Trends of Quality Assurance and Quality Management in Higher Education Systems

Trends der Qualitätssicherung und des Qualitätsmanagements im Hochschulwesen

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Österreichische
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Foreword

Alexander Kohler
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The Bologna Process is founded on mutual confidence in the quality of higher education. European higher education policy is thus focussing on quality assurance and development, and this is manifesting itself in a reform of national higher education systems.

The Bologna member countries have outlined competences for quality assurance. The European standards and guidelines for quality assurance provide higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies with guidance on action. At the heart lies higher education institutions' responsibility for quality assurance, to which external quality assurance measures relate.

In recent years higher education institutions across Europe have developed internal quality assurance processes and systems, or they are in the process of developing systems. It is at precisely this stage that the higher education institutions are seeking to exchange experiences and expertise.

Increasingly, external quality assurance agencies are setting their sights on higher education internal quality assurance. In so doing, they frequently dispense with an assessment of individual teaching programmes and trust in the effectiveness of the audited quality management.

This publication contains contributions to two events that took a close look at the culture of quality in institutions and external quality assurance procedures.

In April 2008, AQA and NOKUT, the Norwegian quality assurance agency, organised a seminar in Vienna on institutional quality assurance procedures and quality audits. Nine quality assurance agencies presented their procedures and discussed methodical approaches. Particular attention was placed on the balance between quality control and development of quality, which should also provide the higher education institutions with scope to formulate QM systems. Nine national monographs provided an insight into various countries' systems (Denmark, Germany, England/Northern Ireland, Finland, Norway, Austria, Scotland, Switzerland, and Spain). In addition, a synthesis offers an overview and a comparison of the procedures used.

In September 2008, AQA organised a conference at which institutional quality assurance procedures and quality audits were debated with international representatives and representatives from Austrian institutions of higher education and higher education policy. It is scarcely possible, though, to discuss and to compare quality audits and similar procedures without introducing national framework conditions and the reality of higher education institutions. For this purpose quality assurance officers and experts from higher education institutions were invited to report on their experiences. The published contributions make apparent the extent to which approaches and progress differ.

In his opening speech at this conference, the President of ENQA, Peter Williams, highlighted the broad spectrum of external quality assurance and emphasised the importance of establishing objectives and the purpose of external quality assurance. He illustrated the strengths and weaknesses of institutional and programme-related procedures using the experiences of the United Kingdom.

During the second presentation on the first day, Lothar Zechlin from the University of Duisburg-Essen illuminated the features and benefits of quality management systems in institutions of higher education. He compared them with the functions of various external quality assurance approaches (accreditation, audit, consultation) and looked critically at external quality assurance practice in Austria and Germany.

Students do not participate in quality assurance and development of quality as customers, but as stakeholders and partners. They are not only interlocutors in the evaluation process, but increasingly participate in peer review processes as expert assessors. Three contributions documented experiences of this.

Introduction of the Bologna study architecture has lead to fundamental reforms of higher education courses. The new qualifications, above all the bachelor qualification, will have to prove their worth over time, during which not only recognition in continuing masters studies, but also acceptance by the employment market will play a role. Two contributions deal with the topic of “employability” in the context of the Bologna reform.

The AQA conference closed with a look at the future of quality assurance in Austria. Representatives from higher education institutions, students, from the Ministry of Science and from industry discussed options for creating a common, national quality assurance framework.

Vorwort

Alexander Kohler
AQA

Gegenseitiges Vertrauen in die Qualität der Hochschulen ist das Fundament des Bologna-Prozesses. Damit stehen Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung im Fokus einer Europäischen Hochschulpolitik, die sich in der Reform nationaler Hochschulsysteme manifestiert.

Mit den Europäischen Standards und Leitlinien der Qualitätssicherung haben die Bologna-Mitgliedsländer Zuständigkeiten für die Qualitätssicherung umrissen und Handlungsanleitungen für Hochschulen und Qualitätssicherungsagenturen gegeben. Im Zentrum steht dabei die Verantwortung der Hochschulen für Qualitätssicherung, auf die sich die Maßnahmen der externen Qualitätssicherung beziehen.

Europaweit haben Hochschulen in den vergangenen Jahren interne Qualitätssicherungsprozesse und -systeme entwickelt, oder sie befinden sich in einer Phase des Aufbaus. In dieser Situation suchen die Hochschulen den Austausch von Erfahrungen und Expertise.

Zunehmend nehmen externe Qualitätssicherungsagenturen die hochschulinterne Qualitätssicherung in den Blick. Dabei wird häufig auf eine Prüfung einzelner Lehrprogramme verzichtet und auf die Wirksamkeit des geprüften Qualitätsmanagements vertraut.

Die vorliegende Publikation enthält Beiträge zu zwei Veranstaltungen, die sich mit institutioneller Qualitätskultur und externen Qualitätssicherungsverfahren auseinandersetzten.

Im April 2008 haben AQA und NOKUT, die norwegische Qualitätssicherungsagentur, in Wien ein Seminar zu institutionellen Qualitätssicherungsverfahren und Quality Audits veranstaltet. Neun Qualitätssicherungsagenturen präsentierten ihre Verfahren und diskutierten methodische Ansätze. Besonderes Augenmerk wurde auf die Balance zwischen Qualitätskontrolle und Qualitätsentwicklung gelegt, wodurch die Hochschulen auch Freiräume bei der Gestaltung von QM-Systemen erhalten sollten. Neun Ländermonographien geben einen Einblick in die Systeme verschiedener Länder (Dänemark, Deutschland, England/Nordirland, Finnland, Norwegen, Österreich, Schottland, Schweiz, Spanien). Zudem bietet eine Synthese einen Überblick und einen Vergleich der eingesetzten Verfahren.

Im September 2008 veranstaltete die AQA eine Tagung, zu der institutionelle Qualitätssicherungsverfahren und Quality Audits international und mit Vertreterinnen und Vertretern österreichischer Hochschulen und der Hochschulpolitik debattiert wurden. Ein internationaler Vergleich und eine Diskussion von Quality Audits und ähnlicher Verfahren kann nur mit Blick auf die jeweiligen nationalen Rahmenbedingungen und den Entwicklungsstand der Hochschulen geführt werden. Dazu wurden Qualitätssicherungsbeauftragte und -expertInnen von Hochschulen und Agenturen eingeladen über ihre Erfahrungen zu berichten. Wie unterschiedlich die Herangehensweisen und Fortschritte sind, führen die publizierten Beiträge vor Augen.

In seinem Eröffnungsvortrag zu dieser Tagung zeigte der Präsident der ENQA, Peter Williams, das breite Spektrum der externen Qualitätssicherung auf und unterstrich die Bedeutung einer Festlegung von Zielen und Zweck der externen Qualitätssicherung. Anhand der Erfahrungen des Vereinten Königreichs veranschaulichte er Stärken und Schwächen institutioneller und programmbezogener Verfahren.

Im zweiten Eröffnungsvortrag beleuchtete Lothar Zechlin von der Universität Duisburg-Essen Merkmale und Nutzen von Qualitätsmanagementsystemen in Hochschulen. Dem stellte er die Funktionen verschiedener Ansätze der externen Qualitätssicherung (Akkreditierung, Audit, Beratung) gegenüber und warf ein kritisches Licht auf die Praxis der externen Qualitätssicherung in Österreich und Deutschland.

Nicht als Kunden sondern als Anspruchsgruppen und Partner beteiligen sich Studierende an der Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung. Sie sind nicht nur Gesprächspartner in Evaluationsverfahren sondern beteiligen sich zunehmend als Gutachterinnen und Gutachter in Peer Review-Verfahren. Erfahrungen dazu werden in drei Beiträgen dokumentiert.

Die Einführung der Bologna-Studienarchitektur hat an den Hochschulen zu grundlegenden Studienreformen geführt. Die neuen Abschlüsse, vor allem der Bachelor-Abschluss, müssen sich im Laufe der Zeit bewähren, wobei nicht nur die Anerkennung in weiterführenden Masterstudien, sondern auch die Akzeptanz des Arbeitsmarktes eine Rolle spielen. Zwei Beiträge befassen sich mit dem Thema ‚Employability' im Kontext der Bologna-Reform.

Die AQA-Tagung schloss mit einem Ausblick auf die Zukunft der Qualitätssicherung in Österreich. Vertreterinnen und Vertreter der Hochschulen, der Studierenden, des Wissenschaftsministeriums und der Wirtschaft diskutierten Gestaltungsoptionen für einen gemeinsamen nationalen Rahmen der Qualitätssicherung.

2

European Trends

Europäische Trends

Österreichische Qualitätssicherungsagentur
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2.1 External quality assurance in the EHEA: the role of institutional and programme oriented approaches

Peter Williams
European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

It is a great pleasure and a great privilege for me to be here today. Vienna is one of my favourite cities and it is always nice to have an excuse to come here. We have very good relations in ENQA with our Austrian quality assurance agency colleges and it is most agreeable to be able to come and talk to representatives of the Austrian universities about some of the developments that have been going on in Europe over the last few years. The title I have been given is "External quality assurance in the European higher education area. The role of institutional and programme oriented approaches". That is the topic I will address (although I may vary from it a little). What I want to do first of all is to make some general points about quality assurance from my perspective. I have to do this in a bit of a rush at the moment because my period of office as President of ENQA will finish on Friday. So I've only two days left to get across my views before somebody else comes along and redefines European quality assurance!

I want to make a few general points, but mainly I want to talk about institutional and programme evaluations, or as it is described here, 'institutional versus programme quality assurance'. I don't see these as necessarily confrontational or in opposition, but there are clearly two different approaches to external quality assurance that we see across Europe. I want to offer you as a case study the experience that we had in Britain, in the late 1990s, not because I think we have anything particularly to be proud about in what we did (or indeed anything to be ashamed of): it was simply an evolutionary stage in our journey. But it was an interesting example of the way in which programme and institutional approaches to quality assurance came into being separately, were operated in parallel and then merged into a single approach. This is an example of the kind of the evolution that we are beginning to see developing elsewhere in Europe. It is quite an interesting case study. Then I want to move on to some comments about Europe and about the way in which quality assurance is moving on there.

The main problem we all face is that there is no single agreed purpose, method or definition of quality assurance. It's largely one of those phrases that mean what you want it to mean, or, more often, it means what the Minister wants it to mean. Of course, the danger is that people will use the same phrase, the same words, to mean lots of different things. So there is a communication problem immediately when we start talking about quality assurance. It can and does mean different things in different contexts. To begin with, consider how diverse the ideas associated with the purpose of quality assurance are. I will show you just a few here: accountability; central control – either centrally within universities or centrally by ministries; improvement or enhancement; information (very important and becoming much more important: in the next 10 years, we shall see public demand for information about quality and standards become one of the main drivers of external quality assurance); public reassurance and confidence (can we trust our universities?); international acceptability (are our universities as good as, or are they doing as well as, universities from other countries?); ranking – I am not a great believer in rankings for a number of reasons, but it is one of the purposes that some external quality assurance is undertaken for. There are other purposes beyond these.

Then we have a diversity of different types of quality assurance, different models of quality assurance. There are variations on the theme: you can have programme or subject evaluation, programme or subject accreditation, programme or subject assessment, programme or subject review. These are all words which define or represent different approaches to the actual business of quality assurance. Then you can have institutional evaluation, where you change the focus, take the focus away from individual programmes and move it on to institutions. You can have institutional audit. That is what my own organisation (QAA) concentrates on. You can have an institutional review, which is a slight modification, and institutional accreditation – which is one of the current directions of travel in some parts of Europe. There are other different kinds of focuses for this activity, different methods and different ways of going about the external quality assurance activity. Peer review – very popular. Inspection: inspectors are always right – by definition – and they tell you what to do. 'Connoisseur' judgements: 'I know it when I see it', as in 'What is quality? I can't define it but I know it when I see it'. You then have criterion or standards based judgements, sets of formal criteria that are laid down and are very often the basis for accreditation decisions. Also, compliance models – 'you must do what we tell you'. If you don't comply you don't get accredited. Then quantitative models, where numbers are more important, statistics become vital – 'how many books have you got in the library?'. This seems to me an irrelevant question. It doesn't matter how many books you've got in the library, if nobody is reading them! Self-regulation models, these are what most universities in Europe wish to see adopted. Threshold models – 'are you meeting the minimum requirement?' Excellence models, where there is more interest in doing better: 'how good can you be?' – Not 'how good do you need to be?'. What we see mostly across Europe at present are hybrid models, combinations of some of these. The point I want to make is, that what you are seeing here is diversity. There is no single one model to fit one single purpose

Linked with that diversity of purpose, diversity of focus, diversity of method, we also have a diversity of outcomes: 'What is all this quality assurance leading to?'. All external quality assurance leads to a report of some sort. Sometimes it is a public report, sometimes a private report. Typically the international specialist subject accreditors will produce private reports, shared between the accrediting agency and the organisation being accredited. More generally now, though, it is expected that there will be a public report, so the public can see what is going on in our education. Reports generally have recommendations. Sometimes – as in United Kingdom – we have things called 'confidence judgements' and what we are saying through these is how far we believe we (QAA) can have confidence in an institution managing its quality and standards properly. Sometimes QA reports lead to approvals, approving a programme or a faculty and that is linked very closely, generally speaking, to accreditation decisions. And, of course, another of the outcomes of external quality assurance are rankings. Very often the rankings are not official rankings. The data from external sources are taken by newspapers and transformed into rank orders.

What can we say about external quality assurance which can be accepted by everybody – or at least, what are the principles? The first thing, I think, is that we ought to be very clear about what external quality assurance is trying to achieve. And that is not quite as obvious as it sounds, because very often I talk to people about quality assurance and they can't tell me what the purpose is. They can tell me about how they are doing it, they tell me about what they are doing, but they can't tell me why they are doing it. My own view is: if you don't know why you are doing something, then you should think very hard and long about whether you should be doing it at all especially an activity like this, which takes a lot of time, a lot of money and a lot of effort. And if you are not quite sure why you are spending the time and effort and the money, then I think you should be rather careful about doing it or not doing it. I don't believe, either, that you should do any more then is necessary to achieve your purposes. Again, there is a very heavy cost to quality assurance – internal and external – and this should not been seen as something where you just do as much as you want. You should certainly do what is necessary, but not more. External quality assurance should not overburden institutions. Anything that gets in the way of institutions, of universities undertaking the tasks they were set up for – teaching, research – and anything that overburdens them unreasonably, cannot be justified. That is not to say, of course, that there isn't a reasonable level of burden that universities should be expected to shoulder – there is always a cost for any worthwhile activity. The important thing is to make sure the benefit from quality assurance activities is greater than the cost of them. For example, I think everyone involved in higher education should be committed to improving quality and the management of quality. This means that quality assurance should not be just about checking compliance, but should actually be designed to provide opportunities for reflection, for observation, for developing self-knowledge, all of which should lead to improvement of what is being offered to students and what is been provided by universities. Quality assurance should also be careful to discourage the sterility of repetition. The law of diminishing returns sets in very quickly. People see reviews or accreditation activities as games or as rituals and then the value of them are quickly lost. Unless it is a developmental activity which is leading to improvement, to providing better learning opportunities for students, to raising academic standards where they need to be raised, unless it does that progressively then again it is something you should think twice about before doing it.

Most importantly, quality assurance shouldn't claim to be able to do more than it reasonably can. I have sat for three years now in the Bologna Follow Up Group, which is full of people from European ministries of education. One of the things I have noted from that interesting experience is that most of them seem to believe that quality assurance is the answer to all the problems in higher education. It isn't. You can do a lot through quality assurance, but the idea that 'if you have quality assurance, everything is going to be alright' is overoptimistic. It should be clear what it is trying to do and it should do that. It should not make too great claims for what it can do. Neither should it put too much burden on institutions. But if you are willing to accept those parameters then it is a valuable, important and an inevitable activity.

I like to think that quality assurance is underpinned by six basic questions. Some of you will have seen these before; I'm sure all of you will have seen some sort of version of them. I claim copyright on them! I devised these in November 1990 – and I defy anybody to show me a version that is earlier than that! They are very simple questions. What are we trying to do? – The purpose – I have already talked about that. Why are we doing it? – The reason. How are we doing it? – The method. Why is that the best way of doing it? That's the optimisation question, though we know we can always do better. How do we know it works? – achieving the purpose. Then how can we improve it? In many ways this the most important question of all. Those are for me the six underpinning questions for quality assurance but their usefulness is not just limited to institutions, or to departments, or to individual academics, although they are – I think – relevant in all those three areas. They are also important for quality assurance agencies. We should all be asking ourselves these questions and if we can answer them for ourselves satisfactorily, then I think we deserve to move on.

So the two key principles that I would offer you in terms of external quality assurance are these: first, a process must follow its purpose and not the other way round. Quality assurance processes must be designed to meet explicit needs. And that means that, just as purposes are different between different institutions, between different systems, between different countries, so the processes used to meet them will be different. Sometimes they may be very different. They will be created for their own purposes, not for other people's purposes. And the second key principle is that a quality assurance process must be 'fit for purpose', it must it meet the purpose it is intended for.

Now, as I said at the beginning, I want to share with you a case study of the relationship between institutional quality assurance and (subject or) programme quality assurance as it used to be. In Britain, in 1993, a dual, binary approach to external quality assurance was introduced. We had two entirely separate systems running in parallel. One was an institutional level system, which was called academic audit, and the other one was a subject, or departmental, level review, much closer to programme review, which was undertaken by the higher education funding councils. The institutional level audit was done by a body (the Higher Education Quality Council – HEQC) which was owned by the sector itself, by the universities themselves. These two review processes ran in parallel, simultaneously. Universities were faced with one set of reviews of external quality assurance looking at the way the whole institution regulated itself and managed itself in terms of quality and standards, and at the same time had to undergo a different series of reviews inspecting individual subjects in those institutions. There were around 60 subject groups and each institution could have seven or eight visits a year – which they found a great burden. So there were two entirely separate external quality assurance streams, with no link between them. Universities became very dissatisfied with that.

I want to analyse very briefly the distinctions, the strength of each of those two different approaches. On the left of this slide we have the strengths of the institutional approach. The first one was the responsibility for standards and quality rested with the institution. Academic audit was entirely about how institutions managed their autonomy. It encouraged very strongly the internal quality assurance processes, because it was those that the audit was looking at. It was cost effective. We only went in once every six years, but we didn't miss much. It was not so burdensome. The actual effort required, although considerable for the people involved, didn't spread itself very broadly throughout the institution. And the academic community found it quite acceptable, as far as they will find anything like this acceptable.

For the subject or programme approach the strengths were that it focused on what was actually being taught and what was being learned. The institutional audits were about systems, about management, and didn't actually look at the pedagogical activities, but the subject reviews did. They provided a level of information, direct information, about individual subjects as taught, which was thought to be useful to the public. The reports of the audits, in contrast, were really rather technical documents. The subject reviews did influence academic behaviour, because the academic community couldn't escape from them. The reviewers came and looked at the academics. Although there are all kinds of anecdotes told about how, for example, if there was known to be a bad teacher, then when the review team came, that bad teacher was suddenly found to be at a conference in Australia, it nevertheless raised the grass roots basic awareness of academics to methods related to quality and quality assurance. It also allowed the university managements to exercise much stronger central control over what was actually being done in their name by their academics. I've put that down as strength of the subject reviews, but some people might count it as a weakness.

If we come to the weaknesses of the two systems, the institutional approach, as I have said, could offer no specific assurances about individual programmes or subjects. So it had very limited usefulness in terms of providing information for the public, because they didn't really want to know whether the committee structure in the university was all right, or whether the rectors were doing a good job. They wanted to know something about the course they were going on or their child was going on. The audits assumed that there were strong internal quality assurance systems in the universities. If you didn't have strong internal quality assurance systems, then external institutional focused reviews were much more difficult to undertake. And the institutional approach tended to engage administrators and managers rather more than the academics, so it was rather distant from the immediate world of teaching and learning. On the subject review side, the weaknesses were that it was extremely expensive and time-consuming. The costs were huge. The reviews were deeply resented by the academic community, which didn't want inspectors coming in peering at them as they were teaching. It tended to create an atmosphere of mistrust and was seen as a threat to their academic autonomy. There was a feeling that their area of power was being invaded by external inspectors, even if they were their own subject peers who were doing the reviewing. The outcomes of the subject reviews, the information that was supposed to provide for the public, was actually out of date before it was published, because things naturally move on and in the six months between the review visit and the publication of the review report, institutions and departments and people had changed and continued to change. So the reports and their judgements became more and more out of date and of less and less use. They also encouraged game playing. Some people tried to beat the system and of course academics are extremely clever people and they became very good at beating the system. In the end, some academics were thought to be spending more time trying to beat the system than they would actually have needed to spend to meet its expectations. I think the subject reviews also discouraged innovation, because people were frightened to do new things, in case the reviewers came along and said it was too dangerous, too risky. So it was a process which encouraged risk aversion. And that is something I think we have to care about.

Then, in 2001, subject review was stopped. Why did that happen? Well, first of all, all the subject reviews, and we did several thousands of them, showed, generally speaking, that the quality and standards across the UK's higher education institutions were uniformly high. And there was no point in just repeating this exercise to show the same thing again and again. It would have been a waste of time. Was there any evidence that things were going wrong? No. Subject reviews had become an unnecessary burden on institutions. They had learned how to win. They knew who to put up as exemplary teachers. They knew who to arrange to be available to be inspected. They knew how to put the persuasive speakers in front of the team. They knew very well how to win the game. So there would be diminishing returns from repetition. The value of the exercise just seeped away. And there was increasing institutional resistance. 'We are not here to be inspected. We do not exist to be inspected, but it feels as if we are being inspected to death. It feels as if people think that the only reason that universities exist are to be inspected.' It was agreed that there were alternative ways of providing information and identifying weaknesses. A cost benefit analysis was done on external quality assurance and as a result of that it was agreed that the institutional level approach would be the only one to be used.

Today, there are other things that link and add to the main review process we are using – institutional audit. We do not rely just on audits for the totality of quality assurance in the UK. The Quality Assurance Framework comprises a number of elements designed to provide up to date information about quality and standards and ways of dealing with any shortcomings that might be identified between the six-yearly audits.

What have we learned about quality assurance from all this history? First of all, only providers can assure quality. Quality assurance agencies do not assure quality. They report on it, they comment on it, they make recommendations, but they do not themselves assure quality. Only the academic community can assure quality. This is why I think that internal quality assurance is the key, the starting point, for good quality in institutions. The second thing we have learned is – the purpose should determine the process; I have already mentioned that. There should be evolution rather then repetition. Things move on, the world is changing all the time. I think we no longer expect simply to do the same thing again and again. We need to progress from the specific to the generic. Having looked at the detail we can then draw back and start looking at more general approaches, knowing that the detail is looked at by the institution itself in a way which is explicit, understandable and defensible. Also I think we had learned that we need to respect the grain of academic life. Academic life operates to its own tempo, with its own purposes, with its own objectives, with its own culture. I believe external quality assurance must recognise that and work with it, not against it. Once you start getting a heavy handed inspector coming in from outside trying to impose industrial or commercial approaches on higher education, then I think there are serious questions about whether it is going to be effective or not.

Mies van der Rohe, the great architect, said famously 'less is more'. We are coming to that conclusion in quality assurance. In the past 20 years we have witnessed (and perhaps been the part cause of) huge great baroque confections of quality assurance, great wedding cakes of processes and practices, myriads of forms and paper and so on. Bureaucratic excesses do not ensure quality. Quality is better assured when people are focused on specific questions, when the bureaucratic processes – there have to be some systems – are designed to meet particular needs, not just to feed a more general hunger for bureaucracy. Another thing we have learnt is that standards and quality are not the same things. I won't explain that here, because that is maybe a particular British thing. But there are differences to be defined between what we call academic standards and what we call academic quality. Quality is expensive. It is not cheap, not cheap in time and not cheap in other resources. And I think that people, who want to get quality assurance on the cheap, or even worse, quality on the cheap, will not achieve it and will regret their decisions. Finally, as I have said before, and I keep on saying: quality assurance is not the answer to all problems.

So as we have seen, in Britain we have moved from subject reviews to institutional audit, from inspection approaches to what I will call quality assurance approaches, from external prescription ('you must do this') to internal regard ('we do this in our institution and we do it well and we know we do it well'), from processes ('how should we do this?') to much more interest in the outcomes of our processes. We have progressed from the implicit ('I know it when I see it') approach to the explicit ('I know it and this is why I know it/how I know it'), from assertion ('we are good, we are the best') to verified information ('we are the best and we can show you we are the best, we can tell you how we know we are the best'). Then there is this other general movement from accountability towards enhancement. We like to think in Britain that the accountability of higher education is now more or less assured, and so we want to develop beyond accountability into enhancement. I also like to think that we have journeyed from mutual suspicion to a much greater mutual trust. We trust the academic community and the community trusts us. Of course, people say 'how do you know this is happening, what is the evidence for that?'. I think my best quote in response to this question comes from a distinguished Vice-Chancellor (Rector) in the UK who, when speaking of the Quality Assurance Agency, said: 'Well, they have become perhaps the least unwelcome of our visitors'. To be the 'least unwelcome' is probably as much as an external reviewing agency can reasonably hope for!

Now moving on to Europe, what is going on across the whole continent? The general assembly of ENQA meets in this room tomorrow and Friday. One of the things we will be looking at is a new publication which is coming out tomorrow on quality assurance processes across the whole of Europe. This is the result of a big project to remap the European quality assurance landscape. It is a very interesting report, which shows a mixture, across the continent, of programme accreditation, institutional accreditation and non-accrediting quality assurance reviews. All kinds of things are going on. There is no standard model. There may be more frequently encountered models, but no standard model has yet emerged. Some countries have moved from a programme focus to an institutional focus. One of the most obvious examples of this is the current development in Germany along these lines. Some countries are moving the other way and the most obvious one there is Denmark, where they are moving away from an institutional audit approach to a programme accreditation approach. They have gone in quite the opposite direction – for political reasons. These changes are normally made for political reasons, not for academic reasons. And as I said, our new publication will reveal this landscape. It will be on the ENQA website, if you are interested in reading it.

Now if that's a very broad-brush description of the European quality assurance landscape as it is developing, in what direction does Europe need to go? What does the European higher education area need by the way of quality assurance? Well, I think there is an increasing need for information about quality. One of the benefits of the European higher education area is the opportunities it offers for mobility. And mobility is made much easier if students and staff know and are happy about what it is they're moving to. To make sensible choices about where to go to study or work, they need good, reliable, information. Information about quality is going to become very much more important in future. There is also a need for general public confidence in universities and providers of higher education. In many countries, the public looks at the increasing number of students and sometimes wonders: is this huge growth sensible? I think it is necessary for quality assurance agencies to be able to demonstrate that universities are managing these great increases in students well. There is also need for reassurance about the value of higher education qualifications. The Bologna Process has brought with it a lot of new degrees in Europe, degrees which, in terms of what they contain and how long they last, are for many countries quite revolutionary and difficult to understand or accept. It is very important that the real value of these new qualifications can be demonstrated and recognised through quality assurance processes. There is also a need for providers, for universities themselves, to have confidence in what they are doing, confidence not based on arrogance or complacency or loud assertion, but based on true self-knowledge. And that leads to a very strong need to encourage academic ownership of quality, ownership by the academic community, by the teachers. Ownership by the academic community is very important, because it brings with it responsibilities and obligations which only that community can meet. Quality and standards must not be owned by the managers, because when that is allowed to happen it inevitably brings with it a collusive willingness by the academic community to cede its responsibilities, which should be inalienable.

Finally I do think we need in Europe some means of establishing international comparability amongst our various higher education systems. I don't mean by that imposing some standard, uniform, harmonised approach which will not be suitable for individual countries and their own particular needs. I mean the transmission of information, understanding and communication between the academic communities and quality assurance agencies within Europe.

So there is a lot to be done. I hope that, whatever parts you have to play, whether as students, teachers, administrators, quality assurers, or civil servants, you will work together on this, which I believe to be an extremely important enterprise. It is a journey with no destination, but a journey which has as its purpose ensuring better opportunities for students, increasing the value of higher education to them as individuals and to society more broadly, both national and European. It is a momentous venture and I wish you good fortune with it.
Thank you very much indeed for listening.

2.2 Funktion und Nutzen der externen Qualitätssicherung für das hochschulinterne Qualitätsmanagement

Lothar Zechlin
Universität Duisburg-Essen

Die „Autonomisierung“ der Universitäten bringt es mit sich, dass Funktionen, die früher durch die staatliche Ministerialverwaltung ausgeübt wurden, durch die Universitäten selbst ausgeübt werden. Hierzu gehört auch die Qualitätssicherung für die Leistungen, mit denen Universitäten für ihre Umwelt in Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft wirksam[1] werden. Waren z. B. früher für die neue Einrichtung von Studiengängen Genehmigungen durch die Ministerialverwaltung einzuholen, die damit selbst eine Art präventiver Qualitätskontrolle durchführte und folglich auch die Verantwortung hierfür übernahm, entfällt dies nunmehr. Der Staat nimmt nur noch eine Rechtsaufsicht und keine Fachaufsicht mehr wahr. Das dadurch entstehende „Vakuum“ ist zum einen durch die Universitäten selbst zu schließen. Sie müssen ein internes Qualitätsmanagement aufbauen, um sich selbst in die Lage zu versetzen, tatsächlich die Verantwortung für ihre Leistungen zu übernehmen. Zum anderen verbleibt aber auch auf Seiten der Politik weiterhin eine Verantwortung für die Qualität der Hochschulen, und zwar nicht nur, weil diese öffentlich finanziert werden, sondern mehr noch wegen der hohen Bedeutung von Erziehung und Wissenschaft für die Wissensgesellschaft. Die Frage lautet, wie diese externe Qualitätssicherung gewährleistet werden kann.

Für die „interne“ Seite ist die Ausgangslage in Österreich klar: § 14 Abs. 1 UG 2002 schreibt vor: „Die Universitäten haben zur Qualitäts- und Leistungssicherung ein eigenes Qualitätsmanagementsystem aufzubauen“. Für die „externe“ Seite lässt das Gesetz aber offen, wie festgestellt werden kann, ob das, was die Universitäten aufbauen, tatsächlich ein QM-System und nicht nur ein zusammenhangloses Sammelsurium einzelner Instrumente ist. Zu dieser Feststellung ist der Staat nicht nur berechtigt, sondern im Rahmen der Rechtsaufsicht verpflichtet. Dabei liegt es nahe, beide Seiten so auszugestalten, dass sie sich insgesamt wechselseitig optimieren, weil auf diese Weise der größte Nutzen für die Leistungsfähigkeit der Hochschulen erzielt werden kann.

Die folgenden Ausführungen präzisieren das Thema des Vortrages deshalb zu der Fragestellung, wie die externe Qualitätssicherung ausgestaltet sein sollte, wenn insgesamt der größte Nutzen für die Leistungsfähigkeit der Hochschulen erzielt werden soll. Dies zieht eine gewisse Schrittfolge in der Argumentation nach sich:

1 Der Begriff „Wirksamkeit“ scheint mir geeigneter als der leider im Sinne einer direkten und kurzfristigen Verwertbarkeit häufig missverstandene Begriff der „Nützlichkeit“. Vgl. zur Wirksamkeit von Wissen Grossmann, Ralph (1997), Wie wird Wissen wirksam?, Wien.

Es muss
1. zunächst geklärt werden, worin die Qualität der Leistungen besteht, bevor untersucht werden kann,
2. wie das hochschulinterne Management dieser Qualität aussehen soll. Im Anschluss daran lässt sich dann
3. bestimmen, wie die externe Seite der Qualitätssicherung aussehen muss, damit der größte Nutzen für das interne System erzielt wird.

1. Was bedeutet „Qualität" in Hochschulen?

Die Definition des Qualitätsbegriffs wird allgemein als schwierig empfunden[2]. Er lässt sich jedoch näher eingrenzen, wenn man die Tätigkeiten und Ergebnisse der Hochschulen systematisiert.

Abbildung 1 soll zeigen, dass Universitäten nicht als „Elfenbeintürme" für sich selbst, sondern für ihre externe Umwelt arbeiten. Damit sie dort Wirkungen erzielen, erzeugen sie bestimmte „Leistungen" oder „Produkte", die sie an ihre Umwelt abgeben. Es handelt sich dabei um AbsolventInnen, die aufgrund ihres Studiums höhere Kompetenzen in die Umwelt hineintragen, und um Forschungsergebnisse, die neues Wissen für die Umwelt erzeugen. Damit diese Leistungen erzielt werden können, müssen die „Prozesse" zur Leistungserstellung (die „Kernprozesse" Lehre, Ausbildung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses, Forschung, aber auch die Dienstleistungs- und Führungsprozesse) und Strukturen entsprechend ausgestaltet sein. Damit diese Prozesse und Strukturen wiederum gute Leistungen hervorbringen können, müssen sie auf guten Bedingungen („Input") aufbauen, z. B. Finanzen, den Ausgangskompetenzen der StudienanfängerInnen oder den Kompetenzen der auf Grund von Berufungsverfahren gewonnenen WissenschaftlerInnen. Es handelt sich um funktionale Wirkungsketten, in denen Strategie und Qualität sich wechselseitig bedingen[3]: Während die strategische Planung zukunftsbezogen von den angestrebten gesellschaftlichen Wirkungen auf die dafür erforderlichen Leistungen, Prozesse und den Input zurück schließt, fragt die Qualitätsbeurteilung gegenwarts- und vergangenheitsbezogen, ob der Input für die Prozesse, ob die Prozesse für die Leistungen und ob die Leistungen für die angestrebten Wirkungen hinreichend sind bzw. verbessert werden können. „Qualität" bedeutet somit, dass diese Wirkungsketten zwischen den jeweiligen „Produktionsstufen" funktionieren.

