Focus on the role of the secretary

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The role of the secretary

Chief liason person
between the chair, the panel members, ENQA secretariat and the agency
Let’s make a simile: ENQA review as a music performance
The role of the secretary

- Chair
- Panel members
- Secretary
- Agency (contact person)
- ENQA = composer

ENQA = composer
The role of the secretary

Chair

Panel members

Secretary

ENQA secretariat=
composer

Agency=
public
The role of the secretary

Chair

Secretary

Panel
experts= musicians

Agency= public

ENQA
secretariat= composer
Chair = the diva

Secretary = the conductor

Panel experts = musicians

Agency = public

ENQA secretariat = composer
The secretary has a preeminent role but…

is he/she “the boss”? Not really; he should not be…
The secretary has a special role but…

is he/she “the boss”?
Not really; he should not be…
The secretary has a special role but...

is he/she “the boss”?  
But rather

**Supporting misión:** Creating the conditions so that the other members of the panel and the chair can conduct their missions in the best way possible
Positioning/ relationship with the chair

Leading voice
Overall responsibility
(visit and report)

Delegation
Distribution of task
Respectives roles

Coordination
Facilitation
Support
Keeping the rules
Tasks

Panel member

Ensuring **logistics coordination and communication** throughout the process

Secretary

**Assist** the chair in **preparing the visit**

**Ensuring respect of the procedures** (particularly **during the visit**)

**Assist** the chair in **preparing the report**
Responsibilities as a panel member

• To have a proper knowledge of ENQA guidelines and criteria (training, analysis of other ENQA review reports)

• Read and analyze the SER and the annexes

• Read and analyze previous review reports (previous ENQA evaluations, follow up reports)
• Have a look at the agency website
• Contribute actively during the preparation and the conduction of the visit
• Contribute actively to the preparation of the report
Ensuring coordination and communication

Establishing and keeping the **time-line for the whole review** (Prior meetings, Site visit, Report):

- Establish clear deadlines
- Keep team on track

**Manage logistic arrangements** (together with agency)

- Travel arrangements: arrival and departure times
- Hotel bookings (plus room for the previous meetings)
- Evening meals and lunches (private)
- Other arrangements:
  - Equipment: printer, computer, internet access
  - Identification of the different participants (small panels with names)
Ensuring coordination and communication

Act as the **chief liason person** between the chair, the panel members, ENQA secretariat and the agency

- Breaking the ice (making early introductions to the Agency, the Chair and the rest of the panel)
- Hold telephone meetings/Skype with the chair regularly (2-3 recommended)
- Keep ENQA secretariat informed throughout the whole process
- Make sure that everyone in the agency, specially those with low level skills, are comfortable during the meeting
Agree on a visit programme with the chair and the agency

**Type of interviews ENQA review panel is required to conduct**

- Executive board (first-last meeting)
- Responsible for quality assurance/ group preparing the SER
- Responsible/managers for the different procedures (evaluation, programme accreditation)
- Chairs and members of the different permanent commissions
- External evaluators
- Staff
- Representatives of the Ministry/Government
- Students (as experts, as members of advisory bodies)
- Stakeholders evaluated/accredited (HEIs). Different hierarchical levels:
  - Technical IQA personnel
  - Vicerectors in charge of quality/programmes/accreditation
  - Rectors
- Other stakeholders? (e.g. employers)
Agree on a visit programme with the chair and the agency.

*Type of interviews ENQA review panel is required to conduct*

- A final debriefing to the agency with some main conclusions of the visit should be scheduled (but not advancing results on compliance)
- A previous meeting with a senior technical staff could be scheduled for clarification on technical issues.
Agree on a visit programme with the chair and the agency.

*Pay attention to:*

- All relevant stakeholders must be interviewed
- Number of people in each interview (no more than 6 people)
- Arrange translation services if necessary (the translator must be independent from the agency)
- The duration of each meeting (at least 45 minutes and more if translation services are required)
- Visit of the facilities should be included in the visit
Assistant the chair in preparing the visit

Agree on a visit programme with the chair and the agency.

Pay attention to:

- Include sufficient breaks and debriefing moments
- Include time to look up at the documentation not included in annex (confidential documents, quality manuals, minutes of meetings)
- Avoid one single person to be present in many different interviews (avoid “control” by a specific person, get a diverse view)
- Be careful when mixing different hierarchical levels (low levels could speak more freely if hierarchy is not present)
- In some situations, Skype meetings could be possible (presence of international experts), but be aware of the potential practical problems
Assist the chair in preparing the content and dynamics of the site visit

Gather individual contributions

Expert 1
Expert 2
Expert 3

Main issues

Questions/Issues for each interview
Distribution of roles among the experts
A. ENQA CRITERION 1 / ESG PART 2: EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

ESG 2.1 USE OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External quality assurance procedures should take into account the</td>
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<td>effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described</td>
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<tr>
<td>in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Guidelines:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The standards for internal quality assurance contained in Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process.</td>
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<td>It is important that ....</td>
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| Evidence indicating compliance                                      |

| Evidence that might indicate non compliance                         |

| Need for clarification/extra documentation                         |
Assist the chair in preparing the visit

Some chairs like to leave more room to improvisation

- Flexibility to adapt
- Organization
Assist the chair in preparing the visit

My personal point of view

• Establish a framework
• But do not fix it all (you never know what can happen in a site visit)- Adapt to uncertainty
Ensuring respect of the procedures (specially during the visit)

- Ensure that the **terms of reference** of the review are respected (timeline, scope of the review, etc.)
- Distribute documentation, including the SER to the rest of the review panel
- Ensure that **all criteria are covered in a systematic way** and that the panel gets enough **evidence** to support conclusions
  - Take notes
  - Keep a record of matters which require further clarification
- **Report any possible problems**, indicences (changes of timing), conflicts of interest, etc to the ENQA secretariat
- Draft, if appropriate, together with the chair, **an informal feedback letter** to the ENQA board on the review process
Assist the chair in preparing the report

Prepare a draft report

Mainly your responsibility!

Block at least two solid weeks

After incorporating changes, send to the agency or factual amendments

Send the final versión of the report to the agency and ENQA

Some chairs/secretary like to prepare a draft report before the visit
Assist the chair in preparing the report

The final report must:

• Accurately reflect the findings of the panel
• Provide evidence, analysis and conclusions against each ENQA membership criterion
• Ensure that the requirements of the exercise are met (Type A or B review)
• Take into account the national context

Provide a good basis for the ENQA board to make its decisión on membership

Provide a useful tool for the ongoing development of the Agency itself

After the final report you could be requested for clarifications by ENQA’s board or/and EQAR
Concluding comments

• It is a lot of work
• It is a very interesting “anthropologic” experience
• **Remember to be flexible:** be organized but leave room to adapt to the aleas of the visit

![Thumbs up emoji]
Thank you!