

EQArep Project

Transparency of European Higher Education through Quality Assurance

EQArep Final Conference, Brussels, 23 September 2014

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EQArep project – why?

- There is a clear need for detailed and reliable information on individual study programmes and higher education institutions
- Quality assurance aims at providing transparent and reliable information on the quality of Higher Education

BUT....

- Review reports vary considerably in terms of structure and content
- We are unsure how much they are used, by whom, and how useful they are for the users
- Their contribution to the comparative dimension of transparency of higher education at the European level is still relatively limited

QA Reporting – Policy Context

European Standards and Guidelines (2005)

- **Standard**
 - Reports should be **published** and should be written in a style which is clear and readily accessible to its **intended readership**. Any decision, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.
- **Guidelines**
 - In order to ensure maximum benefit from external quality assurance processes, it is important that reports should meeting the **identified needs** of the **intended readership**
 - Reports are sometimes intended for **different readership groups** and this will require careful attention to structure, content, style and tone
 - Reports should ... cover ...
 - Description; Analysis (including relevant evidence); Conclusions; Commendations; Recommendations
 - There should be sufficient explanation to enable a **lay reader** to understand the purposes of the review, its form and the criteria in making decisions

QA Reporting – Policy Context

European Standards and Guidelines (2015?)

- **Standard**
 - **Full reports** should be published, clear and accessible to the **academic community**, **external partners** and **other interested individuals**. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the report, the **decision** should be **published** together with the report.
- **Guidelines**
 - The report by the experts is the basis for the **institution's follow-up action** to the external evaluation. ... the report ... needs ... to cover
 - Context; Description (including **experts** involved); Evidence, analysis and findings; Conclusions; Features of **good practice**, demonstrated by the institution; Recommendations for follow-up action
 - The preparation of a **summary report** may be useful
 - The **factual accuracy** of a report is improved if the institution is given the opportunity to point out errors of fact before the report is finalised

EQA Reports – questions?

- What are the key features of a report that can provide a reliable account of the review event and assure that the various purposes of external quality assurance have been addressed?
- How can a report adequately inform a diverse audience?
- Is one report sufficient?
- Should there be different reports for different audiences?

EQArep project – who?

- Consortium of ENQA and four of its member agencies:
 - ASHE, Croatia
 - EKKA, Estonia
 - OAQ, Switzerland
 - QQI, Ireland
- Stakeholder Advisory Board:
 - Business Europe
 - ESU
 - EUA
 - EURASHE

EQArep project – what it entailed

- Mapping of the current publication practices and analysis of the typology of reports, their purposes, use, etc.
 - Exploration of the different needs of stakeholders for transparent and comparable information, and the role that EQA review reports can/are expected to/play
 - Provision of good practice and recommendations/standards for different types of quality assurance reports in the EHEA
 - Evaluation as to whether a European template for quality assurance (summary) reports is feasible
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- Better understanding of the needs of (potential) users
 - Increased comparability
 - Better information for stakeholders

Reminder of Activities and Stages

- Survey on stakeholders' requirements for transparency
- Workshop for stakeholders of quality assurance (Tallinn, May 2013)
- Survey of QA agencies on publication of quality assurance reports: purpose, structure and content
- Analysis of a sample of QA reports
- Workshop for quality assurance agencies on publication of review reports (Zurich, January 2014)
- Elaboration of recommendations (and a possible template) for external evaluation reports
- Final dissemination conference (Brussels, September 2014)
- Final report and publication

Final Dissemination Conference

- Purpose of Review Reports
- Perspective of Stakeholders
- Perspective of Quality Assurance Agencies
- Great Expectations!
 - Higher Education Institutions
 - Students
 - Labour Market
 - National Actors
 - European Commission

Thank you



agency for science and higher education



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



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swiss center of accreditation and
quality assurance in higher education



Thank you!

