

vluhr

Quality Assurance

Second or subsequent review against the ESG
value of the process for further development of the agency

ENQA AGENCY REVIEWS' SEMINAR -
Cologne - 1 June 2022

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- Flemish Higher Education Council - Quality Assurance
- Small Brussels based agency
- Established in 2013
 - merger of two former QA-agencies
 - same organisational and operational structure
 - including a joint manual for programme reviews
- Flanders: shift from programme reviews => institutional reviews in 2015
- Focus
 - Tailor-made programme evaluation
 - Institutional quality enhancement
 - Improvement-oriented approach
- ENQA reviews:
 - 2008 / 2009
 - 2014
 - 2019

- 2014: ENQA review
- 2015 shift in QA system => VLUHR QA 2.0
 - Same procedures for evaluation (ESG 2015-proof)
 - Same organisational and operational structure
- 2016: consolidation
- 2017: start reflection on meeting the ESG
 - Benchmark with other agencies
 - Continuous reflection with stakeholders
 - Start implementation: (complaints procedure, follow up procedure)
- 2018:
 - Continuation measures 2017
 - Start drafting SAR

- A comprehensive or a concise SAR?
- Starting from scratch?
- Language of the SAR?
- Annexes: many? language?

- Feedback from stakeholders: structural and additional
- Feedback from the team, Advisory Board, Board
- Approval by the Board

- Scrutiny by ENQA
- Final SAR to all stakeholders expected to participate in the interviews

Preparing for the site visit



- Composition of the panel
- Visit schedule: agreement between panel and agency
- Invite stakeholders for interviews
- Need for interpreter?
- Additional documents on request of the panel
- Practical arrangements:
 - ENQA review coordinator
 - Shared responsibility of the staff

- Exciting event for a QA agency
- Furnishing of the premises
- Presence of staff and Board during the whole site visit
- Briefing of the stakeholders
 - Informative
 - Not a training
- Open discussions
 - Gives trust
 - Enhancement-led
- Oral presentation by the panel
 - Impressions
 - perceived strengths and weaknesses

- Comprehensive report
 - Evidence
 - Examples
 - Details
- Feedback from agency
- Final report
- Identify follow-up actions
- ENQA Board decision
- Publication SAR and panel report together with ENQA decision on website
- EQAR decision

Follow up

- Follow up report
 - 2 years
 - Stimulus
 - Actions and results
- Progress visit
 - Opportunity to have this enhancement-driven discussion
 - Discussing possible challenges for the agency

Follow up

of the recommendations and suggestions

- ESG part 1
 - Recommendation: give explicit attention to a number of elements of ESG Part 1
 - These elements have been taken into account in the new manual for programme assessments
- Follow up
 - Recommendation: follow-up procedure should be considered a mandatory part of the assessment procedure
 - In the new manuals, the follow-up procedure is fully integrated in the assessment process

Follow up

of the recommendations and suggestions

- VLUHR QA Board
 - Recommendation: QA Board should read all reports before publication
 - At least 2 members of the QA Board will read the report before publication
 - Gives the QA Board the opportunity to ask for clarification
 - The panel remains the owner of the content of the report
- Thematic analysis
 - Recommendation: a stronger focus on thematic analysis
 - The QA Board discussed a discussion note on thematic analysis. In this note the QA Board prioritised topics for further thematic analysis such a first results of the European Approach.

Follow up

of the recommendations and suggestions

- International projects
 - Advise: focus more on international visibility and participation in international projects
 - From 2019 on VLUHR QA strengthened its activity in this area:
 - VLUHR QA plays a role in many Erasmus+ KA3 projects mainly on quality assurance to strengthen its international network
 - New website to make VLUHR QA more visible
 - Strengthened commitment within ENQA

Follow up

of the recommendations and suggestions

- Governance
 - QA board
 - composed of four independent members (no students)
 - deliberate choice to avoid representatives from Flemish higher education institutions
 - ensure the independence of VLUHR QA as an independent agency within the Flemish Higher Education Council
 - Recommendation: strengthen the governance by involving more stakeholders.
 - June 2020: QA Board meeting with a wider group of stakeholder dedicated to VLUHR QA's governance
 - Increase in members of the QA Board
 - ENQA progress visit

Our challenges (2019)

- Small organisation in a competitive market.
 - defining new focus and role after system change
- visibility in the public debate
 - national and international

Challenges defined by the panel

- Stakeholder participation
- Thematic analysis
- International positioning
- optimisation of standards

First solutions

- New framework: suggestions panel included (standards, follow up procedure, role of Board approval reports)
- Stronger focus on thematic analysis
- Higher involvement in international projects
- Strengthening of governance

new challenges

- Thematic analyses
- Involvement of stakeholders
- positioning in the competitive market
 - European Approach

progress visit
(spring 2022)

- flexibility versus sustainability of the organisation
- focus on Flemish higher education inspired by the European and international context
- suggestions for optimising stakeholder involvement
- strengthening vision on thematic analyses
- strengthen role as expertise network

policy plan
(2023 - 2027)

- Small organisation in a competitive market
- Newly defined focus and role
- intensified stakeholder involvement