2 „Die Qualität der Leistungen einer Universität wird von einer Vielzahl von internen und externen Faktoren bestimmt und ist dementsprechend schwer zu fassen", so die Österreichische Rektorenkonferenz (Hrsg.), Evaluierung. Positionspapier der österreichischen Rektorenkonferenz. Wien 1998, S. 8. Vgl. auch Ada Pellert, Hochschule und Qualität, in: Reil, Thomas und M. Winter (Hg.), Qualitätssicherung an Hochschulen: Theorie und Praxis, Bielefeld 2002, S. 24: „Qualität wurde schon ob der Unmöglichkeit, sie klar zu definieren, in Essays mit der Liebe verglichen: Man spürt Qualität, man weiß, wenn sie da ist, man weiß auch, wenn sie fehlt, man kann sie nicht genau beschreiben und definieren".

3 Zu diesem Zusammenhang Zink, Klaus (1999), Qualitätsmanagement – ein Überblick, in: HRK , Qualität an Hochschulen. Beiträge zur Hochschulpolitik 1/1999, S. 27 ff., 37, 44.

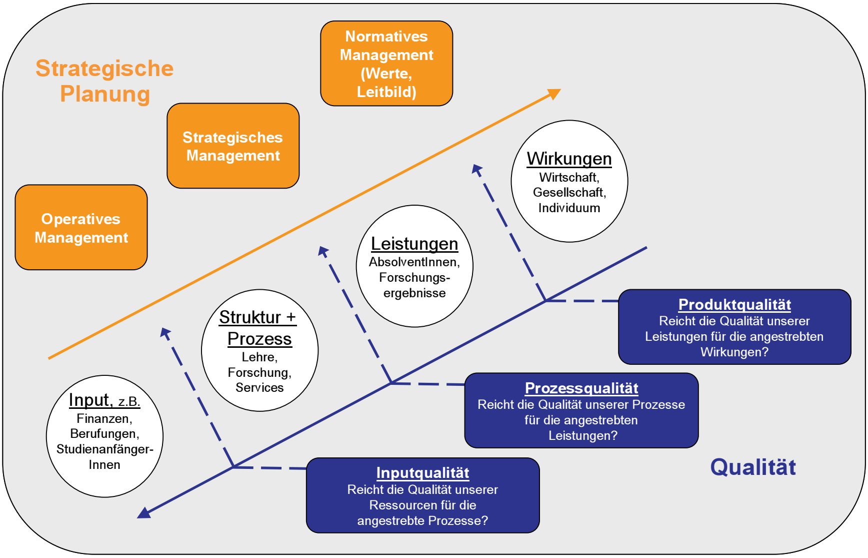

Abbildung 1: Qualität und Strategie

Damit dies der Fall ist, werden für die einzelnen „Produktionsstufen" (Input, Prozess/Struktur, Leistungen, Wirkungen) Qualitätsziele definiert und überprüft, ob die festgestellt Situation („Ist") mit der geplanten („Soll") übereinstimmt. Die daraus gewonnenen Erkenntnisse werden dann in einen kontinuierlichen Verbesserungsprozess übersetzt. Es handelt sich um eine technisch-funktionale Seite des Qualitätsbegriffs: Das „Ist" soll dem „Soll" entsprechen, das „Soll" muss die Funktionalität für die nächste Produktionsstufe sicherstellen. Qualität wird deshalb zunächst einmal rein instrumentell als „Fitness for Purpose" definiert.

Allerdings wird man dabei nicht stehen bleiben können, und zwar nicht nur aus dem Grund, dass sonst der Qualitätsbegriff beliebigen Zwecken unterworfen und auf diese Weise entwertet würde[4]. Genauso wichtig ist, dass die Strategie insgesamt nur erfolgreich ist und Qualität erzeugt, wenn sie die „richtigen" Ziele verfolgt[5]. Diese Beurteilung ist allerdings für Hochschulen erheblich schwieriger als für erwerbswirtschaftliche Unternehmen. Für Wirtschaftsunternehmen bemisst sich der Erfolg ihrer Strategie letztlich im Markt und ist i.d.R. leicht erkennbar, da er sich in schwarzen oder roten Zahlen ausdrückt. Für Hochschulen gibt es ein solch eindeutiges Erfolgskriterium jedoch nicht. Ob klügere AbsolventInnen z. B. zu einer aufgeklärteren Gesellschaft beitragen, ist schwer erkennbar

4 Ein Beispiel: Ausländerfeindliche Wahlkämpfe können höchst erfolgreich sein, aber würden wir zustimmen, dafür einen „Quality Award" zu verleihen?

5 Das ist die Unterscheidung zwischen der „sauberen Küche" und „dem Menu, das dort gekocht wird", vgl. Johann Schneider, Bericht aus der Arbeitsgruppe, in HRK (Hrsg.), Qualität an Hochschulen, Beiträge zur Hochschulpolitik 1/1999, Bonn 1999, S. 80.

und vielleicht noch nicht einmal ein Ziel. Forschungsergebnisse werden z. T. erst nach langen Jahren der Nichtbeachtung wirksam, ohne dass sie deswegen in der Zwischenzeit als qualitativ minderwertig anzusehen wären. Der Erfolg von Hochschulen ist deshalb oft nicht eindeutig messbar. Vor allem aber müssen die Kriterien für das, was unter „Erfolg" verstanden soll, oft erst interpretativ in einem Sinnzusammenhang festgelegt werden, der die Funktion von Bildung und Wissenschaft für die Gesellschaft näher bestimmt. Eine solche Aufgabe, bei der es nicht um technisch korrektes Messen, sondern um kreatives Herstellen[6] geht, kann nur unter enger Einbeziehung der beteiligten WissenschafterInnen erfüllt werden. Die Art und Weise, in der diese Qualitätsentwicklung erfolgt, ist Ausdruck der hochschulspezifischen Qualitätskultur[7]. „Qualität" hat somit auch eine normativ – strategische, auf die gesellschaftliche Relevanz von Wissenschaft bezogene Seite („Fitness of Purpose"). Beide Seiten, das technische „Messen" ebenso wie das interpretative „Verstehen"[8], dürfen nicht voneinander isoliert werden: Die bloße Technik führt ohne gesellschaftsbezogene Strategie in die Irre, die bloße Strategie bleibt ohne technisch saubere Umsetzung folgenlos.

Der Qualitätsbegriff erweist sich somit zwar als (abstrakt) definierbar, jedoch zugleich als hochkomplex. Die Schwierigkeiten liegen deshalb eher in seiner konkreten Umsetzung, nicht in seiner Definition. Das hat Auswirkungen auf das Management von Qualität, das diese Komplexität beibehalten muss.

2. Worin besteht der Nutzen ein internen Qualitätsmanagement-System für die Hochschule?

Da ein Qualitätsbegriff, der die normativ-strategisch und technisch-funktionale Seite miteinander verbindet, sämtliche Bereiche einer Hochschule durchzieht, bezieht sich auch das Management dieser Qualität auf sämtliche Bereiche einer Hochschule. Es gibt also nicht einen abgetrennten Bereich als Qualitätsmanagement so wie es etwa Finanzmanagement, Personalmanagement oder Liegenschaftsmanagement gibt. Es handelt sich vielmehr um ein umfassendes „System", das die einzelnen, zur Herstellung von Qualität erforderlichen Elemente in einer handlungsorientierten Perspektive miteinander verbindet[9]. In einem Quali-

6 Ähnlich wie es sich bei dem Prozess der Rechtsanwendung in aller Regel nicht nur um einen logisch-deduktiven, sondern hermeneutisch-kreativen Vorgang handelt.

7 Zu der Unterscheidung zwischen dem „Technocratic element" und dem „Cultural element" des Qualitätsbegriffes vgl. EUA European University Association (2005), Developing an internal Quality Culture in European Universities, Brüssel, S. 18.

8 So der Titel des instruktiven Beitrages von Uwe Schmidt (2005), Zwischen Messen und Verstehen. Anmerkungen zum Theoriedefizit in der deutschen Hochschulevaluation, eva-Net-Positionen 06/2005 (http://www.hrk.de/de/download/dateien/05-2005_-_Theoriedefizit_in_der_deutschen_Hochschulevaluation_-_Schmidt.pdf), der sich explizit auf den Qualitätsbegriff bezieht. Während Schmidt jedoch vor dem Hintergrund der strukturfunktionalistischen Theorie Talcott Parsons argumentiert, wird in diesem Beitrag das Modell des New Public Managements zugrunde gelegt. Von beiden Ansätzen kommt man jedoch zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen.

9 Vgl. im Einzelnen das bei Nickel visualisierte und erläuterte Analyseschema: Nickel, Sigrun (2007), Institutionelle QM-Systeme an Universitäten und Fachhochschulen. Konzepte – Instrumente – Umsetzung, CHE Arbeitspapier Nr. 94, Gütersloh, S. 44.

tätskreislauf, dem sog. PDCA-Zyklus (Plan, Do, Check, Act), werden Beobachtungen und Analysen vorgenommen, Schlüsse für Verbesserungen gezogen, konkrete Umsetzungsschritte vorgenommen, die Auswirkungen dieser Veränderungen wiederum beobachtet und in neues Handeln übersetzt. Hierfür stehen unterschiedliche Instrumente und Verfahren zur Verfügung, die je nach spezifischer Zielrichtung und Ausrichtung der Hochschule „passend" konfiguriert und aufeinander abgestimmt sein müssen[10]. Es geht also nicht um den isolierte Einsatz einzelner Instrumente der Qualitätssicherung wie z. B. Evaluation, Managementinformationssysteme, auf Handbücher gestützte Kontrollen o.ä., sondern die ganzheitliche Organisationsentwicklung[11] von Hochschulen[12].

Ein derartiges System ist hochkomplex und hängt eng mit der Strategie und dem individuellen Profil der jeweiligen Hochschule (z. B. Gewichtung von Forschung und Lehre, Fächerkultur, Größe) zusammen. Es gibt deshalb nicht „das eine beste Modell"[13]. Von außen lässt sich zwar definieren, was ein solches System zu leisten hat, und seine Funktionsfähigkeit überprüfen. Die Konfiguration des Systems ist jedoch eine strategische Führungsleistung der autonomen Hochschule selbst. Als Beispiel mag das im Aufbau begriffene QM-System der Universität Duisburg-Essen dienen (Abbildung 2). Die UDE hat durch die Fusion eine Größe gewonnen, die sie nur noch eingeschränkt zentral steuerbar macht. Sie dezentralisiert deshalb Teile der Strategieentwicklung auf „strategiefähige Organisationseinheiten" (Fachbereiche und Dienstleistungseinrichtungen). Diese stellen folglich auch den gemeinsamen Focus der vier zentralen Elemente ihres QM-Systems dar, nämlich eines Strategie- und eines Evaluationskreislaufes, eines Managementinformationssystem und des Bereichs Personal- und Organisationsentwicklung[14].

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10 Ein m.E. plausibles Anforderungsprofil hat der Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft mit dem „Leitbild Qualitätsmanagement an deregulierten Hochschulen" entwickelt Vgl. im Einzelnen Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft, Leitlinien für die deregulierte Hochschule, www.stifterverband.de/pdf/deregulierung.pdf, Essen 2008, S. 16 f.

11 Hanft, Anke (2007), Prozessorientierte Qualitätssicherung als neuer Standard des hochschulinternen Qualitätsmanagements, in: Österreichische Qualitätssicherungsagentur (Hrsg.), Qualitätsmanagement und -entwicklung im Europäischen Hochschulraum, Wien, S. 49 ff.

12 Es handelt sich somit um etwas grundlegend anderes als das in Deutschland vorherrschende System der Studiengangsakkreditierung, das lediglich die frühere staatliche Genehmigung ersetzt, aber in keinem gedanklichen Zusammenhang mit der Logik einer autonomen Hochschule steht.

13 Vgl. The costs and benefits of external review of quality assurance in higher education. Report by JM Consulting to HEFCE, Universities UK, SCOP, the DfES and the Quality Assurance Framework Review Group (2005), HEFCE 2005, p. 59: "Quality is … not the same for all disciplines, all institutions or all students. While external review can help to measure and protect standards, and to encourage quality enhancement, it cannot provide an absolute measure of quality … The regulators have to recognize that any indicators of teaching quality that they might seek to apply across the whole HE sector can be no more than proxies, and that a 'one size fits all' approach to measuring quality would risk damaging the diversity and innovation they wish to foster."

14 Einen schnellen Überblick verschaffen die Power Point Präsentationen von S. Gruber und A. Köster sowie von S. Gruber und L. Zechlin unter http://zfh.uni-duisburg-essen.de/qe/veroeffentlichungen.

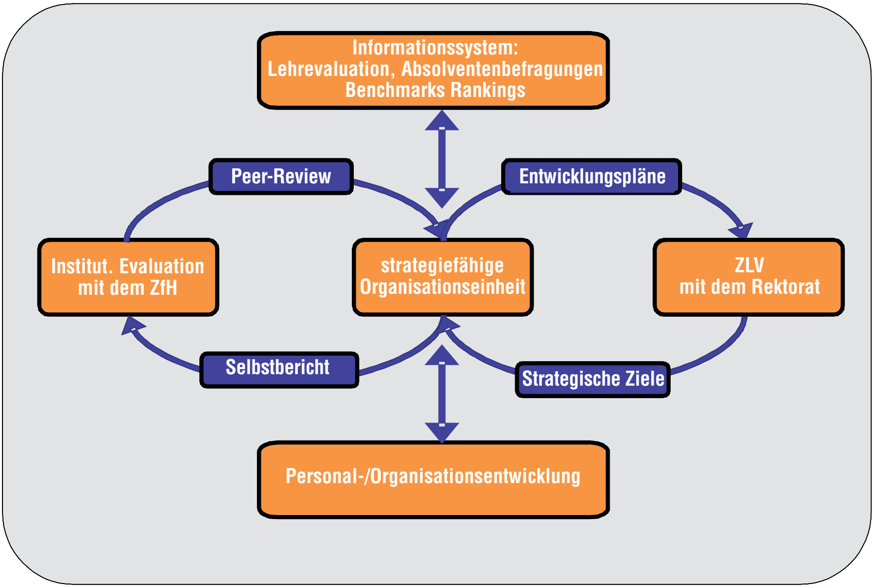

Abbildung 2: QM-System der Universität Duisburg-Essen

Derartige QM-Systeme dienen der Selbststeuerungsfähigkeit der Hochschule. Das hat Auswirkungen auf die Funktion der externen Qualitätssicherung.

3. Worin besteht der Nutzen externer Qualitätssicherung?

Auch wenn das QM-System in der Hochschule selbst zu verantworten ist, bleibt trotzdem ein Verantwortungsbereich für die Politik bestehen. Sie muss sich ein Bild davon machen können, ob dem gesetzlichen Auftrag, ein solches QM-System aufzubauen, auch tatsächlich nachgekommen wird. Wie müsste also eine solche hochschulexterne Überprüfung aussehen, wenn sie einen möglichst großen Nutzen für die in der Hochschule selbst zu leistende Qualitätsentwicklung ausüben soll?

Klären wir zunächst, was mit „externer" Qualitätssicherung gemeint ist. Wer stellt diese externe Seite dar und mit welchen Instrumenten wird dabei agiert?

Im Zusammenhang mit der Qualitätssicherung gibt es eine Vielzahl hochschulexterne Akteure, die berechtigterweise Ansprüche an die Hochschule richten, z. B. VertreterInnen des Beschäftigungssystems, der Politik oder Studieninteressierte („Stakeholder"). Es gibt jedoch nur einen Akteur, der mit hoheitlichen Befugnissen feststellen kann, ob die Hochschulen ihrer gesetzlichen Verpflichtung zur Errichtung eines QM-Systems nachkommen oder ob sie dies nur behaupten, nämlich den Staat selbst. Dabei kann er selbst handeln, indem er als

Exekutive, d. h. über seine Ministerialverwaltung[15] agiert. I.d.R. bedient er sich jedoch, gestützt auf gesetzliche Vorschriften, sogenannter „Buffer-Institutionen“, die in öffentlicher Trägerschaft eingerichtet werden (z. B. als Stiftungen öffentlichen Rechts), gemeinsam mit den Hochschulen selbst und externen Stakeholdern geleitet werden und mit der Kompetenz „beliehen“ sind, rechtlich wirksame Entscheidungen zu treffen. Es handelt sich z. B. in Österreich um den Akkreditierungsrat (für die institutionelle Akkreditierung von Privatuniversitäten) oder den Fachhochschulrat, in der Schweiz um das Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung (OAQ), in Deutschland um den Wissenschaftsrat (für die institutionelle Akkreditierung von Privatuniversitäten) oder den Akkreditierungsrat, der für die Zulassung der Qualitätssicherungsagenturen zuständig ist. Ähnliche Einrichtungen gibt es in anderen Ländern wie z. B. Irland, England, Skandinavien oder Frankreich. Sie sind die eigentlichen Akteure der externen Qualitätssicherung.

Die Instrumente der externen Qualitätssicherung sind vielfältig. Sofern der Staat selbst handelt, kann er entsprechende Gesetze verabschieden[16]. Er kann sich aber auch des Instruments des Kontraktmanagements bedienen und über Ziel- und Leistungsvereinbarungen mit den Hochschulen die Modalitäten externer Qualitätssicherung regeln[17]. Sofern er sich mit hoheitlichen Befugnissen beliehener Agenturen bedient, handelt es sich bei den von diesen verwendeten Instrumenten in der Regel um Akkreditierung, Audits und/oder Evaluation. Dabei herrscht Einigkeit darüber, das Akkreditierung ihren Gegenstand (Institutionen, Studienprogramme, QM-System u. a.) lediglich auf die Einhaltung von Mindeststandards hin überprüft (ähnlich wie der Technische Überwachungsverein in Deutschland regelmäßig die Kraftfahrzeuge überprüfen), während Audits und Evaluationen einen empfehlenden Charakter haben und dazu führen sollen, dass die Hochschulen ihre Systeme optimieren. In einigen Ländern beginnen die durch den Staat mit der hoheitlichen Entscheidung über die „Zulassung“ beliehenen Agenturen damit, ähnlich wie private Unternehmensberatungen Hochschulen bei dem Aufbau von QM-Systemen zu beraten. Dabei entsteht das Problem, wie sie ihre Rollen als staatlich beliehene Entscheidungsträger über das QM-System mit ihrer Rolle als Organisationsberater bei dem Aufbau eben dieses Systems unter

15 Sofern in föderativen Staaten die Kompetenz bei den Ländern liegt oder ein Mischsystem existiert wie z. B. der Schweiz oder der Bundesrepublik Deutschland werden diese Kompetenzen durch Organe der Politikverflechtung wie die Schweizerische Universitätskonferenz (SUK) oder die Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) wahrgenommen.

16 So schreibt z. B. §7 Abs. 1 des Hochschulgesetzes des Landes NRW vor: „Die Studiengänge sind nach den geltenden Regelungen zu akkreditieren und zu reakkreditieren. Die Aufnahme des Studienbetriebs setzt den erfolgreichen Abschluss der Akkreditierung voraus; die aus dem Akkreditierungsverfahren resultierenden Auflagen sind umzusetzen. Die Akkreditierung erfolgt durch Agenturen, die ihrerseits akkreditiert worden sind. Ausnahme von den Sätzen 1 bis 3 bedürfen der Genehmigung des Ministeriums.“

17 So sieht z. B. das im Jahre 2007 in Kraft getretene Gesetz über die Reform der französischen Universitäten vor, dass Studiengänge zwar weiterhin durch das Ministerium zu genehmigen und durch die neu eingerichtete Bufferinstitution AERES Agence d’évaluation de la Recherche et de l’enseignement supérieur (textes officiels, www.aeres-evaluation.fr) zu evaluieren sind, die Ergebnisse der Evaluation jedoch Gegenstand von Ziel- und Leistungsvereinbarungen zwischen dem Staat und den Hochschulen sind.

einen Hut bringen. Jedenfalls dürfte klar sein, dass sie nicht zugleich Spieler, die untereinander im Wettbewerb stehen, und Schiedsrichter sein können.

Wir können nunmehr die Frage, wie die externe Qualitätssicherung den höchstmöglichen Nutzen für das interne QM-System stiften kann, stärker ausdifferenzieren. Dazu lassen sich in einer Matrix (Abbildung 3) die eingesetzten Instrumente und Verfahrensweisen („Wie" soll Nutzen erzeigt werden?) mit den Nutznießern („Für wen" wird Nutzen erzeugt?) zusammenbringen.

Was und Wie? / **Für wen?**	**Nutzen**	**Verfahren**	**Kriterien**
Politik	Dokumentation, „dass" QM besteht	Akkreditierung	Mindeststandards (Ja/Nein)
Stakeholder	Verbraucherschutz	Akkreditierung	Mindeststandards (Ja/Nein)
Hochschulen	Legitimation, § 14 UG 2002	Akkreditierung	Mindeststandards (Ja/Nein)
	Legitimation und Unterstützung	Audit, Evaluation	Optimierung findet statt (KVP)
	Unterstützung	Beratung	Optimierung findet statt (KVP)

Abbildung 3

Der Nutzen einer externen Akkreditierung des hochschulinternen QM-System besteht für die Politik in der rechtskräftigen Bestätigung, dass es sich um ein funktionsfähiges QM-System handelt. Für die externen Stakeholder in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft besteht der Nutzen in einer Art Verbraucherschutz (ähnlich wie das Siegel „Geprüfte Sicherheit" oder die Plakette des Technischen Überwachungsvereins für Kraftfahrzeuge in Deutschland). Für die Hochschulen selbst ist der Nutzen einer Akkreditierung dagegen eher gering, da lediglich die Einhaltung von Mindeststandards bescheinigt wird. Ein externes Audit oder eine externe Evaluation des hochschulinternen QM-Systems würde einen größeren Nutzen mit sich bringen, da von diesem Verfahren Empfehlungen zur Verbesserung und Weiterentwicklung ausgehen, ohne dass die Legitimationswirkung gegenüber der Politik und den Stakeholdern im Vergleich zur Akkreditierung geringer ausfiele. Beides ließe sich auch miteinander kombinieren, wenn das Audit bzw. die Evaluation bestimmte Reifegrade – differenziert nach den einzelnen Elementen des Systems – bescheinigt und damit Hinweise für Verbesserungen gibt, gleichzeitig aber auch bei Erfüllung der „Mindeststandards", also der untersten Reifegrade, die „Akkreditierung" des Systems ausspricht[18].

18 Die Bescheinigung unterschiedlicher Reifegrade (absent, emerging, developing and advanced) nimmt z. B. die finnische FINHEEC vor, vgl. Sirpa Moitus, Experiences of Finnish Quality Audits (in diesem Band).

Wichtig ist in allen Fällen, dass der Gegenstand der externen Überprüfung die Funktionsfähigkeit des QM-Systems, nicht die Qualität der einzelnen Leistungen ist. Letztere wird von der Hochschule und ihrem QM-System verantwortet.

Fazit

So, wie es eine der Aufgaben des Staats ist, die Funktionsfähigkeit des Marktes sicherzustellen ohne die Marktprozesse zu ersetzen, besteht die Aufgabe der externen Qualitätssicherung darin, die Funktionsfähigkeit des hochschulinternen QM-Systems sicherstellen ohne seine Funktionsweise selbst zu ersetzen. In der Wahrnehmung dieser Garantiefunktion liegt ihr Nutzen.

Die Verantwortung hierfür trägt die Politik. Dabei ist in Österreich der Bereich der öffentlichen Universitäten im Vergleich zu dem Sektor der Privatuniversitäten und Fachhochschulen „untersteuert". Es liegt nahe, dieses Ungleichgewicht durch ein einheitliches externes Sicherungssystem für den tertiären Sektor zu überwinden. Für den Teilbereich Studium und Lehre gilt dies umso mehr, als auch innerhalb des Europäischen Hochschulraumes die unterschiedlichen Systeme durch den Europäischen Qualifikationsrahmen transparent und vergleichbar gemacht werden sollen. Das könnte sowohl über Organisation als auch über Kontraktmanagement erreicht werden. Der organisatorische Weg bestünde darin, durch Gesetz eine gemeinsame Qualitätssicherungseinrichtung zu schaffen, ähnlich wie in der Schweiz das Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung. Der Weg über Kontraktmanagement bestünde darin, dass der Staat die Hochschulen im Wege der Leistungsvereinbarung verpflichtet, ihre internen Systeme durch Agenturen akkreditieren zu lassen, die ihrerseits durch ihre Aufnahme in das ENQA-Register dazu legitimiert sind.

3

Approaches and Practice of Quality Audits in Europe

Verfahren und Praxis von Quality Audits in Europa

Österreichische
Qualitätssicherungsagentur
Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance

3.1 Audit Approaches – Features for a common Understanding

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AQA

3.1.1 Background

Quality audits focus on the quality management of higher education institutions (HEIs) and review the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance. Many European countries have established audit[1] procedures as part of their national framework of external quality assurance.

However, what are the main differences in the auditing methods in practice? How can audits allow for creative arrangements in internal quality management? Do the audit processes sufficiently take into account the characteristics of the HEIs? These and other questions were discussed at a seminar in Vienna[2]. The seminar was a revival of a former network, which had been initiated originally and mainly by Nordic countries, for quality assurance agencies that conduct audits to share experiences. The seminar allowed the participants to develop an understanding of the different approaches and to discuss not only the advantages but also the possible limitations of different audit procedures.

This paper gives an overview of current audit procedures and arrangements in nine European countries as well as a summary of chosen aspects discussed during the seminar.

3.1.2 Introduction: Comparisons between countries

One of the postulates of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) is that the primary responsibility for instigating quality assurance lies with the HEIs. Throughout Europe HEIs exert considerable effort to develop quality management systems and procedures. External quality audits, then, establish whether these procedures and quality management systems are in place. To determine compliance the ESG suggest that, "use should be made, wherever possible, of the results of institutions' own internal quality assurance activities"[3].

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1 In the context of this article, *audit* is used for various procedures of external quality assurance that focus on institutional quality management processes or systems.

2 On the initiative of NOKUT and AQA, nine quality assurance agencies met on the 14th and 15th of April 2008 to exchange their experience and to debate their methods of institutional accreditation and quality audits. The following agencies participated in the workshop: Accreditation Council (Germany), ANECA (Spain), AQA (Austria), EVA (Denmark), FINHEEC (Finland), NOKUT (Norway), OAQ (Switzerland), QAA (UK/Northern Ireland), QAA (Scotland). The seminar was meant to stimulate dialogue and discussion so the number of participants invited was limited.

3 Compare: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Finland 2007 http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_v03.pdf page 15.

Any comparisons made between the national auditing procedures of nine quality assurance agencies, however, must include the following considerations.

Audits in the Context of a Quality Assurance Framework
Some of the agencies have already had several years of experience with quality audits whilst other agencies started the development of audit procedures only some months or years ago. Furthermore, audits in some countries represent just one element of a framework of quality assurance that includes further activities such as institutional or programme accreditation or other evaluation schemes. Hence, audits as an instrument of external quality assurance often represent only a segment of a whole set of external quality assurance arrangements. There exists, for instance, (a) an option to assess each programme or to have an institutional audit with a view to decrease comprehensive programme accreditation (e.g. Germany); (b) a differentiation of methods depending on different HEIs sectors or types of institutions (e.g. Austria or Norway) or (c) even a suspension of audits in favour of programme accreditation (Denmark). Hence, auditing procedures and features can be fully understood only within the context of the quality assurance policies of each country.

Adaptations of Audit Design
It is often pointed out that a constant adaptation of the procedures is necessary and important and that agencies must evolve and improve procedures. On the other hand, changes to the framework of external quality assurance are often subject to policy decisions: Methods and approaches – although carefully designed by agencies – are often not modified in light of thorough meta-analyses of their effectiveness. Rather, modifications occur frequently due to shifts in the balance of power in educational politics and changes in the agendas of the different stakeholders within the system. Subsequently, the auditing approaches of the countries change and are adapted very swiftly. Country's representatives qualify the description of the status quo by referring to upcoming changes in their national law or policy-making, or to pending evaluations of the quality assurance framework in their countries. So each description of a nation's quality assurance arrangements represents only a snapshot of current procedures.

Similarities and Differences: A Question of Interpretation and Outlook
Quality assurance agencies take into account international practices when designing their procedures. The ESG, which have had a strong impact on the design of procedures and the development of higher education systems in most European countries, have lead to a convergence of criteria, standards and practice. This convergence may account for the superficial impression that audit procedures vary only in small details and are – apart from nuances – basically the same. However, audit procedures seem similar only at first glance; a closer look reveals that seemingly unimportant details do make a significant difference. For example discussions between countries showed obvious variations concerning the meanings and definitions of some expressions (e.g. "systematic follow-up" and "international recognition", which will be examined later). Additionally, what one agency viewed as a common quality practice that is important for accountability – e.g. Finland's practice of publishing audit reports – another country, such as Switzerland, saw the practice as a breach of privacy and data protection.

All things considered, the methods for making an overall comparison, or the possibilities for formulating an encompassing definition of "audit types", are very limited. Our aim, then, is to describe the main results of the audit seminar, special features and interesting aspects of audit procedures, and to discuss implications regarding the development of audit procedures. An overview of the results can be found in a table at the end of this paper. Background information on, and short summaries of, nations' agencies' auditing procedures have been provided by participating agencies; i.e. we included the summaries of agencies.

3.1.3 Audit Features in Different Countries: Chosen Results of the Seminar on Audit Approaches and Practices in Europe

In preparation for the seminar the participants took part in a survey conducted by AQA and NOKUT. Each country representative provided information about
- the role of the audit scheme,
- the scope of the audit,
- the nature of the audit,
- the expert site visit,
- the follow-up.

For each thematic block, several sub-questions were formulated. Each country representative answered 21 questions regarding the audit procedures in his or her country. The results of the survey were summarized in a table in chapter 3.1.5 of this article. Some issues that were generally regarded as key aspects and necessary to understanding the audit practice of different agencies were discussed in more detail; e.g. the time of the implementation of an audit scheme, arrangements regarding an obligation or not to participate and respectively the consequences of audit results were identified as key aspects and especially discussed.

3.1.3.1 Implementation of Audit scheme

The countries varied in regard to the point of implementation of their audit schemes. Hence, each representative was asked to give some background information related to his or her country's time of implementation:

Accordingly, three questions were posed:

Quality Assurance in my country ...

Audits with "tradition" (longer than 5 years)	Quality Audits conducted for several years	Audit scheme introduced very recently (during the last year or motnsh)
Scotland	Norway	Austria
England/ Northern Ireland, Wales	Finland	Germany
	Switzerland	Spain
	Denmark	

1. **Scotland and England/Northern Ireland[4]:** Your schemes have undergone some changes. What are the reasons behind this?
2. **Norway, Finland, Switzerland and Denmark:** You started some years ago. How accepted is the audit scheme by the HEIs and what are the lessons learnt?
3. **Spain, Germany and Austria:** You have just introduced an audit scheme. What are the (political) reasons and what was your agency's motivation in introducing the audits?

Some Summarised Results
England/Northern Ireland, Scotland – "We look back on a lot of reforms."

QAA England/Northern Ireland: There have been several changes and reforms which were closely linked to political decisions, for example, the abolition of subject-level review. The introduction of student fees and the closer involvement of students in internal and external quality assurance processes have also meant that the audit methodology is evolving again.

Another trend is the wish for a more enhancement-led approach; this led to the audit model which is currently used by QAA in Scotland. Scotland, since 2003, has been able to identify fields of enhancement and, during 2002–2003 was granted some time to establish an audit procedure which is more enhancement-led in its approach. The enhancement-led approach was subject to external evaluation that is evaluation of its effectiveness carried out by a group of researchers independent of QAA and the universities. The outcomes of that evaluation, which were published in 2007, indicate that the approach has been success-

4 The seminar specifically dealt with the approaches of Scotland, England and Northern Ireland, Wales has a slightly different institutional review approach.

ful 'thus far'. Success has been evident in areas relating to the engagement of students, the greater engagement of staff in matters relating to the improvement of learning and teaching, and in relation to institution's strategic management of quality enhancement. A second cycle of the approach is beginning in session 2008-09.
Universities in England/Northern Ireland might debate the point as to whether or not the current audit methodology is a "lighter touch". It is certainly true that the abolition of subject review has decreased the burden of external scrutiny. In some cases the universities try to adapt internal QA/QE planning to the QAA audit cycle.

Finland: Constant dialogue and the HEI's freedom to choose their own models of a QM-system.
FINHEEC put in a lot of effort in order to establish trust. Audits were first established on the basis of pilot-runs. The constant dialogue with the HEIs was identified as most vital for the acceptance. Additionally, the criteria and the audit model itself were very much discussed with the institutions and finally the institutions agreed on the criteria and the audit model was designed according to the wishes of the universities and the polytechnics (also called as universities of applied sciences). Moreover, the institutions are free to choose the quality management system they want to implement (for instance ISO, EFQM or own adapted models). The training of the auditors, a formal agreement with the institution's management, an information seminar for the HEI and a constant dialogue between FINHEEC and a coordinating peer are also deemed important factors.

Denmark: A shift to programme accreditation – a drawback for audits ...
In Denmark the quality assurance agency EVA has had to stop the audits which were carried out on a voluntary basis. The audits met a high acceptance of the universities and EVA tried to keep the audit scheme as simple as possible and to get the highest value out of the audits for the universities. However, EVA had just adapted the audit scheme to the ESG and discussed criteria for the next cycle with the universities when there were several changes in the educational politics. In Denmark, the general focus has just shifted towards programme accreditation thus the audits were put on a hold.

