Przegląd Badań Edukacyjnych
Educational Studies Review

ISSN 1895-4308
nr 30 (1/2020), s. 193–209

METAANALIZY
BADAŃ
EDUKACYJNYCH

Ariadna Strugielska
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5137-1923
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland; mail: ariadnas@umk.pl

Interpretations of the New Quality of Teacher Training in Polish Public Institutes of Higher Education in the Context of a Universal Model of Quality

http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/PBE.2020.011

Abstract
The aim of the paper is to present three selected interpretations of the new quality of teacher training in Polish public institutions of higher education, check their coherence with reference to a common denominator and outline a multifaceted, emergent model along which understanding of the new quality in teacher training can be discussed. The proposed model is then interpreted in the context of a universal framework for discussing quality in higher education put forward by Laura Schindler and colleagues in 2015. The comparison shows that Polish conception is highly compatible with the universal model with reference to its four general dimensions: purposefulness, transformativity, accountability and excellence. Yet, important differences can be observed as regards specific indicators of quality. It seems that these asymmetries may be crucial in further developing the concept of quality-oriented teacher training in Poland.

Key words: teacher training, quality assurance, models, higher education.

Background

Interest in the quality of teacher training in Poland has significantly increased in the last two years. This trend seems to have been largely determined by the out-

comes of the report issued by *Najwyższa Izba Kontroli* [Supreme Audit Office], or NIK[1], in March 2017, which uncovered numerous imperfections in the way teacher training was conducted by public institutes of higher education (https://www.nik.gov.pl/aktualnosci/nik-o-przygotowaniu-do-zawodu-nauczyciela.html). NIK's conclusions were particularly disturbing in view of the fact that teaching is a profession of public trust, which means that training this particular group of students should be done with utmost care. Therefore, the authors of NIK's report, together with *Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej* [Ministry of National Education], hereafter MEN[2], appealed to *Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego* [Ministry of Science and Higher Education], henceforth MNiSW[3], to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the teacher training system in Poland and establish its new quality in the form of a regulation on the standard of education preparing for the teaching profession. Concurrently, NIK's report itself clearly identified areas, such as recruitment procedures or modifications of educational programs, that would need to be taken into consideration in the course of redefining the existing model. Thus, NIK's recommendations have become the first possible understanding of the new quality of teacher education in Polish public institutions of higher education.

Members and experts of *Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna* [Polish Accreditation Committee], hereafter PKA[4], including the author of this article, have also been involved in diagnosing potential shortcomings of the teacher-training system. First, from January 2017 to December 2018, they worked as a team responsible for developing quality-oriented standards of education at both pedagogical studies and studies with teaching specialisations. Then, as regulated by Statut PKA [Statute of PKA] of 13 December 2018 (PKA, 2018), members of the committee started collaborating within a team for teacher education. As a result, the second interpretation of the concept of quality was offered, whose

[1] NIK is the supreme audit institution in Poland responsible for conducting audits according to prioritised directions signalled by its College in order to establish whether the State fulfils its obligations towards citizens. NIK and indicates sectors which raise its particular concerns. One of these areas has been teacher training in Polish public institutes of higher education.

[2] MEN is a department of the Polish government. Its responsibilities include setting educational standards and youth activities but do not encompass higher education.

[3] MNiSW is responsible for developing the quality of Polish science and higher education, popularising it in and outside the country and supporting sustainable growth of all institutes related to science and higher education.

[4] PKA is a state accreditation committee for the enhancement of the quality of higher education in Poland.

rationale is neatly reflected by the detailed criteria of program evaluation and quality standards introduced by PKA in February 2019 (PKA, 2019).

Finally, in April 2019 MNiSW proposed a modification to the standard of education preparing for the teaching profession of 17 January 2012 (MNiSW, 2012), and this revision is understood here as the third interpretation of the concept of quality (https://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl/edukacja/nowe-standardy-ksztalcenia-przygotowujacego-do-wykonywania-zawodu-nauczyciela,124790.htm).

Obviously, the aforementioned concepts of the new quality of teacher training provided by Polish public universities were not prepared as three entirely separate documents. On the contrary, constructive dialogue between MEN, MNiSW and PKA took place and could be heard, among others, during the conference *Forum jakości 2017 – o nową jakość kształcenia nauczycieli* [Quality Forum 2017 – for the New Quality of Teacher Training], held at *Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny* [The Pedagogical University] in Cracow (https:// portaledukacyjny.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/).

