, Past President, ARUCC
Romesh Vadivel, Vice President, ARUCC

In building upon the theme of a "Canadian Digital Data Mosaic," the panel recognized the challenge to find a way to move forward with a national system that respects the diversity that already exists in its ecosystem. Canada currently functions with a great diversity of data mobility systems, within a decentralized model that has led to different jurisdictions with different capacities. It's a model in stark contrast to a more centralized national approach, as you may see in the US and elsewhere. Ultimately, the goals are to improve service to students, support student mobility, and promote national dialogue that aligns with the goals of other Canadian post-secondary stakeholders.

Key Takeaways

- First steps: Scan the environment, and survey key stakeholders
- Explore and develop a data-exchange model, guided by clear principles
- Flexible, cohesive, scalable model, with a single, secure point of contact
- With ARUCC taking the lead, create a governance model of a national joint steering committee to provide oversight

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Moving African Qualification Recognition and Digitization Forward: Updates on Key National, Regional and Continental Initiatives

Yvonne Shapiro, Director, National Learners' Records Database, South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

Yvonne summarized the past, present and future state of SAQA's efforts to assemble a national, authoritative repository of credentials. Some 18 million learner records have been compiled in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD).

The driving imperative has been to extend South Africa's National Qualification Framework (NQF). A secondary goal has been to evolve South Africa's Draft Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications – leading to new collaborative efforts across the southern continent on African Qualifications Verification Network (AQVN) aligning NQFs. Related initiatives include the digitization of 500,000 paper records, leading to real-time verification pilots.

Showcase Session II

European Qualification Passport for Refugees: Update about Ongoing Pilots and Initiatives
Rolf Lofstad, Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

NOKUT is an independent agency established in 2003 by the Norwegian Ministry of Education. NOKUT works with higher education institutions and vocational higher education providers as well as with individuals seeking to obtain recognition of their foreign qualifications, to ensure and promote quality in higher and tertiary education qualifications. The Agency seeks to help refugees, displaced people and people in a refugee-like situation, under the UVD Procedure (Recognition Procedure for Persons without Verifiable Documentation). As a signatory country of The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications relating to higher education in the European Region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention), Norway is committed to establishing a system for recognition under Article 7 of that convention.

Key Takeaways

- The recognition model takes responsibility for the entire recognition process, including obtaining the necessary expertise by appointing expert committees. This model makes it possible to carry out expert assessments in a more efficient and streamlined manner.
- In 2015, this procedure led to the proposed European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR) on the assumption that a high number of

refugees will move from one European country to another -- necessitating a fair and effective overarching European framework.
- Such a framework would result in a fast-track scheme to evaluate refugees' education and training backgrounds which will ultimately contribute to enhancing their mobility within Europe.
- The five-stage recognition procedure results in a legally binding decision on par with Norwegian qualifications.
- Challenges include the volume of applications, language competency and unfinished qualifications.
- Recognition is more than a technical exercise and a preparation for further studies or employment. Early recognition of refugees' qualifications is a key towards building inclusive societies and a way to reduce the risk of social, political and economic alienation.
- A solution was sought that included the following:
    - Early deployment / fast
    - Effective
    - Accessible
    - Professional
    - Fair / provides equal treatment
    - Provides relevant information
    - Provides a feasible system for easy mobility between regions, educational levels and countries

- The current refugee crisis affects all European states, however, there are different legislations, assessment practices, financial capacity, the number of refugees and differences in the willingness to help.
- A multinational tool to assess qualifications was piloted in Greece by the Council of Europe and Greek Authorities in conjunction with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Further testing was carried out in Italy in 2017.
- The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees is a document containing an advisory statement which summarises and presents available information on the applicant's educational level, work experience and language proficiency.
- Data supporting the EQPR will be stored digitally, thereby guaranteeing portability.

A Foot in the Door: Migrant Skills Recognition
Michele Lucas, Manager of Skills Recognition International, VETASSESS

Through the "Foot in the Door Project," the Australian government engaged VETASSESS to conduct research and pilot programs designed to assess and recognize migrant skills. Challenges included:

- Recruiting migrants
- Modifying the skills assessment process
- Meeting training needs of the community
- Placing migrants in suitable work environments
- Considering lower levels of English proficiency
- Accessing extra support when necessary

Developing an Institutional Micro-Credential Ecosystem

Professor Gregor Kennedy, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning); Director Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Melbourne

The "classical" representation of academic credentials has long been a framed piece of paper celebrating the personal achievement of a learner. However, the old form does not address the new use cases and expectations expanding higher education to postsecondary alternatives such as MOOCs or badges that could be collected, stacked or woven into a higher-level summary.

First, the world's higher education system is expanding exponentially. Mass participation – along with new alternatives to address the aspirations of 95% never served by the "classics" – need alternative methods of conveying those achievements.

Second, the rising costs of higher education highlights the pertinent decision between the traditional path and postsecondary training and career development. And as consumers pay, their desire to compare, evaluate and choose aligns with the purpose shifting to employability and job retraining.

Third, credentialing is evolving from "classic" to a more granular set of credentials. Open Badges and Blockchain options may record any form of achievement so that external institutions and stakeholders can share credentials through evolving ecosystems.

The term "ecosystem" means an interconnected community of organizations such as the higher education institutions themselves. Individual organizations, like any organism, seek survival – sustainability, growth and interdependence. As experiments and pilots continue, it is appropriate to compare the energy spent navigating and settling on shared methods versus the one-off method. Scale, exchange, comparability,

and links to broader adoption will continue to generate interest to GDN stakeholders.