Switzerland: From conflicts to "ownership" of the standards and the advantage of a legal mandate

After a difficult start for OAQ the second cycle seems to be much more accepted by the universities which have implemented a more sophisticated QM-system in the meantime. Furthermore, the universities were involved in the design of the audit model and the standards "belong" to the Swiss rector's conference. This joint effort led to more acceptances. Last but not least, it is also pointed out that the acceptance has much to do with the legal regulation which has led to a strong mandate for OAQ.

Norway: A high level of acceptance of the audit concept from the institutions and internal QA systems established at the HEIs
The Norwegian HEIs were in favour of the establishment of an independent national QA agency (NOKUT). Also, the importance of a clear legal mandate for the audits is stressed. The evaluation criteria in Norwegian quality audits have been established in cooperation with the HEIs. The audits focus on teaching and learning. Research is not a part of the audits because there is a separate national research council. Towards the end of the first cycle of audits, the experience is that the internal QA systems at the HEIs have been implemented and are found to be a useful tool for QA work. An evaluation of NOKUT finds that the audits are mainly positively received and contribute to the further development of educational quality. The evaluation panel stressed that the second round ought to increase the focus on enhancement and outcomes. The evaluation is taken into consideration in NOKUT's planning of the next cycle of audits.

Spain: QM-tools offered are appreciated by many Spanish universities
The Spanish approach is to invite the universities to hand in a proposal of their internal QM-system concept in a first round. The universities then receive a feedback from experts. It is decided whether the concept is accepted and will be audited in the second cycle, whether a revised model will have to be handed in or whether the concept needs to undergo some major changes. ANECA is very satisfied with the response of the HEIs so far. The impression is that the institutions are basically approving the audit approach which strongly focuses on the quality management system. It seems that they give ANECA the "benefit of doubt" and that they appreciate the tools and guidelines ANECA offers to them.

Germany: The motivation for the recent introduction of system accreditation has different roots …
In Germany, the system-accreditation has just recently been introduced (in Germany, due to legal reasons, the term "accreditation" has to be used). There are two reasons why the scheme was introduced: Firstly, there was a strong opposition by some German federal states regarding the programme accreditation. Programme accreditation which has been carried out on a wide scale in most German federal states was criticised in regard to its workload and in regard to the costs for each HEI. Lots of different stakeholders with sometimes conflicting interests were involved in the discussion. Secondly, there was also an intensive internal discussion within the German Accreditation Council. During the last years, it became more and more obvious that the institutions did not develop systematic quality management approaches but rather focused only on very small sections which were deemed important to pass the programme accreditation. The institutions did not interlink their processes and had a lot of detailed procedures established without an overall concept. German HEIs are now free to choose between programme accreditation and an accreditation of their quality management systems. The latter cannot be deemed "a lighter touch" compared to programme accreditation and also still includes some elements of programme accreditation (samples of programmes are looked at) but then leads to an accreditation of all study programmes.

Austria: An obligation for quality management without external evaluation or accountability: Designing a fitting concept for the Austrian public universities

In Austria the audit scheme was developed mainly, but not exclusively, for the public universities (by far the biggest higher education sector in Austria). HEIs in Austria are obliged by law to develop internal quality management systems, but so far Austrian public universities are not in any way obligated to undergo an external assessment of their quality management systems. For AQA, developing an audit scheme that would be accepted by the universities was very important. The universities were consulted during the development of the model and were provided with information and support regarding the development of their internal quality management systems. Two types of audit have been developed that have been recognised by the ministry and lead to certification: Universities can undergo audits in one chosen performance area or in four performance areas. The performance areas are (a) studies, teaching and further education, (b) research and development, (c) internationalisation and mobility and (d) human resource management and development. The performance areas that are audited were derived from the performance agreements which are negotiated between the Federal Ministry for Science and Research and each public university. The procedure includes a catalogue of aspects for the quality management system of the performance area and also focuses on two key processes as examples that represent good practice of the QM-system. Even though the universities are under no legal obligation to submit to audits, they are very interested in the approach. So pilot-runs have recently started.

3.1.3.2 Voluntary or Mandatory? Consequences of Audits

To understand further the differences in national approaches to auditing, two additional factors were identified and discussed: whether audits are mandatory and what consequences are linked to audit results. In a session dedicated to these topics called “Stick or Carrot?” each participant gave some insight into the following questions:

Some more information about audits in my country:

In my country, audits are….

Voluntary voluntary, but mandatory

The consequences of audit results are…

The acceptance of audits by the HEIs is…

The purpose and objectives of the audits are crucial factors that, as previously stated, are linked to the overall national framework of each country. The factors are especially relevant in estimating the restrictiveness of the audits. Obviously, some kind of (national) pressure to take part in the audit scheme exists even in the countries that claim to have voluntary audits. Such pressures effect the well-known dilemma of how to balance "control/accountability" vs. "enhancement/support": On one hand, rigorous arrangements of external quality assurance may cause not only considerable objection and distrust from HEIs but may also encourage them to window-dress reports to forestall consequences should weaknesses become evident; on the other hand, if no external agency mandates audits, and institutions' undergoing audits is strictly voluntary,, then HEIs may have little inclination to participate. To compensate for the effect of external influence, some agency representatives emphasise accountability and consumer protection to promote audits, whereas other representatives stress the aspect of enhancement and added value for the HEI. Some agencies have chosen audit features that may lessen the impact of external control. For instance, some agencies allow the HEIs to set the appointment for an audit to be conducted within the audit cycle[5], or agencies prepare the institution by providing a considerable amount of information before the start of an audit. In Scotland, England and Northern Ireland, agencies ask experts to give their impression on enhancement in their report. Also, over time agencies tend to oscillate between the two options; for a while the pendulum swings more in the direction of control/accountability and then back to the "softer" approach of enhancement.
All agencies that have some experience in the field of auditing concur that the acceptance of quality audits by the HEIs has grown over the years.

Some Summarised Results

In **Norway**, an internal quality assurance system was made mandatory for all state-owned institutions by the start of 2004, and for private institutions applying for institutional accreditation. With a new law on higher education from 2005, all providers of higher education must have internal quality assurance systems in place. When NOKUT started auditing the HEIs, it became evident that in general the HEIs had constructed and started to implement their systems. However, quite a few institutions had struggled to meet the deadline. Quality audits in Norway result in a judgement of the extent to which the system as a whole is satisfactory and indicates areas of development. If fundamental deficiencies in the quality assurance system are found, the institution is granted a time limit of six months to rectify matters. The quality assurance agency will then conduct a new audit. If the institutional quality assurance system fails approval again, the institution will lose its right to start or to apply for approval of new provision. After one year the institution may ask for a new audit. Also, on the basis of the audit report, the agency may initiate revision of given accreditation (of a study programme, of a department or of the institution itself).

In **Switzerland**, audits are also mandatory for each publicly recognised university. The consequence could be a cut in federal funding (up to 25% of the budget)

5 Audit cycles are between two to six years, depending on the country.

but before there would be any cuts in funding there would be a re-audit after a year. The estimation is that the possibility of a drop in funding is highly unlikely.

In **Austria** audits are voluntary. Accreditation and certification are linked to the different sectors. Private universities and universities of applied sciences have to undergo some institutional and programme accreditation. Public universities, however, do not have to account for their quality management systems or study programmes. Although public universities in Austria are autonomous, they are preparing consensual procedures for proving their quality. Audits as an instrument for external quality assurance seem to be the most accepted concept by far.

In **England and Northern Ireland**, every university which receives public funding has to undergo an audit – so theoretically a private university which is very rich would not have to undergo an audit. However, media coverage means that it is in all HEIs' interests to participate in audit. QAA is cautious of media coverage as it can tend to focus on negative results and also might misinterpret them. Regarding the acceptance of the audits it is believed that this is generally quite high. Especially when compared with the other sectors of education (highly regulated school inspections), audits are seen as the best possible option.

QAA **Scotland** makes similar observations. Audits in Scotland are mandatory but have not always been so. There was a revision in the legislation. Broadly similar to the position in England and Northern Ireland, a 'confidence' judgement was introduced where review teams would express their level of confidence in institutional management of quality and academic standards. Teams can express 'confidence', "limited" or "no confidence". The judgements of limited or no confidence are rarely passed but would have very serious consequences for the institution. In Scotland, only one institution received a judgement of limited confidence in its management of academic standards during the review cycle in the period 2003-2007. The judgement was one of several different reasons for a merger of two universities. The Scottish Funding Council agreed to a one-year break in the cycle of institutional review to allow for reflection and analysis of the first four-year cycle, and to modify the institutional review methodology for the next cycle which begins in 2008–2009.

In **Denmark**, the audits were absolutely voluntary without any "buts" attached and were highly appreciated for the dialogue. The acceptance was estimated to have been very high.

In **Germany**, the universities can choose to undergo an audit which leads to an accreditation of the QM-system. The "carrot" is that universities which passed the audit do not have to undergo any programme accreditation for up to six or even eight years. On the other hand, some universities have developed quite a routine when it comes to the programme accreditation and are therefore reluctant to change their procedures. Also, study programmes which have an international target group and wish to place its alumni on an international market (e.g. engineers, MBA programmes) tend to prefer the programme accreditation. So, for the time being it will be mandatory for the HEIs to choose between the QM-system accreditation and the programme accreditation.

In **Spain**, audits are also voluntary and not linked to resources. Most universities (more than 80%) are interested to take part and the acceptance seems to be high. At the moment, the threshold to pass the first on-paper evaluation is estimated to be quite low. The only potential negative outcome for the university could be the fact that all evaluation reports are published on the ANECA website.

In **Finland**, all HEIs have agreed to take part and a schedule up to 2011 was drafted. The audit certificate is in three languages and the institutions may use it for their marketing. Also, the recommendations made by the experts are found helpful by the rectors. The recommendations support e.g. strategic planning and organisational development. However, 3 out of 15 (in November 2008, 4 out of 19) institutions have failed the audit. These results have been taken very seriously by each institution even though there is no linkage to resources. In a two years period there will be re-audits focusing on the development needs defined in the audit report.

3.1.3.3 The Audit Scope: Thematic Areas of Audits

Quality audits assess whether a functioning quality management system has been established at the HEIs. Experts assisting agencies do not assess the quality of content as such,, but they rather assess how the HEI ensures high quality for its study programmes and research through quality management procedures. The HEI is expected to show that the aims it has set for itself (or the aims set by the stakeholders) have been accomplished and are constantly being monitored and improved. In its audit handbook[6], QAA has described this approach with the help of six questions:

- What are we trying to do?
- Why are we doing it?
- How are we doing it?
- How do we know it works?
- Why is it the best way to do it?
- How can we improve it?

Yet, the focus of audits across agencies differs in scope and thematic areas. All agencies have a special focus on teaching and learning, but otherwise audit foci vary regarding other institutional aspects. For thematic areas, the agencies have different mandates. Whereas in some countries (e.g. England, Northern Ireland or Norway) research results are evaluated by another agency or body, in other countries (e.g. Austria) research can be a focus option of an audit. Even though the quality management system is assessed by an audit, many agencies apply different methods by which the element of the “content” becomes relevant. To determine whether the implemented quality management system “produces” and ensures good results, the HEIs provide examples of good practice to agencies as evidence. For example, Germany provides random samples of study programmes and feature samples; England and Northern Ireland asses so-called “audit trails”; and Austria examines key processes within defined performance areas. Also, em-

6 http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/handbook/audit_handbook.asp

phases vary between nations regarding input, process or throughput and output quality. When the emphasis is on the output quality for example, the rationale points to the increasing importance of learning outcomes. The emphasis on output, however, causes to speculate that the focus on processes has become less relevant. Yet, as mentioned earlier, comparisons between audit approaches are difficult to make, and no universal types of audits as such can be identified. One must consider that the HEIs vary not only between countries, sizes and types of institutions but they also vary in regard to their experience in implementation of quality management systems. The HEIs are in different stages of development. Even within one institution different levels of development exist. Thus, where an element in one department may be an enhancement, in another department the same element would be a serious drawback.

Consequently, the variations between institutions necessitate different requirements for audit design. The demand for a comprehensive quality management system, which is to be established by the HEIs, seems to be an especially challenging one, as illustrated in a statement made by Inge Enroth, EVA: "It seems [that] the main common challenges concern ensuring coherence and a systematic approach in the quality work, as well as [seeing] the possibilities in using the quality work to the institution's own advantage. The audits show that the work for quality often seems abstract and isolated compared to the academic core activities. […] In general there is strong and good will to offer education of very high quality, but not everyone thinks that quality work is the way to do this. […] Furthermore, the audits have revealed that the quality work is often arranged in order to fulfil external demands, as opposed to supporting internal objectives (of the institution, faculty, department or individual employee). […] In other cases, when quality work is based on individual ideas and efforts, it is much more likely to be perceived as relevant but will then often take place without or outside a strategic framework and will remain well-intentioned, but a more or less isolated project [or] arrangement."[7]

3.1.3.4 The Views on Follow-Up and Support

One of the questions of the survey, which was carried out before the seminar, was: "Is there a systematic follow-up procedure? Does the agency provide for counselling during the follow-up?" (Question 20)

As already stated above, achieving a clear definition of certain issues is not always easy. Initially, respondents were misled by the above survey question. Their problem had to do with the word "counselling" and the different meanings attributed to it especially by non-native English-speaking representatives and authors. So at first, counselling – with its oft-missed meaning of "support" – did not seem to be part of the mandate of some of the agencies. Perhaps respondents were also uncertain whether a follow-up could have formal elements of counselling or support, which may have been construed as a conflict of roles and regarded as unprofessional. Also, the wording "systematic follow-up procedure"

7 Compare procedure description Denmark; see the table for more details in chapter 3.1.5 of this article.

may have been ambiguous and interpreted differently: What features are relevant for defining a follow-up as "systematic"? Various interpretations cannot be fully surmised here; the responses, however, obviously showed different emphases regarding the follow-ups. Yet contrary to the varying interpretations of the question, every agency has established some form of follow-up either on a voluntary basis (e.g. Switzerland), an obligatory mid-cycle review (e.g. England/Northern Ireland, Germany) or in the form of annual meetings between the HEI and the agency (e.g. Scotland). Representatives from Spain and Austria emphasised the need to offer some support for HEIs that have just started implementing quality management systems. All agencies try to support the enhancement of the HEIs by establishing a variety of support mechanisms, such as supportive meetings, development plans, seminars, conferences and annual meetings. Another example for support is the guideline of the Spanish agency ANECA, which gives the HEIs comprehensive information on how to execute a process-documentation[8]. Furthermore, Spanish HEIs can receive feedback from experts on the written description of their quality management system when they submit a proposal applying to be audited.

Additionally, many agencies include a special section for recommendations in review reports. These recommendations by the peers have no influence on the accreditation decision itself.

Finland describes the re-audit as "a supportive tool". Also, the conditions imposed on HEIs for accreditation and passing audits– provided the implementation of these conditions is possible – can function as an opportunity for feedback and support from experts.

3.1.3.5 International Recognition

In addition to terms regarding follow-up causing confusion, respondents also had varied responses to "international recognition". The survey question was posed in the context of the role of the audit scheme and was stated as follows: "Are the audit and/or its results formally recognised in other countries?"

Interestingly, several agencies misinterpreted the question regarding and mentioned the international recognition of their own institution. They wrote about evaluation or memberships in networks such as ENQA. The agencies for quality assurance, like HEIs, are under a certain level of political pressure regarding their work and their national and international accountability.

Originally, however, the question was aimed at assessing the results of audits and determining whether the results were internationally or bi-laterally accepted: In addition to national recognition, HEIs strive for international accreditation and labelling. The question was whether or how quality assurance agencies can react to this demand. Another possible reasoning is that the demands of HEIs regarding international recognition vary from country to country. So the discussion on the international acceptance of audit results was encouraged during a group session and then presented in the plenum. Smaller countries in particular seemed to have more at stake the in international recognition of good audit results because they have to make sure that the titles of their study programmes are fully accepted by

8 http://www.aneca.es/ingles/docs/audit_tools_eng_080221.pdf

neighbouring countries. In some countries, the HEIs are also very interested in labels; this is especially true for some study programmes that target an international workforce market such as MBAs. The increasing demand for labels may prove difficult in the long run because an inflation of different quality labels may result in a loss of significance. Again, the specific context of the higher education system in each country must be taken into account. However, agencies assume that they have to acknowledge the demand of the HEIs and make sure that they offer international recognition for their audit procedures.

3.1.4 Outlook

The seminar offered a good start for a networking initiative. The group is interested in having additional seminars about specific audit related issues and wishes to continue sharing experiences. The following areas of activities were identified by the representatives of the agencies:

- Allow the countries that have just started their audit scheme to present their first experience in the form of a "case study".
- Promote activities such as an exchange of staff and experience by inviting members of the network to take part in audits as international observers.
- "Invite critics to learn from them": Invite one or two representatives from the universities to give input on their view of the audits.

The next meeting of the network will be held in Madrid in the spring of 2009.

3.1.5 Table

Country / Question	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
ROLE OF THE AUDIT SCHEME **1. Mandatory Audit?** **Comments, if voluntary**	mandatory audit – undergoing Enhancement-Led Institutional Review is a condition of funding from the Scottish Funding Council.	mandatory audit for all universities	no mandatory audit but: all universities and polytechnics have registered to take part in an audit	Not, mandatory but 70% of universities have registered to take part in the first Audit programme initiative	yes, mandatory for all	no mandatory audit but: choice between Audit or programme accreditation is mandatory	no mandatory audits	mandatory in order to receive funding from the HEFC	Since 2007: voluntary before: mandatory
2. Establishment of Audits	current method: 2003/ 2004, but audits since 1988/89	first cycle 2003/ 2004	since 2005	introduced in 2007	introduced in 2003	end of February 2008	2008	since 1990, "*in one form or another*"	since 2003
3. Cyclical?	currently a 4 year cycle (the last cycle was 4 years with a one year opportunity for 'reflection and analysis' before beginning the next cycle)	every 4 years	every 6 years	Not decided yet. Probably, certification of IQAS valid for 3-4 years	no longer than 6 years	first cycle 6 years, then subsequently 8 years	every 6 years	every 5/6 years	
4. Consequences **Outcome linked to resources?**	no direct link to funding, although if there was a 'no confidence' judgement which was not rectified by the institution within an agreed timescale, funding would be removed (would be the decision of the Scottish Funding Council and not QAA Scotland).	linked to federal (not cantonal) resources	no linkage	No legal consequence, but can affect to the results of programme accreditation	no linkage	not direct linkage	no direct linkage	can affect funding (but no cases of funding affected to date)	no linkage
5. International recognition?	currently going through an ENQA Review for recognition in Bologna Process – the recent ENQA review was a judgement that QAA (UK-wide) is	national instrument, formal international recognition is not needed	no	Not now, but planned for future	not through any specific agreement	yes, because the final decision is one of an accreditation	planned	Recently reviewed for membership of ENQA. Method can focus on collaborative overseas	not by formal agreement

Question / Country	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
	substantially compliant with the European guidelines							provision	
SCOPE OF THE AUDIT **6. Coverage of thematic areas**	mainly the broad area of teaching & learning in 3 focussed strands: institution-led reviews (e.g. subject review, external examiner system etc); the student learning experience and the strategic approach to managing quality enhancement	quality assurance (especially in teaching and governance)	-Institutional QA-system as a whole - QA of degree education, research/R&D, interaction with and impact on society, support services, staff recruitment and development	Quality assurance (Teaching and learning) Issues: how are standards used to enhance quality? Involvement of interest groups?	only relates to educational quality, governance, R&D are relevant as "resource qualities"	teaching and learning	performance areas: studies/ teaching/further education, research, personnel, internationalisation additional evaluation of 2 or more key processes which demonstrate the functioning of QA system	institution's ability to manage standards of its awards and the quality of learning opportunities available emphasis on students and their learning	arranged according to the wish of the institution for instance on education, research, innovation…
7. Main Themes	ability of the institution's internal review systems to monitor and maintain quality and standards; the institution's approach to promoting an effective learning experience for all of its students; policies and the strategic approach to managing quality enhancement	internal quality assurance system – implementation of the QA System on the level of programs.	Comprehensiveness, performance, transparency, effectiveness of QA-system as well as the organisation of monitoring, evaluation and quality development	Quality policy and goals, programme design; classroom activities & student-oriented actions; academic staff and auxiliary teaching staff; physical resources and services; outcomes; public information	directly related to mandatory QA systems in the institutions: includes the documentation that is generated by the systems and the results they produce. *"The institution's own assessment of quality is tested."*	Management system and mandatory internal QA-system, outcomes, documentation and formal quality assurance	quality management system and how quality is ensured in the above mentioned areas of performance	see above	themes which have appeared more than once: quality culture, strategy, organisation of the quality work, quality work in practice, systems of information and documentation
NATURE OF THE AUDIT 8. Control vs. Enhancement (summative bias - formative bias)	enhancement-led, does also provide an overall judgement on the confidence that can be placed in the institution's management of quality (including quality enhancement)	a balance between control and enhancement is tried to be kept	enhancement-led, focus on institutional feedback and recommendations, control-oriented only insofar as there is a pass or re-	Continuous Enhancement based in a self control designed system	control perhaps formally the most important aspect/ rationale, in practice two aims are tried to balance	due to accreditation: approach is based on summative dimension but includes various formative elements	more formative, enhancement-led approach	"The balance is probably slightly in favour of assurance (not control) but it is shifting towards enhancement."	enhancement: overall purpose is to support the institutions' own quality work

Country / Question	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
	and academic standards		audit decision						
9. Linkage to other procedures, e.g. programme accreditation?	ELIR is part of a linked Quality Enhancement Framework with five elements in total: 1. internal subject level review using national guidelines, 2. involvement of students in quality management internally and via a national information and support agency, and the attention given to student feedback 3. a national programme of enhancement themes relating to particular dimensions of learning and teaching (e.g. responding to student needs, assessment) 4. an agreed set of public information on quality 5. enhancement-led institutional review	can be linked to programme accreditation (on a voluntary basis)	no	No mandatory linkage, but can modify partially the results of programme accreditation	audit has man-date to report if major weaknesses of programmes/ subject areas are detected: this may trigger revision of accreditation	option between programme or system accreditation	not at the public universities might be a possible option for universities of applied sciences	linked to degree awarding powers and university title application. *"Also to overseas audits and collaborative provision audit processes."*	No
10. Explicit common criteria/ standards for all audits? ESG reflected?	general guidelines laid out in a handbook regarding the review method (ELIR Handbook) Review teams make use of common sets of reference points, such as what we call in the UK the Academic Infrastructure which includes the QAA	guidelines for internal QA issued by the Swiss University Conference 7 standards for minimal requirements in full agreement with ESG	7 audit targets which reflect ESG and a criteria describing four different stages of development of QA system specified by each audit target See Audit	See general guidelines, handbook and review process (http://www.aneca.es/ingles/docs/audit_directrices_eng_080221.pdf)	set of 10 criteria for the QA system, however no standards that have to be met 100%	6 not very detailed criteria which reflect ESG	6 standards which are explained and made explicit in form of a questionnaire which can be used as a structure for the quality report (self-evaluation report)	see handbook (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/handbook/audit_handbook.asp)	12 predefined criteria closely reflecting the ESG

Country / Question	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
	Code of Practice, subject benchmark statements and a qualifications framework. There is also the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. In addition, institutions can identify reference points particularly relevant to their part of the HE sector. The Scottish Funding Council also issues guidance to institutions on the form their institution-led subject reviews should take and adherence to these guidelines is considered during ELIR.		manual: http://www.kka.fi/files/147/KKA_1007.pdf						
11. Varying of evaluation themes depending on negotiations?	The main themes are the same (as reported on above) but the elements that comprise those themes will vary so the process is relevant to the institution concerned and its strategic priorities.	no	no	No	No, but here are discussions of introducing special focus themes for the second cycle in 2009: However, no negotiation but set themes by NOKUT	some themes vary (to be chosen of a list)	yes, audits can concentrate on one performance area or the HEI can chose to under go an audit in all 4 performance areas	no variation in themes but the evidence provided varies from HEI to HEI depending on the audit trails carried out	no
EXPERTS/ SITE VISIT **12. Competencies represented in panel?**	5 individuals: student, 3 UK-based senior academic reviewers, one coordinating reviewer and, from 2008-09, a sixth member who will be an international re-	Expertise QA, background knowledge Swiss System, profile of the university, management experience,	5 members: 3 HEI representatives (polytechnics and universities as well as different staff groups),	5 members: 3 senior members from HEI, with institutional management experience and	academic, including professorial level, no subject specific; experience from institutional	Expertise in: QA, Management of HEI, student perspective, subject related expertise,	management experience in higher education, international experts, students, knowledge of	Senior representatives from the institutional management of other UK universities,	4-5 members together representing experience in - planning, organising, implementing

Country / Question	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
	viewer. All reviewers are required to have current or recent experience within a higher education institution. Academic reviewer: senior academic managers responsible for quality management in own institution; student reviewers: experience of representing students at institution-level; coordinating reviewers: senior university administrators; International reviewers: similar experience to academic reviewers but in an international setting, also required: number of skills relating to synthesising information, working in teams, communication skills.	academic background, member of student body	student, representative of the employers knowledge of field, experience in evaluation and QA-systems auditors must participate in training	external quality consultancy and/ One member of technical quality offices from HEI One member of external auditing firms.	management in HEI; evaluation expertise; panel member from abroad; student member	perspective from the professions	quality assurance concepts, academic or administrative background	It is likely that a student member is going to be included in future	education - assessing QA and development - insight into quality assurance from the student's perspective - quality assurance and development outside the sector
13. Main documents/ support of agency?	There is a Handbook – the ELIR Handbook which sets out the method. A senior member of staff from QAA Scotland manages each review and offers support and guidance to the institution, including meeting with staff and students, and providing comments on the institution's	Guide for experts given as support to panel / Main document Self-evaluation report	documentation of the institutional QA-system (including a SWOT analysis), evidence and examples of the effectiveness of the QA system by each audit target Audit manual	HEI submit their IQAS for evaluation to Agency, using an "ad-hoc" developed application based in information technology. that guides all the process to the end of evaluation	no self-evaluation required, audits try to rely on authentic documents, material e.g. annual report has to be supplied but also description of system	mission statement/ strategic planning, QA system, reports on outcomes no support	manual, preparatory talks and information visit of experts University hands in self-report on chosen performance area and description of key processes	institution submits a briefing paper with evidence documents; student body may submit written submission if it wishes, and invariably does so.	EVA provides guidelines for the self-evaluation and an interview guide for the site visit EVA conducts a one-day preparatory seminar for the experts EVA holds preliminary

Question / Country	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
	draft submission document (all institutions subject a 'reflective analysis' in advance of the review visits).								meetings with the institution and participates in launch seminar at institution
14. Duration of site visit?	<u>2 visits:</u> 2 days and then 3-5 days	2,5-3 days	2-5 days, typically 2,5 days, depending on size of HEI	Not necessary in the first step (design evaluation of IQAS) Not decided for second step (certification of IQAS), but likely 2-3 days	1,5 - 5 days, average: 3, great variations depending on the size of HEI, extra one-day visit before the main on-site visit is considered at the moment	First visit: 1 day, Second visit: approx. 3 days and an additional day for a sample which will be evaluated	1 day for information visit on-site visit: 2-4 days	1 day Preliminary visit; 3 day briefing visit (first day private) followed by a 4 day audit visit with one final day (private meeting of team with member of agency staff)	one visit of 2-4 days
15. Author of report	The review team members draft the sections of the report which are edited by the senior agency officer who has managed the review	Chair panel with expert group	written by audit group, edited by the Chair and FINHEEC's project manager	Written by experts and edited by agency officer	NOKUT project manager (according to panel's instructions)	Experts	Experts	written by experts and edited by agency officer	EVA's officers draft report according to panel's instructions and for panel's comments and final approval
16. Typical themes/ sections of report	See question 7	introduction of university, paragraph on the self-evalua-tion report, description of the on-site visit, description of standard fulfilment, re-commendations, summary	descriptions: the HEI organisation, the QA-system, the audit process findings by seven audit targets conclusions: strengths, re-commendations, proposal for the audit outcome FINHEEC's	- Result of compliance with criteria - Justification of evaluation - Strengths of IQAS - Weakness of IQAS - Mandatory and/ or voluntary enhancement actions to do	no predefined structure, but typical pattern: introduction, description of QA system, assessment of criteria (lumped together in sections with assessment at the end of each section), recommendation *"Reporting in the second cycle will probably be*	QA system and management, compliance with criteria and out-comes	Evaluation of the fulfilment of the 6 standards, conclusion and additional recommenda-tions	see handbook annex B (8 sections from summary – background to recommendation s and features of good practice)	see question 7

Country / Question	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
			decision of the approval of the QA system or the need for a re-audit		*different, with more emphasis on the results and the use of the system than on the system qualities as such."*				
FOLLOW UP **17. Formal decision?**	There is an overarch-ing confident judgement in the report. One year after the review, the institution has to write a response indicating the action taken in relation to the outcomes of the report.	yes, the Ministry for Education and Research decides on the federal funding	pass or re-audit FINHEEC may decide to deviate from the proposal	Pass/ pass with condition. The last will be re-audit before can be implemented	institutions must have a recognised QA system to achieve/keep status of being accredited	accreditation decision leads to an accreditation of all programmes	pass, pass with condition or not passed	a formal judgement of confidence is made	no
18. Consequences of negative outcome?	remedial action plan to be submitted and, once approved by QAA Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council, implemented and monitored by QAA Scotland with a follow up review. Close monitoring maintained until "*a clean bill of health"* is given.	federal funding: 25%, here cuts are possible. Before cut is realised a re-audit within twelve months is decreed	re-audit with special focus on the essential development needs defined in FINHEEC decision, no direct financial consequences (may be gener-ally discussed in the performance negotiations between the HEI and the Ministry)	no direct consequence, but all programmes have to develop quality assurance system for programme accreditation	loss of rights to provide courses or programmes without havening them programme accredited in each case	all programmes have then to undergo individual programme accreditation	no label, if part of the performance agreements with the ministry there might be additional consequences attached	possible impact on funding and bad press	no formal consequences
19. Formal decision making	The review team is responsible for reach-ing the decision in relation to the review, advised by the senior member of QAA Scotland staff (the latter to ensure con-	Department of Home Affairs	FINHEEC	judgement is panel's decision, but the formal decision comes from the certification committee of ANECA	board of governors	responsible body within each agency (6 different agencies in Germany)	accreditation and certification committee	judgement is panel's decision	no

Country / Question	Scotland	Switzerland	Finland	Spain	Norway	Germany	Austria	England/ Northern Ireland	Denmark
	sistent application of the review method).								
20. Maximum validity of a passed audit?	valid until next review (4-5 years). possibility of a range of caveats to a decision in relation to quality and/or standards of awards	4 years, no conditions	6 years	not set yet	6 years negative con-clusion: second evaluation round after 6 month, (institution loses no rights), second negative verdict: application for audit can be filed after a year	8 years, no conditions	6 years or if conditions shorter period possible	3 levels of recommen-dation: essential, advisable and desirable. An essential recommendation means that the overall judgement must be limited or no confidence. Judgement re-mains current until next audit	not defined
21. Systematic follow up procedure? Support?	follow up 1 year after review with formal response and through a series of meetings between the QAA Scotland officer and the institutions (called annual discussions).	no systematic follow up, OAQ offers voluntary follow up procedure, but no counselling	re-audit procedure includes a follow-up aspect with a development plan, a supportive meeting, a re-audit visit and a report for institutions that passed the audit, voluntary follow-up and benchmarking seminars are being planned to be organized 3 years after the audit took place	Follow up methodology and recurrence period is now under discussion.	*"The systematic follow-up lies in the cyclical nature of the evaluation (and of course in the second round after negative decisions)."* NOKUT has no legal mandate for other follow-ups normally no counselling but efforts of assistance in more general terms (e.g. seminars, conferences)	after accreditation there will be a sample of study programmes to be reviewed after 4 years (midterm review)	follow-up procedure is integrated part of the concept	follow-up proce-dure in place (mid-cycle follow-up for all institutions obligatory) In the case of limited or no confidence judgements, an action plan must be produced and implemented within 18 months of the end of the audit.	No formal follow up procedure, but a conference is arranged if the institution wants it

3.2 The Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in Scotland

Ailsa Crum
QAA Scotland

3.2.1 The Audit Model

Scottish higher education institutions are required to participate in Enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR) which is coordinated by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland (QAA Scotland) under a service-level agreement with the Scottish Funding Council and the institutions' representative body, Universities Scotland. It is regarded as meeting the Scottish Funding Council's legal obligation to assure the quality of higher education provision.

Enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR) is one component of the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF), a radical approach to quality assurance and enhancement in higher education introduced in Scotland in 2003. The QEF emerged out of the experiences of more than a decade of audit and review within the UK. According to the final report of the external evaluation1, the QEF was 'based on the pooling of expertise and knowledge of literatures on teaching, learning, change and quality from a wide range of sources, all shot through with a commitment to enhancing students' experiences as learners'. In other words, the QEF brought right to the fore the simple and powerful idea that the purpose of quality systems in higher education is to improve student experiences and, consequently, their learning. The second edition of the ELIR Handbook (which is currently available on the QAA website at www.qaa.ac.uk and relates to reviews to be carried out at Scottish higher education institutions from 2008-09) remains firmly focused on this target.

In addition to ELIR, the main elements of the QEF are:
- the Enhancement Themes
- institution-led quality review (sometimes known as subject review)
- the engagement of students in quality management, including the support provided through the national independent development service, student participation in quality scotland (sparqs)
- the provision by institutions of an agreed set of public information.

