

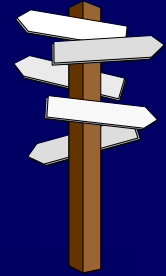
Types of external QA in Higher Education

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CARDS 2003

In-house seminar for AZVO, Zagreb, 27 November 2006

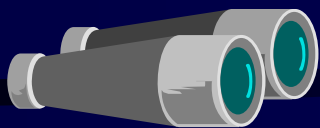
Lessons from first seminar

(Or feedback on the feedback)



1. Theory – practice
2. Differing views
 - “One man’s meat is another’s poison.”
 - expectations
 - needs
3. To be improved:
 - European examples
 - Staff participation
4. But remember: no recepies, no royal way!

☺ Thank you for your feedback! ☺



In this seminar

- I. Evaluation
- II. Accreditation
- III. Audit
- IV. Actual situation in Croatia
- V. Possible options for Croatia?

About types of external QA

*The term “quality assurance” in this report includes processes such as **evaluation**, **accreditation** and **audit**. (ESG, p. 5.)*

*[External QA activities] may involve evaluation, **review**, audit, **assessment**, accreditation or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the agency.*

(ESG, Guidelines to standard 3.3, p. 24.)

+ benchmarking

I. Evaluation

Possible interpretations

- Overarching term (includes all types)
- Narrow sense (special type of QA)

Do you agree?

How is the term used in Croatia?

I. Evaluation - Definitions

Evaluation (of quality or standards) is the process of examining and passing a **judgment** on the appropriateness or level of quality or standards.

www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/

Evaluation is systematic appraisal and highlighting of value or comparison **against objectives and targets**, and “measurement” of performance (assessment, as in quality assessment) **against set criteria**.

(FINHEEC Audit Manual, p. 32.)

I. Evaluation - Characteristics

Reference points:

- mission, goals of inst./program, and/or
- predefined criteria (→ accreditation, if minimum)

Report:

description – analysis + judgements – conclusions

Results / consequences:

not making decision, only recommendations

Follow-up: not necessarily built-in

Intentions:

- quality enhancement
- external view (publicity)

I. Evaluation – Example: EUA IEP

EUA = European University Association

- ~ 800 members in 45 countries
- conferences, projects, publications
- policy making role
- Institutional Evaluation Programme
as a service to members

<http://www.eua.be/eua/index.jsp>

I. Evaluation – EUA IEP

Launched in 1994

see handout

Over 150 univs evaluated

Sector-wide evaluations too (from 2001 on)

Intentions (of EUA):

- increase strategic capacities
- develop internal quality culture

Methodology:

self-evaluation + external peer-review (2 visits)

External evaluation of IEP in 2002

Self-reflection of IEP in 2005

I. Evaluation – EUA IEP

Philosophy

- fitness for purpose (goals of the univ.)
- institution as a whole, strategic management with possible other foci
- emphasis on the self-evaluation phase
- supportive yet critical

No criteria - **Four questions** instead



I. Evaluation – EUA IEP



The four questions:

1. What is the institution trying to do?
2. How is the institution trying to do it?
3. How does the institution know it works?
4. How does the institution change in order to improve?

P
D
C
A

Evaluation and recommendations by the team

Consistency: induction course + Guidelines

Questions, comments?



II. Accreditation

The word 'accreditation' (Latin ad + credere) means to prove something creditable and publicly acknowledge its worth in relation to external criteria. Accreditation usually refers either to an official approval of HEIs or their programmes or to the awarding of different quality labels to HEIs or their programmes.

(FINHEEC Audit Manual, p. 31.)

Problem with “official approval”:

Accreditation ≠ licensing



II. Accreditation



Accreditation (in HE)

Attestation of quality, proving credibility

By an independent professional organisation

Licensing

Permission for operation, administrative act

By relevant state authority

Croatia:

Accreditation is considered as a legal process, to “approve” institutions (OECD Country Report ‘06)

Am I right or wrong?

