

The Flemish institutional reviews and the conduct of QA of programmes

ECA-NVAO Seminar: Institutional and Programme Reviews:
Towards New Combinations

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Outline of the workshop

- The institutional review in Flanders
- The conduct of QA of programmes
- The new QA system in Flanders
- From theory to practice: University of Antwerp
- Discussion
- Concluding remarks



The institutional review in Flanders

- 5 universities and 13 university colleges
- Trust and dialogue in the context of peer review
- Appreciative Approach
 - Ownership of the institution
 - Context of the institution as a point of reference
 - Create added value
- Boost for quality culture
- Assessment of the effectiveness of educational policy
- Advice on the conduct of the QA of programmes
 - Ensuring quality
 - Quality enhancement



Essential elements of educational quality at programme level **can/cannot** be assessed in an institutional review

- Intended learning outcomes
- Curriculum
- Teaching and learning environment
- Learning assessments
- Achieved learning outcomes



The conduct of QA of programmes

- Gain insight into the quality of essential elements of educational quality through the conduct:
 - Intended and achieved learning outcomes, curriculum, teaching and learning environment and learning assessments
=> **quality features corresponding to ESG (Quality Code)**
- Conduct = variation on a theme:
 - (Multi-)annual plans, management reviews
 - Programme evaluation
 - Thematical audit
 - Quality features and ESG
- Main concerns:
 - Involvement of (external) stakeholders and peers
 - Publicly accessible information on programme quality



The external perspective

- Strong advice to reinforce the external, independent view at programme level
 - External?
 - Selection?
 - Expertise?
 - Role?
 - Students?

=> The less frequently the external perspective is introduced ,
the more elaborate this perspective should be



Transparent and public information

- Public information on programme quality
 - Autonomy and ownership on QA of programmes implies public accountability
 - Public information ≠ publishing a report
 - QA based on results and outcomes of conduct
 - Decision on quality for each programme by institutional board
 - Strengths, opportunities, actions (new!) and timeframe (new!)
 - Recognizable and traceable
 - Motivation behind a conclusion, decision or action?
 - Sources?
 - In the future: risk-based
 - Institutional portfolio, programme information, data...
 - Programmes as starting point



In a QA system with institutional reviews, comparing the quality of programmes of different institutions will no longer be possible

- No clustering of programme assessments
- Other ways of benchmarking?



The new QA system in Flanders

- Accreditation vs. review: focus on programme quality
- 6-year extension of the accreditation for existing programmes
- NVAO = gatekeeper
- Conduct as part of the educational policy
- Guidance and support from the institutional level
 - “All institutions have found the right balance in developing a central policy that is rooted in initiatives at programme level.”*
- Sharing of good practices and collaborative learning
- Evaluation and monitoring
 - Transfer of information/data to the institutional level
- NVAO: assessment of educational policy and conduct



The new QA system in Flanders

- The institutional review in the new Flemish QA system
 - Connection of educational policy with educational vision and societal challenges
 - Policy implementation and continuous evaluation and improvement of effectiveness
 - Conduct of QA of programmes
 - Connection between conduct and quality features
 - Quality culture within the institution



Programme evaluation by an external committee (and the resulting reports) is the preferred way to demonstrate quality (features) of programmes

From theory to practice: University of Antwerp

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