Nevertheless, visions of the new quality of teacher training resulting from NIK's analysis, PKA's quality standards and MNiSW's proposal turned out not to be fully compatible, which will be demonstrated below with reference to a common denominator, i.e. criteria of program evaluation included in *Konstytucja dla Nauki* [Constitution for Science] of 2018 (MNiSW, 2018)[5].

Criteria of program evaluation as a reference platform for discussing the new quality of teacher education in Poland

Prawo o Szkolnictwie Wyższym i Nauce [Law on Higher Education and Science] of 20 July 2018, also called the Constitution for Science (MNiSW, 2018a), refers to evaluating the quality of education in Section VI, Chapter 1, and in particular in Article 248, which states that quality is subject to evaluation in the form of program (or comprehensive) assessment conducted by PKA, during which special attention should be paid to the following aspects: study programs and educational standards, teaching and research staff, facilities and resources used for implementing the study program, cooperation with the socio-economic environment, internationalisation, and support for students in the course

[5] The Consitution for Science is a law which systemically re-organises higher education and science in Poland, placing particular emphasis upon improved conditions for scientific and didactic excellence, sustainable development of academic institutes and their effective management.

of the learning process. Thus, the quality of studies preparing for the teaching profession should be assessed at least, or in particular, with reference to these six areas.

On the basis of Article 248, point 1, of the aforementioned Law, *Rozporządzenie Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego* [Decree of the Minister of Science and Higher Education] of 12 September 2018 concerning the criteria of program evaluation was published (MNiSW, 2018b). It elaborates and extends the above-mentioned six areas and stipulates that the criteria be the following:

1) manner of designing the study program and its compliance with the standard(s) of education;
2) implementation of the study program;
3) rules of student admission and recognition of learning outcomes, including certification;
4) competences and experience of teaching staff;
5) adjustment of facilities and resources used for implementing the study program to the needs and objectives of the teaching-learning process;
6) relations with the socio-economic environment;
7) degree of internationalisation;
8) quality of student support in the course of the learning process;
9) quality of public information;
10) ways of improving quality of the teaching-learning process and their effectiveness (http://www.dziennikustaw.gov.pl/DU/2018/1787/1).

These criteria, called from now on the quality criteria, appear in NIK's report, PKA's quality standards, and MNiSW's proposal for a new standard of education preparing for the teaching profession, and thus they form the basis for further analysis.

Quality criteria and the results of NIK's report

Summing up the results of the control of selected courses preparing for the teaching profession in Poland, NIK (2017, pp. 11–30) indicates imperfections regarding quality criteria 1–4, 6, 8 and 10, highlighting the following problems.

First of all, study programs are not structured in the way that would ensure the advantage of learning outcomes related to the category of skills and social competences over those included in the category of knowledge. Thus, the authors recommend reinforcing practical aspects of studies by, for instance, extending the number of teaching practice hours and introducing practical classes

already in the second semester of the first year of studies. Likewise, in the students' opinion encompassed by NIK's report, the content of the courses preparing for the teaching profession requires changes in terms of developing practical competences, also during teaching practice or workshops. Moreover, the report argues for a design of a study program that would place particular emphasis on the learning outcomes related to self- and professional development. Finally, objections are raised as to the organisation and supervision of teaching practice.

Secondly, the implementation of the study program should take place in smaller groups, which would facilitate student participation in classes. Importantly, NIK indicates a negative selection for the teaching profession resulting from the growing number of candidates with the lowest scores at school-leaving exams. The lack of detailed admission requirements and inadequate monitoring of the progress of teacher candidates during studies often lead to delays in defending their diploma or master theses. With regard to human resources, the authors of NIK's report emphasise the need for the presence of teachers-practitioners who could conduct classes within the specialization or the field of study. Attention is also paid to the legitimacy of regular contacts between the university and the socio-economic environment, which would provide students with support both in the learning process and at the initial stages of their professional career. Furthermore, the report underlines the fact that the process of training teachers is not periodically reviewed nor are the programs systematically modified. In conclusion, the authors of NIK's report indicate the validity of improving the quality of teacher training in public institutions of higher education within seven areas (Table 2).

