

External reviews of agencies The ENQA experience

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Why are agencies externally reviewed?

How are agencies externally reviewed?

What is the impact? What is the experience?

Why external reviews of agencies? - 1

2003 ENQA workshop “Taking our own medicine”

ENQA Statutes, Article 5: “...It is a condition of membership that all Full Members undergo an external review at least once every five years...”

Why external reviews of agencies? – 2

“Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG)

Bergen 2005

Standard 3.8 – Accountability procedures

“... iii. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agencies activities at least once every five years...”

Why external reviews of agencies? – 3

European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)

Brussels 2008

Substantial compliance with ESG main criterion for access to the register

(ENQA Full membership as prima facie evidence for fulfilment of ESG)

Standards for the review process

ESG part III, standards

3.1 Use of external QA procedures

3.2 Official status

3.3 Activities

3.4 Resources

3.5 Mission statement

3.6 Independence

3.7 Criteria

3.8 Accountability procedures

Remit of the review process

Two possible remits:

- **Type A: sole purpose of review is to fulfil the periodic external review requirement of ENQA membership**
- **Type B: review has additional purposes, e. g. fulfilment of legal obligations**

Reviews conducted in accordance with
“Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area”

which contain guidelines for

- **Terms of reference**
- **nomination of experts/composition of expert panel**
- **self evaluation document**
- **site visit**
- **Report**

Reviews for granting ENQA membership started in 2005, by end of 2011 approx. 53 reviews will be completed.

Impact of reviews on agencies

In general: recommendations for improvement are taken serious (esp. internal QA); growing professionalism

European level: gain of credibility

National level: driving force for further developments; gain of credibility; strengthening of position towards public authorities

Impact of reviews on regional integration 1

Regional integration is limited due to different legal, political and cultural framework conditions at national level!

Regional standards need to be either generic or contain principles rather than rules

Other experience

High level of „critical friendship“ between panel and agencies

Difficulties in „taking the own medicine“ in practical terms

Thank you for your attention

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