Showcase Session III

Lifting the Curtain on My eQuals© – The Real Story behind the Digital Student Data Project

Dr Andrew Trnacek, Chief Executive Officer, Higher Ed Services
Neil Robinson, Deputy Head University Services and Registrar, The University of Melbourne and Groningen Declaration Network Annual Meeting Chair

The original concept that would become My eQuals was prompted by the Groningen Declaration in 2013. The initiative was designed to provide a controlled and secure mechanism for sharing of the student record, and in essence, "boldly go where higher education has not gone before:"

- My eQuals is without precedent in Australia / New Zealand
- No legislative requirement
- No government funding
- No contract template
- No blueprint to reference
- Completely voluntary

Participation and relationships were essentially governed by two agreements:

1. *Participation Agreement* between universities and Higher Ed Services
2. *Master Services Agreement* between the sector and the vendor, Digitary

Many critical lessons were learned along the way:

- An aggressive approach can produce excellent results but carries risks that need to be managed.
- Sector-wide projects require an act of faith… and commitment well beyond colleagues' "day jobs."
- Simplify the decision-making process, with consistent and solid analyses focused on "why."
- The contract phase will take longer than anticipated; universities are notoriously risk-averse.
- "Cash(flow) is king": Establish a combination of milestone and fixed payments, and include contingency.
- Understand your stakeholder ecosystem: 45 universities, 47 participants, 10 committees, 2 countries

- Be clear and consistent about process; document decisions; keep talking.

Panel Session 1

Increasing the Impact of GDN in ANZ
Dr David Christie, Managing Director, Universities Admissions Centre

A number of potential barriers and challenges exist in relation to digital disruption and the expansion of the Groningen Declaration Network in New Zealand and Australia. The relatively complex international admissions process involves students, agents, admission centres, partner organizations, government agencies and credential evaluators.

Expansion of the Groningen Declaration Network in ANZ will require political support. It is not just practitioners or technology players desiring to reduce the paper-based workflows. The digital disruption also is focused on the student experience. In addition, universities don't represent all the types of education providers, such as TAFE or private colleges; various tiers include two-year, undergraduate, graduate and vocational options.

Moving forward, several questions should be addressed:

- Can My eQuals "scale" to serve other countries and regions?
- What systems lead to the articulation of quality and comparability?
- How do the sectors within higher education build respect for differences and value?

The challenge in "scaling" lies with compatibility. Not all participants have the same resources and capabilities. By default, many will opt for least costs, or focus on how to minimize requirements to avoid bottlenecks.

My eQuals is based upon models of Hub and Spoke, Centralization and Adoption of Standards or Specifications that would be shared between the participants. The Hub and Spoke model may eventually evolve in education, as it has in telecommunications where two different phone companies bridge the voice call, and translate the packets according to the needs of the sender and receiver. This approach may facilitate faster adoption, when compared with expecting every participant to conform.

Current staging and adoption often does not address all requirements, like adhering to data exchange standards, so implementation proceeds without the "burden" of compatibility with other hubs and spokes. Managing these types of IT implications must be addressed in the wider challenge of connecting different regions.

Thursday, 27 April 2017

Plenary II

Extending Engagement: Towards the Need of Effective Partnerships
(Sponsored by VETASSESS)
Francisco Marmolejo, Lead, Global Solutions Group on Tertiary Education, Lead Education Specialist for India, World Bank

- The good news: The current and future environment is "fertile land" for more and better tertiary education.
- The challenge: We don't know how the dramatic social, economic, political and technological shifts will impact education (and its internationalization).
- Top issues in your region?
  - Quality assurance / governance
  - Employability of graduates
  - Financing
  - Diversification of tertiary education
  - Equity, access, innovation
- Significant growth in access to education, but great disparity between the rich and the poor.
- The developing economies will define the future profile of global tertiary education, transitioning from an elitist approach to a flexible access model.
- From 2015 to 2050, the total population in most of Europe will decrease by 5%, while most of Africa will grow by more than 40%. *(World Bank, 2015)*
- Between 2025 and 2050, experts anticipate "brutal pressure for talent" worldwide.
- Relative to other obstacles, skills have become a more severe constraint to business. *(World Development Report, 2013)*
- In the future, success will depend on the ability to adjust; to creatively develop or modify skills and knowledge.

Concurrent Session I

Credential Integrity Track
Everybody lies! How can recruiters and universities prevent / detect credential fraud?

Jayne Rowley, Deputy Chief Executive, HEDD / Graduate Prospects

The United Kingdom's Higher Education Degree Datacheck (HEDD) was established in 2011 with funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England to provide a verification service for academic qualifications and to authenticate colleges or universities in the UK. The aim is to protect UK institutions, employers and graduates from degree fraud. It is not mandatory for universities to use the service; currently 72 higher education providers, or approximately 50%, have registered.

Key Takeaways

- One-third of people admit to lying on their CVs
- 44% of CVs have discrepancies in education claims; of those, 10% have false grades
- Research in universities show that just 25% of students and graduates know it's illegal to lie about qualifications
- Two-thirds of employers ask for degree certificates; 76% assume they are legitimate and don't check
- Few universities have a policy on degree fraud
- HEDD has received 160,000 enquires and overall, 5% are "not verified"
- Bogus universities and degree mills operate to make money, provide authentic-looking documentation and act as verification services for fraudsters.
- Many copycat university websites exist. Graduates unwittingly take selfies with their testamurs / certificates and those are frequently picked up by fraudsters who then use them to create fake but genuine-looking documents.
- Some 40% of companies in the UK spent more than £10,000 over the last three years re-hiring staff after employing someone who wasn't properly qualified.
- A secure online verification service enables everyone to get authenticated documentation quickly – paper is a barrier to making checks.
- Providers should inform graduates that their credentials are as private as their passport, driver's licence or bank details. They should be encouraged to keep their credentials secure and not to use social media or other means to place their documentation in the public sphere where they can be stolen.