Quality criteria and PKA's quality standards

Detailed criteria for program evaluation and PKA's education quality standards were introduced by *Uchwała Nr 67/2019 Prezydium PKA* [Resolution No. 67/2019 of the Presidium of PKA] of 28 February 2019. These criteria, hereinafter referred to as the quality standards, were introduced instead of the criteria applicable to proceedings initiated before 30 September 2018 (PKA, 2019). From the perspective of the new quality of teacher training, a significant change has been made, the purpose of which is to take into account the specifics of this educational path in five, instead of the previously functioning two, criteria for program evaluation. These changes are illustrated in Table 1 below, which shows modifications that are not only quantitative (introducing new quality standards with reference to teacher training, e.g. the level of competence and

experience of teaching staff) but also qualitative (extending the existing quality standard with reference to teacher training, e.g. the implementation of the study program). Since the main purpose of the article is to show new interpretations of the quality of teacher training, abbreviation "nc" (no change) is used whenever no alteration has been detected.

Table 1. Criteria for program evaluation and PKA's quality standards[6]

Criteria for PKA's program evaluation for the academic profile (until 30/09/2018)	PKA's quality standards for the academic profile (from 1/10/2018)
1) learning outcomes (general)	learning outcomes (general and specific)
2) study program, forms and organisation of classes, including organisation of teaching practice, duration of studies and students' estimated workload measured by ECTS, selection of program content	nc organisation of the teaching process ensuring effective use of time devoted to teaching, learning, monitoring students' progress and evaluation, program of teaching practice, its organisation and supervision, selection of places and environments for student placement, including facilities and resources and supervisors' competences
3)	methods of verifying learning outcomes
4)	competences, experience and qualifications of academic teachers and other staff conducting classes
5)	university's didactic and research facilities and resources, facilities and resources of other institutions where classes take place

Source: PKA's standards and procedures (https://www.pka.edu.pl/wzory-i-procedury/).

As indicated above, PKA assumes that new quality standards should encompass more criteria of program evaluation than before and former categories should be detailed and extended, e.g. criterion 2. Particularly noteworthy is the postulated strengthening of the rank of teaching practice that is to become a separate sub-category of program evaluation. This change is evident in the detailed criteria for the assessment of teaching practice, to be found in PKA's new quality standards, encompassing the following aspects: consistency of teaching practice learning outcomes with those of other classes, inclusion of teaching content, estimated workload and number of ECTS, inclusion of teaching practice in the program of studies, selection of placement institutions in a way that enables students to achieve intended learning outcomes, proper selection of

[6] Good practices can be identified with reference to both criteria for program evaluation and quality standards.

methods of verifying learning outcomes assumed for teaching practice, methods of reporting teaching practice process and tasks, comprehensiveness of assessment carried out by internship supervisors, competences, experience and number of teaching practice supervisors, facilities and resources of institutions providing teaching practice and their suitability for the teaching-learning process, achievement of intended learning outcomes and proper implementation of teaching practice, formally adopted principles of teaching practice organisation and supervision, including criteria that are to be met by institutions in which teaching practice takes place, procedures of recognising learning outcomes obtained at the workplace, rules of lesson observation, responsibilities of supervisors in teaching practice location and scope of cooperation between internship supervisors and academic staff, provision of teaching practice for students by the university and in the case of placements arranged by students themselves, providing predefined and officially accepted quality criteria on whose basis the supervisor is to recognize teaching practice, regular assessment and continuous improvement of the internship program.

The discussion presented above indicates strengthening the role of teaching practice in defining the new quality of teacher training by PKA. Student placement is to become an independent standard comprising criteria related, among others, to the construction and implementation of the study program, staff competences, facilities and resources, student support and improvement of the curriculum, as shown in detail in Table 2.

Quality criteria and a proposal for a new standard of education preparing for the teaching profession

The third interpretation of the new quality of teacher training in Polish public institutions of higher education is a proposal for the standard of education preparing for the teaching profession put forward by MNiSW in 2019. To illustrate the extent of proposed changes, the document is discussed alongside the previously-adopted standard (MNiSW, 2012).

