



INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

Professionalization of Quality Assurance

The view from the agencies

*Ton Vroeijenstijn
The Netherlands*

INQAAHE: 20 years of professionalization

Jewel in the crown:

Guidelines of Good Practice:

- Benchmark for an EQA agency to be used for professionalization
- Informally standards setting



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Professionalization starts with an adequate Business plan and policy statement



Business plan and policy statement

- Object of assessment
- Aims of assessment
- Independence EQA agency
- Quality concept and criteria
- Decision making process
- Financial and human resources
- Internal quality assurance



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Professionalization asks for a clear process of assessment



The process

- is based on self-assessment and external review.
- Is based on clear documentation
- is well known and made public
- respects the internal quality assurance activities of an HEI; the requirements for self-assessment are in line with it.
- Assure equal treatment and consistency of the judgements



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Professionalization asks for professional staff



Staff

- Recruitment
 - From HE or outside?
 - Discipline experts or generalist?
- Competencies
 - Academic training
 - Generic skills
 - analytical skills
 - Skill for synthesizing
 - Communication skills: oral and in writing
 - Training skills
- role
 - Organiser
 - Facilitator
 - Secretary/report writer
 - Track keeper



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Professionalization of the external experts



External experts

- Nomination and appointment
 - Who are those experts?
 - Not only peers
 - Primus inter pares
 - From outside the country?
- Training
 - Explaining criteria
 - Ins and outs of quality assessment
 - Does and don'ts during site visits
- Independence/no conflict of interest

INQAAHE and professionalization

From Guidelines of Good practice to Harmonization of quality assurance

- Shared concept of quality
 - *Many definitions and concepts.*
 - *David Woodhouse (2006) Q=FFP*
 - *OK, but one step more: What is quality??*





What is quality??

Quality is achieving our goals and aims in an efficient and effective way, assuming that the goals and aims reflect the requirements of all our stakeholders in an adequate way.

Furthermore:

- ❑ Shared set of criteria
- ❑ Shared approach in quality assessment
- ❑ Shared rules for decision making