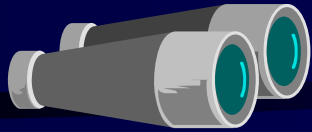


***Methodology -
Involving External Experts***

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CARDS 2003**

In-house seminar for AZVO, Zagreb, 25 May 2007



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!

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



I.

Recapitulation: activity scheme – relevance of involving external experts

evaluation

Accreditation

Audit

Institution
new + operating

Programme
new + operating

Theme

✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
✓		

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;*

ESG reference₂

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*

ESG reference₃

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*

I.

ESG reference₄

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)*

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)

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

Selection of experts₁

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?



Selection of experts₂

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

Selection of experts₃

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

see handout

Selection of experts₄

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”)

Selection of experts₅

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

Training and briefing of experts₁

When?

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



Training of experts₂

Who?

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

Training of experts₃

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)

Training of experts₄

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?

Training of experts - example

evaluation Accreditation Audit

Institution

Exist. progr.

New progr.

Theme

	EUA		(QAA)

EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme

(recap. from seminar 2)

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

Training of experts - EUA₁


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

Training of experts – EUA₂

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

Training of experts – EUA₃



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)



Feedback from experts

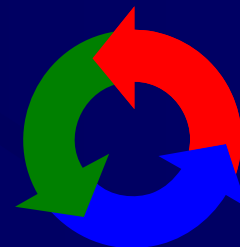
ESG 2.6.8, Accountability (of agency)

“... 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



Feedback from experts - example

evaluation Accreditation Audit

Institution	HAC	
Exist. progr.		
New progr.		
Theme		

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**)

Thank you for your
attention!