The first major alteration is the very layout of the newly-proposed standard, which clearly reflects the quality criteria. Thus, the first part of the standard concerns the design and implementation of study program, including numerical indicators, e.g. the number of terms and ECTS as well as the duration of studies. At this point, a significant pro-quality change is visible, as it is assumed that studies preparing for the teaching profession are conducted as first- and second-cycle studies or as long-cycle studies. Certainly, this regulation facilitates the effective

use of time allocated to the teaching process and proper recognition of learning outcomes. In this part of the standard proposal information about subject modules is also included, which, for the teacher of a given subject, covers substantive preparation for the first subject teaching, psychological and pedagogical courses, basics of teaching methodology and voice emission as well as preparation for the teaching of the first subject. Importantly, two-thirds of psychological and pedagogical preparation should be delivered in the form of lectures and tutorials and the remaining part should be conducted in a way that is integrated with the teaching practice module. This provision emphasizes the role of activating forms of classes and indirectly increases the number of teaching practice hours and practical courses from 150 to 210. In this part, there is also a detailed programme of teaching practice focused on gaining experience related to didactic and educational work of a teacher and confronting her knowledge in the field of teaching methodology with pedagogical reality. Moreover, types of teaching practice institutions for a particular educational stage are determined and qualifications of internship supervisors in kindergartens, schools or other educational institutions are defined. Finally, the role of facilities and resources facilitating the achievement of intended learning outcomes is underlined.

The second part of the proposal for the standard in question concerns qualifications of the staff preparing candidates for the teaching profession, among whom there should be tutors with professional or research competences as well as experience relevant to conducted classes. Attention is paid to the fact that research should be related to the discipline to which learning outcomes refer, i.e. psychology, pedagogy or the discipline corresponding to the subject taught. In other words, the presence of teachers-practitioners among the staff responsible for training is not seen as obligatory.

The third and most comprehensive part of the document concerns general and specific learning outcomes. In terms of the quality criteria adopted in the analysis, it is essential to observe that each set of subjects, including courses in the teaching practice module, is dominated by outcomes related to skills and social competences rather than knowledge. Among the specific learning outcomes, there are those related to both professional and self-development, e.g. B.1.U8. the graduate can plan, on the basis of conscious self-reflection, activities for professional development, B.1.K1. the graduate is ready for auto-reflection on professional development, B.2.K3. the graduate is ready for independent improvement of her pedagogical knowledge, B.2.K4. the graduate is ready to cooperate with other teachers in order to increase her professional skills, D.2/E.2.K1. the graduate is prepared to effectively interact with her supervisor and other instructors in order

to broaden teaching knowledge. Still, while these learning outcomes provide important details within particular sets of courses, especially within psychological and pedagogical modules, they do not introduce a fundamental qualitative change in comparison with the standard of 2012. Nevertheless, a crucial modification is formulating the learning outcomes, especially those pertaining to social skills and competences, in a way that promotes cognitive and affective development of teacher candidates, including, in particular, their critical thinking skills. This tendency is illustrated by the following phrases: (the graduate) can analyse, draw conclusions, identify, create, adapt, promote, or propagate.

The fourth and last part of MNiSW's proposal from 2019 concerns on-going assessment of intended learning outcomes whose forms should be adjusted to the category checked. Thus, in the area of knowledge, the following methods can be found: written examinations in the form of open tasks or tests as well as oral exams aiming primarily at checking critical thinking competences. In the category of skills, the key method, applicable predominantly during teaching practice, is direct observation of a student during her performance of a given professional task. A synthetic version of the above analysis can be found in Table 2 below.

An emergent model of the new quality of teacher training in Poland

The three aforementioned interpretations of the new quality of teacher training in Poland have been juxtaposed in Table 2 with reference to the quality criteria adopted for the analysis. For the sake of clarity, extensive categories, i.e. criterion 2, are discussed according to letter subsections while points of convergence between the three conceptions are underlined. In a way then the highlighted fragments constitute an emergent model of the new quality of teacher training in Polish public institutes of higher education.