Mobility Track
Challenging Barriers and Borders for Employability Mobility for Health Workers

Franklin Shaffer, President and CEO, CGFNS International, Inc.

- CGFNS was established in 1977 at the joint request of U.S. government and nursing organizations to evaluate foreign-educated nurses for U.S. nurse licensure exam eligibility *in home countries*.
- CGFNS is a non-governmental organizational (NGO), with consultative status to the United Nations
- Barriers impeding cross-border employability:
  - Primary source authentication and verification of documents
  - Comprehensive credentials evaluation to ensure licenses are valid and unencumbered
  - Review of English language proficiency examination scores
  - Varying regulatory standards across jurisdictions

The entire "supply chain" is responsible for creating the credential evaluation product, including academic institutions, regulatory authorities and employers. "Consumers" must also understand the functional roles of key concepts to take responsibility, as required.

As a community, we must be fully cognizant of the uneven development in technology across the globe due to economic, sociological, cultural, political and historical factors. In conclusion: Credential assessment is a conduit for enabling empowerment and mobility for people who depend on this impartial adjudication to seek opportunities.

Global Cooperation Track
E Transmission and International Cooperation
Dr Lei Chaozi, Director-General, China Higher Education Student Information and Career Center (CHESICC)

CHESICC was founded in 1991 as the authorized Ministry of Education (MOE) entity for higher education qualification in China. This annual update highlighted CHESICC's achievements in its efforts to centralize the nation's qualifications with verification services. The intent is to support full-scale e-portfolios sectioned by area, housing secure academic histories.

- CHESICC's database covers all the MOE-recognized academic institutions and all post-secondary level students
- 154 million qualification records registered in the datebase

- 1.22 billion records are divided across major areas such as registration, photo, student scores, enrollment, student record, qualification certificate, CET, and employment
- Several online platforms, such as online authentication, online payment, online graduate school admission
- Recently added verification reports: High school transcripts, Huikao results
- 520,000 students currently study abroad; 41.3% are undergraduate, with the trend moving younger
- Two sets of verification services currently offered: One for postsecondary level students, and one for secondary level students
- English verification reports grew from 8,330 in 2014 to 20,700 in 2016
- False qualifications dropped from a high of 28% in 2002, to 2.35% in 2016
- After the on-the-job post-graduate examination was brought into the Unified National Postgraduate Entrance Examination, the quantity of examinees increased 13.56% from 1.77 million in 2016 to 2.01 million in 2017

The online application service helps students prepare a single copy application to be shared with a range of institutions. This leads to sharing electronic authentic documents with third parties; CHESICC has identified about 30 worldwide. Many of those relationships are nurtured within the Groningen Declaration Network.

Initiatives are underway to render dual certificate forms for different use cases: One for evaluating a candidate for qualification and the other for viewing and validating academic degrees.

CHESICC reinforces a very pragmatic approach with a realistic perspective of serving mobile learners and the stakeholders who need to validate learning claims and credentials.

Concurrent Session II

Credential Integrity Track
Checking the Integrity of Qualifications and Employment
Dr Mamta Chauhan, Group Manager Skills Recognition (General Occupations), VETASSESS

Established in 1997, VETASSESS provides skill assessment for migration, skills recognition against Australian standards, testing services for course entry and selection, and specialist advisory services. VETASSESS assesses more than 200 occupations, covering six broad industry groups: business, fine arts and education, hospitality and retail, construction and manufacturing, health science, and agriculture. Verifying the documents' integrity is a crucial component of the process; investigations are launched when concerns become apparent.

Key Takeaways

- Types of fraud: Falsification by information, misrepresentation of claims, misrepresentation of intention and diploma mills
- Fraud detection strategies: resume check of qualifications and employment; a passport check; a phone interview with VETASSESS specialists; and a site visit when all other avenues have been exhausted.
- Four emerging trends:
  - Increased human migration: How are humanitarian claims dealt with? Do different systems need to be established?
  - Improved technological capability: Many challenges and opportunities, but balance is key
  - Need to increase resources for deeper integrity checks
  - Increased focus on employment integrity

VETASSESS looks forward to supporting the Groningen Declaration Network in its efforts to guide a holistic system based on trust and respect.

Mobility Track
Enhancing Mobility: Next Generation Policy
Elizabeth Campbell-Dorning, Director of Qualifications Recognition Policy, International Mobility Branch, Commonwealth Department of Education and Training

A qualifications framework (QF) is a formalized structure in which learning level descriptors and qualifications are used in order to understand learning outcomes. This allows for the ability to develop, assess and improve quality education in a number of contexts. QF projects are generally developed and published by Departments of Education and Training within the Ministries of Education. Some may blend with other departments like Labor, which also handles licensing. This session covered examples from Australia and South Africa, as well as regional and international efforts pegged to UNESCO.

As an outgrowth of UNESCO's desire to support mobility, the Bologna process and the GDN, the commitment by countries producing national QF forms has grown a great deal.