The Enhancement Themes were a novel development within the QEF. They have now become well established under the direction of the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC). The remit of SHEEC relates both to the strategic management of the rolling plan for the Enhancement Themes, and also to supporting the development of institutional quality cultures. The outcomes from the work of SHEEC now represent a valuable resource for the sector in the management of quality, drawing widely as they do on both national and international practice, evidence and experience. There was, and is, no expectation that the outcomes of the Enhancement Themes will lead to compliance with specific approaches. Rather, the outcomes now provide a rich repertoire of reference points for institutions and their students to draw on in developing their own policies and practice within the context of their own timeframes and priorities. The Enhancement Themes, therefore, now increasingly provide an important context for discussion within ELIR and are also increasingly referred to within institution-led quality reviews.

3.2.1.2 The Audit concept

The ELIR methodology incorporates five themes:

- **Enhancement includes assurance** – The overarching theme of ELIR is the strategic management of academic standards and the enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience. It is important to emphasise that a key element of an effective enhancement strategy involves knowing where one is starting from, i.e. how does the institution assure itself that standards and quality are being appropriately maintained. This can then be linked to the related element of the management of enhancement; improving the effectiveness of student learning; seeking to learn from current activities, reference points and good practice; and to make the most effective use of resources to support engagement and high-quality learning. Assurance and enhancement are inextricably linked within the quality cultures of institutions.
- **Looking forward** – The focus within the ELIR process is how an institution learns from the past in order to inform the future.
- **Enhancement and risk** – Enhancement is the result of change and innovation that will frequently involve risk. Institutions are expected to manage this risk in a way that provides reasonable safeguards for current students. The review process will continue to recognise and support effective risk management and adopt a supportive and not punitive role in this context.
- **Supporting diversity** – ELIR supports the rich diversity of higher education institutions in Scotland. While there are commonalities of purpose, each higher education institution in Scotland has its own unique mission and will seek to meet the needs of its own particular students in its own particular ways. The quality culture of each institution will therefore have its own individual characteristics, and the ELIR process will consequently engage with the enhancement of the learning experiences of students in the context of their own institution.
- **The UK and international context** – Institutions in Scotland operate and compete in a global environment. The ELIR process supports institutions in this context. Key outcomes from ELIR are directly comparable with outcomes from related processes elsewhere in the UK. Some of the reference points for quality and standards used by institutions and ELIR will be common across the UK, for example the Academic Infrastructure (which includes the QAA Code of Practice and subject benchmark statements) and the relevant sections of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. In general, institutional enhancement strategies, ELIR and related elements in the overall enhancement model draw on good prac-

tice, not only across the UK, but internationally. In addition, ELIR and its outcomes are used proactively to promote the high standing of Scottish higher education internationally.

ELIR reports provide information about the effectiveness of individual institutions' approaches in three broad areas:
- Management of the student learning experience
- Institution-led monitoring and review of quality and academic standards
- Strategic approach to quality enhancement.

These three report sections each lead to a commentary in which the ELIR team will set out its views of the effectiveness of the institution's approach. There is no prescribed formula for expressing the team's views. The commentaries lead to a single overarching judgement which is expressed in the form of a confidence statement. The statement is intended to provide a holistic view of the effectiveness of the institution's management of academic standards, and of the assurance and enhancement of the student learning experience both currently and in the future. ELIR teams express their level of confidence in one of three standard forms: confidence, limited confidence, or no confidence.

3.2.1.3 Audit criteria

In the ELIR method, institutions are expected to make use of a wide variety of reference points. Some of these reference points, such as the Academic Infrastructure or the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education, will be common to all institutions, while others may be limited to particular institutions or groups of institutions. Some reference points are determined largely externally (e.g. Professional, Statutory or Regulatory body guidelines) while others are internally defined (e.g. institutional strategic plans, quality enhancement plans etc). Some reference points are national while others are international (e.g. from international learned societies, international groupings of institutions, Bologna guidelines etc). Therefore, while there will be significant elements of commonality, the particular combination of reference points used by individual institutions may vary widely. There may also be significant variation in the way reference points are used both within and between institutions.

Within this variation, and in common with previous practice, all Scottish higher education institutions are expected to adhere to the Academic Infrastructure, including the higher education qualifications framework within the SCQF and have regard to Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Adherence to the Academic Infrastructure involves institutions being able to demonstrate that the elements of the Infrastructure are addressed through the design and operation of the various institutional policies and processes for securing academic standards and assuring quality, but it does not involve narrow compliance. The outcomes of the Enhancement Themes provide interesting and potentially valuable reference points. Institutions are expected to engage with the Themes and their outcomes in the manner appropriate to the institution and its strategic approach. There is no expectation that institutions should comply with particular outcomes or approaches. Nonetheless, over time, certain practices may become common across the sector and it will be entirely appropriate for an ELIR team to explore with an institution why it has chosen to adopt a particular approach. Equally, it is emphasised, for example in ELIR training, that diversity of approach is to be supported.

3.2.2 Methodology

3.2.2.1 The Audit process

The ELIR process consists of four integrated elements:

- An annual discussion with each institution – to facilitate the review process and provide an important opportunity for information sharing between QAA Scotland and the institution.
- The production of a reflective analysis (RA) which is submitted by the institution in advance of the review visit – the ELIR process is designed to support institutions' self-evaluation and reflection. The institution's RA is, therefore, central to the process and should highlight the main and distinctive features of the institution's arrangements for enhancing the student learning experience and securing academic standards. The RA should also set out the institution's reflections on the effectiveness of its approach in those areas, citing the evidence on which these reflections are based.
- A review visit to the institution by a team of peers from other higher education institutions – the review team comprises six individuals, three of whom will be senior academic managers drawn from across the UK; one will be a senior administrator; one will be a student reviewer; and one will be a senior academic manager from outside the UK.
- Sector-wide feedback on the learning points from ELIR activity – this comprises published reports on the review outcomes for individual institutions, sector overview reports and thematic reports.

QAA Scotland manages the ELIR method under the terms of a service-level agreement with the Scottish Funding Council and Universities Scotland (as indicated in section 1.1 above). Each ELIR review is managed by a QAA Scotland Assistant Director who liaises with both the institution and the ELIR team to ensure that the methodology is undertaken as intended. The Assistant Director is present for part of the visit including the early stages where the specific review themes are being agreed between the team and the institution, and at the end of the review to agree the review outcomes with the team. The Assistant Director is then responsible for editing the text of the report, which is drafted by the team members.

3.2.2.2 The Audit panels

All members of ELIR teams are selected by QAA Scotland according to a set of criteria (which are published in the ELIR Handbook). Reviewers are not allocated to the ELIR team for their own institutions. Institutions have an opportunity to comment on the composition of their team.

All ELIR reviewers are required to undertake training and are also expected to participate in continuing development and information seminars.

3.2.3 The consequences of the Audits

One year after publication of the ELIR report, QAA Scotland asks the institutions to produce a year-on response to ELIR. This will focus on the action taken following the review and will include consideration of the effectiveness of that action insofar as it is reasonable for the institution to take such a view in the time that has elapsed. The year-on response will be a focus for the annual ELIR discussion held closest to the anniversary of the publication of the ELIR report.

After the annual discussion at which the year-on ELIR response has been discussed, the QAA Scotland officer will write to the institution to confirm whether the action the institution has taken is broadly in line with the outcomes of the ELIR report. QAA Scotland is asked to report to SFC on the extent to which institutions are responding appropriately to the outcomes contained within the ELIR reports. The year-on responses to ELIR will form a key information source for these regular reports.

The final version of the institution's year-on response to ELIR will be published on the QAA website alongside the ELIR report to which the response refers.

SFC receives copies of the ELIR reports and, as a matter of course, may provide a commentary to institutions following receipt of reports. Where the ELIR report indicates that there can only be limited or no confidence in the institution's ability to manage quality and/or academic standards, SFC will require the institution to undertake follow-up action in specified areas. Institutions will have the opportunity to rectify limited or no confidence judgements, normally through a follow-up review. The precise methodology and timescale for the follow-up review will be agreed by QAA Scotland and SFC in consultation with the institution, having regard to the reasons for the limited or no confidence judgement and the nature of the remedial action the institution is required to take.

3.2.4 Experiences and trends

The final report of the external evaluation of the QEF (see reference 1 below) opens with the statement 'the approach to quality that we review here is ambitious, distinctive and, so far, successful'. The final external evaluation report identifies the key drivers of the success of the QEF. It states:

Distinctively, the quality enhancement framework which we review here, is a commitment to:

- Students and the continuing enhancement of their learning in higher education.
- Partnerships between agencies...higher education institutions...and other stakeholders, most distinctively seen in the active involvement of students and student bodies in the QEF.
- A theory of educational change that placed far more weight on consensual approaches than on the more coercive stances embedded in some quality assurance regimes. The approach emerged from serious discussion and thinking.
- A culture shift – away from top-down compliance-inducing processes to participative and critical supported self-evaluation; away from audit and towards improvement; away from ruffling the surface of higher education practices and towards permeating the system with practices compatible with the QEF; away from mechanistic models based solely on inputs and outcomes and towards more sensitive other forms of evidence of cultural change, while maintaining rigour and challenge.
- Reflexivity, in the sense of exposing QEF itself to evaluation from the very beginning. Evaluation was valued for the contribution it could make to the enhancement of the QEF itself, even as the QEF was working out what it would mean to have a higher education system committed to quality enhancement.'

Importantly, the final evaluation report also stresses that a key success factor is commitment to the long term, recognising that the development and nourishment of quality cultures does not happen overnight: the dynamic of real enhancement depends to a significant extent on operating within a relatively stable, predictable policy environment.

At the heart of the QEF to date has been the successful operation of professional partnerships with Universities Scotland, with the individual autonomous institutions, with the Scottish Funding Council and with students and their associated bodies, importantly the National Union of Students (Scotland) and sparqs. One vital piece of evidence on the importance of building further on the partnership model comes again from the final external evaluation report which indicates:

'We have also noticed … that when it comes to enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR), institutions are increasingly willing to lay out areas of imperfect practice and publicly consider ways in which they could improve on them in coming years. Perhaps the shift from the concealing behaviours associated with the previous quality assurance regimes operating in UK HE in the 1990s towards – and let it be clear that this is a direction of travel – disclosure of areas for improvement is the biggest cultural shift in thinking and the most distinctive feature of Scotland's fresh thinking about quality.'

Reference:
Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in Scottish Universities 2007. Final report of the external evaluation quoted in SFC circular SFC/11/2007 'Evaluation of the higher education quality enhancement framework: final report'.

3.3 Quality Audits in Switzerland

Stephanie Maurer, Laura Beccari
OAQ

3.3.1 The Audit Model

3.3.1.1 Audit as part of the country's evaluation of higher education[1]

The Federal Law on Financial Aid to Universities, which came into force in 1999, states in Art. 11 that in order to qualify for financial aid by the Swiss federal government, universities or institutions must provide "high quality services, which are evaluated by the Center of accreditation and quality assurance and are recognized by the Swiss University Conference." Every four years the Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities (OAQ) receives a mandate from the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER) to examine in a summary procedure whether the recipients of federal subsidies meet the prerequisites.

In accordance with the authorities the OAQ decided in 2002 to carry out these evaluations by means of quality audits. The OAQ developed four standards that described the minimum requirements for a quality assurance system. The first cycle of Quality Audits were carried out in 2003/04 for the ten Swiss public universities. Individual results of these Audits were not published whereas a report that summarizes the most important findings has been published. According to the Law the second round of quality audits is taking place in 2007/08. This time, besides the public universities, the Quality Audits include an examination of the ETHZ and the EPFL, the two Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology. Basis of the second cycle of Quality Audits are the Quality Assurance Guidelines for Swiss universities which have been issued by the Swiss University Conference in 2006. These Guidelines have been developed by the OAQ after the first round of quality audits in close collaboration with the universities. They are compatible with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

3.3.1.2 The Audit concept

The subject of the procedure are the measures taken by universities to ensure quality in teaching, research and any interconnected supporting services.

1 All Documents relating to the Quality Audits are published on the OAQ Website www.oaq.ch.

The Quality Audit 2007/08 examine both the quality assurance at institutional level and the implementation of quality assurance in teaching by looking at selected study programmes that are representative of the university in question. The audit focuses on quality assurance processes and considers the experts' recommendations from the quality audits 2003/2004.

In 2003/04 only the quality assurance measures at institutional level were evaluated. The goal of the procedures is to investigate the current state of quality assurance measures at universities using the standards of the SUC's Quality Assurance Guidelines as a legal instrument. The audits should also provide recommendations for improving quality assurance measures at individual universities.

3.3.1.3 Audit Criteria

The Audits in Switzerland are regulated by the Quality Assurance Guidelines for Swiss Universities. These Guidelines state that every university is responsible for the introduction of an internal quality assurance system. Article three of these Guidelines defines the minimum requirements to be fulfilled by a quality assurance system. These minimum requirements are described in seven standards. These seven standards are binding for the universities and fulfilment of these standards is evaluated in the audit. The seven standards treat different aspects of an internal quality assurance system such as the strategy, processes and responsibilities, evaluations, human resources and development, communication as well as the decision-making. The standards have been developed in close collaboration with the universities. They mirror the European Standards and Guidelines but also take into account national specificities.

3.3.2 Methodology

3.3.2.1 The Audit process

The procedure is divided into three steps, consisting of a self-evaluation phase of the university, an on-site visit by independent experts and a final report prepared by the OAQ. The site-visits of the 2007/2008 Quality Audits have taken place in May 2008.

A group of five experts visited the universities for three days and – based on the interviews and the self-evaluation report – compiled an expert report that the respective university could comment on. The responsibility for writing the report lied with the peer leader. The OAQ's final report was then based on the self-evaluation, the experts report and the comments from the university. It includes a presentation of the quality assurance system, an evaluation on the basis of the quality standards, as well as recommendations for improvements and further development. An OAQ collaborator accompanied the expert panel on the site visit. He/She was present during all the interview sessions and was responsible for the good functioning of the process in respect of the mandate given but was not a member of the expert panel.

3.3.2.2 The Audit panels

The audit panels are selected according to criteria which have been set up by the OAQ and discussed with the universities. The OAQ's Scientific Advisory Board selects the members of the expert group. The university can express an opinion on the selected experts and – by asserting important reasons – may call for the rejection of individual persons. The expert group is formed in a way that guarantees expertise in academic leadership, quality assurance, current research and teaching, as well as knowledge of the Swiss educational system. One expert must represent a student body in Switzerland. Also aspects of language and region as wells as the profile of the individual university are taken into consideration. The majority of the group must work in a foreign country.

Prerequisite for the students to be chosen as an expert is that he/she receives the training that is organized by the OAQ in collaboration with the VSS, the Union of students in Switzerland, within the scope of the student accreditation pool. All the experts have to attend a briefing session which is organized by the OAQ and takes place on the evening before the on-site visit.

3.3.3 The consequences of the Audits

Pursuant to article 6 and 7 of the Guidelines for the qualifying procedure for financial support, and based on the results of the quality evaluations performed by the OAQ, the State Secretariat for Education and Research (i.e. the Federal Department for Home Affairs) decides whether or not the conditions for qualifying for subsidies are still fulfilled at the university. If the university does not fulfil these conditions the State Secretariat can decide to cut the subsidies. However before such a cut is realized the State Secretariat decrees a second Audit within twelve months.

The final audit reports prepared by the OAQ are published in consultation with the SUC and by observing personal rights and data protection aspects (Art. 6 Quality Assurance Guidelines).

3.3.4 Experiences and trends

The Quality Audit processes in Switzerland have undergone very important changes since 2003. First of all, the basis for the Audits resp. the Audit criteria have been formalised. The Guidelines for internal quality assurance and the according standards as formal basis of the procedure has proven very helpful and useful. Also the communication with the university in the "Quality network of the Swiss universities" was a vital element for the preparation of the actual cycle of Audits. The Quality Audit cycle 2007/08 will be completed in December 2008 so the results and experiences of this second cycle have not yet been evaluated or published.

At the moment in Switzerland a new Law for the Higher Education sector is in discussion. The law is planned to come into force in 2012. According to this law the Quality Audit procedures will be replaced by an institutional accreditation. The exact criteria for this institutional accreditation are still to be discussed. What is clear is that the results of this audit cycle will be taken into account in these future institutional accreditations.

3.4 Audits of Quality Assurance Systems of Finnish Higher Education Institutions

Sirpa Moitus, Hannele Seppälä
FINHEEC

3.4.1 The Audit Model

3.4.1.1 Audit as a part of the Finnish evaluation of higher education

The discussion about Quality Assurance (QA) within the Finnish higher education system was intensified in 2004 when a national Committee proposed that the universities and polytechnics should develop QA systems that cover all their operations and that these be regularly audited by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC). The development of QA naturally was not a new issue or new task for the Finnish HEIs, but it involved better usage of the existing structures and procedures, and making them more visible and concrete.

Operating on the basis of legislation, FINHEEC is mainly in charge of the external evaluation of HEIs in Finland. FINHEEC has organised institutional evaluations of all Finnish HEIs, and also a number of thematic and programme evaluations in selected fields. In addition, it organises evaluation processes of high-quality units (so-called centres of excellence).

The audit model was developed in 2005. Currently, it has no links to other FINHEEC evaluations. Participation in the audit is voluntary for the higher education institutions. However, each university and polytechnic has signed in and all the institutions will undergo an audit by the end of 2011.

3.4.1.2 The Audit concept

Premises
FINHEEC has defined a quality assurance system in higher education comprising of procedures, processes and systems used by the HEIs to manage and enhance the quality of its education and other activities. Based on the autonomy of the HEIs, each institution determines independently its own objectives, the organisation and methods of its own QA system.

The target of the audit is to evaluate how well the QA system serves the strategic aims the HEI has set for itself, and how well the QA system works in relation to the national audit criteria set by FINHEEC. The aims, operative contents or performance of the HEI are not, per se, touched upon in the audits. Result assessment is the domain of the HEI itself and is also performed by the Ministry of Education in the framework of its management by objectives and performance.

Objectives
The aims of the audit are:
- to establish the qualitative objectives set by the HEI for its own activities;
- to evaluate what procedures and processes the HEI uses to maintain and develop the quality of its education and other activities;
- to evaluate whether the HEI's quality assurance works as intended, whether the QA system produces useful and relevant information for the improvement of its operations and whether it brings about effective, improvement measures.

The objective of the audits is to collect and disseminate best QA practices and promote their adoption within the HEIs. The aim of the audit and public reporting on the HEI system is to activate the debate on quality issues, as well as the interaction between the HEIs and their stakeholders.

3.4.1.3 Audit targets and criteria

Audits focus on two levels: the HEI's QA system as a whole and the quality assurance related to the HEI's basic mission. Audits assess the comprehensiveness, performance, transparency, and effectiveness of the QA system, as well as the way in which the HEI monitors, evaluates and develops its own QA system.

Audit targets:
1 Definition of the objectives, functions, actors and responsibilities of the HEI's QA system as well as the respective documentation
2 The comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the QA procedures and structures related to the HEI's basic mission
 a) Degree education
 b) Research/R&D
 c) Interaction with and impact on society as well as regional development co-operation
 d) Support services (such as library and information services, career and recruitment services, and international services)
 e) Staff recruitment and development
3 Interface between the QA system and the management and steering of operations
4 Participation of HEI staff, students and external stakeholders in quality assurance
5 Relevance of, and access to, the information generated by the QA system
 a) within the HEI
 b) from the perspective of the external stakeholders of the HEI
6 Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement of the QA system
7 The QA system as a whole

Criteria
In order to support the work of the HEIs and the audit teams, FINHEEC has prepared a set of criteria which describe four different stages of development of the QA systems. Each audit target includes definitions of absent, emerging, developing, and advanced level. The audit criteria will help the audit team to relate their

assessments to a predefined scale, which in turn, has been compiled to assure the consistency of evaluation results of different audit teams.

3.4.2 Methodology

3.4.2.1 The Audit process

At each HEI, the audit process is composed of the following stages:
1. HEI registration for the audit
2. audit agreements signed between HEI and FINHEEC
3. audit material collected by the HEI
4. preparatory meeting for the audit visit
5. audit group's visit to the HEI
6. audit report
7. publication of results and feedback discussion

Audit material
The HEI involved in an audit process collects the audit material from its own QA system, the purpose being to provide the audit group with sufficient information and evidence. The HEI must compile the audit material to allow the auditors to get a picture of the HEI organisation, the QA system, and its links to the operative steering system, as well as evidence of the QA system performance.

The audit material must include the following documents:
- Basic material for the audit (e.g. the quality manual shared by the entire HEI or other quality document in full, HEI's own SWOT analysis of its QA system)
- Evidence and samples: The HEI must include evidence and samples providing proof of the performance of the QA system in the audit material for each of the seven audit targets and their sub-targets.

The HEI is also requested to provide the audit group with access to any electronic material relevant to the audit.

Audit visit
About three weeks before the actual audit visit FINHEEC organises a public seminar for the staff and students to inform them about the audit process and to provide them with a discussion forum.

Typical duration of the audit visit is two and a half days, but depending on the size of the HEI, it may be extended to 5 days. One objective of the audit visit is to verify and complement the picture of the HEI's QA system obtained on the basis of the audit material. According to the developmental approach, FINHEEC also aims to realise the audit visit as an interactive event that contributes to the development of the HEI's quality assurance.

The first day involves interviews with the representatives of the HEI's management, teaching and other staff, students and other stakeholders. The focus is on the QA system as a whole. On the following days, the audit group visits faculties and individual units on sample basis to verify the QA in actual operations. Moreover, the audit group can arrange thematically meetings with various staff groups to discuss themes central to quality assurance. The audit visit always ends with a meeting with the HEI management. At the end of visit, the Chair will provide the institutional management with the preliminary oral feedback.

3.4.2.2 Audit group

FINHEEC appoints the audit group. As a rule, the audit group is composed of five members, three of whom are HEI exponents, one a student representative and one a work life representative. In appointing the groups, care is taken to include representatives of both higher education sectors, as well as the expertise of several of the HEI's staff groups (management and administration, teaching and research as well as support services). As applicable, the audit group should also include experts with previous audit experience.

The HEIs may choose an international audit. In these cases, the role and number of foreign auditors are determined separately for each audit.

Auditor training
All auditors must have participated in the FINHEEC auditor training. The training includes introduction to the Finnish HE system, especially for the foreign team members; the objectives, methods and criteria used in audits; the ethical and social dimensions of audit; the roles of the chair and members of the audit group; the audit techniques; analyses of audit materials and reporting. The training can involve 10–20 auditors at a time. The training takes 1.5 working days.

Audit report
The audit reports follow a uniform structure including
- a description of the audit process
- a description of the HEI under review and its QA system
- audit findings, including assessments by the audit group on the stage of development of the QA system per each audit target
- conclusions
  - strengths and best practices
  - recommendations
  - a proposal of the audit group recommending that the HEI´s QA system pass the audit or be subjected to a subsequent re-audit.

The audit group shares the writing responsibilities among themselves according to the expertise of each member. The aim is to produce a first version of the report already before the audit visit which helps the members to focus the interview questions to relevant topics. After the visit, each member rewrites his/her share and the Chair and FINHEEC's Project Manager are responsible for editing the audit report as a fluent whole.

All the audit reports are published in the FINHEEC publication series and on website. Additionally, FINHEEC organises a publication seminar together with the

HEI. These seminars are open to the entire institutional community and give an opportunity to discuss and comment the findings and conclusions with the auditors. A typical programme includes introduction of the evaluation results by the chairman and comments by the representatives of the institutional management, staff and student representatives.

3.4.3 The consequences of the Audits

Based on the audit targets and criteria, the audit group appraises the fitness for purpose and performance of the QA system, issuing recommendations for its improvement and highlighting best practices.

The audit group issues an appraisal of the development stage of the QA system by each audit target, using this criteria to make a proposal to FINHEEC as to whether the HEI passes the audit or whether a re-audit is needed. The audit group can propose that the HEI passes the audit if all audit targets meet the minimum criteria of an "emerging" system, and that the QA system as a whole (audit target 7) is at least "developing".

On the basis of the proposal of the audit group, FINHEEC will decide whether the HEI's QA system passes the audit or whether a re-audit is needed. As FINHEEC is responsible for defining the national threshold level of audits, it may decide to deviate from the proposal of the audit group.

If a re-audit of the HEI's QA is required, it will take place in about two years from the audit proper, and it will focus especially on the essential improvement proposals made. A typical number of re-audit targets is three.

FINHEEC maintains a register of HEIs that have undergone an audit on its website. FINHEEC issues an audit certificate to the HEIs passing the audit. The audit of the HEI's QA system is repeated every six years.

3.4.4 Experiences and trends

By the end of November 2008 FINHEEC has implemented 19 audits. The following conclusions can be drawn:

a) Audit model functions as intended
According to the feedback and the audit reports, audits have clearly boosted the development of systematic internal quality management. Audit reports have made visible quality policies, quality criteria and indicators, processes and procedures applied by different institutions. While paying special attention to the connection between the quality management and the institutional management, audit has supported the development of management tools. The audit model also requires evidence from the institutions about the utilisation of the evaluation and feedback information and thus emphasises the importance of quality loops.

Furthermore, the audit model pays attention to the equal participation of different staff groups and active engagement of students. According to the audit results, the institutions have created a lot of opportunities for participation. Some student unions even offer quality related training for students. However, the involvement of stakeholders is more challenging to the institutions.

It seems that not only institutions being audited but also those waiting for their turn have been able to recognise the strengths and development needs of quality management on the basis of the audit reports.

b) The expertise related to quality assurance and audits has increased significantly

So far (in November 2008), FINHEEC has trained about 70 auditors. About 1500 staff members and students have participated in the starting seminars of audits in their own institutions. Addionally, each institution preparing for audit, have organised internal training and many have organised internal audits, as well. Interestingly, many institutions have increased their mutual cooperation when changing best practises and experiences about the QA procedures and the audit visit.

c) Re-audit as a supportive tool

Four of the 19 audits have led to a re-audit decision. The main reasons for a re-audit conclusion have been shortcomings in the comprehensiveness and the effectiveness of the QA system. Dealing with a re-audit decision is not easy for the institutional leadership, but in our experience it has led to remarkable improvement in processes.

d) National benefits

As the current FINHEEC audit model covers the QA of all the institutional activities, it has enabled to evaluate how the QA processes are linked to each other, for instance, the QA links between education and research; or education and support services.

At the national level, the audit approach as a whole will enable the Government and the citizens to get a national overview about the quality assurance in Finnish higher education institutions. As mentioned before, it has been also used as a means to implement the ESG in Finland.

e) Constant development of FINHEEC procedures

It is a constant challenge for FINHEEC to monitor the implementation of audits and collect systematic feedback from audited institutions and from auditors. Feedback has been utilised in the development of the auditor training and the Audit Manual.

f) Future of Audits

FINHEEC audit schedule extends to 2011 and it covers the first round of audits. Currently, there are no formal decisions about the future of audits, but FINHEEC has proposed that the next audit round might target to more focused areas, like quality assurance of internationalisation, employability of students or research process.

3.5 The Spanish AUDIT Programme

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3.5.1 Context and Constraints. Quality Assurance in Spanish Universities

The recently reformed Spanish Universities Act of 2007 states the need for standards of quality assurance to be set to facilitate evaluation, certification and accreditation, and considers quality assurance as an essential purpose of university policy.

Although this change in legislation was a milestone in the implementation of quality assurance standards in Spanish universities, there were various stages prior to this in which other developments in quality assurance had taken place. The first of these, involving the opinions and satisfaction of university students regarding teaching, have been carried out since 1981 in some universities, and more recently graduates and employers have been incorporated into the surveys. There is still no methodology that is common to all universities, however, and surveys on the quality of teaching have yet to be carried out in some universities.

Between 1996 and 2006 quality assurance in Spanish universities came to be associated with institutional self-evaluation processes through the University Quality Assessment Plan, although these were not mandatory. They involved a board of academic staff and students drawing up a report for each educational programme on the quality of teaching, research and management.

As a consequence of the 2007 reform of the Spanish Universities Act, the current panorama is a new organisational structure for university studies, as described in Royal Order 1393, 29 October 2007, which establishes quality assurance as one of the basic elements to be provided by educational programmes in line with the Bologna process. It is consequently proposed that a quality assurance system should be one of the essential elements in the design of all future undergraduate, Master and doctorate degrees.

3.5.2 The AUDIT initiative

As shown in the previous section, the existence of enhancement strategies enabling the universities to develop, control, review and redefine their actions so that anticipated goals can be attained is not new in the context of Spanish higher education.

The aim of the AUDIT programme initiative, which is promoted by the ANECA, (and other regional Spanish agencies) is to guide and facilitate universities and their institutes, as the organisational reference both internally and for students and society in general, in the process of defining and designing the IQAS, enabling all activities associated with the quality assurance of degree programmes developed up to the present time to be included. AUDIT examines the universities' commitment to participate in and support the frameworks for technical collaboration with the agencies. In this respect, the AUDIT programme is intended to serve as an open framework within which institutions participate, although participation is not mandatory for universities.

The AUDIT programme is also intended to be a tool that contributes towards the recognition of HEI-designed IQAS, and it will therefore include an evaluation process of the IQAS. The evaluation process will enable HEIs to assure the appropriateness and relevance of the design through compliance with given prerequisites. The final stage of the AUDIT programme sees the certification process of IQAS being implemented by institutions being brought to a conclusion.

The aspects included in the AUDIT programme are covered by regulations dealing with undergraduate and Master's degrees in Spain. Efforts by the universities to set up IQAS will thereby be brought into line with their involvement in the accreditation of new degrees.

3.5.3 Methodology for the diagnosis and evaluation of the IQAS design

The QAAs need to strengthen their advisory role within the framework of the AUDIT programme. In this respect, one of the main outcomes of the evaluation process is the drawing up of two main documents, the interim and final reports. In the interim report the review panel, in its role as advisor, identifies the strong and weak points and indicates modifications to the design of the IQAS prior to its implementation; the final report includes a list of suggestions and recommendations for improving the IQAS, together with critical aspects that will need to be examined in detail in the follow up stage.

The analysis and diagnosis of the IQAS is carried out according to a series of guidelines that are given in the evaluation protocol. These guidelines have various aims: to help the HEI in the design of the IQAS, to establish how much ground has been covered already and the direction for forthcoming actions, and to structure the evaluation process to be carried out by the review panel.

The guidelines are based on the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) document Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, and they are meant to cover all the dimensions and stakeholders involved in an educational programme.

Table 1. Guidelines for the diagnosis, design and evaluation of the IQAS

- Guideline 1. How the HEI defines its quality policy and goals
- Guideline 2. How the HEI carries out the quality assurance of its programmes
- Guideline 3. How the HEI directs its programme at the students
- Guideline 4. How the HEI assures and enhances the quality of its academic staff
- Guideline 5. How the HEI manages and improves its physical resources and services
- Guideline 6. How the HEI analyses and takes into consideration the outcomes
- Guideline 7. How the HEI publishes information on educational programmes

In turn, every guideline is broken down into a series of elements, some of which are regulated at the national level under the design of educational programmes.

3.5.3.1 Evaluation criteria and scale

Evaluation criteria need to be broad and flexible, according to the above mentioned ex ante scenario prior to implementation of the IQAS. Reviewers will need to check a number of aspects in the IQAS design, however, such as:

- Organisation and structure, with a well-defined scope and meaning that is clear.
- All of the guidelines must be dealt with.
- Existence of a comprehensive process map (or similar), describing what the process is, who is involved, and how each process carried out.
- Examples of procedures and indicators that are included.

A four-level scale is used in the AUDIT programme for the assessment of each element and related guideline:

A Satisfactory
B Sufficient
C Insufficient
D Absence of information

A "satisfactory" or "sufficient" grade for each element in a given guideline leads to approval of the guideline, and the approval of all guidelines leads to the positive evaluation of the IQAS design, thereby enabling it to be implemented within the framework of the AUDIT programme. If a significant number of elements are graded as being either "insufficient" or "absence of information", particularly if they are critical elements, the guideline cannot be approved and IQAS design will need to be modified and improved in order for it to ultimately be positively evaluated.

3.5.3.2 The review panels

Peer review is used to evaluate the IQAS design. The same kind of review panel has been developed by the three QAAs involved in the AUDIT programme; there are five panel members, one ex-vice rector, two university academic staff members with experience in QA processes, one university QA expert and one QA professional (adviser in quality assurance). Some reviewers have therefore developed quality assurance systems in their own universities, and others are people who have previously held executive positions in a university.

There are different stages in the evaluation process. Firstly, each reviewer analyses the QA design separately and assesses its conformity with the AUDIT evaluation criteria. All of the reviewers then compare their evaluations and reach a joint agreement. They then draw up a report on the QA design, which is sent by the QAA to the university.

3.5.4 Participation

126 faculties and colleges from 53 Spanish universities participated in the first call of the AUDIT programme in 2007, which represents 70% of the total. The following table shows the distribution of participants, broken down according to each corresponding QAA:

Participation in AUDIT 2007-2008

Faculties, colleges and institutes	Universities
126	**53**

3.5.5 Conclusions and Lessons learned

Some of the lessons learned in designing the AUDIT initiative:

– The development of initiatives such as AUDIT is very useful in universities without an IQAS or where the internal quality assurance procedures and mechanisms have still not been systematised.
– A university's mission, vision and values should serve as the basis for producing an IQAS, and consideration also needs to be given to strategic issues.
– In an initial stage of the development of IQASs, the agencies need to play an advisory role as well as that of external review to encourage the growth of a true quality culture in the universities.
– It is necessary to involve university QA experts, professionals and academics to create synergies between those who play key roles in the design, development and enhancement of IQASs.
– It is necessary to develop standard procedures between the different peer reviews that are carried out to ensure that results between the various review panels and committees are coherent.
– Cooperation by the QAAs in joint projects is beneficial to the management of peer review processes.