Table 2. Interpretations of the new quality of teacher training in Poland juxtaposed

Quality criterion	NIK	PKA*	MNiSW
1) manner of designing the study program and its compliance with the standard(s) of education	making learning outcomes more practical (e.g. dominance of outcomes in categories of skills and social competences, emphasising preparation for self- and professional development among detailed learning outcomes)	learning outcomes (general and detailed)	learning outcomes (general and detailed), making learning outcomes more practical (dominance of outcomes in categories of skills and social competences, development of critical thinking)

Table 2. Continued

Quality criterion	NIK	PKA*	MNiSW
2) implementation of the study program	a) effectiveness of the organisation of the teaching-learning process (e.g. number of students in groups), activating forms of classes, b) importance and workload of teaching practice, d) organisation and supervision of teaching practice	a) effectiveness of the organisation of the teaching-learning process, forms of classes, b) importance of teaching practice, c) implementation of the study program, number of terms and class hours, estimated student workload, in particular with reference to the teaching practice program, d) selection of institutions and environments for teaching practice, including facilities and resources and supervisors' competences, organisation and supervision of teaching practice	a) effectiveness of the organisation of the teaching-learning process, activating forms of classes b) importance and workload of teaching practice, c) implementation of the study program, number of terms and class hours, estimated student workload, in particular with reference to the teaching practice program, d) selection of institutions and environments for teaching practice, including facilities and resources and supervisors' competences
3) rules of student admission and recognition of learning outcomes, including certification	admission requirements, ongoing verification of learning outcomes, final recognition of learning outcomes (certification)	methods of ongoing verification of learning outcomes, including in particular teaching practice	methods of ongoing verification of learning outcomes referring to knowledge and skills, including in particular those related to teaching practice
4) competences and experience of teaching staff	presence of teachers-practitioners among teaching staff	competences, experience and qualifications of academic teachers and other instructors	competences, experience and qualifications of academic teachers or other instructors, including in particular their research competencies
5) adjustment of facilities and resources used for implementing the study program to the needs and objectives of the teaching-learning process		facilities and resources of universities and other places where classes, including teaching practice, are to be conducted	facilities and resources of universities and other places where classes, including teaching practice, are to be conducted
6) relations with the socio-economic environment	real contacts between schools and universities	selection of environments where teaching practice is to take place	selection of environments where teaching practice is to take place
7) degree of internationalisation			

Table 2. Continued

Quality criterion	NIK	PKA*	MNiSW
8) quality of student support in the course of the learning process	support provided by teachers-practitioners during studies, including teaching practice, as well as communication between the school and the university in the initial phase of students' work (mentoring)	organisation and supervision of teaching practice	
9) quality of public information			
10) ways of improving quality of the teaching-learning process and their effectiveness	systematic revision of quality of the teaching-learning process and introduction of justified changes to the study program	improvement of the teaching practice program	

* Good practices can be identified in each of the ten criteria discussed.

Source: Author's compilation.

Table 2 above compares three conceptualisations of the new quality of education preparing for the teaching profession in Poland with reference to ten criteria stipulated by the Constitution for Science (MNiSW, 2018a; 2018b). The underlined excerpts indicate convergences between the interpretations discussed, simultaneously highlighting imperfections in the emerging model. Firstly, there are identical (or similar) indicators classified under two different categories, e.g. "organisation and supervision of teaching practice" subsumed under quality criteria 2 and 8. This problem results directly from vague statements in the source documents. Next, despite apparent similarities between the interpretations analysed, especially in criteria 10 and (partly) 4 and 6, no fragments have been underlined. This is due to the fact that one of the juxtaposed understandings, usually the one put forward by NIK, is too detailed and/or complex to be effectively compared with the remaining visions. On the other hand, fragments have been highlighted, e.g. in criterion 6, although only 2 of the analysed 3 interpretations seem compatible. This decision has been motivated by the fact that the "missing" indicator could often be found in another category, e.g. 2b in the case of criterion 6. Finally, the model proposed in Table 2 does not account for absence or minimal presence of certain categories, e.g. 7, 8 or 9, on the one hand, and extensive manifestation of the other(s), particularly criterion 2, on the other hand.

All in all, the emergent model proposed above, in which the design and implementation of a standard-driven study program together with ways of recognizing learning outcomes seem the most noticeable quality criteria, is not easy to interpret due to its two characteristics: dissimilar levels of generality at which certain indicators have been formulated and asymmetries in the way the ten quality criteria have been evoked. In order to neutralise these deficiencies, the emergent model is referred to a universal framework of quality in higher education.