Elizabeth noted there were more than 140 countries producing their own QF or working on one or joining a region with an existing QF.

The use of the QF affords higher education institutions and other stakeholders to support mobility and academic credit portability in a number of ways:

- All parties may refer to a "structured dictionary" to evaluate and compare.
- It allows for verification, and for aligning claims with detailed formal programs of study.
- It allows for recognition – and alignment with priorities of national and international bodies.

Elizabeth utilized the Australian QF as a model describing the content divided into levels starting with Certificates, moving to Diplomas, Degree, Master Degrees, and Doctoral Degrees.

The QF is often used in licensing educational providers and professional boards certifying competencies. It is also used in assessing immigrants and mobile learner's competencies, skills and knowledge.

Global Cooperation Track

Recognition Body: The China Case
Weimin Che, Deputy Director General, Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE)

The Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) is a public organization affiliated to the Ministry of Education of China. Approved by the government, CSCSE has been providing evaluation services to overseas higher education qualifications as the only recognition body in China since 1991.

Mr. Weimin introduced the policy and the system of overseas qualifications recognition (evaluation) in China. He also illustrated why digital student data are very important to recognition bodies, through the establishment of partnerships between CSCSE and student data organizations. In conclusion, Mr. Che reiterated his hopes for increased involvement by student data organizations, ideally leading to partnerships.

Plenary III

Student Data Portability in Europe: Trends

Valère Meus, International Relations Expert, Ghent University, Coordinator **Erasmus without Paper**
Vanessa Debiais-Sainton, European Commission, Directorate-General, Education and Culture – Erasmus+ (via video presentation) *(Note: this is a large file and may take some time to download)*

This session covered an update of the Erasmus without Paper Project, a digital network of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) which is committed to supporting students studying anywhere with technology, and to removing the paper-based barriers or frustrations. Related is the validation, acceptance, comparability and applicability of learning achievements referenced in the data structures and information shared.

Erasmus without Paper is governed by a consortium of 11 partner institutions composed of public institutions, higher education institutions, and companies from eight European countries sponsoring this initiative. This year (2017) marks the 30th anniversary of Erasmus+, the European Commission project designed to support millions of mobile students moving across EU countries and institutional borders as they pursue higher education studies.

Vanessa Debais-Sainton and Valere Meus highlighted the Erasmus+ history and its primary objectives, which aim at serving the exchange of student information and addressing the implications of mobility. Types of data and services:

- Data for Interinstitutional Agreements
- Data on higher education institutions
- Lists of students to be exchanged (nominated and approved)
- Learning agreements (includes course catalogues)
- Student transcripts (from Source or Destination)
- Grade conversion (for Source of Destination)
- Arrival / Departure certificates etc …
- Reporting Erasmus+ student data use data (Mobility Tool+)

Details were shared on concurrent and related sub-projects including:

- Erasmus without Paper (EWP) APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) were covered, as well as the launch of the Mobile App that incorporates the front and back-end processes, tips, event feed, step-by-step guides, emergency contact protocol, Online Linguistic Support, location specific info, multilingual, and advanced document storage.

  API specifications for developers are available publicly: developers.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu

All technical documents are hosted in a constantly updated separate GitHub repository: github.com/erasmus-without-paper

- EIDAS -- which is a European Commission Regulation on electronic identification, authentication and signatures – is set to be operational in 2018. Some 20 countries have hosted eID systems in place. EIDAS will enable users to cross real and digital boundaries using their assigned student ID. This includes the support for Erasmus Student eCard.

- Supporting end-of-study-cycle, sharing of credentials and diplomas requested by students or HEIs. Information is released for admission, recognition of qualifications and portfolios to be shared or extended by other services. See: ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide_en.pdf

- EMREX is the electronic transfer of student achievement records initiated by students attending education institutions across Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Poland and Sweden. This is a pilot of web/REST services employed by participating HEIs.

- Online Learning Agreement (OLA) is an application framework supported by 150 HEIs coordinating studies across multiple HEIs. The application enables students to directly connect with coordinators to finalize their documents.

- Egracons grade conversion system for grade performance transformation and translating across EU countries, HEIs and application nodes.

Conclusion and Key Takeaways

1. Concerns about security and privacy are unfolding. The shared eCard and ID infrastructure would enable service improvements. Students in charge of their own requests is a good thing. But, this does not address employers' or other stakeholders' access – and how this would be managed over time.

2. Data Exchange between HEIs in a private point to point network of sorts (managed) can evolve through the open source code and nodes adopting without variation. What happens when they vary? What if there was a hub coordinating bridges across different domains around the world?

3. HEIs exposing web/REST services for request/reply access to any authorized agent or HEI seeking to play in the network will need more work. EMREX pilot proves it can be done if you have trusted players with capabilities to connect and manage the interfaces. What happens when you don't have all trusted players? Or capabilities?

4. Managing the registry of authorized external applications and organizations was not covered. Part of the initiative covers data standards – while APIs render services from an inside-out perspective, without having an abstraction layer to mitigate the differences across HEIs. This will be challenging as evolution and change continues – and the technology support shifts – impacting those in operation.

5. The speed of adoption – and change – is slower than expected, but happening. There are a lot of moving parts. It is not simply sharing data, but improving the workflow processes dependent on data sources outside of any one domain.