3.6 Norway

Wenche Froestad
NOKUT

3.6.1 The Audit Model

3.6.1.1 Audit as part of the country's evaluation of higher education

Cyclic auditing of the institutions' quality assurance systems (QA-systems) is a core element of the external quality assurance apparatus in Norway. QA-systems are evaluated in a 6 year audit-cycle. It is important to observe, though, that the quality audits are supported by other mechanisms. According to Act of 1 April 2005 No. 15 relating to universities and university colleges NOKUT's responsibilities are:

a) "Evaluation of the institutions' systems for quality assurance
b) Accreditation of institutions
c) Accreditation of course provision
d) Revision of previously granted accreditation
e) Evaluations of significance to assessment of the quality of higher education. The Ministry may instruct NOKUT to conduct such evaluations.
f) General recognition of qualifications awarded by institutions not subject to this Act

The Ministry may not instruct NOKUT beyond what is authorized by statute or laid down in regulations issued by the Ministry, and may not set aside accreditations granted by NOKUT. All evaluations conducted by NOKUT are public, and NOKUT shall ensure that they are made known."

By accreditation, the institutions of higher education may obtain the right to give new provision, to grant degrees, to achieve accreditation of the institution or be accredited in order to apply for a change in institutional status (see appendix 5.1). The initial accreditations of programmes and institutions have no period restrictions. However, NOKUT may at any time initiate revision of a given accreditation. Through revision procedures an institution may lose accreditation for any of its programmes, or lose its institutional accreditation altogether.

It is mandatory for all institutions providing higher education to have a QA-system "which satisfactorily documents work on quality assurance and which is capable of revealing poor quality. The quality assurance system shall be applied to all processes of importance for the quality of study programmes, beginning with the information provided to potential applicants and ending with completion of the course. Routines shall be included for students' evaluation of teaching, for the institutions self-evaluation and its follow-up of evaluations, documentation of the institution's development of the learning environment and routines for quality assurance of new course programmes. The institutions shall have routines that ensure continuous improvement of the system."[1]

The act states that accreditation and evaluation activities shall be designed in such a way that the institutions can benefit from them in the course of their quality assurance and development work.

3.6.1.2 The Audit concept

A fundament in the Norwegian model for quality assurance of higher education, is that the institutions of higher education themselves have the responsibility for educational quality.

Also, the concept of external quality assurance builds on a long tradition of trust between the institutions and the authorities. Thus, the audits are focused on evaluating the institutions quality assurance systems and their work on educational quality. The external quality assurance is meant to be cost effective, and the institutional QA-systems produce yearly reports on the institutions quality work. Hence, these reports, a long with other existing documentation will be sent NOKUT prior to an audit. No extra self-evaluation project or extra self-evaluation report are demanded.

The audits maintain the general cyclic element in the national external quality assurance of Norwegian higher education. If the QA-system of an evaluated institution is approved, NOKUT will conduct a new audit no longer than six years afterwards. The audits shall be organised in order to be useful to the institutions in their work on educational quality. The audits shall provide transparency when it comes to objectives, approach and the evaluation process itself. There shall be no divergence concerning what is to satisfy the demands and criteria of quality. Also, the requirements regarding internal quality assurance and external evaluation are found to be compliant with binding commitments in the Bologna process concerning European cooperation and coordination within higher education.

3.6.1.3 Aspects covered in the evaluation criteria/standards target points

In accordance with the regulations, NOKUT has established evaluation criteria to which the QA-systems shall be evaluated, in consultation with the sector. Authorised by these regulations, and after a hearing in the sector, NOKUT has issued 10 criteria of what constitutes a satisfactory QA-system. In brief the criteria encourage the institutions to integrating the work on quality with the institution's strategic work and to define objectives for the work on quality. Moreover, the work on quality must be linked to steering and management, but also be organised in such a way as to ensure broad participation with emphasize on student participation and the students' learning environment. The system must generate

1 Abstract from Regulations of 8 September 2005 concerning accreditation, evaluation and approval pursuant to The Act No. 15 relating to universities and colleges laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research 1 April 2005.

documentation and information that should be analysed in the form of an annual report to the institution's board. Finally, the work on quality should contribute to resource management and priorities at the institution.

NOKUT will nearly have ended the first round of audits in 2008. For the new cycle starting in 2009, there will be adjustments in the set of criteria. The new set of criteria will focus on the HEIs use of their QA-systems and on outcomes and measures taken to enhance quality of provision.

3.6.2 Methodology

3.6.2.1 The Audit process

The institutions to be evaluated in the national audit cycle, will receive a letter describing the audit process. NOKUT will also have a meeting with the institutions' leadership early in the evaluation process. These meetings have a special focus on the documentation to be submitted and the audit panel's site visit.

The institution is heard prior to the formal appointment of the audit panel. However, as long as all persons in the panel have legal capacity, NOKUT does not have to comply with remarks the institution makes.

Two months prior to the site visit the institution must submit documentation of its work on educational quality. This information must include a detailed description of QA-system itself; reports on quality; key-figures on educational quality used by the institution and important steering documents. Also, the documentation must show how the institution's work on educational quality is organised in order to ensure broad participation from students and staff. The QA-systems shall ensure that institutions conduct annual self-evaluation processes concerning educational quality resulting in annual reports to their boards. There are no requirements for specific self-evaluation projects or a specific report prior to an audit. Instead, the documentation produced annually on quality work, and the institution's use of this information in its decision-making procedures, form central elements in the audit panel's analysis. Both NOKUT and the audit panel may demand additional documentation from the institution.

The panel will normally have their first meeting immediately before starting the site-visit. Until present, the site-visits have lasted from two to five days. The purpose of the site-visits are to contribute relevant information on the HEIs work on educational quality and to complete the information already received in the documentation from the HEIs. The site visits include dialogues between the panel and various groups in the evaluated institutions. The feedback from the evaluated HEIs often points out that these meetings and dialogues are constructive and useful for the institutional work on quality.

The focus of the site visits has in the first audit cycle been on meetings and interviews, but the visits also include document studies and visits to different parts of the campus or campuses. According to their mandate, the panel shall always meet with leaders, students, academic staff and administrative staff. The groups are assembled to cover all departments and faculties, and leaders will come from different organisational levels. Often, the panel will have separate meetings with students holding formal positions in decision-making bodies at the institution. Also, the panel will meet different representatives from decision-making bodies. Finally, one or two external representatives from the institution's board will normally meet the panel. However, an audit panel can always speak to anyone, as well as visit whatever part of the institution they would like. The audit panel will have meetings during and at the end of the site visit. Officers from NOKUT's staff take part in the site visits and will make notes from the meetings.

After the site visit, the panel and the NOKUT officer will normally correspond on e-mail until the audit report is concluded. When NOKUT receive the report, it will be sent it to the evaluated institution which is given a time limit of six weeks to formulate its formal statements. These statements and the audit panel's report will follow the document from NOKUT's director to The Board of NOKUT.

After the board meeting, the report is published on NOKUT's website together with the statement from the evaluated institution and the board's decision. The report is, however, a public document as soon as it has been registered in NOKUT's files.

3.6.2.2 The Audit panels

Experts conducting evaluations for NOKUT must not have any formal connections formal connections with – or functions at – the evaluated institution. Legal obligations on fair gender representation must be observed. The expert panels should consist of from two to five persons. NOKUT's criteria for selecting auditors are:

- Minimum one panel member shall have qualifications at the level of professor.
- Minimum one panel member shall have experience from (top) leadership of an institution of higher education.
- Minimum one panel member shall have competence within QA-systems or QA work.
- The panel shall have at least one expert with a foreign nationality.
- The panel shall have one student representative with experience from a governing body of an institution and/or experience from leadership or other position of trust from one of the national student organisations.

The Board of NOKUT appoints a group of auditors annually. Normally an auditor will stay with the task for approximately three years. When recruiting the first group of experts, NOKUT especially searched for academics known to the agency as experienced evaluators. Also, knowledge of the Norwegian higher education system was considered important. Student auditors are suggested from the two national student organisations for a period of two years. Auditors leaving the group, often remain as people to call upon when NOKUT must surplus a panel. However, these occasions may also be used to recruit new auditors to the group of experts. To boost the recruitment of new experts, NOKUT has recently asked the institutions of higher education to suggest possible auditors. Also, the auditors themselves are sometimes asked to suggest new experts. Until now NOKUT has had no problems recruiting experts. A tight schedule is often the reason when suggested experts say no to the task.

From the group of experts, NOKUT will select panel members for each specific audit according to the criteria listed above.

3.6.2.3 The report from the Audit panel

The audits always result in public reports. The report shall analyse how the institution's QA-system and work on quality meet the demands given in the act relating to universities and colleges, regulations to this act and NOKUT's evaluation criteria. According to their mandate, the audit panel shall make a clear conclusion on whether to advise The Board of NOKUT to approve the QA-system at the evaluated institution. The panel shall also indicate areas where the institution should further develop its work on educational quality and/or its QA-system. Finally, if they find it appropriate, the panel might advise The Board of NOKUT to initiate revision of accreditation.

In their report, the audit panel shall present a conclusion as to whether they find the evaluated institution's QA-system to satisfy each of the ten criteria. However the panel shall always produce an overall and comprehensive conclusion on the quality of the QA-system. The NOKUT officers responsible for the audit will be the secretary of the audit panel, and write the panel's report on the basis of their discussions and comments. The members of the audit panel are the authors of the report, and are responsible for the statements made. The institution will receive a draft of the report in order to remark eventual incorrect descriptions or misunderstandings. This draft does not include the panel's final conclusions. The panel decides whether remarks should lead to adjustments in the report.

The board of NOKUT has exclusive power to decide whether an institution's QA-system is to be approved.

3.6.3 The consequences of the Audits

If an institution fails to meet the demands on quality assurance in its provision, it will be allowed a time limit of six months to improve the system according to the experts' advice. The institution must submit documentation of the measures taken. NOKUT will then arrange a second evaluation. If the system is still not satisfactory, the institution is prevented from offering new provision or to seek accreditation of new provision. After one year, the institution may ask for a new evaluation.

It is part of the mandate of the audit panel to advise NOKUT whether to initiate revision of given accreditation. Also, The Board of NOKUT may initiate revision on the basis of an audit even though this is not suggested by the audit panel. Such a revision of accreditation can include one or several study programmes; one or several departments or faculties or whole institutions of higher education. If it is followed by a decision of non approval in the Board of NOKUT, a revision procedure will also contain a time limit for the institution to adjust according to the expert panel's remarks. When the adjustments are found to be unsatisfactory, the institution may lose accreditation, and be given a time limit before it may ask for a new evaluation to regain its accreditation.

3.6.4 Experiences

In Norway it is mandatory for all providers of higher education to implement an internal system of quality assurance of the provision. From the start in 2003 until April 2008, NOKUT has conducted quality audits in 54 institutions of higher education. A study of the audit reports show that the Norwegian institutions have developed quality assurance systems. In eight cases the system was not approved by NOKUT's Board of Governors. Four of these institutions have been re-audited in order to check the institutions' adjustments to their QA-systems. In all these cases the system was approved after the re-audit. The audit panels are always asked to point out areas for further development of the institutions QA-work. The following areas for development have been pointed out for 10 or more institutions: Advice concerning the reports from the QA-system on various institutional levels; advice concerning student questionnaires (particularly course evaluations) and insufficient feedback to students; other types of advice the information gathering or analyses. Further, the institutions' follow-up of the QA-reports was sometimes insufficient. Also, several institutions were advised to strengthen their internal QA-routines in specific areas or to find measures to increase the participation on the part of students and teachers. It is the impression, however, that students know how to use the quality assurance system with the help of their representatives or those responsible for quality assurance at the institutions, whenever necessary.

NOKUT was evaluated in 2007. In this study all parties involved in the audits at the evaluated institutions were asked about the effects of the audits. The respondents claim that audits were helpful in the development of institutions' quality systems. NOKUT's role in this respect was important in forcing the institutions to develop their systems and to do it faster. The answers indicate that the most visible changes relates to routines and quality assurance, whereas impact on the quality of education itself are indicated/mentioned by a substantial number of the respondents. The impacts of the current Norwegian quality assurance system are perceived to be positive. A majority find that the system helps putting quality issues on the institutional agenda (77 percent), create equal framework conditions for public and private institutions (54 percent), and provide students with information about the quality of the education (56 percent)". For the next cycle of audits, the evaluators advice NOKUT to focus less on the QA-systems themselves and put more focus on outcomes. NOKUT is also advised to emphasize the enhancement and the institutions' follow up after quality audits.

When NOKUT conducted the first audit cycle, the mandatory quality systems were part of a newly decided reform. Hence the evaluations have emphasized the structure and implementation of the systems, the information flow gathered, the participation from staff and students in analyses and decision-making and the institutions planned and conducted measures of improvement. In the next cycle of audits the institutions will have had their QA-systems in place over some time, and naturally more emphasize will be put on outcomes. When the QA-system has been approved, NOKUT has had no mandate to demand specific follow-up from the evaluated institution. However, the institutions are always asked to inform NOKUT about their follow-up. Also, NOKUT's evaluations will be background material for the yearly dialogues between each state owned institution and the Ministry of Education and Research.

3.7 Germany

Achim Hopbach
German Accreditation Council

3.7.1 The Audit Model

In 1999 compulsory programme accreditation was establishes in the German higher education system. 8 years later, in December 2007, a new accreditation approach which is called "system accreditation" was added to the accreditation framework as another option for fulfilling the legal obligation of accreditation of programmes as prerequisite for state approval. Both accreditation approaches coexist, and the HEI can opt for one of them.

Thus, even though the 'object' of the review processes differs between programme and institutional level, the new system accreditation has close links to the programme approach. The system accreditation, its goals and its purpose, its criterion and process rules, are only understood with its previous history and the political and legal general conditions.

I fact, the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs they did not intend to introduce a completely new accreditation approach, but rather further develop the existing process of the study programme accreditation by simplifying the process and reducing the workload for HEI.

3.7.1.2 The Audit concept

In the new process, the internal management and quality assurance systems directed toward studies and education are reviewed with regard to their suitability and effectiveness in guaranteeing the quality of the study programmes and the compliance with the formal guidelines. This means that, on the one hand, the internal structures and processes are subject to the review. On the other hand the learning outcomes play a crucial role, since one of the basic criteria is the question whether or not the HEI is capable to guarantee that students reach the level of the intended learning outcomes. The core of the system accreditation is: The HEI must prove that it is able to – and namely systematically and not only in concrete isolated cases – guarantee the compliance of the criteria for the study programme accreditation independently.

In the legal consequences related to the study programmes lies, so to speak, the highlight of the system accreditation: study programmes which are set up within an accredited system or at least were once part of the university-internal quality assurance, are also accredited. The conventional study programmes accreditation whether in individual processes or in bundles is thus no longer necessary. Thus, acts de facto like another process for the accreditation of study programmes.

3.7.1.3 Audit criteria

The 6 criteria for the system accreditation describe standards for management and quality assurance systems and processes related to teaching and learning. The criteria do not describe how a university-internal quality assurance system should look. There is so, no “blueprint” for the university-internal quality assurance. The configuration is the universities’ choice.

Criterion 1: Qualification goals
The HEI has defined and published for itself as an institution and for its study programmes, training profile as part of a strategic development concept. It possesses and continually uses processes for the examination of the qualification goals of its study programmes.

Criterion 2: Management systems in teaching and learning
The HEI continually has available and uses a management system in the area of teaching and learning. These safeguards the determination and implementation of concrete and plausible qualification goals of study programmes taking into account the “criteria for the accreditation of study programmes”, and its adequate implementation. The first, somewhat succinct sentence points out that the planned action of the institution is expected which is defined and is integrated with other defined processes within defined structures into a system.

Criterion 3: Internal quality assurance system
The HEI has in an overall concept, an embedded process for the quality assurance in teaching and learning which meet the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.
The internal quality assurance system has personnel and neutral resources which guarantee sustainability. It is suitable to evaluate the effectiveness of the internal management processes in the area of teaching and learning as well as guarantee the assurance and continual improvement of the quality of teaching and learning.

Criterion 4: Reporting system
The HEI has available an internal reporting system which documents the structures and processes in the development and implementation of study programmes as well as the structures, processes and measures of the quality assurance, their results and affects.

A basic assumption of the system accreditation is however, the idea that HEI, which take over the responsibility for the quality assurance themselves to a great extent, have the necessary structural prerequisites for this and for this reason regularly reassure themselves as to whether or not they achieve their goals effectively and efficiently. For this, there especially belongs the ability at any time to present evidence with regard to each study programme which was and is used in the declared internal and external quality assurance system from the planning to the implementation and monitoring as well as the optimisation phase.

Criterion 5: Responsibility
The decision process, competencies and responsibilities in the management system for teaching and learning and in the internal quality assurance system are clearly defined and published university-wide.

Criterion 6: Documentation
The HEI informs the responsible committee for teaching and learning at least once a year and additionally the public in a suitable way as well as the stakeholders about processes and results of the quality assurance measures in the area of teaching and learning.

3.7.2 Methodology

3.7.2.1 The Audit process

Required documentation
The HEI submits documentation to the agency from which especially the internal management and decision-making structures, the profile of the institution, its study offerings, the defined quality goals and the system of internal quality assurance in the area of teaching and learning are documented. The documentation clarifies the functionality of the processes for quality assurance and development. In the case of the system re-accreditation, the documentation also includes a report in which it presents the measures for remedy of quality deficiencies. The documentation is to include a statement from the student representation of the university.

The documents to be submitted by the university are documentation from which it is assumed that they do not have to be prepared for the accreditation process; it is thus not conventional self-reports etc., but rather available texts. The components of the self-reflection, i.e. the actual execution of all quality-relevant reflections with regard to each study programme are not ignored due to this approach because part of a functioning internal study programme-related quality assurance system is, without a doubt, particularly one such regular process of which the last results then are also to be submitted to the appraisers.

Review process
The review process is made up of three major components: the review of the management and quality assurance systems, as well as an examination of their effectiveness by conducting feature random samples and programme random samples. These components are divided between a total of three site-visits.

Two site-visits
The first site-visit serves mainly to gather the information on the university and its control systems. The panel checks the submitted documents with regard to their validity and completeness and decides which documents the university must additionally submit for the second site-visit.

The second site-visit serves the critical analysis of the submitted documents and the implementation of the feature random sample.

The panel held discussions especially with the HEI management, the administrative personnel, the equal opportunities officer, the person responsible for quality assurance as well as representatives of the teachers and students.
They prepare a preliminary report which considers the critical analysis of the documents submitted and the results of the feature random sample as well as the discussion held. The preliminary report is made available to the panels of the programme random samples.

Random samples
The central question of the system accreditation is of the effectiveness of the management and quality assurance systems, and, as a result, of its suitability for the guarantee of high quality and the compliance with formal guidelines for study programmes. Beside the review on a systemic level, two process elements also serve to answer the question on the study programme level, the feature random sample and the programme random sample.

The feature random sample especially serves to help in the compliance with the accreditation criteria for the accreditation of study programmes in all study programmes of the university. The objects of the attribute random sampling can be especially: the modularisation concept of the university, the system of the awarding of ECTS points, the examination system, etc.

The programme random sample comprises detailed reviews of 15% of the study programmes as a second random sample for the review of the effectiveness of the control systems and quality assurance systems also applies, namely, to the study programmes level. Its direction is, however, not horizontal but vertical. Instead of checking selected attributes of the study programme design over all the study programmes, all attributes are always checked based on a study programme.

Midterm review
After half of the accreditation time limit has passed, the HEI let pass a detailed review of the study programmes. The realising agency prepares a report on the result of review, which, if applicable, contains recommendations for the removal of quality deficiencies, makes it available to the institution and publishes it. Thus, the sole aim of this review is giving a feedback to the institution.

3.7.2.2 The Audit panels

Expert panel
The expert panel consists of
- three members with experience in the area of university control and the university-internal quality assurance,
- a student member with experience in university autonomy and the accreditation,
- a member from the professional world.

A member from the appraiser group should always have experience in university administration, in the set-up of studies and in the quality assurance of studies and education. One panel member group should be from abroad.

The central role of the experts for the quality of the accreditation processes corresponds to the emphasis on the necessity of preparing the panel members for the process. Only panel members, who exactly know their responsibilities and functions of the process regulations and evaluation criteria, guarantee a regular and qualitatively high quality appraisal. It is true that the terminology "preparation" absolutely allows for interpretation leeway. A restriction in the preparation in the sending of relevant resolutions and documents may hardly however be enough. Correct role behaviour plays just as big a role in order to rule out, as far as possible, a classical problem of every review by experts – the appraisal using individual standards.

The impartiality of the experts after all belongs to the indispensible standard of accreditation processes. The agency has to guarantee in the very least, for one, that they can achieve this: that it requires an impartiality declaration from the experts and if necessary, also independent thereof, pursues concrete suspicious factors.

Report

The panel prepares, under consideration of the outcomes of the programme random samples and under participation of the chairs of the expert groups for the programme random samples, a final report with a resolution recommendation for the final accreditation decision. The results of the two random samples play an important role in the review. The core question reads: Which conclusions can be drawn from the results of the random samples on the functions of the quality assurance systems? Only when the review yields that the management and quality assurance system is causally responsibility for high quality in study programmes and their compliance with the formal guidelines, if the system, namely, "shows effects", can it also be accredited.

Decision

The process of the system accreditation leads to a decision of the "classical" type for accreditation processes because this can only be positive or negative. The decision is published.

3.7.3 The consequences of the Audits

A positive system accreditation certifies that the university has a suitable quality assurance system in the area of teaching and learning to guarantee the achievement of the qualification goals and the quality standards of its study programmes. Study programmes set up after the system accreditation or which were already object of an internal quality assurance according to the guidelines of the accredited systems, are therefore accredited. A HEI that fails in the process has to get accreditation for its programmes by way of programme accreditation.

3.8 Austria

Carola Brink
AQA

3.8.1 The Audit Model

3.8.1.1 Audit as part of the country's evaluation of higher education

In Austria, all higher education institutions are required to establish internal quality management systems and procedures, however, external quality assurance and the obligation to undergo reviews depends on the sector:
The 22 public universities represent the oldest, and with about 247.000 students by far largest sector. Public universities have no obligation for external quality assurance. Audits, evaluations or programme accreditation are carried out on a voluntary basis.

In the early nineties universities of applied sciences were established and since 1999 there is the additional sector of private universities. The universities of applied sciences and the private universities have to undergo institutional audits and programme accreditation.

AQA is an independent non profit agency for quality assurance for the entire sector of higher education. The agency was founded by all relevant stakeholders within the Austrian system of higher education. AQA carries out audits, evaluations, projects for supporting special quality issues, system analysis and benchmarking for the whole HEI sector in Austria. Additionally to AQA, there are two sectional accreditation bodies: the Council for the universities of applied sciences and the accreditation council for the private universities.

Regarding the design and the targets of the audit model it is important to bear the context of these three sectors in mind. AQA developed the audit model for all HEIs in Austria but with a special focus on the public universities. Universities are offered the opportunity to get feedback on different performance areas by international experts. They are able to prove that they fulfil the obligation to establish a quality management system by the audit and might also achieve a label if the audit standards are fulfilled. The label is formally recognised by the Federal Ministry for Science and Research.

3.8.1.2 The Audit concept

AQA offers two types of audits. The audit procedures are similar but they differ in scope:

- A **FOCUS Audit** assesses the structure of the quality management system and two relevant key processes in one performance area. The FOCUS Audit certifies the quality management for one selected performance area.
- An **ADVANCED Audit** assesses the structure of the quality management system in four relevant performance areas, and it evaluates the effectiveness of

the quality management system of one key process in each performance area. There are four key processes, one per area. They are evaluated in conjunction with an assessment of the organisational efficiency of the quality management in each performance area. An ADVANCED Audit certificate attests the effectiveness of the entire internal quality management system.

The following performance areas were defined:
- Performance area: Studies, Teaching & Further Education
- Performance area: Research & Development
- Performance area: Human Resource Management & Development
- Performance area: Internationalisation & Mobility

The AQA Audit reviews whether the quality management system (QM-system) is supporting a HEI to meet its quality goals and evaluates whether the QM-system is in compliance with the six audit standards. To accomplish this review, AQA uses two assessment levels:

Assessment level 1:
Assessment of the organisation and structure of the QM-system (in a selected performance area or the entire organisation)

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Assessment level 2:
Assessment of evidence regarding the QM-system's effectiveness in executing and accomplishing the goals of two or more negotiated key processes

The first level assessment emphasis is on the structure and organisation of the quality management in a selected performance area. For the second level assessment the HEI provides evidence that quality management has effectively executed two previously selected key processes to meet the institution's goals. A key process should be of high relevance for the HEI (for Austrian universities this could be for instance revolving around the issues of the performance agreements, which are agreed on between HEI und the Federal Ministry).

3.8.1.3 Audit criteria

AQA developed 6 audit standards which are based on the ESG:
1. HEI possesses a strategy for quality and integrates this strategy into its steering mechanisms.
2. Quality assurance and development are a part of the leadership's responsibilities.
3. HEI clearly defines and makes transparent the assignments of responsibilities and duties, and it also provides easy access to information needed for achieving target goals.

4. Procedures for internal quality assurance are established and the quality management system supports the core processes of the HEI.
5. Monitoring and information systems are an integral part of the quality management system and facilitate regular reporting.
6. A quality management system includes the systematic participation of the different stakeholders.

These standards are further explained in a guideline and exemplified for the four different performance areas.

3.8.2 Methodology

3.8.2.1 The Audit process

The audit process follows more or less the common practice of a peer review. AQA discusses the procedure with the HEI management. At this time the entities decide which performance area and which two key processes will be evaluated for certification, and they draft a schedule.

The HEI composes a quality documentation (self-report). This documentation has two parts: In the first part, the HEI describes its framework and demonstrates that the organisation of its quality management complies with the audit standards. This description is about 30 pages long. The second part describes quality management's implementation of the two key processes relevant to this performance area. The length of the description of each process is no longer than 20 pages. If necessary, other documents may be voluntarily submitted.

The HEI may make use of a one day, information-gathering visit by the peer team. The visit offers the HEI an opportunity to introduce itself to the review team and explain the organisation of its quality management. If necessary, the team will specify what the HEI needs to include in its description of the key processes. The visit is optional and is not part of the assessment.

After their review of the quality documentation, the peer team makes a mandatory, two-day, on-site visit to the HEI. During this visit the peer team evaluates (1) the quality management's performance according to the outlined assessment levels and (2) their degree of compliance in adhering to the audit standards.

The peer team's review report includes an evaluation of the extent to which the standards have been fulfilled; recommendations for possible improvement; and consensus about whether the HEI qualifies for certification.

The report is made available to the HEI within four to six weeks after the visit. The HEI then has the opportunity, in the subsequent four to six weeks, to submit a written statement refuting decisions with which it disagrees. If all requirements have been satisfied, a standing committee for accreditation then certifies the HEI.

Following the on-site and document reviews, a member of the peer-review team and one member from AQA will present the results of the assessment to the HEI in a half-day workshop. If AQA decides to certify the HEI in one performance area, the institution will be awarded a certification label that is valid for six years. An award may, however, include conditions that the HEI is expected to fulfil.

3.8.2.2 The Audit panels

An assessment is effected through peer-review. Experts with a background in higher education management and specific subject experts for the key processes together with a student constitute the panel. There is at least one international peer sometimes the whole review team can be from abroad. AQA tries to achieve a gender balance when choosing its review team.

AQA intensively prepares the experts for the peer review process. Furthermore, AQA designates a project coordinator for each audit.

The HEI can veto the nomination of a peer if it can argue a serious conflict of interest.

3.8.3 The consequences of the audit

As the audits are at the moment only in an early stage of implementation and as they are up to now only carried out at public universities, there are no consequences linked to a negative outcome by now. A positive outcome would be the achievement of a certification/accreditation by the AQA label.

3.8.4 Experiences and trends

A general trend appears to be that the approaches seem to change quite often and that sometimes are focused on the need for quality control, the consumer protection and accountability and again the need for an enhancement-led approach is stressed.

AQA has always tried to find ways to support the HEIs in their quality development and to strengthen those motivated to improve quality issues. Also a fair balance between input – process and outcome quality is important. On the other hand this approach can lead to critique regarding the angle of control and accountability. (See also the discussion above)

In the end, there isn't THE one way to organize external quality assurance but it is important that the aims of the external quality assurance are not only clearly formulated but also realistic in regard to what external quality assurance can really achieve and what it cannot.

3.9 England/Northern Ireland

Fiona Crozier
QAA UK and Northern Ireland

3.9.1 The Audit Model

Some form of institutional audit has been carried out in the UK since the late 1980s. Methodologies have been reviewed and revised periodically to take into account devolution and other political imperatives, experience and learning from good practice and other considerations which impact on the work of QAA.

Audit is mandatory for those institutions in England and Northern Ireland (and indeed for those in Wales and Scotland) who wish to receive public funding. Previously, there was a programme of subject review in the UK. When this ceased in 2001, one aspect of the institutional audit method was the scrutiny of selected disciplines, by a subject specialist, through the discipline audit trails. However, this was always only used as a means of viewing institutional procedures as they happened at "ground level". Discipline audit trails were discontinued in the current audit methodology. Sampling trails still exists but these do not demand subject level expertise amongst the audit team.

Responsibility for provision and its quality assurance lies with the institutions. The purpose of the audit is to ensure that the institution has appropriate mechanisms in place to manage and assure the quality and standards of its provision and to provide public information on the institution's quality and standards.

3.9.1.2 The Audit concept

As stated above, the audit focuses on the institutional management of the standards of its provision and on the quality of the learning opportunities available to students. It involves scrutiny of processes and includes the whole of an institution's higher education provision, however and wherever delivered, although collaborative and overseas provision may be the subject of separate audit exercises.

3.9.1.3 Audit criteria

A "Handbook for Institutional Audit in England and Northern Ireland" (www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews) provides the framework within which all audits are undertaken. Institutions are audited against external reference points such as the Higher Education Qualifications Framework, the QAA Code of Practice, and Subject Benchmark statements. The process expects that institutions are aware of ESG.

3.9.2 Methodology

3.9.2.1 The Audit process

The audit process for England and Northern Ireland follows the normal pattern used across much of Europe: that is, a self evaluation document is prepared by the institution, a team of peers (experts) visits the institution and gathers evidence to confirm (other otherwise) the claims made by the institution, the team makes two judgements: the level of confidence in the institution's ability to a) manage the standards of its awards and b) manage the quality of its learning opportunities, and a report is then written by the team.

The site visit is in two parts: a briefing visit, lasting 3 days (of which one day is a private meeting of the team and the assistant director) and an audit visit normally lasting 5 days (of which one day is a private meeting of the team and the assistant director).

QAA's role is to coordinate and facilitate the smooth running of each audit and to ensure that it is carried out in accordance with the Handbook. QAA staff (the assistant director attached to the audit) attends the Briefing Visit but not the Audit Visit (the process is peer-driven) and does not write any report but is responsible for editing it. The role of the assistant director is to test that the judgements arrived at by the audit team are supported by adequate and identifiable evidence.

3.9.2.2 The Audit panels

Audit teams consist normally of four academic auditors and an audit secretary. Audit team members are nominated by their institution and are then selected by the agency on the basis of their experience as demonstrated in an application form against published criteria. They must follow a three day training programme run by agency staff if they are to participate in an audit.

Each time the audit methodology changes or is revised, even experienced auditors must attend a refresher course to ensure that they are fully aware of the focus of the methodology with which they are working.

The audit report is written by the auditors: each is responsible for a different section of the report. The assistant director edits the report and checks its evidence base. All reports are read by one senior member of QAA staff to help ensure consistency of approach. All reports are published on the QAA website.

3.9.3 The consequences of the audits

The reports by the audit teams are sent to the Higher Education Funding Council for England. (HEFCE) It is up to HEFCE to decide whether or not to award funding on the basis of the outcome of the audit. Funding has never been withdrawn due to the outcome of an audit; however, in the case of judgements of limited or no confidence, an action plan is required and, in the case of a judgement of no confidence a re-visit, in order that the institution might demonstrate that it is remedying any problems that put standards and/or quality at risk.

3.9.4 Experiences and trends

QAA publishes a series of papers called "Outcomes from Institutional Audit (in England and Northern Ireland). These papers analyse audit reports on a thematic basis (for example, themes such as Student Support, Staff Development, Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of programmes etc) and allow institutions to quickly view what has been highlighted as good practice in a particular topic. The aim of the papers is that they be produced reasonably quickly after each round of audit so that the information is not out of date and that they provide information in a way that is easy and quick to read.

3.10 Audits in Denmark

Inge Enroth
EVA

Present status (summer 2008)
In the period from 2003–2007 EVA conducted audits of universities, but due to a government decision the mandatory and thereby predominant quality assurance method is now programme accreditation, and institutional audits have been postponed.

However, EVA is keen to maintain audit as an important quality assurance method at the institutional level. At present the university colleges (offering higher education programmes up to vocational bachelor level) seem very interested in audit as a way of developing their quality work, and EVA plans to conduct a pilot audit in 2009 with the purpose of adapting the present audit approach, designed with the university sector in mind, to fit other types of institutions, such as the university colleges.

3.10.1 The Audit Model

History
When EVA started auditing in 2003 the Danish development was in line with the broader European development with increasing focus on the quality assurance area. The goals of the Bologna-process: comparability, transparency and mutual recognition of programmes made new demands to both institutions of higher education and quality assurance agencies and auditing was seen as a way of meeting these demands. By this time the quality work at many Danish universities was performed rather unsystematically and sporadically. But even so, the universities showed interest in audit as a way of supporting the development of their quality work.

The Danish Rectors' Conference and EVA made the agreement that all universities should be audited within a given period, but the universities themselves could decide the order. EVA therefore yearly invited the universities to participate in an audit and the universities volunteered. This procedure meant motivated participants, at least on management level where the decision on audit participation was made.