The emergent model in the context of a universal model of quality in higher education

While the aim of the current section is to set the emergent model against a universal framework for defining quality in higher education, this juxtaposition can only succeed if quality is seen in a broader perspective. Historically, the notion was first applied in the field of industrial production to subsequently encompass service industries and public institutions, including schools and universities. In those early days, quality was defined through the prism of control and error elimination carried out by a group of inspectors. In fact, it was not until the second half of the twentieth century that comprehensive quality principles were developed, as illustrated by Deming's (1986) *plan, do, check, act* scenario. Simultaneously, the human aspect of quality was emphasised, with more focus on collective responsibility, a systems approach and decisions supported with thorough data analyses.

Another dimension of quality was developed when the concept was applied to the sector of services where, as postulated by Feigenbaum (1961), the intangibility of products required that customer satisfaction based on well-defined standards be highlighted and where meeting customers' expectations should become the key element of quality. At the same time though those in charge of quality procedures were to decide who their customer or client was (Winder & Judd, 1996). In the context of educational services, for instance, the question to be answered was whether pupils, parents, teachers or perhaps the society in general needed to be considered in defining quality. Such dilemmas led to the emergence of customer networks, mutual client relationships and an overall importance of accountability in building and managing quality. Charters or guarantees issued by public institutions were then to clarify their promises so that the public could verify them. Consequently, quality statements took the form of valid and achievable objectives which, as Harvey and Green (1993,

p. 9) put it, were to fit the purpose or match "the ability of an institution to fulfil its mission or a programme of study to fulfil its aims".

The brief overview of quality-related constructs above shows that the notion is far from clear, encompassing a variety of often inconsistent elements, e.g. efficiency, standards, satisfaction, accountability or purposefulness, This blurred picture of quality becomes even less attractive when applied in the context of education since schooling is built on values different from the priorities of commercial operations. In fact Weber (2007, p. 19) claims that quality procedures in universities can "sap dynamism and reduce their sense of internal responsibility". Moreover, Schwartzman (1995) argues that the idea of customer satisfaction is not felicitous in educational settings whose long-term values are hard to identify and/or tend to emerge years after the experience has been completed.

While defining quality is (and perhaps will always be) difficult, that is the reality higher education cannot escape since its "landscape is currently characterised by the need to establish accountability and, in so doing, to explicitly rationalise learning outcomes and academic-achievement standards to support quality assurance" (Diaz et al., 2015, p. 1). Consequently, "theoreticians have struggled and come up with a variety of definitions, including quality being defined by the degree to which set objectives are achieved, added value, fitness for purpose, and client satisfaction" (Thomas, 2003, p. 232). In fact, depending on the definition adopted, a number of models can be discerned, i.e.: the goals and specifications model, the resources input model, the process model, the satisfaction model, the legitimacy model, the absence of problems model and the organisational learning model (Cheng & Tam, 1997). As Cheng and Tam (1997) further argue, a combination of these models can provide a comprehensive approach to quality in education. Still, what remains to be answered is how to connect this plethora of definitions in a motivated manner.

One strategy is to propose a broad definition of quality, highlighting a particular goal, such as fulfilling a stated mission or vision (Bogue, 1998). Another option is to come up with a list of specific indicators demonstrating assumed inputs (e.g. responsive staff) and outputs (e.g. employability of students) (Tam, 2010). A third route, advocated by Schindler and others (2015), is to combine both strategies, which seems most appropriate in order to reconcile the three understandings of the new quality of teacher training in Polish public institutes of higher education.

The framework put forward by Laura Schindler and her colleagues results from an extensive overview of relevant literature, including educational data-

bases, e.g. Academic Search Complete or Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). On the basis of interpretations of quality emanating from both journal articles and reports from professional organisations, the authors have proposed its conceptual model. Building on previous definitions of quality in higher education, e.g. those formulated by Ewell (2010) or Harvey (2005), Schindler and others (2015, p. 5) have identified recurring themes and outlined four areas emerging from their synthesis of literature: purposefulness, transformativity, accountability and excellence.