6. The complexity, due to the nature of the use cases, capabilities to support, and funds are not uniform.

7. The recognition and need for crosswalks and data transformation without industry standards.

8. The evolution will continue as pilots prove value.

Plenary IV

Article 26 Backpack Initiative
Adrienne Fricke, Senior Fellow, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative

This tool for refugee and vulnerable student educational mobility is an interdisciplinary collaboration between the University of California, Davis and GDN Signatory, AACRAO. The Article 26 Backpack Initiative unites the disciplines of Refugee Studies, Middle East Studies, human rights experts, and international academic credentialing.

Concurrent Sessions III

Adventures in Admissions
Andy Dowling, CEO, Digitary
Anthony Manahan, Associate Director, Admissions, The University of Melbourne

The focus of this session was My eQuals, an online system being implemented in all but one Australian university and in all universities in New Zealand to issue electronic transcripts and graduation documents. It specifically focused on the admissions process at The University of Melbourne, one of the pilot universities for My eQuals, exploring the benefits and opportunities for applicants and staff. The session also included a demonstration of My eQuals by Andy Dowling, CEO of Digitary, the company which developed the system.

Key Takeaways

- My eQuals will streamline admissions procedures which, like many admissions processes, have always been labor-intensive. While there has been a move towards electronic processes, the volume has increased. Applicants to Melbourne apply and provide their prior qualifications either paper-based or online. This means that the opportunity for submitting fraudulent qualifications has, in effect, been built into the process.
- While **t**he majority of applicants provide legitimate qualifications, the number of fraudulent qualifications that are submitted is on the rise. Given that a university's "product" is the integrity of its qualifications (and those include the entry qualifications), even small numbers justify concern. Although qualifications are checked each time an "oddity" is observed, and there is a process for spot checks, the sheer volume of applications precludes the check of every one, a fact that is sometimes taken advantage of.
- My eQuals was initiated to deliver on credential security; improved student experience; and productivity improvements.
- It is constructed as a secure ecosystem which means that admissions can be certain that the qualifications provided by applicants are their actual qualifications as they come from a source of truth.
- The China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre, for example, is particularly valuable in helping to remove barriers.
- My eQuals is the first step in the integrity continuum that delivers a virtuous cycle from admission, through assessment to completion and then back to admissions and/or into the world of work.

EMREX and EWP Compared, with Updates about Ongoing Pilot Initiatives
Geir Magne Vangen, CERES

Dr Janina Mincer-Daszkiewicz, Associate Professor in Computer Science, University of Warsaw

Geir and Janina covered an overview, details and updates on EMREX through an online demonstration, with crosswalks referencing EWP+.

EMREX supports peer-to-peer networking sharing student exchange initiated data through a rich set of APIs that are bolted to the SIS (Student Information System) and share a common UI (User Interface) application.

The session covered the state of affairs and gave an overview of student survey.

- Turning the proof of concept into a product, to be launched at the end of 2018. The API's cover the primary use case of Study Abroad – applications, document exchange and learning agreements. Not sure this covers one student moving and transitioning to another – with the added complexity of determining how course work or learning outcomes are shared.
- Tuning and improving functionality (e.g. grade conversion, integrating APIs with local processes). Not all learning ends with a diploma or certificate. The level of learning and field of study.
- Development of the Competence Centre. This would be a good thing to expand knowledge and best practices.
- Creation of the EWP Hub. At the time, it is not certain how this ties into other exchanges.
- Integration with other projects (OLA, ESC, EMREX).

Key Takeaways

1. Managing a centralized hub, registry and conformance will bring convergence with EWP.
2. Dissemination, scalability, sustainability, steadily growing set of services (open vs. closed) will be taxing to HEIs. Late adopters will probably stall.
3. Central registry, open source published in GitHub (specifications, code) are great. Someone is going to have to manage these resources over time.
4. HEIs need to appoint oversight and management to ensure conformance and participation. This won't self-manage.
5. Uniformity of data models will be tested as more HEIs are added with more workflow use cases.

6. The cultural complexity, vocabulary and differences – at the time of writing, EMREX brings together participants that speak six different languages besides English -- and the slight differences in the various national educational systems are not always easily addressed.

7. Integration with various Student Information Systems will vary given the level of adoption.

Single Institution Code (International School Code List)

W. Matthew Bemis, Associate Registrar, University of Southern California
James Kelly, Senior Director of Technology, Education Credential Evaluators
Michael Sessa, President and CEO, PESC

This presentation covered the initiative and primary use case of sharing a global identity list of educational providers sourced by country, enabling crosswalking internal and external identifiers. There is no present global registry that has been kept up-to-date, thus just about every institution on the globe that assesses prospective learning from another institution has to build its own database for reference and reuse. The concept of the PESC project is to develop a sustainable global identifier registry so that all can access it for free. Presently, the first version has been created and is available at PESC.org. Work continues on adding more countries - and creating an updating process. Next phase will be to create an automated web page on the PESC site with API services so that institutions and providers can interact with the registry.

Key Takeaways

- Institutions spend a great deal of effort curating their own institutional data describing the external sources of learning they become aware of either through transfer, study abroad or assessing prior learning.
- When it comes time to assess or exchange student level data that associates with source of learning, name fields are not adequate to match. Identifiers are needed, but not assigned globally.
- Sharing a global identifier list would combine known data sources with variations. There is a core set of elements needed per source provider.
- Optional methods and elements will include attributes such as alternative names and locations.

- The global identifier list will not include any verification or authentication of a given source provider. Its purpose is like a mailing list for lookup.
- The PESC work will continue and is looking for volunteers and stakeholders who would want to participate in the future development of the global registry of educational providers.