II. Accreditation - Characteristics

Reference points:

- predefined **criteria** (+ mission, goals in cases)
- minimum, “**threshold**” requirements

Report:

description – analysis + judgements – conclusions

Results / consequences:

Accreditation decision (yes-no) (+ conditions to be met)
+ recommendations

Based on evaluation!

Follow-up: usually built-in

Focus on: **accountability**

cf. slide 7

II. Accreditation - in Europe

Types (as to ownership)

- **National** (regional), public, obligatory
- **Private**, interntl org., “label”, voluntary
e.g. EQUIS + EPAS, www.efmd.org/equis see handout
- **Self-accreditation** (e.g. Sweden, beyond national)

History, trends - East and West

Mixed model: ACQUIN www.acquin.org see handout

II. Accreditation – Example: NVAO

NVAO, *Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie*
Accreditation Organisation of The Netherlands and Flanders
www.nvao.nl

In operation (in this form) since 2004

Major tasks:

- accreditation of existing study programmes
- validation of new study programmes (initial accr.)

II. Accreditation – NVAO

The Dutch-Flemish speciality:

- assessing body (VBI / VAI) \neq
- accrediting body (NVAO)
- + recognition by the minister

Remember: accreditation \neq licensing!

Assessing bodies (VAIs) work within the limits of the accreditation and validation frameworks (made by NVAO, see next slide)

NVAO assesses these bodies \rightarrow annual list
(7 VAIs in 2006, NL – VLIR and VLHORA, B)

The accreditation framework

- assessment framework, consisting of subjects, facets and criteria
- rules for accreditation
- criteria for assessment of the followed procedure and of the report of the Visiting and Assessing Institution (VAI)
- a description of the procedure used for accreditation of existing degree courses.





Assessment subjects* („aspects of quality”)

- aims and objectives of the degree course
- programme
- deployment of staff
- facilities and provisions
- internal quality assurance
- results

→ facets, criteria for each subject, as e.g. ...

(see [handout](#) for “programme” facets and criteria)

* *Not to be mixed with “subjects” taught at courses*

II. Accreditation – NVAO

Features of assessment (VAI)

- self-assessment by HEI
- **four-point scale** as per each subject and facet (excellent, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory)
- **no quantitative criteria** (except credit min.), [threshold!]
- **internal QA expected on the programme level** (3 facets)
- report ends with a conclusive assessment

VAI report sent to NVAO by HEI, request for accr.

NVAO assesses the report (may request additional info)

→ **makes the accreditation decision** (6 years)

Questions, comments?



III. Audit

Auditing is independent external evaluation to ascertain whether a QA system conforms to its stated objectives, is effective and fits its purpose. Auditing does not address the objectives or the results of operations as such but evaluates the processes that the HEI uses to manage and improve the quality of its education and other activities.

(FINHEEC Audit Manual, p. 31.)

“Audit” is also used in a general sense, like “evaluation”!

III. Audit - Characteristics

Reference points:

- (predefined) **targets** and/or **criteria**

Report:

description – analysis + judgements – conclusions
+ recommendations

Results / consequences:

Audit decision (passed or re-audit), certificate
Based on evaluation!

Follow-up: in case of re-audit

Focus on: **internal QA system!**

cf. slide 7, 15

III. Audit – Example: FINHEEC

By Višnja Petrović

AZVO experience in Finland

IV. Actual situation in Croatia

Evaluation Accreditation Audit

Inst. / faculty	(✓) + planned	planned
New progr.	✓	
Exist. progr.	???	
Subject		
Theme		

Clear tasks, roles, dividing lines? Parallelism?

V. Possible options for Croatia?

Evaluation Accreditation Audit

Inst. / faculty		✓ →	(Later)
New progr.		✓	
Exist. progr.	✓	← ✓	
Subject			
Theme	✓		

Council(s) + Agency? Changing responsibilities?
One organisation?

Your views?



Thank you for your
attention!