Purpose
The overall purpose of EVA's audits is to support the institutions' own quality work and their task of developing and maintaining appropriate systems for quality assurance and development. EVA's audits therefore have a strong enhancement perspective while the element of control is not so prevailing.

More specifically, the purpose of an audit is to evaluate an institution's present quality assurance and development efforts and provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of these efforts, as well as to provide recommendations on how the institution may carry out more systematic quality assurance and development.

Audit criteria – and their reference to the ESG
EVA's audits are based on twelve criteria for good quality work. The criteria are formulated as statements about a mature and well-developed system for quality assurance and development.

The criteria were laid down by EVA in 2006 on the basis of and in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines, ESG. The intention has been to ensure, that if an institution meets all of EVA's criteria in a satisfactory way, it will also live up to the ESG. Certain elements which are included in the European standards and guidelines like 1.1 and 1.6 have been singled out as independent criteria. Accordingly, EVA's audit criteria and the ESG are related as illustrated in table 1:

Relations between EVA's criteria and the European Standards and Guidelines for internal quality assurance

EVA's criteria	The ESG
Criteria 1, 2, 3, 6, 7	Standard 1.1
Criterion 8	Standard 1.2
Criterion 9	Standard 1.3
Criterion 10	Standard 1.4
Criterion 11	Standard 1.5
Criteria 4, 5	Standard 1.6
Criterion 12	Standard 1.7

Audit consequences, linkages and follow up
There are no formal consequences linked to the result of an audit process in the present Danish quality assurance system. And there is no direct or formal linkage between an audit and other ways of assuring quality in higher education. Furthermore, it is up to the individual institution how to make use of an audit, as follow-up is not part of EVA's mandate. However, seminars/conferences with participation from the panel and EVA have been arranged as part of the institutions' follow-up activities.

3.10.2 Methodology

Audit panel
The audit panel is responsible for the assessments, conclusions and recommendations in the final audit report and must as a whole encompass relevant experience of:

- planning, organising and implementing education
- organising and implementing quality assurance and development
- assessing quality assurance and development
- insight into quality assurance and development, as seen from the student's perspective
- quality assurance and development outside the sector.

The panel members are introduced to EVA's audit method by EVA's project group at the first panel meeting. Special attention is given to the site visit including site visit conduct and interview technique. In each case the project group will estimate the panel members need for information. This may include information on EVA, the institution under audit and the Danish educational system in general, the relevant legislation and provisions on quality assurance.

Self evaluation
The institution must evaluate its own quality assurance systems and activities and prepare a self evaluation report over a period of approximately three months. EVA recommends that the process of self evaluation includes participation and information from all relevant organisational levels. EVA prepares a set of guidelines for the self evaluation which are intended to facilitate a process serving two independent aims:

- to create a stimulating framework for the institution's internal discussions of the strengths and weaknesses of the present quality assurance and development that may serve to improve and further develop this work
- to provide the required documentation in the form of a self evaluation report with the relevant substantiation as part of the basis for the work of the audit panel.

The audit guidelines for self evaluation explain about quality work and the audit method. It presents the purposes of the audit and of the self evaluation. And it provides advice for the institution's organisation of the process, states the conditions for the self evaluation report, and elaborates on the criteria.
The audit guidelines are sent to the institution and shortly after presented at a launch seminar. The seminar is held at the institution with the participation of the top management from the institution and EVA and with as many participants from the institution as possible. The seminar is supposed to call attention to the self evaluation process as well as to be an opportunity to inform about and clarify the project and meet or anticipate critique.

Additional written documentation
Apart from the self evaluation report the institution must submit already existing documents which are central to the audit, such as the institution's development contract, strategies concerning quality work and accounts for procedures. If the institution chooses to have an international panel the institution must provide all documents in English.

Site visit
The site visit consists of a number of meetings which will be conducted over two – four days. Purposes of the visit are:

- to give the audit panel a clear and detailed picture of the institution's quality work by verifying and amplifying the information given in the self evaluation report
- to inspire the institution's further reflection upon, and development of, its quality work.

Together with the panel EVA's project group prepares a question guide in order to meet the purposes of the site visit. At the site visit meetings the audit panel speaks with representatives from groups, who in one way or another are involved in the quality work at the institution, e.g.:

- the self evaluation group
- management at different organisational levels
- administrative staff (holding key positions with regard to quality work)
- academic staff (who have not been a part of the self evaluation group)
- students (who have not been a part of the self evaluation group).

In addition to these, the panel typically speaks with other persons whom the panel, the institution or EVA consider relevant to the institution's quality work, e.g. external stakeholders, including graduates, external examiners and employers of the institution's graduates.

Audit report

EVA's project group makes a draft report based on the panel's comments concerning the self evaluation report and the site visit. It is not usual practise that the panel members contribute to the report in writing other than perhaps outlines of main impressions, conclusions and recommendations. The panel comments twice on the draft report before it is submitted to the institution for consultation. The aim of the consultation is to allow the institution to correct factual errors and comment on the course, procedure and findings of the audit. After the consultation EVA publishes the final report.

The audit report will focus and elaborate on how and to what extent the quality work of the institution fulfils the demands of the criteria, and not only on whether the criteria are fulfilled or not. The purpose is to point forward to ways in which the institution can improve its quality work in the areas identified by the criteria.

3.10.4 Experiences and trends

The completed audits have shown that the institutions are generally doing many and serious quality assurance efforts. The audits have certainly raised focus on quality work at the institutions and have caused broad internal debates among management and staff. But challenges continue to exist. It seems the main common challenges concern ensuring coherence and a systematic approach in the quality work, as well as to see the possibilities in using the quality work to the institutions' own advantages.

The audits show that work for quality often seems abstract and isolated compared to the academic core activities. Among the academic staff quality work is often regarded as something that takes valuable time from the actual (read: the academic) work. In general there is strong and good wills to offer education of very high quality, but not everyone think that quality work is the way to do this. It is therefore an important task for the institutions to discuss and identify how the academic milieus and the individual teacher and researcher can benefit from quality work.

Furthermore, the audits have revealed that the quality work is often arranged in order to fulfil external demands, as opposed to supporting internal objectives (of the institution, faculty, department or individual employee). This results in experiences of the quality work as irrelevant. In other cases, when quality work is based on individual ideas and efforts, it is much more likely to be perceived as relevant, but will then often take place without or outside a strategic framework, and will remain well-intentioned, but a more or less isolated arrangement.

The audits also point out that it can be a difficult task for the institutions to collect the relevant knowledge and documentation – and not more than that – and to let this be available and accessible to the relevant decision makers as well as practitioners when they need it. There seems to be a positive development underway in this field, where registration of information is conducted according to the needs of the users and external demands at the same time.

All things considered, it seems the institutions do not yet benefit fully from the resources that are being spent on quality work. And when the people involved in quality work do not see the clear relevance and positive meaning and results of the efforts, this may easily result in lack of support for the quality work. The audit panels have stressed that it is very much a job for the management to head the process of developing an institution's quality work in order to signal its importance. And if it becomes more clear, what the advantages of the quality work are, and who are responsible for carrying it out and following up on it, it is expected to enhance the institutions' activities and results – instead of being regarded as a drain of resources from academic activities already under pressure.

4

Development of Quality Management Systems at Universities

Entwicklung von Qualitätsmanagement-systemen in Hochschulen

Österreichische
Qualitätssicherungsagentur
Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance

4.1 Development of quality management systems in universities: the experience of Bath Spa University, UK

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Preamble
Discussion following the two presentations suggested that it might be helpful in this printed version of my talk to give a brief outline of Bath Spa University's internal quality assurance arrangements, in order to put my comments on the impact of academic audit by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in context. Bath Spa's arrangements are similar in outline to those of most British universities.
Briefly, to make national academic audit along UK lines meaningful at all, a university needs an infrastructure with three systems:
1. An information system that tracks degree programmes, all students enrolled on them, and the marks students achieve for assessments.
2. A system for internal quality assurance.
3. A system of accountability and management that considers and acts on information generated by the internal quality assurance system. This typically includes committees of academics and students.

Internal quality assurance at Bath Spa has three interlocking processes for:
1. the design and approval of new courses leading to awards of the university;
2. monitoring on an annual basis the successes and failures of courses, including the results of assessment of students;
3. reviewing on a periodic basis (for Bath Spa, every five or six years) the overall successes and failures of each course, the continuing currency of the curricula, and the teaching and assessment methods employed to deliver them.

At Bath Spa University, all three processes include input from academic peers from other universities, most conspicuously in arrangements for external examining (part of process 0: annual monitoring and assessment). Each external examiner visits the university and reports in writing at least once annually. The scale of this arrangement may be gauged by the fact that Bath Spa has a permanent academic staffing complement of some 250, and employs about 100 external examiners to moderate marks.

Introduction
My brief is to give a 'personal viewpoint on how effective audits are. Do they have an added value to the University or are they only seen as an administrative burden? What mistakes should Austria strive to prevent regarding quality assurance?' By way of theoretical context, I would like to suggest that national quality assurance arrangements have three ideal 'types' or families: inspection, accreditation and audit. 'Inspection' is primarily concerned with compliance, and carried

out by inspectors whose authority is conferred by appointment. Dialogue has little formal place in inspection: the word of the inspector is law. Inspection is primarily concerned with outputs, not with systems. 'Accreditation' is typically concerned with fitness to practice in a professional group, and carried out by accreditors whose authority is conferred by their status within the group. Here too dialogue has little formal place. Accreditors are typically concerned with inputs (such as staffing and curriculum coverage) and outcomes (such as job-destinations). 'Audit' is typically concerned with the extent to which an account of reality made by an institution is a 'true and fair' representation. It is conducted by auditors whose authority is guaranteed by professional qualifications, experience and track-record. The auditors' 'opinion' is constrained by established codes and norms, but as opinion the discourse of auditors is dialogic by nature. Audit is essentially concerned with systems.

No actual set of quality assurance procedures in place in British higher education is a completely inbred member of any one of these families; but each practical manifestation has more of the features of one family than the others.

Bath Spa University and QAA audit: a personal view of costs and benefits
Personal views of quality assurance in British higher education vary with two distinctions, among others: institutional affiliation, and institutional role. In a forthcoming book on higher education and the marketplace, Roger Brown (former chief executive of the Higher Education Quality Council, the forerunner body to the present Quality Assurance Agency) borrows the terminology of marketing to distinguish between universities that value themselves according to 'reputation' and those who value themselves according to 'prestige'. These two terms describe a spectrum of universities, of which the ends are much easier to specify than the middle. Briefly, the 'ancient' universities, particularly Oxford and Cambridge, are at the 'prestige' end, and the newest universities, the so-called 'teaching-led' universities, are at the 'reputation' end. The perceived status of 'prestige' institutions—their valuation in the public mind, and even more, in their own minds—is only marginally affected by reports on teaching and learning from national quality assurance bodies. The 'reputation' universities, on the other hand, regard the reports of auditors and inspectors as critical to their status and continuing success. My own university is one of the latter, and so I am bound to think audit is important.

An individual's role in the university is also important. In an amusing and perceptive talk on contrasting valuations of quality assurance, Sir David Watson (formerly vice chancellor of Brighton University and an important influence on decisions about UK quality assurance since 1992) distinguished between 'type A' and 'type B' commentators. (Watson, 2006: 2) Type A has a professional stake, and in his or her essential form will be a senior manager responsible for quality assurance in a university. The essential type B, on the other hand, is a jobbing academic, responsible for the delivery of what is to be assured. I confess to being a classic type A, and as deputy vice chancellor (academic) in my university my job is to ensure that all the long-suffering type Bs I manage fulfil the quality assurance responsibilities laid upon them. My type A status is confirmed by my engagement as a QAA auditor since 1995.

Bath Spa has about 6500 students, with a curriculum biased towards the creative arts and humanities. We have significant commitments to teacher training and to social science. We have courses in biology and physical geography, but no other ‘hard’ sciences, no engineering, and no medical education. We are empowered to make awards at all levels up to PhD.

Since 1992 we have had 12 assessments of individual subjects under the system of ‘Teaching Quality Assessment’, now superseded; and, in the last 10 years, some 20 inspections by OFSTED of our teacher training. Both these regimes, and particularly OFSTED inspection, are members of the inspection family, though lawyers for the system of teaching quality assessment may dispute my attribution of parentage. Our responsibility to accreditation bodies is relatively small, confined to the British Psychological Society, which accredits our degree in psychology. In terms of QAA audit we are much more typical, and we have had three visits from QAA or its predecessor body, in 1996, 2003, and 2008.

I wish to draw your attention to three aspects of this summary history. First, the nature of our curriculum has meant that we have had little, relative to other universities, to do with professional accrediting bodies, and disproportionately more to do with inspecting bodies, particularly OFSTED. Second, the time and resource devoted to inspection, though it covers less than one 12th of our student body, has been greater than the time and resource devoted to audit, though audit covers 100%. Third, as a university, we have done well overall in these national forms of quality assurance.

What are the costs of all this activity, and particularly audit? The major and most obvious cost, of course, is financial. In a piece of research conducted by JM Consulting for the funding council to inform the present arrangements, the cost of audit to the average institution was estimated at some £ 138,000 (€ 180,000,– but falling …) annually: two senior posts, to put it in perspective. (HEFCE, 2005: 34) Bath Spa’s latest audit certainly took up most of my working time for some six months prior to the audit visit, and a significant amount of staff time in collecting and assembling information; it involved a good deal of committee time in the consideration and approval of the briefing document required; and also the time of staff who work directly for me in briefing colleagues about what would be expected of them in the course of the visits. The visits themselves involved meetings with groups of 6–8 academic and support staff or students per meeting for a total of about 10 hours. For the two weeks or so that the auditors were in the university neither I nor my staff could do much else. Nonetheless, I repeat that the aggregate amount of institutional resource devoted to the audit process is very significantly less than the amount devoted to the inspections.

The other significant cost is reputational. As I have said already, my own university’s audit balance sheet is fortunately in the black rather than the red, though for universities at the ‘reputation’ end of the spectrum, an adverse audit report can be very damaging to recruitment; and it is certainly the case that damaging audit reports have led to the resignations of vice chancellors, and even the dissolution of institutions.

One word more on costs: The report by JM consulting to which I referred earlier said that some universities engaged in ‘gold-plating’: that is, having or preserving over-elaborate quality assurance mechanisms, or means of recording quality assurance activities, that were in excess of their usefulness, except in so far as they were easily ‘auditable’. (HEFCE 2005: 37) Gold-plating obviously increases costs, and less obviously decreases benefits, by gearing practice to what is ‘inspectable’, tending to stifle both honesty and innovation.

And what are the benefits? They are reputational too: good reports from national quality assurance agencies are valuable for marketing. But much more important, audit encourages self-criticism, enshrined in a 'briefing document': the account prepared by the university for its auditors. The process of developing a briefing document for academic audit is an educative experience for all staff, for they are obliged to try to see themselves as others see them. Audit is also an opportunity to make the case about a university's successes and failures to informed external observers. These informed external observers often have good and valid ideas about matters in which you could improve, or, just as important, can give an external imprimatur to things that you do differently, but believe you do well.

Now I suppose I must recognise that there are those who would describe my account of the benefits and costs of audit as rose-tinted; and even cynics who would say that my response is predicable, since I am paid to manage the audit process for my own university, and not only that, paid to audit others. There is a significant literature, particularly from type B witnesses to whom I referred earlier, who would not distinguish between kinds of external assessment as I have (except perhaps to exempt professional body accreditation from general strictures), and who see national quality assurance of any kind as an attempt to introduce 'New Public Managerialism' into an academic enterprise to which it is radically ill-suited. One example of this literature is Mary Evans's Killing Thinking: the Death of the Universities, to which David Watson refers in the talk I mention above. Watson describes Evans's story as 'one of desperate dystopia'; for Evans herself, the QAA assessor has a 'horrible psychic reality... almost too awful to contemplate' and for whom the most desirable end is extinction. (Evans, 2004: 32) It must be assumed that since the book was published more than two years after the system of teaching quality 'assessment' came to an end; this applies to the 'auditor' too.

Another example is 'Coercive accountability: the rise of audit culture in higher education', by the anthropologists Chris Shore and Susan Wright, for whom audit represents 'a coercive form of governance' with 'disastrous social costs', (Shore et al, 2000: 85) symbolised most succinctly in Jeremy Bentham's design for the prison-panopticon. (Shore et al, 2000: 70) One of its most insidious side-effects is infestation by what the authors call 'new parasitical professions' (Shore et al, 2000: 80) devoted to the management of quality inside the university and in agencies. Members of this audience may be beginning to feel uncomfortable!

Recommendations on an audit system

On the basis of this personal view, then, what mistakes should Austria strive to prevent regarding quality assurance? Despite having become a parasite, I still recollect some of the techniques of my discipline, English literature. Shore and Wright's vocabulary of 'surveillance', 'inspection' and their reference to the panopticon all remind me that the metaphorical framework of one kind of quality assurance is visual: the subject is being watched, looked at, observed—inspected. Inspection implies distance; but at the same time the 'observer effect' in physics and in psychology reminds us that observing affects the behaviour of what is observed. However, the metaphorical background to 'audit' refers to another sense, the aural sense, listening. In English idiom, to 'give someone a hearing' refers not only to a legal procedure; it implies that the listener is sympathetic to the talker, at least to the extent of not making any prejudgement. To 'to hear someone out' implicitly involves notions of fairness and impartiality. It may now be clear why I made this a 'talk' rather than a 'presentation.'

My first piece of advice is that in introducing your system you ensure it bears a strong resemblance to members of the audit family, and looks as little like its inspection cousins as possible. Michael Power's excellent critique of The Audit Society (from which Shore and Wright take some views and exaggerate them) reminds us that 'the earliest financial audits seem to have been oral in form and judicial in structure. The auditor would stand in judgement over a party giving the account; hence the original "aural" meaning of auditing in which the aim was to establish the trustworthiness of agents'. (Power 1997: 16) Power defines modern audit briefly as 'an independent examination of, and expression of opinion on, the financial statements of an enterprise'. (Power 1997: 4) Audit is an expression of opinion on statements, by informed independent persons who come to the account with open minds.

My second piece of advice is that you take steps to encourage universities to be as thorough and self-critical as they can in making these statements. You will remember that I believe the most useful part of audit is the activities of the university itself in preparing its account of the strengths and weaknesses by its quality assurance system. One of the biggest drawbacks of inspection as a system is that it encourages deception: the inspector is not given a full account, but an account of what can pass inspection only. It is not accidental that in British inspection systems in recent years, the institution's assessment of itself has carried little weight. There are various things an agency can do in order to maximise the self-critical aspect of a university's account, but it must at least train the auditors to give credit in any report to a university's attempts to put right wrongs it has identified for itself.

My third piece of advice is that your auditors and their practices must be respected and trusted by the universities you audit. This means using auditors whose experience enables them to look at whole-institution matters, and to understand the constraints within which universities work. It will readily be understood that this has significant implications for the seniority and source of authority of potential auditors, and for the use of students as auditors. This matter is being discussed elsewhere in this conference; I merely say here that their role in audit and the extent of their responsibility for the audit report must be very carefully defined if the confidence of universities is to be retained.

My final recommendation is that you accept that audit deals with quality at one remove. This is not necessarily a weakness, though it has certainly been represented as such. The argument is that, since audit does not look directly at teaching, for instance, it can do little to improve it. I am not saying that auditors should not look at evidence; on the contrary, they must find ways, through trails and sampling, try to put themselves in a position to comment on the accuracy or otherwise of the statements the institution makes about itself. But the key task is to pass an informed opinion on those statements, not to make direct and unmediated judgements on what they observe. Power's main aim in The Audit Society is to remind us of the limitations of audit, not to recommend that we disengage with it. It is only by accepting the limitations and working with them that an agency and the institutions it audits can maximise the benefits.

Conclusion

In her 2002 BBC Reith lectures, subsequently published as A Question of Trust, Dame Onora O'Neill addressed the question of accountability in the age of the audit society. Like Michael Power, she lays stress on the fact that 'all guarantees are incomplete', (O'Neill, 2002: 6) saying that 'political institutional and professional life... may not flourish if we constantly uproot it to demonstrate that everything is transparent and trustworthy.' (O'Neill, 2002: 19) Nonetheless she recognises the importance of accountability, whether for institutions to their shareholders, or public bodies to the representatives of those who fund them. 'Those who are called to account', she says, 'should give an account of what they have done, and of their successes and failures, to others who have sufficient time and experience to assess the evidence and report upon it.' (O'Neill, 2002: 58) That is audit at its best in a nutshell.

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4.2 Development and auditing of the quality management system of the University of Helsinki

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Developing the quality assurance system
With 11 faculties, 38 400 undergraduate students, 47 000 continuing education and Open University students, 7 900 employees (3 900 of whom researchers and teachers), and funding of 546 million euro, the University of Helsinki is the biggest and most diverse university in Finland. The university is bilingual (Finnish and Swedish), and also provides teaching in English.

All higher education institutions in Finland develop a quality assurance system which is audited by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC, www.kka.fi/english/). At the University of Helsinki, quality assurance encompasses the entire operations of the University as part of the University's strategic plan, and the quality assurance system is a strategic key area of development.

University of Helsinki defines quality as both high quality of results and quality and expediency of performance (processes). High-quality processes help to achieve high-quality results. The quality assurance system ensures that the strategic goals of the university are achieved. Thus, quality assurance is part of the university's steering process. According to the 'quality policy' of the University the goal of the quality assurance system is to support each member of the university community in work towards the University's strategic goals. The University needs a quality assurance system to improve the quality of its activities and to make the high quality visible. The main goal, however, is to develop our own work through the quality assurance system. Furthermore, developing a quality assurance system is part of the Bologna Process. Quality assurance covers all main activities of the University: research, education, societal interaction (including continuing education), decision-making and management, human resources, administration and support services, and libraries and information services.

The development of the quality assurance system was a major undertaking at the University of Helsinki. In the beginning of the process (in 2005-2006) there were also critical voices raised. However, with time the process gained acceptance, and in the end even some enthusiasm was observed. Based on the experience from the University of Helsinki, at the least the following issues are important in motivating the staff to work for building a QA system. First, those responsible for the QA system assured that the main aim of the QA system is to help improve the work of individual staff members and university's units. Thus, quality assurance is part of normal work at the university, e.g. development of work processes. The difference being that in the context of the QA system the development of work processes is more systematic and coherent than before.

Furthermore, the internal work should be made visible to outsiders in the form of a QA system. Second, it is important to give the university community enough time to discuss the QA system. Various opportunities for staff to discuss and debate should be organised. Third, commitment and leadership by the university's leaders is vital. With the support of the leaders (rectors, deans, department heads) it is possible to motivate the staff to work on the QA system.

Lessons from the auditing of the quality assurance system

The University of Helsinki's quality assurance system was audited at the end of 2007, and the report was published in early 2008. The auditing followed the guidelines of FINHEEC and was done by a national group of 9 persons (representing universities, private sector, government, students). The auditing process is consultative and supportive. Furthermore, the auditing process is regarded as a milestone (not an end stone) in quality assurance. This means that the University gets an evaluation of the state of its quality assurance system with recommendations about how to improve it. The aim of the auditing is to assess the functionality of the quality assurance system and whether the system supports the strategy of the university. From the 'victim's' point of view the auditing process has positive and negative sides. In the case of the University of Helsinki the following issues can be mentioned as positive: the auditing group was professional and very well prepared for the audit, the atmosphere of the auditing was firm but relaxed, the audit increased awareness on quality assurance at the University, the audit acknowledged the long term quality work at the University (evaluations, feedback systems, strategy work and operations management), and the audit resulted in a community spirit: "We made it!". Further positive effects are the following: the audit was seen by the University as a possibility for development: "We shall do it!", the audit helped the university to see its strengths and weaknesses, the audit encouraged to continue work on the quality assurance system, the audit pinpointed several fields for development – an excellent support for improvements (interestingly, fields for development identified by the auditing group were largely the same as the University's own SWOT had identified), and the audit provided an objective certificate on high level quality assurance.

Some concrete examples of the strengths and benefits of the quality assurance system mentioned by the audit is the system whereby the progress of the studies is monitored through a register that follows the accumulation of credits. If students fall behind the normal schedule their study advisors are alerted and the students received counselling and support in order to get back on the normal routine.

Another example of the benefits and positive effects of the quality assurance system are the process maps that have created at the central administration, faculty and department levels of various processes. These process maps are available in the intranet and make it easier for the users to find out how the processes flow.

As regards topics needing development the audit identified, for example, the student feedback system whereby students give feedback about course and other teaching. In particular, quality assurance related to processes of doctoral studies should be improved. Also collaboration with external stakeholders in issues related to quality assurance should be improved according to the auditing report.

Some disappointments were related to the audit. The auditing group was very busy, and had little time for each interview. The auditing report was at the university level, while faculties and departments did not get direct feedback from the group. Furthermore, some parts of the report were superficial because of lack of time and focus on university level. These are understandable complaints as the aim of the auditing is to evaluate the QA system as a whole. The University has now started to focus further development work on the faculty and department levels, for example, by planning the introduction of voluntary 'internal audit system' or 'internal benchmarking' whereby faculties or departments could share best practices and learn from each other as regards quality assurance procedures.

The challenge now after the audit is to keep up the momentum, i.e. it is of critical importance that the recommendations of the auditing report lead to actions in the University. It is important to secure resources for the continued development and maintenance of the quality assurance system. Also preparation for the next audit (now less than 6 yrs ahead) should be started as it will (probably) be an international audit.

Overall, the positive aspects of the audit are stronger than the negative ones, and the University community as a whole had a positive feeling about the audit. This was verified by a feedback survey to those who were interviewed by the auditing group: 62% of the interviewees agreed that the audit motivated to invest on developing the quality assurance system, and 56% answered that the audit was useful in the development of the processes and the activities of their own unit at the University.

4.3 Qualitätsmanagementsystem und externe Qualitätssicherung

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Qualitätsmanagementsystem und externe Qualitätssicherung

Im Rahmen dieses Vortrages soll die Konzeption des Qualitätsmanagementsystems der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz vorgestellt werden. Das System befindet sich derzeit noch im Entwurfsstadium und ist noch nicht abschließend diskutiert.

Im Vortrag soll nach der Darstellung der Rahmenbedingungen und der Skizzierung der Anforderungen an ein universitäres QM-System das Konzept der Universität Graz vorgestellt werden. An Hand von ausgewählten Beispielen an unserer Universität eingesetzter Instrumente wird erläutert, wo gemäß dem Titel der Tagung externe Qualitätssicherung erfolgt. Dies wird durch einen Überblick über den Einsatz von externer Qualitätssicherung der österreichischen Universitäten ergänzt. Im Fazit sollen die Anforderungen an die externe Qualitätssicherung durch die Universitäten diskutiert werden.

Rahmenbedingungen

Im Rahmen des Bologna-Prozesses wurde mit der Bologna-Erklärung 1999 der Startpunkt markiert, einen einheitlichen europäischen Hochschulraum zu schaffen. Spätestens mit der Bergen-Erklärung 2005 wurde das Qualitätsmanagement explizit zum Thema gemacht und den Universitäten und Hochschulen in die Selbstverantwortung übertragen. In diesem Sinne wurde auch das für die österreichischen staatlichen Universitäten relevante Universitätsgesetz formuliert. Gemäß dem § 14 UG 2002 haben die Universitäten eigenverantwortlich ein Qualitätsmanagement aufzubauen, die genaueren Regelungen sind in der Satzung festzulegen. Derzeit ist eine explizite Regelung der verpflichtenden externen Qualitätssicherung nicht vorgesehen. Diese Rahmenbedingungen formulieren politische Anforderungen an das Qualitätsmanagement, die Universitäten selbst und insbesondere die WissenschafterInnen haben unter Umständen andere, weitergehende oder gegensätzliche Anforderungen (Forschungsfreiheit, Reputation, persönlicher Erfolg), die die Akzeptanz der politisch determinierten Regelungen konterkarieren.

Bei einer Entwicklung und Diskussion des Qualitätsmanagements sind meines Erachtens auch die gegenwärtigen und zukünftigen Entwicklungen im Auge zu behalten. Sowohl auf nationaler wie auch internationaler Ebene sind hier besonders folgende Tendenzen beachtenswert (vergleiche dazu auch den Vortrag von Peter Williams bei dieser Tagung): Das universitätsinterne Qualitätsmanagement entwickelt sich mittlerweile zu einem eigenständigen System[1], das von Externen

1 Vergleiche hierzu die Empfehlungen des Deutschen Stifterverbandes für die Wissenschaft zum Qualitätsmanagement in: Manfred Erhardt, Volker Meyer-Guckel, Mathias Winde (Hrsg.), Leitlinien für die deregulierte Hochschule, Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft, 2008.

in Form von Audits zu prüfen ist. In der Lehre geht die Entwicklung von der Akkreditierung von Einzelprogrammen zur Prozess- bzw. Systemakkreditierung, die von Agenturen durchgeführt wird, die im europäischen Register der Qualitätsmanagementagenturen gelistet sind. Die Bedeutung von (qualitativ hochstehenden) Rankings und Ratings wird zunehmen und damit gemeinsam mit anderen Faktoren den Wettbewerb um Forschungsmittel, Studierende und Personal intensivieren. All diese Aspekte (und einige mehr) sollte ein modernes Qualitätsmanagementsystem berücksichtigen.

Anforderungen an ein universitäres QM-System

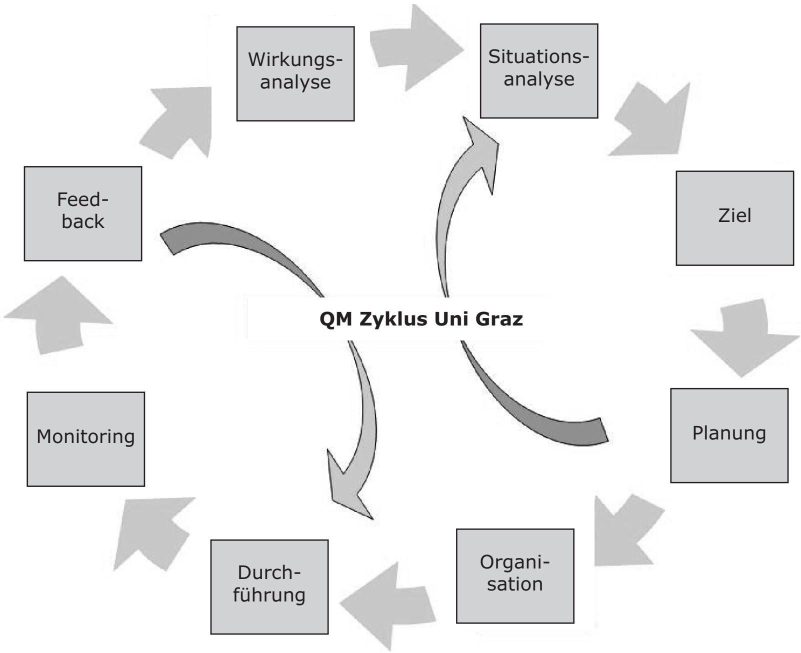
Am Beginn der Anforderungen sollte wohl eine Begriffsdefinition gestellt werden. Ich verstehe unter „Qualitätsmanagement“ die verschiedenen, eingesetzten Instrumente und unter „Qualitätsmanagementsystem“ einen geschlossenen Zyklus, der eng an die Universitätssteuerung gekoppelt ist.

Zur Identifizierung eines Qualitätsmanagementsystems wurden bei der Universität Graz die folgenden Elemente herangezogen:

– Strategisches, zielbezogenes Steuerungsinstrument: Das QM-System ist ein Teil des Sets an Steuerungsinstrumenten, ist auf die Strategie der Universität abgestimmt und wird zielbezogen eingesetzt.
– Integriert über alle Leistungsbereiche: Das QM-System umfasst alle Leistungsbereiche der Universität (Lehre, Forschung, Transfer, Management u. a.) und versucht, als integriertes System, Redundanzen nur dort zu zulassen, wo sie einen Mehrwert ergeben bzw. solche Instrumente einzusetzen, die mehrere Leistungsbereiche oder Fragestellungen abdecken.
– Kommunikation und Transparenz: Das QM-System muss zum Einen Elemente der Kommunikation enthalten wie die Einbeziehung der Betroffenen und die Diskussion der Ergebnisse und Konsequenzen. Zum Anderen sind die Zielsetzungen, Methoden Abläufe und Schlussfolgerungen mit der nötigen Sorgfalt transparent zu gestalten.
– Ressourcen schonend und zweckorientiert: Das QM-System selbst als auch die eingesetzten Instrumente sind mit möglichst geringer Belastung der personellen und finanziellen Ressourcen zu gestalten, ohne dabei den Zweck aus den Augen zu lassen und nutzbare Ergebnisse hervor zu bringen.
– Feedback und Lernorientiert: Das QM-System beinhaltet in der Regel mehrere Feedbackschleifen, die zu verschiedenen kritischen Stadien notwendige Korrekturen erlauben. Das QMS ist auch so gestaltet, dass es lernen ermöglicht bzw. fördert.

QM-System an der Universität Graz

Auf Basis dieser Anforderungen wurde das Folgend abgebildete Qualitätsmanagementsystem der Universität Graz konzipiert und in nächster Zeit auch intern diskutiert. Dabei ist dieser Zyklus in den jeweiligen Nutzenskontext zu stellen und mit den kontextbezogenen Anforderungen abzugleichen.



Derzeit befinden sind die meisten Elemente bereits im Einsatz, doch fehlt teilweise die Abstimmung aufeinander bzw. Integration über alle Leistungsbereiche. Allerdings ist der Zyklus bereits bis zu den Elementen „Monitoring“ und „Feedback“ entwickelt, sodass in Bälde von einem geschlossenen Kreislauf gesprochen werden kann.