Purposefulness stands for education in accordance with the mission, vision and strategy of the university and/or for education compliant with standards, including those established by external organisations, e.g. accreditation committees. Its other indicators are transparent objectives and procedures. Transformativity means facilitating a student-oriented approach through institutional support and competences of teaching staff, intelligibility of learning outcomes, care for comprehensive development of students, including cognitive, emotional, psychomotor, personal and professional dimensions, and in particular critical thinking skills, as well as student involvement in the creation of the study program. Accountability in turn is understood as conducting the teaching-learning process in consultation with external stakeholders in terms of both teaching staff and resources so that students are prepared for the requirements of the labour market. It focuses on sufficiency and quality of facilities as well as the need for continuous development. Finally, excellence is the ability to create independent standards which, initially, take the form of good practices. As Schindler and others argue (2015, p. 6–7), purposefulness, transformativity and accountability are stages on the way to excellence and each of these three categories is characterized by indicators which can be used as evidence for distinction. In other words, excellence is a dispersed category.

In the context of the holistic model developed by Schindler and others (2015), the new quality of education preparing for performing the teaching profession in Poland is clearly related to the four dimensions of the universal framework. Thus, criteria 1 (with the exception of student development) and 2 in the emergent model can be linked to purposefulness, criteria 1 (in terms of student development), 4, 8 as well as (partly) 3 and 5 stand for transformativity, whereas criteria 6, 10, 3 (in terms of certification/final verification of learning outcomes) and 5 (with regard to facilities and resources outside the university) are connected with accountability. Excellence – a disseminated category – is acknowledged in the Polish conception though its role is definitely far less central than in Schindler et al.'s (2015) proposal. Interestingly, criteria 7 and 9,

which are not exemplified in the Polish model are also absent in the universal framework. Thus, referring to the four general dimensions in Schindler et al.'s (2015) model, it can be stated that the Polish vision of new quality emerges from purposefulness, transformativity and accountability. Still, considering specific indicators within each quality criterion in Table 2, purposefulness and transformativity seem to dominate the Polish conception since their elements consistently feature in the three interpretations analysed. In other words, NIK, PKA and MNiSW highlight the role of pre-defined, student-oriented standards in quality education. Still, what remains fairly unclear is the role of both internal and, particularly, external stakeholders in formulating those standards. Their influence might come in the form of greater involvement of students in the creation of the study program or systematic participation of teachers-practitioners in designing and conducting classes. The category of accountability could also be reinforced through the provision of regular support to students of teaching courses and specialisations during both studies and internship as well as in the first years of professional activity. Most importantly, though, whether such, or any, modifications are introduced depends on the dominant perspective adopted in the context of Polish higher education.

All in all, Schindler et al. (2015) distinguish between two dominant approaches to quality in higher education: standards- and stakeholders-driven models. The former focuses on the dimension of purposefulness while the latter concentrates on accountability, i.e. responsibility to the public, and/or transformativity, i.e. providing learning experience beneficial to both students and employers (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007). The emergent model of the new quality of teacher training in Polish public institutes of higher education, with its focus on pre-determined criteria and student development, can be situated somewhere between the two extremes, perhaps with a slight inclination towards the standards-driven end. However, its current structure is just a transitional stability to be modified by, among others, circulated examples of good practice or further debate between NIK, PKA and MNiSW. As a result, the vision of quality abstracted from its three interpretations and rendered through the fragments underlined in Table 2 is expected to evolve with reference to the four broad dimensions of quality and/or its specific indicators. Thus, the Polish understanding of quality in higher education, shaped by both universal and culture-specific tendencies, is likely to undergo further, if not constant, changes whose nature might be easier to capture with the help of the emergent model proposed here.

References

Bogue, G. (1998). Quality Assurance in Higher Education: The Evolution of Systems and Design Ideals. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 99, 7–18, doi: 10.1002/ir.9901.

Cheng, Y. & Tam, W. (1997). Multi-models of Quality in Education. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 5(1), 22–34, doi: 10.1108/09684889710156558.

Deming, W. E. (1986). *Out of the Crisis*. Boston, MA: MIT Center for Advanced Engineering Study.

Díaz, A. R., Hortiguera, H., & Espinoza, V.M. (2015). Quality Assurance and Foreign Languages – Reflecting on Oral Assessment Practices in Two University Spanish Language Programs in Australia. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 12(3). Retrieved 23 December 2019 from https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol12/iss3/2.

Ewell, P. (2010). Twenty Years of Quality Assurance in Higher Education: What's Happened and What's Different? *Quality in Higher Education,* 16(2), 173–175, doi: 10.1080/13538322.2010.485728.

