ENQA review: focusing on the role of the Chair

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(chaired reviews of VLHORA, PKA and ACSUCYL)
Primary roles and responsibilities
(adapted from the OAQ briefing pack)

the Chair has to:
• take overall responsibility for the functioning of the review, the assessment of the Agency against the ENQA membership provisions/ ESG and the production of the review report

as well as defined Roles
• before .. the site visit
• during .. the site visit
• after .. the site visit

there are also (not in any formal briefing pack) some other - equally important – roles
(these are less easily ‘defined’ / ‘written down’)
before the site visit

• liaise with the organising body and the Agency under review to establish a (provisional) timetable of activities for the site visit (in practice – the Secretary is often best placed to do the detailed planning/liaison)

• review the documentation provided by the Agency and any other information available prior to the site visit, to ensure it is complete and adequate for the needs of the panel

• READ THE SER THOROUGHLY

• (make informal contact with the other members of the panel?)
during the site visit (1 – of 3)

at the pre(briefing) meeting for Panel members:

• get ALL panel members to discuss their ‘first impressions’ from the information received to –
  – agree the lines of enquiry to be pursued
  – perhaps – allocate approximate ‘areas of interest’ depending on panel member’s expertises

and the ‘unwritten bit’

• try to ensure that the team start to work together ..
  no ‘dominant individuals’ – right from the start

• check the ‘Ryanair principle’ ..
  best to ‘leave baggage at home!’ .. (can be ‘expensive’ )
**During the site visit (2 - of 3)**

*During the formal site visit* Chair all meetings and discussions to:

- ensure that ALL identified lines of inquiry are dealt with
- check that any new evidence made available is recorded
- ensure that ALL of the standards have been addressed by more than one session (‘triangulation’ of evidence)
- (make time for a quick summary agreement between sessions)

and the ‘unwritten bit’

- **STICK TO THE TIMETABLE!** NO ‘GOSSIPING’ !!
- ensure ALL panel members are involved – as equally as possible (may mean [politely] ‘sitting on’ someone – early on)
- ensure that any ‘party lines’ are NOT pursued (some will try !)
during the site visit (3 - of 3)

at the end of the site visit

ensure that

• ALL OF THE STANDARDS have been addressed
• ALL PANEL ARE AGREED on ALL outcomes
• AND there is VALID EVIDENCE to support each decision
• the Secretary has a clear understanding of the agreed outcomes

and the ‘unwritten bit’ .. concerns the Chair’s ‘feed back’

• agree with the other Panel members what is going to be said
• and HOW it is going to be said ! (tone is important)
• DON’T be too specific and DON’T get into discussions
After the site visit

• contribute to and comment on the Secretary’s initial draft
• ensure that ALL Panel members are involved in completion of the Draft Report that goes to the Agency
• carefully assess the Agency’s comments on the Draft Report
• agree with the Panel any final changes
• submit the Final Report - within the timescale allowed!

and the unwritten bit:

• some organisers may also ask for ‘feedback’ – ensure (like the report) that there is evidence for anything that is reported back
a couple of final thoughts

in my experience ...

   a well informed panel, working as a team, politely and constructively, and treating others with dignity

   gets a lot more achieved

than a (poorly briefed / ‘know it all’) panel that conducts an aggressive / confrontational site visit

(but ..

sometimes it can useful to play a little good cop / bad cop too!)
really sorry I can’t be there but please contact me if you have any thoughts / comments / questions ..

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