Internes und Externes Qualitätsmanagement

An der Universität Graz wurden in den letzten Jahren einige Instrumente des Qualitätsmanagements entwickelt, adaptiert und eingesetzt. Dies erfolgt zum einen bewusst vielfältig, um verschiedene Instrumente kennen zu lernen und damit verbundene Möglichkeiten auszuloten, zum Teil auch auf Grund von externen Anforderungen wie Gesetze oder Joint Degree Programmen. Diese stehen aber nur zu einem Teil im Dauereinsatz und es wird unsere Herausforderung sein, diese Instrumentenlandschaft zu reduzieren und kohärent abzustimmen. Ich möchte im Folgenden nicht alle Instrumente vorstellen, sondern den Fokus auf ein paar ausgewählte Instrumente legen und diese näher vorstellen, bei denen Externe mitwirken.

- Evaluation der Forschung: Verfahren der „informed peer review“, bei der fast ausschließlich internationale Peers zum Einsatz kommen.
- Berufungs- und Habilitationsverfahren: Hier wirken externe, internationale Peers in Kommission mit und erstellen die erforderlichen Gutachten. Weiters wird das AQA Audit „Internationalisierung“ u. a. im Rahmen der Berufungsverfahren angewandt.

– Regelung „Gute wissenschaftliche Praxis" und Ethikkommission: bei der Erstellung und der laufenden Tätigkeit sind externe Peers im Einsatz.
– Erstellung neuer Curricula: Im Zuge der Erarbeitung von neuen und der Überarbeitung bestehender Studienprogrammen werden externe Peers mit einem Fragenkatalog eingebunden, aber auch VertreterInnen der Wirtschaft und von Interessensvertretungen werden zu Stellungnahmen eingeladen und sind beratender Mitglieder der Curricularkommissionen. Daneben gibt es auch Programm-Akkreditierungen bei Joint Degrees, Universitätslehrgängen und MBA.
– ‚Prozessqualität für Studium und Lehre': Es erfolgt die Begutachtung der Prozesse der Lehre durch ACQUIN im Rahmen des Pilotprojektes „Prozessakkreditierung".
– Strategische Analysen Arbeitsmarkt: Neben AbsolventInnenbefragungen startet gerade ein Projekt zum AbsolventInnenmonitoring gemeinsam mit dem IHS (Institut für Höhere Studien)
– Internationalisierung: für den gesamten Leistungsbereich läuft das AQA Audit über die Prozesse und des Qualitätsmanagement.
– Strategiebildung: Bei der Entwicklung und Diskussion der Strategie der Universität wurden auch externe Stakeholder aktiv einbezogen.
– Strategische Analysen: Bei der Durchführung und Auswertung der Analysen wurden sowohl Stakeholder einbezogen als auch auf das Wissen der professionellen Marktforschung zurück gegriffen.
– Interne Revision: Hier arbeiten wir anlassbezogen sowohl mit der Wirtschaftsprüfung als auch externen Auditoren zusammen.
– Dienstleistungen: Bei den Verwaltungsdienstleistungen erfolgt ansatzweise die Einbeziehung externen Know-hows bei Benchmarkings (z. B. BIX für Bibliotheken) oder von Unternehmensberatungen.

Externe Qualitätssicherung an österreichischen Universitäten
Ich möchte die Gelegenheit auch nutzen, einen Überblick über den Einsatz externer Qualitätssicherung der Österreichischen Universitäten zu geben. Im Rahmen einer Umfrage unter den QM-Einrichtungen der Universitäten im Juni 2008 konnten folgende Ergebnisse festgehalten werden:
– Zumindest 17 Universitäten haben eine oder mehrere Formen der externen Qualitätssicherung.
– Diese decken alle Bereiche von Forschung, Lehre, Weiterbildung, Verwaltung, Dienstleistung, Kliniken, etc. ab.
– Die Gegenstände der Qualitätssicherung sind Institute bzw. Departments, Studienprogramme, Lehrgänge, Prozesse, QM-Systeme, Personen, Standort, Strategien, und anderes.
– Die eingebundenen externen Organisationen sind nationale oder internationale Agenturen, ISO, Peers, Zertifizierungseinrichtungen, Berufsorganisationen, Fachverbände, usw.

Es zeigt sich in diesem Überblick, dass die Universitäten nicht nur im Aufgabenbereich Lehre und Studium einen Bedarf nach externer Qualitätssicherung haben, sondern diese bereits jetzt das gesamte Aufgabenspektrum umfasst. Allerdings muss kritisch festgehalten werden, dass dieser Bedarf nur teilweise durch die derzeit im Hochschulsektor aktiven Agenturen abgedeckt wird. Dies erklärt sich auch daraus, dass die Universitäten einen Bedarf nach Entwicklungsperspektiven haben, die Agenturen aber ein Legitimationsmodell verfolgen.

Fazit

Ich möchte mein Fazit auf drei Ebenen ziehen:
An erster Stelle steht die Frage: „Was brauchen Universitäten?"

- Qualitätsziele: diese sind sowohl intern durch Gremien und Individuen zu artikulieren als auch extern durch Staat, Studierende, Mittelgeber, Gesellschaft oder Wirtschaft.
- Beratung auf Augenhöhe: durch Peers, Senior Consultants, die die Bedürfnisse der WissenschafterInnen ansprechen und erfüllen können.
- Expertise für Lehre/Weiterbildung, Forschung, Management und Verwaltung/Dienstleistung.
- Externe Referenzebenen in Form von „Benchmarks", Markers u. a.
- Qualitäts-„Labels" mit internationaler Reputation.
- weltweite Anerkennung von Audits.

Als zweites ist zu fragen: „Welche Agenturen werden benötigt?"

- Diese müssen umfassende Expertise in Lehre, Forschung, Management anbieten können.
- Es müssen Systeme betrachtet werden statt einzelner Fragmente dieser.
- Angebot von Audits und Zertifizierung statt Programm-Akkreditierung.
- Methodenkompetenz und –beratung.
- Angebotene Zertifikate müssen zumindest EU-weit gültig sein, besser weltweit.

Zum Schluss steht die Frage nach „Externes außerhalb von Agenturen?"

- Universitäten benötigen umfassende berufsspezifische Expertise.
- Es muss fachspezifisches Know How angeboten werden.
- Es muss gesellschaftliche Reputation gewährleistet, anerkannt und gefördert werden.

Jedenfalls müssen alle externen Bemühungen zur Unterstützung des universitätsinternen Qualitätsmanagements vor die Frage gestellt werden, welchen Mehrwert (added value im Sinne Schencker-Wicki's) sie der Universität bringen.

4.4 Das Prozessorientierte Qualitätsmanagementsystem der Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland

Franz Guttmann
FH-Studiengänge Burgenland

4.4.1 Kontext und Ausgangssituation

Die Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland waren einer der ersten von derzeit 20 Erhaltern von Fachhochschul-Studiengängen am österreichischen Fachhochschulsektor, dessen Qualitätssicherungsmodell durch einen äußeren Qualitätsregelkreis der Akkreditierung – Evaluierung – Re-Akkreditierung mit dem Österreichischen Fachhochschulrat (FHR) als zuständige Behörde und durch einen inneren Qualitätsregelkreis, welcher jeweils durch die Qualitätsmanagementsystems der fachhochschulischen Einrichtungen determiniert wird, gekennzeichnet ist.

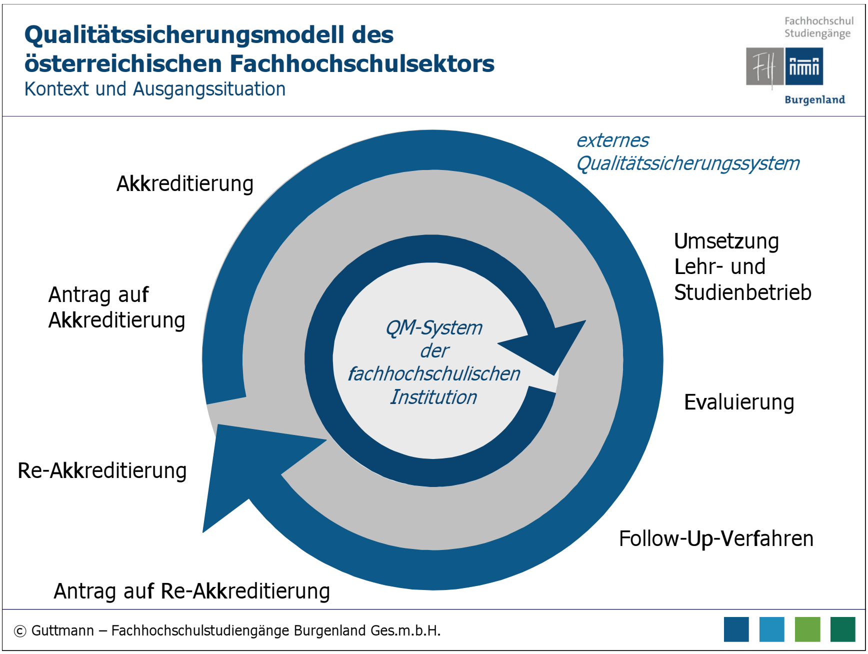


Abbildung 1: Qualitätssicherungsmodell des österreichischen Fachhochschulsektors

Das institutionelle Qualitätsmanagementsystem der Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland folgt einerseits den geforderten Rahmenbedingungen des österreichischen Fachhochschulsektors, andererseits orientiert es sich an den internen und externen Stakeholdern. Ausgangspunkt für den Aufbau des Prozessorientierten Qualitätsmanagementsystems (PQMS) ist das Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz (FHStG § 2 Abs. (3)): „Die Erhalter haben zur Leistungs- und Qualitätssicherung ein eigenes Qualitätsmanagementsystem aufzubauen“. Weiters bilden die Verordnung des Fachhochschulrats über die Evaluierung im österreichischen Fachhochschulsektor (Evaluierungsverordnung) und die Richtlinien des Fachhochschulrats für die Akkreditierung von Bachelor-, Master- und Diplomstudiengängen (Akkreditierungsrichtlinien) den Rahmen für die Entwicklung des internen Qualitätsmanagementsystems.

4.4.2 Phasen der Entwicklung

Der Aufbau und die Weiterentwicklung des Qualitätsmanagements in ein Prozessorientiertes Qualitätsmanagementsystem (PQMS) der Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland werden durch die für Qualitätsmanagement zuständige Geschäftsführerin, die Geschäftsstelle Qualitätsmanagement & Organisationsentwicklung sowie stakeholderorientierte QM-Zirkel seit Oktober 2003 forciert – die Vorgehensweise kann durch die drei Phasen Analyse, Entwurf und Realisierung umschrieben werden.

Analyse
Erster Schritt in der Entwicklung waren eine Literaturrecherche hinsichtlich unterschiedlicher QM-Systeme und –Ansätze bzw. eine Dokumentenanalyse der in den Studiengängen bzw. der Institution bis 2003 vorhandenen Unterlagen und Dokumenten zum Bereich der Qualitätssicherung und des Qualitätsmanagements. Wenn möglich bzw. verfügbar wurden auch „best practices“ – Beispiele für die Betrachtungen herangezogen.

Entwurf
Basierend auf den Ergebnissen der Analysephase wurde die Basis für das institutionelle Qualitätsmanagementsystem als abgestimmter „Mix“ unterschiedlicher Aspekte des Qualitätsmanagements entworfen. Die Basis des institutionellen Qualitätsmanagementsystems der Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland bilden Prozessorientierung, kontinuierliche Verbesserung und umfassende Qualitätskultur. Das Qualitätsmanagementsystem als Gesamtheit der aufbau- und ablauforganisatorischen Gestaltung dient sowohl zur Verknüpfung der qualitätsbezogenen Aktivitäten als auch der einheitlichen, gezielten Planung, Umsetzung und Steuerung der Maßnahmen des Qualitätsmanagements im Unternehmen. Ein System vernetzter Regelkreise auf allen betrieblichen Ebenen legt Ziele, Struktur, Verantwortlichkeiten, Prozesse und die zur Durchführung erforderlichen Mittel fest.

Realisierung
Ausgehend vom Ist – Bestand wurde das PQMS konzipiert und modular aufgebaut. Ein Grundprinzip im Rahmen der Realisierung ist die laufende Reflexion und Weiterentwicklung des Qualitätsmanagementsystems.

- **Organisationsentwicklung (Einbettung in die Organisation):** Schaffung der erforderlichen aufbauorganisatorischen Einheiten
- **Ausgestaltung der Ablauforganisation (Prozesslandschaft):** Festlegung, Entwicklung und Abstimmung von Kern- und Supportprozessen der Institution
- **internes Qualitätssteuerungssystem:** Entwicklung von strategischen und operativen Qualitätsregelkreisen unter Ausrichtung auf das Leitbild, die Strategie und die Wissensziele – als wesentliches Element des internen Qualitätssteuerungssystems wurde ein Modell für eine Wissensbilanz entwickelt
- **QM-Instrumentarium:** Entwicklung und Implementierung von Instrumentarien für die verschiedenen Stakeholder im Bereich des Qualitätsmanagements
- **Informationssystem für QM-Daten:** Strukturierung und Dokumentation der im Rahmen des Qualitätsmanagements anfallenden Informationen
- **aktive Einbindung/Integration der Stakeholder:** In allen Phasen der Entwicklung wurde darauf geachtet, die betroffenen Stakeholder – vorrangig Studierende, Lehrende und MitarbeiterInnen – in Konzeption und Entwicklung des Systems, der Prozesse und der QM-Instrumentarien aktiv einzubinden. Punktuell wurden bei Bedarf auch externe ExpertInnen bzw. ExpertInnenwissen, z. B. im Rahmen der Entwicklung der Wissensbilanz, einbezogen und eingeholt.

4.4.3 Aufbau/Struktur – Bausteine/Elemente

Einbettung in die Organisation

Für die Einbettung in die Organisation wurden eine Abteilung für Qualitätsmanagement & Organisationsentwicklung auf institutioneller Ebene, ein Qualitätsmanagementausschuss als beratendes Organ sowie Qualitätsmanagementzirkel zur Einbindung der verschiedenen Stakeholder eingerichtet. Darüber hinaus werden im Bedarfsfall stakeholderspezifische bzw. stakeholderübergreifende Arbeitsgruppen eingerichtet, wie z. B. Arbeitsgruppe Öffentlichkeitsarbeit etc.

Prozesslandschaft

Zur übersichtlichen Darstellung aller Prozesse des Unternehmens und deren Beziehungen zueinander wurde eine Prozesslandschaft erstellt. In dieser sind jene Prozesse dargestellt, die einerseits die Leistung für den Kunden erbringen, und andererseits auch alle Prozesse, die diese Leistungserbringung steuern, unterstützen und verbessern.

Die definierte Prozesslandschaft (Kernprozesse und Supportprozesse, inklusive qualitätssichernde Prozesse) mit Prozessbeschreibungen in Form von dynamischen Qualitätsmanagementdokumenten je Organisationseinheit (webbasiert auf interner Plattform) unterstützt die Durchführung des Lehr- und Studienbetriebs sowie der angewandten Forschung & Entwicklung bzw. der Internationalisierung und Vernetzung.

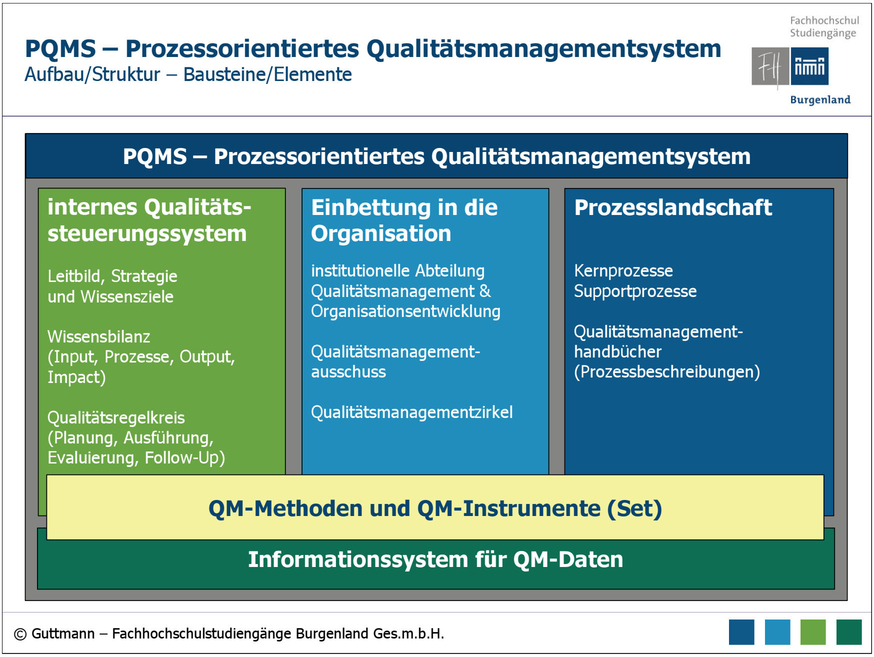


Abbildung 2: PQMS – Prozessorientiertes Qualitätsmanagementsystem

Internes Qualitätssteuerungssystem
Das interne Qualitätssteuerungssystem basiert auf Leitbild, Strategie und Wissenszielen sowie einer Wissensbilanz und wird durch einen Qualitätsregelkreis (in Anlehnung an den Deming-Kreis bzw. Plan-Do-Check-Act-Zyklus) gesteuert (siehe Abbildung 3).

Von Leitbild und Strategie werden die jährlichen Ziele der Studiengänge und Kernkompetenzbereiche im Rahmen von Workshops und/oder Gesprächen abgeleitet und vereinbart sowie darauf aufbauend entsprechende Jahrespläne erstellt (Plan). Im Lauf des Jahres werden die vereinbarten Pläne entsprechend den Qualitätsmanagementhandbüchern (Prozessbeschreibungen) in den einzelnen Bereichen umgesetzt und qualitätsrelevante Daten gesammelt (Do). Im Anschluss daran werden zusätzlich zu Reportings in Form von Selbstevaluierungsberichten und Qualitätsdaten Evaluierungen in Form von Peerberichten bzw. Erhebungen und Studien (z. B. AbsolventInnenanalysen, Bedarf- und Akzeptanzerhebungen etc.) durchgeführt (Check). Einzelne Reportings werden im Bedarfsfall einer Bewertung von Peers (externe Begutachter) unterzogen. Ergebnisse dieser Begutachtung sind Peer-Berichte, welche zusammen mit den unterschiedlichen Reportings im Rahmen von Workshops und/oder Gesprächen diskutiert werden und als Basis für die Ableitung von Maßnahmen bzw. das Festlegen von Zielen für das nächste Jahr dienen. Die einzelnen Berichte (Reportings und Peer-

Abbildung 3: Qualitätsregelkreis des internen Qualitätssteuerungssystems

Berichte) bilden darüber hinaus den Ausgangspunkt für die Erstellung der jährlichen Wissensbilanz, die der Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland als Steuerungs- und Kommunikationsinstrument dient (Act).

Informationssystem für QM-Daten
Zum Informationssystem für Qualitätsmanagementdaten zählen die Daten im Rahmen der Bereitstellung von Informationen über den Studienbetrieb (BIS), das Forschung & Entwicklung Informationssystem (FEIS), die Wissensbilanzen und die diversen Reportings und Monitorings.

QM-Methoden und QM-Instrumente (Set)
Ein Set an Methoden und Instrumenten bindet die verschiedenen Stakeholder (MitarbeiterInnen, Studierende, Lehrende, Wirtschaftspraxis, AbsolventInnen etc.) ein und unterstützt die Führungskräfte im Qualitätsmanagement. Die Instrumentarien werden den Kategorien Abstimmungsinstrumente, Erhebungsinstrumente, Information- und Kommunikationsinstrumente sowie Steuerungs- und Reportinginstrumente zugeordnet. Zahlreiche Instrumente sind bereits gut in der Institution eingeführt und implementiert (z. B. regelmäßige Planungs- und Strategieworkshops, Wissensbilanz, Lehrveranstaltungsevaluierung, AbsolventInnenanalyse, Studierendenbefragung, MitarbeiterInnengespräch, Qualitätsmanagementzirkel, pädagogisch-didaktische Weiterbildung etc.).

4.4.4 Zusammenfassung

Das Prozessorientierte Qualitätsmanagementsystem (PQMS) der Fachhochschulstudiengänge Burgenland ein stakeholderorientiertes Qualitätsmanagementsystem mit bereits gut in der Institution implementierten Instrumentarien. Es ist institutionell verankert, unterstützt die Führungskräfte bei ihren Aufgaben im Rahmen des Qualitätsmanagements und trägt durch die laufende und aktive Einbindung der verschiedenen Stakeholer zum guten Verständnis von Leitbild, Strategie, Wissenszielen und Prozessen bei. Neben der Stakeholder- und Prozessorientierung steht der Gedanke „Fitness for Purpose" mit kontinuierlicher Verbesserung und Nutzung von Lerneffekten im Vordergrund.

Das Qualitätsmanagementsystem wird laufend weiterentwickelt. Mittelfristig ist die Entwicklung eines Benchmarkingsystems (innerhalb der Institution und mit externen Benchmarkingpartnern) sowie die Weiterentwicklung des QM-Instrumentariums, z. B. Evaluierung im Bereich Forschung & Entwicklung, vorgesehen.

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5

Students as Members of Review Teams

Studierende als Mitglieder von Review Teams

Österreichische
Qualitätssicherungsagentur
Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance

5.1 Participation of students in the process of quality assurance of higher education

Anita Liice
ESU

Introduction

For the past three years, quality assurance of higher education has gained importance in both European and national debates and reforms under the umbrella of the Bologna Process. Although being mentioned in the official documents and communiqués already since 1999, only since the Berlin ministerial conference has quality assurance developed into a central action of the Bologna Process. During all these years, the participation of students in quality assurance activities has always been a key concern and demand both of the European Students' Union and of national unions of students. Although there has been significant progress and many developments done in a number of countries and on the European level, many challenges still remain to be overcome.

This article summarizes the main work that the European Students' Union (hereinafter ESU) has done in the field of quality assurance, challenges faced and describes the system of how ESU organizes involvement of students in international review teams for quality assurance evaluations.

Work of the European Students' Union in the field of Quality Assurance

ESU has a long history of work and initiatives linked to the pursuit of quality of higher education as a characteristic that provides a guide for students, higher education institutions, as well as other actors such as employers and governments. ESU has been a very active partner in the design and promotion of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (hereinafter – ESG) in co-operation with other E4 partners (ENQA, EUA and EURASHE) and is a founding member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education. ESU is delegating student experts for different QA activities. One of the recent activities was the first audit of a national Quality Assurance Agency in Romania (ARACIS) which was performed entirely by a student review panel. Also, ESU is involved in various QA projects such as: the Quality Assurance Forum, the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme and Quality Assurance for the Higher Education Change Agenda (QAHECA).

Quality assurance and accreditation: two sides of the same coin

ESU believes that quality assurance and accreditation are two sides of the same coin – a successful mixture of the two leads to the development of "quality culture" within higher education institutions as well as to the provision of a basic certainty about the quality of education. It is the basis for trust in quality of education, which is so important for students and other major stakeholders in higher education.

The quality culture is meant to ensure that quality is a focus of the institution at all levels and that it is incorporated in the everyday work of the students, university management, staff, professors and teachers. In this approach there is a need to develop institutional and internal quality assurance mechanisms in the framework of a "fitness for purpose" approach to assess whether the institutions are fulfilling the missions they have defined for themselves. The development of such internal mechanisms should be seen complementary to external and programme quality assurance, which could include accreditation.

Main challenges

The ESG are increasingly becoming the reference document for quality assurance processes in Europe. Many European countries are only now introducing reforms to adapt their quality assurance systems to the ESG and, through that, developing comparable processes around the continent and building inside the country the necessary trust in higher education institutions as independent and responsible actors.

ESU believes that we should strive to achieve a coherent implementation of the ESG in the place where quality assurance takes place – in the higher education institutions.

Among the principles outlined by the ESG, it is relevant to stress the importance of programme evaluation. ESU believes that quality assurance and accreditation on programme and course level is essential for maintaining and enhancing quality. Even within institutions, standards and procedures and study provisions and facilities may vary, and students should be able to base their programme choices on reliable and accurate information. Programme accreditation and/or quality assurance is often criticized on institutional level. The reasons for this critique are related to claims that evaluating each programme can become a bureaucratic and financially burdening exercise. Nevertheless, for the protection and guidance of students, quality assurance and accreditation at the programme level is of prime importance. Individual students are most directly affected by the quality of their own programme of study and therefore programme level reports will be the best guide and the safeguard of quality for those students. Of course, institutional quality assurance is also of great relevance as it helps the institutions to develop a higher level of quality to the benefit of all actors in the higher education sector.

When it comes to the linkages between external and internal reviews, they should be seen as complementary and both methods of quality assurance are essential for the development of higher education.

Also, ESU calls for the full and active involvement of students as equal partners in all quality assurance processes. The success of quality assurance in building trust of the society as a whole is intimately linked with public availability of the internal and external quality assurance processes results. Transparency is essential for the academic community to feel ownership over the review processes and to recognize their long-term benefits. I would like to analyze more two above mentioned points: equal involvement of students and transparency of the quality assurance process.

1. Equal student involvement

All institutional quality assurance processes should fully engage with the higher education institutions' management, academic and support staff as well as students and their representatives. Students are only now becoming recognised as full partners in this area and rather than simply as a source of feedback and information for indicator purposes. They are taking part in internal quality assurance, they are sitting in external review panels and in governing bodies of the agencies, they are founding a European register.

The next challenge is that students should become not just partners in the area of quality assurance at both institutional and agencies level, but equal partners. They provide momentum for change and modernization, as they experience the institutions in a particular way, which neither academics, nor agencies can emulate.

There are several different ways, roles and models in which students are participants in quality assurance throughout Europe. At the programme level, involvement of student representatives takes place only through student questionnaires for all students and by the involvement of student representatives in respective bodies, committees or internal review teams. However, both ways of student involvement are not in place in all cases. Regarding student questionnaires, there have been quite some reports from the national unions of students that students often do not see that those have any impact or value (ESU: 17, 2007). Also ENQA's report (ENQA, 2008) affirms that still a significant number of quality assurance agencies involve students in other forms, such as interviews of local students during site-visit or a rather consultative involvement.

2. Transparency

Transparency carries an undisputable importance for the overall success of the quality assurance exercise: all results and outcomes of the quality assurance processes must be made public and especially accessible to students. For the quality assurance process to achieve its goals, we need it to be known, accepted and trusted by all parties concerned. Also, the ESG specifically mention that "this information should be accurate, impartial, objective and readily accessible and should not be used simply as a marketing opportunity" (ENQA: 19, 2007). It is obvious that in order to ensure maximum benefit from quality assurance processes, it is important that the reports are adequate to the needs of the targeted reader. There should be sufficient preliminary information to enable readers to understand all the key messages delivered by the reports, such as key findings, conclusions and recommendations for improvement. Also, the opportunity for the reader to provide feedback to such reports must be provided by all higher education institutions.

Current activities of the European Students' Union to organize student involvement in quality assurance processes in Europe

ESU is organizing student involvement in external evaluation processes in panels of experts, organized by the national agencies or institutions for institutional evaluations (e.g., AQA's evaluations) and for evaluations of the national quality assurance agencies (e.g., polish NARIC for external review of the Polish State Accreditation Committee). ESU has also done an independent review of Romanian agency for quality assurance (ARACIS). When it comes to international initiatives, ESU delegates student experts to the Institutional evaluation programme (hereinafter – IEP) of the EUA by delegating student experts to all institutional evaluations as well as to ENQA's quality assurance evaluations of European quality assurance agencies. A student expert delegated by ESU is also involved in the panel reviewing the IEP.

Student experts, delegated to the review teams, are always pre-evaluated and selected by ESU on a basis of their CV's and experience in quality assurance processes on national and/or European level as well as on their motivation. To ensure quality student involvement, ESU is requesting student experts to report on their activities and problems they encountered in the process of evaluation. This report addresses the perceptions and difficulties the delegated student met when being involved in the activities and aims at detecting the main needs for further training and development of the experts' pool. However these students are involved in these activities in their own individual capacity and not as ESU representatives, and the type of the work requires discretion; there are strict guides as when it comes to communication with ESU and externals, ensuring that this report or any other communication does not in any way contravene the confidentiality rules of the review.

All these actions are the basis for a larger development within ESU, called the Student's Experts pool. The European Students' Union intends to set up a database of students, experienced in quality assurance procedures and willing to undertake a review on behalf of the European Students' Union. There are two sections already launched under this pool, meaning, pool of IEP student experts (selected and re-launched every year in early autumn) and pool of trainers, launched in August 2008 with the aim to prepare trainings for the national unions of students and in particular trainings on equity in the frame of ESU's project "Equity from a students' perspective".

Conclusions

To conclude this article, I would like to stress once again that fundamental challenges remain in the development of internal and external quality assurance, such as:
- harmonising institutional and programme quality assurance or accreditation;
- involvement of the students in order to achieve equal partnership status in all quality assurance exercises and
- overall transparency of both internal and external evaluations.

ESU calls for the development of continuous quality enhancement processes with the participation of students, while respecting the diversity of higher education institutions.

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5.2 Experiences of a student

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We all have a feeling on what quality could be. But quality is hard to define. Quality assurance is even harder to define because this special feeling about quality is very subjective and not standardised. To get a certain level of quality we need many subjective opinions and views on our higher education institutions and their study programmes. With these opinions we can build a qualitative higher education area. In this context, we need opinions of all stakeholders – also the students.

5.2.1 Me, myself and I – About myself

Since this year, I'm reviewer for the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance (AQA). But who am I?

First of all, I'm student of two different subjects: computer science (more precisely software engineering and business) and law. A unique combination which should be a hot topic in the near future, I hope. Since 2003, one year after starting my study, I also started my work in the local students union at the Technical University Graz. Since March this year I'm chairperson of the students union. In this position I often have to deal with quality issues. Since last year I'm also trainer for organisation and personnel development.

5.2.2 AQA and their peer review teams

The review teams of the AQA mostly consist of three experts: one expert in quality assurance, one for didactics and last but not least one for the subject, which will be reviewed. So we have three opinions from three different perspectives. From international experiences we can learn, that the perspective of students can be a gainful opinion for a review. So many quality assurance agencies already include students in their review teams. In 2007 the Fachhochschule council was evaluated. In the report, the reviewers gave the advice to include students. So the Fachhochschule council and also AQA made the decision, that they want to try to include students in the review teams. This year AQA asked the European Students Union (ESU) to nominate students for their reviews. As you can assume, ESU nominated me.

5.2.3 Motivation is all we need

I want to point out my motivation by looking at history:

In 1998 the Council of Europe first talked about quality in higher education. On year later, the bologna process was declared, which surely includes quality as an aspect of the process.

In the year 2003 we could read some more statements in the Berlin communiqué: "Quality of higher education has proven to be the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area" and "… consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework."

In 2005 the Bologna Follow Up meeting took place in Bergen. There Europe went a step further introducing the European Standards and Guidelines of Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Last year, 2007, the European Qualification Framework was discussed in London.

So, that's a lot of history. Quality was getting more and more important in Europe. With the Berlin communiqué in 2003 I also started my work in the local students union. The ideas and opinions on quality in higher education accompanied me since then. This gives a lot of motivation. When I'm thinking of my motivation, I also think of a special quote of Lewis Carroll from "Through the Looking Glass": "Well, in OUR country", said Alice, still panting a little, "you'd generally get to somewhere else – if you ran fast for a very long time as we've been doing". "A slow sort of country" said the Queen. "Now, HERE, you see, it takes all the running YOU can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

The whole European Higher Education Area is also very fast. More and more ideas and processes get published. I want to help that we all run faster, that we all can understand all the processes and that we can implement these processes.

5.2.4 Experiences

First of all, I learned, it is very important, that you can draw conclusions for the report on a basis of many different perspectives. In the review teams we have now four very different perspectives (didactics, quality assurance, subject and student). Everyone inspects the higher education institution from a different view. All the perspectives together can show you a huge variety of quality advices.

As a student in the review team I naturally also want to speak to students. I figured out, that the formal interview in front of the whole peer review team is very sterile for the students. They have to come to an unknown room speaking to some people in front of them about their university or Fachhochschule. I learned that they don't talk about everything in front of the whole review team, so I spoke to student in laboratories and in the cafeteria. This gives you a real idea of how it is to be a student at this higher education institution. I think it is always a good idea, that the student in the review team gets time to speak to students in a familiar situation like in the cafeteria. This student to student interview is somehow an approach to a more student centred quality assurance, which would lead to more open minded higher education institutions.

Finally I think, the student in the review team needs some sort of understanding about higher education institutions in general and quality in general (What is it? What could it be?). The students need also the feeling to ask the right question at the right time. I think you can only get this by practising. The review team should respect the student as equal partner and should be sympathetic for the questions of the student.

5.2.5 Conclusion

Student participation in review teams gives us all a new perspective on quality of higher education institutions. We should not underestimate the opinion and ideas of the students. The student to student communication is very important and we should use this chance to develop a new student centred quality assurance. Giving students the chance to be part of a review team is a good and important step further for an open minded quality assurance.

5.3 Student involvement in internal and external quality assurance – experiences from the ENQA member agencies

Emmi Helle
ENQA

Student involvement as promoted by the ESG

The Standards and Guidelines for the European Higher Education Area (ENQA, Helsinki, 2005), the so called ESG, mention the involvement of students in the internal quality assurance of the higher education institutions (HEIs), in the external quality assurance of the HEIs, and in the activities of the quality assurance agencies. Student members can thus be included, for example, in the internal quality management committees of the HEIs, in the expert teams that evaluate or accredit the HEIs and in the decision-making bodies of the quality assurance agencies.