Feigenbaum, A. V. (1961). *Total Quality Control*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Harvey, L. (2005). A History and Critique of Quality Evaluation in the UK. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 13(4), 263–276, doi: 10.1108/09684880510700608.

Harvey, L., & Green, D. (1993). Defining Quality. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education,* 18 (1), 9–34, doi: 10.1080/0260293930180102.

MNiSW [Ministry of Science and Higher Education] (2012). Rozporządzenie Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dnia 17 stycznia 2012 r. w sprawie standardów kształcenia przygotowującego do wykonywania zawodu nauczyciela (Dz.U. 2012, poz. 131) [Decree by the Minister of Science and Higher Education of January 17, 2012, concerning the standard of education preparing for the teaching profession, OJ 2012, item 131]. Retrieved 10 April 2019 from http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/.

MNiSW [Ministry of Science and Higher Education] (2018a). Ustawa z dnia 20 lipca 2018 r. – Prawo o Szkolnictwie Wyższym i Nauce (Dz.U. 2018, poz. 1668) [Law on Higher Education and Science of 20 July, OJ 2018, item 1668]. Retrieved 5 April 2019 from http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/.

MNiSW [Ministry of Science and Higher Education] (2018b). Rozporządzenie Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dnia 12 września 2018 r. w sprawie kryteriów oceny programowej (Dz.U. 2018, poz. 1787) [Decree by the Minister of Science and Higher Education of September 12, 2018, concerning criteria of program evaluation, OJ 2018, item 1787]. Retrieved 20 February 2019 from http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/.

NIK [Supreme Audit Office] (2017). Przygotowanie do zawodu nauczyciela – Informacja

o wynikach kontroli [Preparation for the Teaching Profession – Report on Audit Results]. Retrieved 17 March 2019 from https://www.nik.gov.pl/aktualnosci/nik-o-przygotowaniu-do-zawodu-nauczyciela.html.

PKA [Polish Accreditation Committee] (2018). Statut Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej [Statute of the Polish Accreditation Committee]. Retrieved 10 March 2019 from http://www.pka.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Statut-PKA-1.pdf.

PKA [Polish Accreditation Committee] (2019). Wzory i procedury [Standards and Procedures]. Retrieved 17 March 2019 from https://www.pka.edu.pl/wzory-i-procedury.

Propozycja nowego standardu kształcenia przygotowującego do wykonywania zawodu nauczyciela [A Proposal for a New Standard of Education Preparing for the Teaching Profession] (2019). Retrieved 30 May 2019 from https://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl/edukacja/nowe-standardy-ksztalcenia-przygotowujacego-do-wykonywania-zawodu-nauczyciela,124790.html.

Schindler, L., Puls-Elvidge, S., Welzant, H., & Crawford, L. (2015). Definitions of Quality in Higher Education: A Synthesis of the Literature. *Higher Learning Research Communications,* 5(3), 3–13, doi: 10.18870/hlrc.v5i3.244.

Schwartzman, R. (1995). Are Students Customers? The Metaphoric Mismatch between Management and Education. *Education,* 116 (2), 215–220. Retrieved 30 December 2019 from http://roypoet.com/files/Are_Students_Customers. pdf.

Srikanthan, G., & Dalrymple, J. (2007). A Conceptual Overview of a Holistic Model for Quality in Higher Education. *International Journal of Educational Management,* 21(3), 173–193, doi: 10.1108/09513540710738647.

Tam, M. (2010). Measuring Quality and Performance in Higher Education. *Quality in Higher Education*, 7(1), 47–54, doi: 10.1080/13538320120045076.

Thomas, H. (2003). The Arguments for and the Meaning of Quality. *ELT Journal,* 57 (3), 234–241, doi: 10.1093/elt/57.3.234.

Weber, L. (2007). Quality Assurance in European Higher Education. In: L. Weber, & K. Dolgova-Dreyer (Eds.), *The Legitimacy of Quality Assurance in Higher Education: The Role of Public Authorities and Institutions* (pp. 17–30). Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Winder, R. E., & Judd, D. K. (1996). Organizational Orienteering: Linking Deming, Covey, and Senge in an Integrated Five Dimension Quality Model. In: *ASQC Seventh National Quality Management Conference Transactions*. American Society for Quality. Retrieved 17 January 2020 from www.ldri.com/articles/96orgorient.html.