Concurrent Sessions IV

Digital Credential Verification and Evaluation in Web-based Admissions

Andy Dowling, CEO, Digitary
Kenneth Warren, President, Educational Perspectives
Jim Wolfston, CEO, CollegeNET
Thomas Black, Associate Vice Provost and Registrar, Stanford University

This panel session covered a pilot created to demonstrate how electronic academic records can be requested, verified and evaluated in a web based admissions application. The pilot was with a single institution – that potentially could be used by others.

CollegeNet, like other shared admissions application services around the globe, connected source and destination schools they service, then forwarded the transcript requested for external verification and evaluation by Educational Perspectives.

The pilot demonstrated how a shared admissions application prepared by the prospective student, would link stakeholders together to collect the necessary artifacts from the source institution without the student or agent touching any documents – and without paper based methods. Digital documents can be sent and received quickly, if they can be generated by the source institution in an acceptable format.

In addition, if learning claims represented on a transcript (presumably other forms as well) would require translation, external comparability or verification by evaluators, these outcomes would be uploaded and attached to the learner's application as well. The challenge not covered is the added complexity behind the scenes of managing a registry of players, roles and permissions.

So, this presentation showed how a single platform could bring together various parts of the admission application process so that the receiving institution could trust the digital versions – and save time and effort consuming them.

Key Takeaways

It is unlikely all institutions across the globe will be connected on a single hub or network. Thus, the pilot demonstrates potential for a set of schools, but needs bridges to cross to other sources or systems.

The presentation was well done, but missed addressing the adoption of industry specifications or standards that overlap the space – such as protocols like REST, PESC Request/Reply or Transcript formats, Diploma Supplement, moving from PDF to XML or back – and addressing the store / forward or privacy concerns with how the exchange of digital artifacts works.

The presentation did not address covering hops over various sources of transcripts, such as the ministries of education or third-party clearinghouses forming across the globe. The effort portrayed a well-designed approach living within scope and controls managed by participants. Variations would evolve as new stakeholders stress varied issues – such as which Student Information System is utilized, identify management protocols and the regulations (local or regional or country) of recording, storing or securing academic history inside or outside of the institutional firewall.

The request, collection and transmission of artifacts showed how it could all work together in a simple use case. Some may need to retrieve multiple transcripts – and what happens when an institution is not connected? The slowest part of retrieval will impact the whole transaction.

Data Initiatives, Policy and Sharing – Opportunities for Cooperation
Elizabeth Campbell-Dorning, Commonwealth Department of Education and Training, with GDN guests from Fiji, Nauru, Mongolia and Vietnam:
Mr Rajendra Prasad, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (Fiji)
Cecilia Giouba, Nauru Education Department (Nauru)
Mr Batsaikhan Khashbat, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Mongolia)
Mr Vu Ngoc Ha, Ministry of Education and Training (Vietnam)
Ms Trinh M.H. Truong, Ton Duc Thang University (Vietnam)

At one of its earlier board meetings, the GDN Board of Directors indicated that the GDN should also make a point of reaching out to countries that lack the funding and systems to pilot with other GDN participants. The GDN annual meeting chair invited representatives from a number of neighboring developing countries, by providing these with bursaries to cover their airfare and hotel accommodation. Results of this

first trial clearly indicated that some states have already started considering the benefits and impacts of digital student data on their local globally mobile learners, while others are still grappling with questions of technology and funding.

Verifying Credentials - Challenges for Professional Associations
(Panel discussion; no presentation)

Jay Segeth, Program Director, Higher Ed Services
Dr Julie Strous, Executive Director, Australasian Veterinary Boards Council
Erin Wood, General Manager Membership, CPA Australia
Carl Matheson, Director Assessment and Innovation, Australian Medical Council

Dr Strous explained that the role of the AVBC is to make recommendations to the registration boards of Australia and New Zealand as to how suitable young vets are to practice. This is carried out in numerous ways and requires checking and verifying qualifications. Ms Wood said that CPA Australia has 160,000 members in 118 countries with 25,000 employed as CEOs. CPA Australia assesses qualifications for course accreditation, applications for membership and for migration applications. The Australian Medical Council is a standards body – not a membership association - and is constituted of medical deans, specialist colleges, public and private hospitals and doctors. Its role is to ensure medical standards in Australia and to accredit medical schools and specialist colleges. Assessment of international medical graduates is now conducted via a digital platform.

Key Takeaways

- Secure online platforms for verifying qualifications deliver many advantages for professional organisations including validating credentials, streamlining processes and thereby providing huge efficiencies, address customer expectations of being able to access what they want when they want it anywhere and eliminate translation issues.
- Professional bodies and the higher education sector can work together in the digital sphere.

Panel Session II

Innovation and Standardization in Digital Credentials: Exchange of Comprehensive Student Records and the Blockchain

Dr Matthew Pittinsky, Director of Communications, Parchment
Dr Natalie Smolenski, Leader, Research Initiatives and Head Business Development, Learning Machine

This presentation covered an industry perspective from two vendors deep in the credentials space. Topics included: Some of the drivers impacting Higher Education, emerging technologies, comparable industry specifications developed by standards groups, the level of standard adoption and evolving practices under development or in pilot, addressing the varied issues of conveyance, exchange, trust, validation, comprehension, purpose and hosting infrastructures.

Traditional academic credentials were described as document based, such as transcript, diploma or certificate. The primary uses of the paper based credentials conveyed the type, general information and level of accomplishment defined by the document type.

