

**ENQA review:
focussing on the role of the Chair**

Nick Harris

(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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