

Methodology - Involving External Experts

## Methodology - Involving External Experts

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### In this seminar


- I. Relevance of the theme (activity scheme, ESG)
- II. Expert roles and tasks
- III. Selection of experts
- IV. Training and briefing of experts  
[ Guidance for expert panels ]
- V. Feedback from experts

Questions, comments at any time!

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### Overview of evaluation steps (recapitulation)

1. Criteria and procedures
2. Self evaluation
3. Expert tasks
4. Selection of experts
5. Training of experts
6. Site visit
7. Evaluation report
8. The results of evaluation
9. Feedback
10. Monitoring and follow-up
11. Closing the quality loop



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### I. Recapitulation: activity scheme – relevance of involving external experts

	<u>evaluation</u>	<u>Accreditation</u>	<u>Audit</u>
Institution new + operating	✓	✓	✓
Programme new + operating	✓	✓	✓
Theme	✓	X	X

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### I. ESG: Reference to external experts?

Quite a lot!

#### 2.4.4 Processes fit for purpose [G]

- *insistence that the experts undertaking the external quality assurance activity have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their task;*
- *the exercise of care in the selection of experts;* [independence, no conflict of interest]
- *the provision of appropriate briefing or training for experts;*
- *the use of international experts;*

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### I. ESG reference<sub>2</sub>

#### 2.6.6 Independence [of the agency] [G]

- *the definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence*

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I. **ESG reference<sub>3</sub>**

2.6.7 Criteria and processes [S]

These processes will normally be expected to include:

- an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits as decided by the agency

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I. **ESG reference<sub>4</sub>**

2.6.8 Accountability [of the agency] [G]

- the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts
- (subcontractors)
- the agency has in place internal QA procedures which include (...) and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development)

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II. **Expert roles and tasks**

Role of experts:

- external party to HEI
- competent but not omniscient! (should not pretend knowing everything better...)
- critic + friend (good advice)
- external party to agency?

The “small country effect”  
good and bad examples (Scandinavia vs CEE)

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II. **Division of labour**

	agency	experts	council
organisation	✓	(✓)	
visit, checking	✓	✓	
report writing	?	?	
recommendations	(✓)	✓	✓
accr. decision	(✓)		✓
publication	✓		✓
lessons	QA (+QE)	(QA+) QE	QA + QE

QA = quality assurance  
QE = quality of education

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II. **Selection of experts<sub>0</sub>**

**PURPOSE!** → competence needed

- evaluation
- Accreditation
- Audit
- inst. / fac.
- programme
- theme

↓

**selection of experts**

- “type” (pool)
- individual


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III. **Selection of experts<sub>1</sub>**

**Skills, competence** (ESG 2.4.4)

- context knowledge (national, internat.)
- disciplinary knowledge (theory)
- professional knowledge / experience (practice)
- QA experience
- evaluation / audit experience
- international experience

Peers (field, status, rank)  
Audit: certification bodies?



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III. **Selection of experts<sub>2</sub>**

Student participation, options: (ESG 2.6.7)

- written submissions invited
- oral input, meeting with students at visit
  - organised (usually by HEI)
  - ad hoc
- student member(s) on the expert panel
  - full member (rights and obligations!)
  - training

Selection of student member(s), options:

- by agency
- delegation by student organisation

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III. **Selection of experts<sub>3</sub>**

Independence of experts (ESG 2.4.4)

- from HEI
- from agency?

No conflict of interest (ESG 2.6.8)

- agency policy
- declaration signed by expert

Objective, impartial approach

Code of Ethics?

example: HAC, [www.mab.hu/english/doc/ethics.doc](http://www.mab.hu/english/doc/ethics.doc)  
see handout

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III. **Selection of experts<sub>4</sub>**

International experts, options: (ESG 2.4.4)

- in Board / Council (AR, OAQ, HETAC etc)
- in expert panels (many countries)
- International Advisory Board (HSV, HAC etc)
- ad hoc / project consulting
- (full time employees)

Selection aspects:

- reputation
- availability (actual "usefulness")

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III. **Selection of experts<sub>5</sub>**

Nomination and appointment (ESG 2.6.6)

*"... autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence"*

By agency (Croatia: Council - and/or Agency?)

Appointment procedure:


- proposal
- checking availability
- informing HEI (right of objection!)
- decision and appointment

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IV. **Training and briefing of experts<sub>1</sub>**

When?

- general training (e.g. yearly)
- specific training (given task)
- briefing: update on the given task
- general briefing, e.g. newsletter



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IV. **Training of experts<sub>2</sub>**

Who?

- agency
- regulatory bodies (ministry)
- peers
- QA experts
- international experts?
- combination

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IV. **Training of experts<sub>3</sub>**

How?

- time, time, time
- “soft touch” (or experts know everything...)
- combination of written and oral info
- location: at agency or somewhere else?
- synergy effects! (learn from each other)

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IV. **Training of experts<sub>4</sub>**

What?

- national and international context
- legal regulations
- purpose and principles of Evaluation
- roles
- methodology, procedures
- criteria (→ consistency!!!)
- how to execute / implement the review (preparation, visit, report writing)
- group work and decision, consensus

Code of conduct?  
Guidebook / manual for experts?

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IV. **Training of experts - example**

evaluation    Accreditation    Audit

	EUA		(QAA)
Institution			
Exist. progr.			
New progr.			
Theme			

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IV. **EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme** (recap. from seminar 2)

The four questions:

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

Evaluation and recommendations by the team  
Consistency: induction course + Guidelines

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IV. **Training of experts - EUA<sub>1</sub>**

Induction course

- general + specific training, once a year (Autumn)
- 2 days, somewhere in a hotel in Europe
- participants:
  - experts (pool, most of them former rectors)
  - panel secretaries (pool, HEI and agency employees)
  - invited guests (reflecting on the programme)
  - EUA staff
- purpose: general training + prepar. for next yr eval.
- plenary and group sessions

Speciality: the programme is international by nature

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IV. **Training of experts – EUA<sub>2</sub>**


Induction course, content elements

1. General context, European developments
2. Specific context, EUA IEP
  - current EUA issues
  - IEP experience, lessons from previous years
  - Guidelines (purpose, method, visits, feedback, reports, language; - dos and donts)
3. Preparations for next round
  - list of HEIs requesting evaluation (decision by SC)
  - appointment of teams
  - logistics

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IV. **Training of experts – EUA<sub>3</sub>**

 IEP experience, lessons from previous years

- reports from previous panel chairs\*
- reports from secretaries
- summary report by EUA staff
- external report by invited person\*\* (external review of IEP in 2002)

\* Speciality: many chairs (former rectors!) had experience from the other side, their institutions being evaluated as well!

\*\* Remember: “external feedback mechanism” (ESG 2.6.8)

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V. **Feedback from experts**

ESG 2.6.8, Accountability (of agency)

“... collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development”

Feedback:

- oral or written
- organised (regular, not ad hoc)
- documented! (easier in written form)
- processing → enhancement measures

CLOSING THE QUALITY LOOP 

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V. **Feedback from experts - example**

	<u>evaluation</u>	<u>Accreditation</u>	<u>Audit</u>
Institution		HAC	
Exist. progr.			
New progr.			
Theme			

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V. **Feedback from experts - HAC**

see handout

Subject: Institutional accreditation

Timing: Yearly, after final accr. reports

Form: Written questionnaire (anonymous)

Questions: closed (also grades)  
open (strengths, weakn., enhanc. opp.)

Processing: Secretariat

Discussion: HAC Quality Development Committee →  
HAC Plenary session → enhanc. measures

(Summary results to be published on website)

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Thank you for your attention!