Emerging new credential delivery forms such as the portfolio, badges and blockchain were introduced. Some of the IMS and PESC initiatives focused on the exchange of credential data more than the content were summarily covered. Across the industry, the exchange or access to credentials in general lacks standardization involving varied forms of governance, independence and capabilities.

Credentials, which represent learning achievements, are decentralized, fragmented, non-standard and confusing. They are opaque, not designed to communicate or translate or compare or weigh or suggest what was learned or how well one has learned. The credential and how it is conveyed has different purposes, often augmented by supplements such as the catalogue, syllabus or learning outcomes attached.

In support of the GDN mission and vision, the presenters went on to say that all credentials should be:

1. Digital, with machine-readable data

2. Innovated, both in form and function

3. Owned and managed by the learner, across their lives

Credential conveyance, form and storage methods are being piloted – or developed across a range of stakeholders trying to innovate the space addressing social, economic and political expectations. Reimagining use cases allows us to remove the barriers of prior approaches and investment.

The credential itself can convey all sorts of content from competencies, learning outcome measures to effort, source of learning and who participated. The type of instruction, the type of workshops, the type of classroom, the type of technology, etc. all can vary – and lack industry wide semantics and dictionaries.

Reimagining credentials is a good exercise. Just as the scope of any credential development would limit functions and use cases, the presentations leaned toward conclusions that highlight the steep curve of change needed across thousands of organizations managing a very decentralized industry.

Both vendors went on to present their own technology stack approaches. One was proprietary and closed, allowing the learner to manage their "portfolio" hosted for them. The other was open source utilizing Blockchain, an over hyped extension of the write once ledger propagating across industries evolving to address shared models of commerce without centralized controls or governance. Both vendors tried to convey how their innovations addressed key use cases aligned with the initial statement of why all credentials should be digital, transparent and owned by the learner.

Comments and Takeaways

The ownership of the credential is an interesting topic and the conclusion drawn was that the learner owns it. The curation and custody of the credential or artifact over time, on behalf of the institution, government or individual is an underlying issue. How can credentials be saved, shared and utilized if they are paper based or digital? How can we say who owns them, when the generator may be the institution measuring the progress of the learner, not just the conclusion of time spent in class?

Who pays for the curation and storage of credentials? Who has access? Who controls the business rules and governance, and who is an authorized institution that can convey or exclude parties such as a diploma mill? How will technology, such as Blockchain, be employed, with the inheritance of new challenges, and address the will to change – and how about the global issues wrestling with economic, political and social complexities?

The trends driving the industry to either replace or supplement the paper based diploma or certificate still need to address how individuals utilize the credential forms to display their accomplishment – online or in-person. Likewise, the calls for disruption or replacement or supplement vary greatly. There is no single vision here, but a need to continue

elevating the conversation and sharing of which innovations seem to find traction.

Credentials are not just documents conveyed at the end of learning events, such as graduation. They can also be small steps along the path to earning recognition of achievement and the conveyance of it that incorporates context. The diploma supplement is a good example drawn in distinction with the traditional transcript of seat time. The grand scheme is like a puzzle that continues to challenge us with moving parts.

Methods of conveying credentials still need to consider how an individual uses the diploma and certificate. If the life cycle of a credential should be five, ten or more years, that life cycle adds considerable complexity over immediate exchange, storage and access. It also opens the door to vulnerabilities, breaches and misuse adding to the insecurity underlying social, economic and political interpretations.

The presumptions and conclusions presented were leaning toward one-size-fits all methods that address use cases different from the original use cases behind the academic transcript, diploma or certificate. Not sure why we have to push or accept the premise that one method of conveyance is needed by the industry or that one technology will address all the challenges represented in mobility. It is simply not viable – given the need for high level analytics, confidentiality, the desire for many learners to pick and choose what to showcase, and the conclusion that one solution may be better than another simply because it may solve one set of problems over another.

Friday, 28 April 2017

Plenary V

Opening Higher Education to Lifelong Learning

Dr Carlos Gonzalez-Sancho, Policy Analyst, Centre for the Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), OECD Directorate for Education and Skills

This OECD presentation and topic covered the importance (or high value) of lifelong learning as the labor market shifts. Higher education is shifting further to address labor market expectations and gaps. The presentation covered comparison statistics across countries, bringing the relevance of the GDN into view. The variation of priorities, scope and externalities are interpretations by governance though. Not all countries join or invest in education at the same level, so it is helpful to compare inputs to outputs. Where learners reside and work will change over time as opportunities shift. Thus the

questions and support of the GDN call to action to support mobility is being heard.

The opening few slides covered some of the key trends and global issues of higher education beginning with the proportion of the workforce with a higher education credential by country. The social, political and economic challenges such as inequality of access, the escalating costs, the business models driving long term sustainability of private and public organizations are relevant.

The skill structure of advanced economies is changing rapidly and job creation up to 2030 will be largely driven by high-skilled occupations. Education systems are beginning to revise the set of skills which people need to succeed in the increasingly volatile and uncertain environment of the 21st century. The importance of innovation will also demand a new perspective into lifelong learning as adults attend or re-attend higher education at different stages of their working lives for the sake of retraining and reskilling.

This may require that higher education institutions recognize prior learning at a larger scale and become more open to non-traditional student profiles. Open forms of delivery and open learning processes call for new forms of recognizing skills that may change or supplement traditional ways of awarding qualifications. Many of these developments are supported by digitalisation and the emergence of new types of information systems, which promise to capture learning experiences with greater granularity. These trends underline the importance of initiatives such as the Groningen Declaration to facilitate the transfer of student records to qualified parties.

The presentation reviewed recent OECD work on skills and education information systems, and presented some innovative models of certifying knowledge and competences adopted by higher education institutions, with a focus on creativity and critical thinking skills.

Recognition and conveyance of Informal or non-formal sources of learning, such as work and life experience was introduced. Skills development, through on-the-job training and mentoring makes up a big part of the human talent development investment. The OECD believes Higher Educational Institutions need to recognize prior learning, skills and experiences –of which the verification, acceptance and applicability in academic pathways to a degree or certificate would lower educational attainment costs while increasing completion agendas.

Carlos presented a summary of open degrees and qualifications that recognize flexible study plans – and alternative learning sources such as MOOCS or open

courseware developed by leading universities and posted online for all to freely access.

Next, Carlos mentioned India's initiative to recognize MOOCS as an alternative source of credit. This idea was introduced as SWAYAM, the platform HEIs and learners are using to process claims and awards.   EdEX and other platforms were mentioned as examples of how other countries are recognizing learning sources outside of the traditional classroom.

In conclusion, rich portable student data, containing formal and informal learning claims should be developed and curated without boundaries, to enable global recognition of qualifications. The continued need for openness through sharing was recognized. Finally, connecting people by providing the opportunity to showcase their achievements, knowledge and skills honed through formal or informal education investment has a payback in local, regional and national economies.

Plenary VI

TAICEP Symposium Report

Margaret Wenger, Senior Director of Evaluation, Educational Credential Evaluators

On 25-26 April 2018, a group of stakeholders in credential evaluation and digital student data met prior to the GDN meeting in Melbourne. The goal was to develop a plan to direct the progression of the transfer and use of student data, building on the work of the GDN as it pertains to credential evaluation. Discussions of nearly 30 participants from five continents resulted in these "next steps":

1. Explore best practices and credential evaluators' needs for trusted sources (particularly third parties)
2. Explore issues surrounding documentation retention and data ownership
3. Explore desirability and feasibility of inclusion / addition of evaluation report to digital student data
4. Develop shared terminology as a prelude to further discussions about credential evaluators' needs in digital student data
5. Expand representation and engagement through existing forums and networks to ensure recommendations to the GDN are representative

Task Force Updates

Mid-Term Vision
Michael Sessa, President and CEO, PESC

- GDN stabilized its organizational status as a legal entity in the Netherlands.

- An online survey is underway to poll signatories and interested parties about their expectations of GDN.

- A Glossary of Terms was presented.

- The task force plans to Identify and publicize "best practices" through an award process by recommending three initiatives to the board for recognition.

Verification Policies and Best Practice
Navin Vasudev, Deputy Director, Foreign Qualifications Evaluations and Advisory Services, SAQA
Margaret Wenger, Senior Director of Evaluation, Educational Credential Evaluators

Members noted the significant challenge of coordinating efforts across the entire task force. Greater success was realized through bilateral exchanges between members.

Next steps:
- Consider limiting the number of task force members to those who actually engage with the group
- Map accredited institutions to determine trusted sources and enhance transparency

Pilots
Dik van der Wal, Manager, International Services, DUO and Head, Netherlands Europass Consortium
Kathleen Massey, Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment, McGill University

- Publish a list of pilot projects at GroningenDeclaration.org

- Highlight collaboration, and share the outcomes across the network

- Build a universally-accessible, searchable repository to record the goals, topology, technology, communities served, current status of the pilot, success factors and content.

Privacy
Valère Meus, International Relations Expert, Ghent University, Coordinator, **Erasmus Without Paper**

The GDN Privacy Task Force has yet to come into its own, with interactions so far unfortunately hampered by time pressures. Valère Meus, Task Force chair, therefore focused on the upcoming European Union's General Data Protection Regulation and its possible effects on stakeholders outside Europe. With an enforcement date of 25 May 2018, the GDPR is poised to influence not only much of the Task Force's future work but the Groningen Declaration Network Ecosystem at large. It is also linked to the eIDAS regulation of the EU (electronic Identification and Authentication System), which will also come into force in 2018.

Empowering Cross Border Enrolment and Student Loan Portability
Jelger de Boer, Legal Policy Advisor, **DUO**

- Several fellow signatories expressed interest in establishing pilots with DUO to verify enrolment data digitally, These fellow pilot partners are :

  - ✓ Parchment (Netherlands / USA)
  - ✓ HEDD and INTCAS (Netherlands / UK)
  - ✓ EMREX (Netherlands / Scandinavia)
  - ✓ Universities Admissions Centre (Netherlands / Australia)
  - ✓ AHOVOKS (Netherlands / Flanders)

- Submit proposals to NAFSA and GDN'18, to share challenges and successes with the pilots

- Consider shortening the name of the task force

- Plan on meeting in person, in Groningen, in late August / early September

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Closing Address

Digital, Seamless, Global: Student Records go Digital
Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), **Australian National University**

As a transit person herself in terms of the use case for student data, Marnie Hughes-Warrington reminds us of the niceties but at the same time shortcomings of the traditional testamurs, degree certificates and transcripts. Anything printed on paper can be imitated and forged. In industries other than education, paper technology has therefore been superseded by digitization. This will benefit all as it provides more security, trust and granularity. Student requests for paper copy documents are decreasing, while requests for e-documents are increasing. ANU wholeheartedly encourages this trend, not only because of efficiency gains but more importantly because of the opportunities digitization offers to provide more personalised learning pathways and more granular personalised certificates, transcripts and testamurs.

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