In addition, students can also be members of the decision-making bodies of the HEIs, which is a common feature for example in the Nordic countries. The students of a certain programme or institution should certainly be consulted during the evaluation or accreditation of the programme or HEI in question. In some cases, students can also function as chairs or secretaries of the external review teams evaluating or accrediting the programmes or institutions.

ENQA is an umbrella organisation for quality assurance agencies operating in Europe. The majority of its 48 member agencies operates according to the ESG, and the rest is expected to do so in one-to-two years time. This means that these agencies follow the above-mentioned standards and guidelines for student involvement in quality assurance, or are shortly about to do so. Similarly, the HEIs evaluated by those agencies should involve students in their internal quality assurance procedures.

Student involvement as promoted by the Bologna Process

The Bologna Process has introduced stocktaking exercises for the signatory countries, to be carried out every two years in view of the Bologna Ministerial meetings. The stocktaking exercise has five different scores, varying from "green" to "red". "The Bologna Process Stocktaking 2009 list of indicators" includes, and thereby promotes as key issues, three aspects in the national implementation of the ESG: 1. Stage of development of external quality assurance system; 2. *Level of student participation in quality assurance*; and 3. Level of international participation in quality assurance.
What comes to the *Level of student participation in quality assurance*, in order to obtain "green" (i.e. the highest score)? The Bologna signatory countries have to meet the following requirements at the national level:

"In all quality assurance reviews, students participate at five levels:
- in the governance of national bodies for quality assurance;
- in external reviews of HEIs and/or programmes: either in expert teams, as observers in expert teams or at the decision making stage;
- in consultation during external reviews;
- in internal QA processes;
- in preparation of self-assessment reports."

For the "light green", four levels of the above-mentioned have to be met; for the "yellow", three levels; and for the "orange", two. "Red" is the lowest score, and means that either the students cannot participate in any of the levels mentioned, or they can participate in just one of them. The Bologna signatory countries have to fill in the national report templates for this exercise by January 2009, in order for the integral stocktaking report to be submitted to the ministerial meeting of Leuven in April 2009.

In the 2007 stocktaking report, which had similar requirements for quality assurance as the forthcoming one, it was concluded that "student involvement in quality assurance had grown significantly since 2005. Every country had achieved some level of student participation in quality assurance, and in more than two-thirds of countries students were participating in at least three of the four levels." These findings were backed up by European University Association's Trends V report as well as by surveys from ESU i.e. the European Students' Union (Bologna with students' eyes, London 2007) and ENQA (Student involvement in the processes of quality assurance agencies, Helsinki 2006).

Agency reviews

The ESG as well as "The guidelines for national reviews of ENQA member agencies" (Helsinki, 2006) suggest that the evaluation teams for the reviews of the quality assurance agencies should include a student member. These reviews of agencies can be coordinated by a national authority, by ENQA, or by another European QA agency or body.

The ENQA-coordinated reviews always include a student member, the nomination of which is asked from ESU. The student member and the other members of the review team are expected to have some knowledge of the language and a good knowledge of the higher education system of the country where the agency under review is located. The same responsibilities and expectations prevail for the student member as for the other members of the team. The student member receives the same briefing and same fee as the other team members (except for the Chair and Secretary, who receive higher fees in compensation for their more demanding tasks).

For the time being, neither in the ENQA-coordinated reviews nor in the other agency reviews, a student member has functioned as the Secretary or Chair of the review.

Lessons learned by the ENQA member agencies

The ENQA survey "Quality Procedures in the European Higher Education Area and Beyond" (Helsinki, 2008), with 51 agency respondents (ENQA members, associates and affiliates), highlighted that in 53% of cases students have a say when HEIs in the agencies primary domain specify processes and criteria for the external quality assurance. The same survey further revealed that in 29% cases students may suggest or nominate members of the external expert panels used by the agencies; that in 57% of cases the expert panels include students; and that in ca 50% of cases students have a role in the agencies' decision-making bodies.

The overall experiences of the ENQA member agencies in involving students have been positive, and the agencies have been truly satisfied with the student members in their review teams. The same prevails for the ENQA-coordinated agency reviews – ENQA has been fully content with the ESU-nominated student experts. The commonly shared perception is that student involvement in the quality assurance processes is crucial for better responsiveness to the needs of a changing labour market and of an increased emphasis on students' employability. The advantages of a partnership approach, including the stakeholders as encouraged by the Bologna Process, are evident.

As for the challenges of student involvement, different traditions and cultural contexts exist, and there are agencies that have been involving students since the late 1960's, while the others have just recently begun. For the same reasons, a model that works in one country does not necessarily work in another. In some countries profound legal and cultural changes would be required in order to allow student involvement at all levels of higher education system; while in others there might be formally adequate legal provisions that just don't work in practise. In some countries, legal changes have already been introduced regarding the student involvement, as for example in Switzerland, as a consequence of the ESG and of the Bologna Process. But in several cases the cultural changes are more challenging and time-taking than the legal ones. However, the agencies are encouraged by ENQA, and by the Bologna Process, to take the necessary steps to develop in this respect. What comes to the practical challenges of the student involvement, the agencies and HEIs should take into consideration the increasing study workload of the students and other time constraints (examination periods, graduation, etc.) when planning for their training and employment.

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6

The Relevance of Employability for different Disciplines

Employability im Spannungsfeld der Disziplinen

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6.1 Die Frage nach Dimensionen von Employability in den universitären Studiengängen vor allem der Bachelor-Stufe

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Bereits in der Bologna-Deklaration von 1999 ist der Employability-Aspekt von Hochschulabgängerinnen und Hochschulabgängern enthalten. Seither wurde er sukzessive stärker betont und auch in den zentralen Dokumenten des Bologna-Prozesses immer ausführlicher behandelt.

Der Beitrag fragt, vor welchem Hintergrund die Realisierung von Employability in universitären Studiengängen zu sehen und mit welchen Herausforderungen sie konfrontiert ist. Es wird die These vertreten, dass sich Employability in verschiedenen Dimensionen in die Studiengänge integrieren lässt und dass die konkrete Realisierung vor allem auch fachspezifisch und mit Blick auf die nationalen Gegebenheiten des Hochschulsystems anzugehen ist. Dabei wird in aller Kürze auf die Situation in Österreich eingegangen und diese mit Aspekten des Schweizer Hochschulsystems und mit europaweiten Ergebnissen gespiegelt.

Die Konjunktur des Employability-Begriffs im Bologna-Prozess

Die Bologna-Deklaration verbindet den Employability-Begriff mit dem Ziel der Transparenz und Lesbarkeit des neu einzuführenden Studiensystems: «Adoption of a system of degrees easily readable and comparable in order to promote the European citizens employability […]»[1]

Die Graz-Deklaration der European University Association EUA aus dem Jahr 2003 lässt erste definitorische Herausforderungen erkennen, wenn sie eine breit zu fassende Employability-Bedeutung proklamiert und diese auch für den ersten Hochschulabschluss anvisiert: «Implementing a system of three levels […] requires further change. Universities see the priorities for action as: […] Continuing to define and promote employability skills in a broad sense in the curriculum and ensuring that the first cycle programmes offer the option of entering the labour market.»[2]

Dass mit der Employability-Frage schwierig zu fassende Ansprüche an die Hochschulen einhergehen, wird in den Dokumenten von 2007 noch deutlicher. Im London-Kommuniqué der Minister vom Mai 2007 wird die Berücksichtigung des Employability-Aspektes für alle Studienstufen und für das lebensbegleitende Lernen reklamiert. Gleichzeitig wird betont, dass eine breite Diskussion mit allen Anspruchsgruppen geführt werden sollte und dass auch der Staat entsprechende

1 Bologna-Deklaration, Bologna 1999.
2 Graz-Deklaration der EUA, Graz 2003, Absatz 14.

Arbeitsmöglichkeiten für Hochschulabsolventinnen und Hochschulabsolventen der ersten Studienstufe eröffnen muss.[3]

Dieselbe Position vertritt die EUA, die in ihrer Lissabon-Deklaration vom März 2007 konzedierte, dass der Employability-Aspekt eine noch intensivere Bearbeitung und einen auf Kompetenzen und Lernergebnisse fokussierten Dialog mit den Anspruchsgruppen, insbesondere mit den Arbeitgeberinstitutionen erfordert.[4]

Begriffliche Alternativen und Begründung einer Präferenz

Der Employability-Begriff hat seit seinem Auftauchen im hochschul(politischen) Kontext eine breite Diskussion erfahren, die auch nach begrifflichen Alternativen fragt.[5] Im deutschsprachigen Raum könnten dies sein: berufliche Relevanz, Arbeitsmarktorientierung, Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit, Berufsorientierung, Beschäftigungsfähigkeit oder gesellschaftliche Relevanz.

Im Rahmen eines AQA-Mandates, das der Autor dieses Beitrags zusammen mit Professor Ulrich Teichler, ehemals Universität Kassel, zwischen Februar und September 2008 zur Analyse des Employability-Aspektes an ausgewählten österreichischen Universitäten wahrnahm, haben wir uns für «berufliche Relevanz» entschieden. Damit wollten wir jede Bezugnahme auf Aspekte eines Arbeitsmarktes oder auf eine bestimmte juristische Form der Beschäftigung (Anstellung, Selbstständigkeit) vermeiden, um darauf fokussieren zu können, ob Universitäten dem beruflichen Bezug in den neu gestalteten Bachelor-Studiengängen eine Bedeutung beimessen und wie sie diese Bedeutung inhaltlich ausgestalten.

3 «Following up on the introduction of the three-cycle degree system, we ask BFUG (Bologna Follow-up Group) to consider in more detail how to improve employability in relation to each of these cycles as well as in the context of lifelong learning. This will involve the responsibilities of all stakeholders. Governments and HEIs will need to communicate more with employers and other stakeholders on the rationale for their reforms. We will work, as appropriate, within our governments to ensure that employment and career structures within the public service are fully compatible with the new degree system. We urge institutions to further develop partnerships and cooperation with employers in the ongoing process of curriculum innovation based on learning outcomes» Aus: London-Komuniqué der Bologna-Minister, London 2007, Absatz 3.5 Employability.

4 «Universities recognise that additional efforts are needed to make employers aware of the enormous efforts which are being undertaken to reform curricula. They will seek to engage more consistently in dialogue with employers, provide better information on the competences and learning outcomes of their graduates and put in place systems to track graduate employment. In conjunction with state and/or private agencies, they will address the question of how to provide more systematic career guidance support and services to their students. Both institutions and governments should translate this broadly accepted policy commitment into action. Governments are urged to adapt their own public sector employment structures to take account of the new degree structures – an issue pointed out in Trends IV, but not yet resolved.» Aus: Lissabon-Deklaration der EUA, Lisabon 2007, Absatz Employability.

5 Teichler 2008, Jargon der Nützlichkeit; Teichler 2008, Academic Learning, 304–306.

Herausforderungen und Gefahren bei der Konzipierung von Bachelor-Studiengängen

Universitäten, die bisher Diplom- bzw. Magisterstudiengänge als ersten Studienabschluss angeboten haben, sind durch den zusätzlichen Bachelor-Abschluss in ihrer Identität gefordert. Die bisherigen Hochschulabschlüsse waren – vereinfacht gefasst – dazu geeignet, den Weg aus der Hochschule heraus (Magister) bzw. den Weg in die Hochschulkarriere hinein (Doktorat) zu bestimmen. Mit dem Bachelor-Abschluss tritt neben den früheren Königsweg in die berufliche Arbeitswelt ein neuer und zeitlich früherer Abschluss.

Hinzu kommen Beeinflussungen durch staatliche Regelungen. In Österreich wurde im Universitätsgesetz und im Fachhochschulgesetz das Studiensystem einheitlich gefasst; für Fachhochschulen und für Universitäten gelten 180 ECTS als Bachelor- und zusätzlich mindestens 120 ECTS als Master-Abschuss. Die Hochschultypen unterscheiden sich aber nebst anderem gerade auch darin, dass für die Fachhochschulen die Berufsausbildung und für die Universitäten die Berufsvorbereitung als Qualifikationsziel definiert wird.[6]

Über diese quantitativen (Studienumfang) und begrifflich-konzeptionellen (Berufsausbildung vs. Berufsvorbereitung) Setzungen hinaus, sind in Österreich im Universitätsgesetz 2002 staatliche Vorgaben deutlich zurückgenommen worden: So müssen die neuen Curricula nicht mehr den Arbeitgeberorganisationen zur Stellungnahme[7] vorgelegt werden. Zudem fehlen von staatlicher Seite Hinweise auf finanzielle Modelle oder auf quantitative Szenarien betreffend Akademikerinnen- und Akademikerquoten auf Bachelor- und Masterstufe.

Mit Blick auf den neuen Bachelor-Abschluss und die mit ihm verbundenen Kompetenzen und Qualifikationen lassen sich ganz allgemein drei Typen misslungener Konzeptionen beschreiben, die in vielen Ländern und an vielen Hochschulen festgestellt werden können.

- Der Bachelor als Defizit-Master: Der Bachelor-Abschluss zeichnet sich vor allem durch Defizite gegenüber dem Master-Abschluss aus. Immerhin wird dem Bachelor-Titel ein Mehrwert gegenüber dem unzertifizierten Studienabbruch zugestanden.
- Der Bachelor als en-passant Zertifizierung: Der Hauptabschluss des Universitätsstudiums ist der Master-Abschluss. Der Bachelor-Abschluss ist ein Zwischenschritt zu diesem Studienziel. Immerhin ist es möglich, dass der Bachelor-Abschluss eine gewisse Berufsrelevanz aufweist bzw. erlangt.
- Der Bachelor als Bonsai-Master: Der Bachelor-Abschluss enthält alle inhaltlichen Aspekte des Master-Abschlusses, aber in reduziertem Umfang. Der Bachelor-Titel stellt eine unfertige Miniaturqualifikation dar, die für kleinere Aufgabenstellungen genügen mag.

Allen drei Konzeptionen fehlt ein Vision für einen eigenständig profilierten Abschluss, in welchem die Berufseinmündung nicht nur eine mögliche, sondern vielmehr auch eine konzeptionell vorgesehene und aktiv gestaltete Option für die Absolventinnen und Absolventen ist.

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6 Universitätsgesetz 2002, § 54 (3), Fachhochschulgesetz, § 3.

7 Universitäts-Studiengesetz (UniStG) § 12 (2) und Universitätsgesetz 2002 § 54 (5).

Pragmatische Zugänge zur beruflichen Relevanz in vierzehn Dimensionen

Um sich bei der Curricula-Konzeption systematisch mit verschiedenen Anforderungen an eine angemessene Qualifikation auseinandersetzen zu können, ist ein konsequenter Miteinbezug aller Anspruchsgruppen erforderlich. Dieser Prozess ist durchgängig, von der Idee über Konzeption, Feinplanung und Durchführung bis zur Evaluation und Neukonzeption, zu definieren und in geeigneter Weise schlank und repräsentativ auszugestalten.

Für die systematische Diskussion und Priorisierung von Realisierungsformen der beruflichen Relevanz empfiehlt es sich, ein Dimensionenraster zu verwenden. Erst danach ist festzulegen, ob die Dimensionen implizit, en passant, in den üblichen Veranstaltungsformaten und Beratungsaktivitäten oder in besonderen Veranstaltungen und Maßnahmen realisiert werden.

Im Rahmen des oben genannten AQA-Mandates zur beruflichen Relevanz im Bachelor-Studium an ausgewählten österreichischen Universitäten wurden vierzehn Dimensionen angewendet:[8]

- Neugestaltung des Studiums
- Allgemeine kognitive Kompetenzen
- Arbeitsstile
- Generelle berufsrelevante Werthaltungen
- Spezifische berufliche Stile und Werthaltungen
- Transferqualifikationen
- Sozio-kommunikative Kompetenzen
- «Zusatz»-Qualifikationen
- Befähigung zur Selbst-Organisation
- Befähigung zum Umgang mit dem Arbeitsmarkt
- Internationale Kompetenzen
- Alternative Lernformen mit besonderer beruflicher Relevanz
- Experiential Learning
- Beteiligung von Berufspraktikerinnen und -praktikern

Die Dimensionen erleichtern auch eine institutionelle Profilierung mit fach- und universitätsspezifischen Gewichtungen.

Hinweise aus dem internationalen Vergleich

Die Schwierigkeiten, die mit der Konzipierung einer eigenständigen Bachelor-Qualifikation verbunden sind insbesondere auch mit Blick auf dessen berufliche Relevanz, finden sich auch im Schweizer Hochschulsystem. So hat die Rektorenkonferenz der Schweizer Universitäten (CRUS) festgehalten, dass die Bachelor-Stufe an den Universitäten auf die Vermittlung von grundlegender wissenschaftlicher Bildung und eines methodischen wissenschaftlichen Denkens ausgerichtet sein soll. Das Bachelor-Diplom soll vor allem die Mobilität erleichtern und ermöglicht lediglich als Zugabe eine Berufseinmündung.[9]

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8 Teichler 2004, Employability, S. 291–294; Teichler 2005, Hochschulstrukturen, S. 315–317.

9 Empfehlungen vom 3. Mai 2007, Punkt 2.1.

Diese Konzeption kontrastiert mit provisorischen Ergebnissen einer repräsentativen Befragung der Studierenden an den Schweizer Universitäten aus dem Frühjahr 2008. Aus ihr geht hervor, dass 50% der antwortenden Studierenden den Bezug ihres Studiums zur beruflichen Praxis für zu gering halten, wobei diese Einschätzung bei Studierenden in höheren Semestern zunimmt. Von den im Studium vermittelten Kompetenzen bewerten 90% der Studierenden die Fachkompetenz als gut gefördert, wohin gegen rund 40% der Studierenden die mündliche und schriftliche Kommunikationsfähigkeit für ungenügend vermittelt erachten. Eine präzisere Analyse dieser Antworten ist aber sicher noch erforderlich.

Neue Studienverlaufszahlen von 2007 zeigen, dass nur etwas mehr als 70% der Studierenden nach dem Bachelor-Studium direkt ein Master-Studium aufnehmen.[10] Damit korrespondiert, dass in der Befragung von 2008 rund je ein Drittel der Bachelor-Studierenden angeben, ein Master-Studium aufnehmen bzw. nicht aufnehmen zu wollen oder diesbezüglich noch nicht entschieden sind.
Auch im Trend V Bericht zur Umsetzung der Bologna-Reform in den Bologna-Signatarstaaten wird festgestellt:[11]

- Die Aufmerksamkeit der Hochschulen gegenüber der Thematik der beruflichen Relevanz eines ersten Hochschulabschlusses ist zu gering;
- Die Aufmerksamkeit betreffend die berufliche Relevanz ist insbesondere in solchen Ländern zu gering, in denen das Hochschulsystem zwischen Universitäten und Fachhochschulen differenziert; hier wird die Aufgabe der beruflichen Qualifikation des ersten Abschlusses vorwiegend bei den Fachhochschulen gesehen.
- Diese Sichtweise könnte «wishful thinking» sein, insb. da andere Länder die Differenzierung der Studienstufen anders sehen.

In diesem Sinn sollte die Schlussfolgerung aus Trend V ernst genommen werden und für die jeweils eigene Institution bewertet werden: «Yet if first cycle programmes have not been designed as a self-standing entity, and if little effort has been made to consider whether or not the contents of the new first cycle are relevant for the labour market, it is not surprising that students will normally see little option but to continue to a second cycle programme».[12]

Literaturhinweise:

Empfehlungen der CRUS für die koordinierte Erneuerung der Lehre an den universitären Hochschulen der Schweiz im Rahmen des Bologna-Prozesses, 2. grundlegend überarbeitete Fassung vom 3. Mai 2007.

Ulrich Teichler, «Employability» or «Professional relevance»: Changes in the Relationships between Higher Education and the World of Work on the Way towards the European Higer Education Area. Keynote Speech at the EUA Conference «University and Society: Engaging Stakeholders», Marseille, 1.–3. April 2004, in: Ulrich Teichler, Higher Education and the World of Work, 2008 (im Druck), S. 287–296.

Ulrich Teichler, Hochschulstrukturen im Umbruch. Eine Bilanz der Reformdynamik seit vier Jahrzehnten, Frankfurt a.M./New York 2005.

10 Schlussbericht 2004–07, S. 106.
11 Trends V, 2007, S. 35.
12 Trends V, 2007, S. 24.

Ulrich Teichler, Professionally Relevant Academic Learning, in: Ulrich Teichler, Higher Education and the World of Work, 2008 (im Druck), S. 297–310.
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Schlussbericht 2004–07 der CRUS zum Stand der Erneuerung der Lehre an den universitären Hochschulen der Schweiz im Rahmen des Bologna-Prozesses, Bern Juni 2008.
Trends V: Universities shaping the European Higher Education Area. An EUA Report written by David Crosier, Lewis Purser and Hanne Smidt, Brüssels, EUA 2007.

6.2 Employability als Anspruch – Herausforderung für Universitäten

Christa Schnabl
Universität Wien

Herausforderung Employability

Definition und Bedeutung

Employability (auch: Beschäftigungsfähigkeit, Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit) ist in jüngster Zeit vor allem durch aktuelle Entwicklungen auf europäischer Ebene in den Fokus des universitären Interesses gerückt. Die Steigerung von Employability gilt als ein wichtiges Ziel des Bologna-Prozesses und bedarf einer angemessenen Integrierung in die universitäre Strategieplanung. Die folgenden Überlegungen sind aus der Perspektive der Universität Wien formuliert, einer alten „Volluniversität", für die die Auseinandersetzung mit „Employability" bezogen auf Fächer, die keine per se definierte Berufstätigkeit im Blick haben, eine besondere Herausforderung darstellt. Was aber heißt nun Employability, und welche Erwartungen sind daran geknüpft?

Definition und Bedeutung von Employability sind Bestandteile kontroversiell geführter Diskussionen. Es kursieren unterschiedlichste Auffassungen darüber, was mit diesem Begriff überhaupt gemeint ist. Mit „Beschäftigungsfähigkeit" wird – so könnte resümierend zusammengefasst werden – zumeist die Fähigkeit verstanden, sich durch Kompetenzerlangung für den Arbeitsmarkt zu qualifizieren, um Arbeit erfolgreich aufnehmen, behalten und auch wechseln zu können. Diese Kompetenzerlangung beschränkt sich jedoch nicht bloß auf den Erwerb bestimmter einzelner „skills", sondern orientiert sich an der Ausbildung fachlicher, persönlicher und sozialer Kenntnisse und Kompetenzen, die eine Korrelation zum Arbeitsmarkt bzw. zu bestimmten Berufswegen aufweisen. Employability setzt gegenüber dem klassischen Berufskonzept neue Akzente. Die Ausbildung wird nicht mehr in erster Linie bezogen auf einen Kanon an klar definierten Anforderungen durch einen bestimmten Beruf oder Berufszweig, sondern durch den Erwerb von Fähigkeiten und Kompetenzen, die es den Individuen ermöglichen, auf die sich wandelnden Anforderungen des Arbeitsmarktes jeweils selbstbestimmt zu reagieren Dieser größere Kontext macht deutlich, dass eine zu enge Definition von Employability auf ganz bestimmte berufliche Tätigkeiten hin zu vermeiden ist. Employability fordert nicht in erster Linie die „Verberuflichung" der Ausbildung, sondern die stärkere Verzahnung von Bildungszielen mit der Frage nach der Entwicklung bzw. Erweiterung von praktisch relevanten Kompetenzen.

Trotz der Tatsache, dass Employability eine angemessene Antwort auf aktuelle Herausforderungen der Arbeitsmarktsituation sein will, ist das Konzept nicht gänzlich neu. Einerseits war diese Dimension dem Konzept von Bildung als Befähigung zur Selbstbestimmung auch in beruflicher Hinsicht immer schon immanent. Allerdings war sie früher mehr noch auf bestimmte Berufe bzw. Berufsstände fokussiert. Andererseits wurde Employability bereits in den 1990er Jahren zu einer zentralen Säule der britischen Sozial- und Arbeitspolitik, und gegen Ende der 90er Jahre auch im deutschen Sprachraum und in der internationalen Diskussion rezipiert.

Die aktuelle Konjunktur des Employability-Begriffs reflektiert Veränderungen im Gefüge von (Aus-)Bildung und Arbeiten. Sich am in Bewegung befindlichen Arbeitsmarkt beschäftigungsfähig zu halten, stellt Anforderungen an das Individuum nicht nur im Zuge der Ausbildung, sondern auch später während des aktiven Erwerbslebens. Jobgarantie und Arbeitsplatzsicherheit gehören nicht mehr zu den gängigen Rahmenbedingungen des Arbeitslebens. Angesichts der Zunahme von befristeten Verträgen und der Abnahme von Verbindlichkeiten seitens der ArbeitnehmerInnen, könnte Employability als eine Art von neuem sozialem Kontrakt zwischen den Beschäftigten und dem Arbeitsmarkt aufgefasst werden. Durch Aus- und Weiterbildungen sichern die Unternehmen die Beschäftigungsfähigkeit ihrer MitarbeiterInnen und somit den Umstand, dass fähige Personen auf dem Markt zirkulieren. Das Individuum ist ebenfalls in die Verantwortung genommen, insofern es sich selbstständig um die permanente/lebenslange Weiterentwicklung seiner Kompetenzen zu kümmern hat.

Kompetenzbereiche

Grundsätzlich und allgemein lassen sich fünf Kompetenzbereiche (Pasternack 2006) im Blick auf Employability identifizieren, wobei Universitäten auf diese Bereiche unterschiedlich stark eingehen:

- Fachkompetenzen
- Methodenkompetenzen: Problemanalyse und -lösung, selbständige Organisation von Lernprozessen, lebenslangen Lernens;
- Sozialkompetenzen: Kommunikations- und Konfliktfähigkeit, situationsadäquates Verhalten, interdisziplinäres Denken, Teamfähigkeit;
- Selbstkompetenzen: hauptsächlich bestimmte Einstellungen (z. B. Flexibilität, Leistungsbereitschaft, Selbst-Motivation)
- Zusatzqualifikationen, Aneignung spezieller Techniken und Kenntnisse (z. B. EDV-Kenntnisse, Präsentationstechniken, Fremdsprachen)

Für Universitäten steht die Entwicklung von Fach- und Methodenkompetenzen im Vordergrund. Diese den Studierenden zu vermitteln, gehört zu den unverzichtbaren Kernaufgaben von Universitäten. Sozial- und Selbstkompetenzen werden häufig auch durch Erfahrung ausgebildet und entwickelt. Ein (teilweise auch wissenschaftlich unterlegter) reflektierter Umgang mit solchen Kompetenzen zählt jedoch auch zu den Herausforderungen, auf die Universitäten heute in den unterschiedlichsten Bereichen zu reagieren haben. Bei diesen Kompetenzen handelt es sich jedoch häufig um indirekt, während des Studiums erworbene Fähigkeiten, wobei das Selbstverständnis der Institution, die Qualität in Forschung und Lehre, das Engagement der Forschenden und Lehrenden etc. große Auswirkungen auf diese impliziten Lernprozesse haben.

Die Universitäten sind angesichts des Ziels einer Steigerung der Employability gefordert, die verschiedenen Kompetenzbereiche nach Außen hin und für Studierende sichtbarer zu machen bzw. sie noch weiter auszubauen. In Wissensgesellschaften, in denen Wissen und Informationsverarbeitung zusehends an

Bedeutung gewinnen, kommt gerade den Universitäten eine besondere Rolle (auch bezogen auf den Arbeitsmarkt) zu. Insofern kann der Befürchtung, dass das Konzept der Employability eine „Verberuflichung der Universitäten“ zur Konsequenz habe, entgegengehalten werden, dass möglicherweise genau die umgekehrte Tendenz der Fall ist, nämlich eine „Ver-wissen-schaftlichung“ oder auch Wissensintensivierung verschiedener Bereiche der Gesellschaft. Die Universität als Ort des Wissenserwerbs und der Wissensorganisation ist nicht nur der prädestinierte Qualifizierungsrahmen für WissenschafterInnen, sondern auch für zukünftige Wissens(ver)arbeiterInnen.

Umsetzung von Employability-Maßnahmen an der Universität Wien

In diesem Zusammenhang muss sich die Universität Wien folgenden Fragen stellen: Was kann die Universität tun, um die Employability ihrer AbsolventInnen zu erhöhen? Welchen Stellenwert hat Employability bei der Umsetzung in den Studienplänen der Universität Wien? Schließlich: Bestehen fachspezifische Anforderungen, Besonderheiten und Unterschiede?

Generell

Grundsätzlich ist anzumerken, dass Employability nicht auf bestimmte „Skills“ zu beschränken ist. Die Kernaufgabe einer Universität in der Lehre ist und bleibt weiterhin die wissenschaftliche Grundausbildung, und nicht die konkrete Berufsausbildung. Positiv zu vermerken ist, dass ein Verfolgen der zentralsten Ziele der Universität Wien – Exzellenz in Forschung und Lehre – ebenso zur Steigerung der Beschäftigungsfähigkeit der AbsolventInnen beiträgt. Begründet liegt das darin, dass Steigerungen der Reputation der Universität in Konsequenz auch die ihrer Studierenden und AbsolventInnen erhöht. Zudem verbessert der Erwerb von aktuellem, forschungsbasierten Wissen (professionelle Verzahnung von Theorie und Praxis in Lehre und Forschung) die Chancen der AbsolventInnen, im Arbeitsleben zu reüssieren.

Zugleich ist jedoch auch festzuhalten, dass der Blick auf Inhalte und Gegenstände, die für das Erwerbsleben von Relevanz sein können, bei der Entwicklung der Studienziele und –inhalte noch stärker zu berücksichtigen ist. Lernen im Blick auf aktuelle Herausforderungen zu begreifen, die Verzahnung der Theorieentwicklung mit Fragestellungen des heutigen Lebens voranzutreiben ohne jedoch nur von der tagesaktuellen Verwertbarkeit des Wissens auszugehen, das sind Herausforderungen, denen Universitäten heute zu begegnen haben.

Studienstruktur/Curricula

Employability ist nicht zuletzt ein Anspruch, der die Neuheit von „Bologna“ unterstreicht. So ist ein bloßes Zerteilen der alten Diplomstudien nicht sinnvoll möglich, da auch der Bachelorabschluss Optionen am Arbeitsmarkt ermöglichen sollte. Durch eine flexible, modularisierte Gestaltung der Curricula sowohl im Bachelor- als auch im Masterbereich werden an der Universität Wien die Wahlmöglichkeiten für Studierende erhöht. Ein Überschreiten von Fachgrenzen (z. B. in Form der sog. Erweiterungscurriculas) und die Nutzung von Synergien (z. B. durch gemeinsame Studieneingangsphasen) tragen entscheidend zur Ermöglichung individualisierter Bildungsverläufe bei.

Internationales
Für die Universität Wien als europäische Universität im 21. Jahrhundert ist klar, dass sich das Streben nach einer Erhöhung der Employability nicht auf nationale Arbeitsmärkte beschränken kann. Es ist vielmehr eine Verpflichtung der Universität, ihre AbsolventInnen bestmöglich auf den europäischen bzw. internationalen Arbeitsmarkt vorzubereiten (z. B. Ermöglichung von Auslandsaufenthalten, Ausweitung des fremdsprachigen LV-Angebots).

Zudem setzt die Universität Wien im Bereich der Weiterbildung, sowie an der Schnittstelle zum Arbeitsmarkt aktiv Maßnahmen, welche zu einer Steigerung der Employability ihrer Studierenden und AbsolventInnen beitragen. Als wichtige Maßnahme im Bereich Information und Support hat sich die Etablierung eines Supportkontinuums von der Studienwahl bis zur Arbeitstätigkeit (zur Weiterbildung/zum postgradualen Studium) herausgestellt.

Notwendige Differenzierungen
Die Erhöhung der Employability stellt durchgängig für alle Fächer eine Herausforderung dar, wenngleich in unterschiedlicher Weise. Ein besonderes Anliegen ist der Universität Wien naturgemäß auch die Steigerung der Employability im wissenschaftlichen Bereich selbst z. B. von angehenden NachwuchswissenschafterInnen, sowie bereits beschäftigten WissenschafterInnen.

Bezogen auf die unterschiedlichen Studien ist klar, dass studienspezifisch unterschiedliche Schwerpunkte gesetzt werden müssen – je nach der fachlich bedingten Berufsbezogenheit. Demnach sind zu unterscheiden:
- Studien mit hohem Anteil an beruflicher Fokussierung (z. B. Recht, Lehramt)
- Studien ohne klares Berufsprofil (z. B. Philosophie, Philologien)
- Studien, die vor allem auf eine Karriere in der Wissenschaft bzw. auf Forschungstätigkeit abzielen (z. B. Molekulare Biologie)

Diese Unterschiede müssen auch in die Planung gezielter Maßnahmen einfließen.

Nicht zuletzt bedürfen auch die unterschiedlichen Studienstufen einer differenzierten Herangehensweise. So soll der Bachelor als erster Studienabschluss vor allem gute Chancen am Arbeitsmarkt ermöglichen, wohingegen die Master- und Magisterstudien angehalten sind, Employability sowohl auf den wissenschaftlichen Bereich als auch auf den Arbeitsmarkt hin zu fördern. Hier ist viel Flexibilität gefragt.

Schließlich muss es den Universitäten ein Anliegen sein, ihre NachwuchswissenschafterInnen (Doktorat/PhD) auf Karrieren im internationalen Wissenschaftsumfeld bestmöglich vorzubereiten.

Geteilte Verantwortung
Klar ist, dass Fragen der Employability nicht nur von der Universität behandelt werden können. Vielmehr besteht hier eine geteilte Verantwortung von Studierenden, BildungsträgerInnen und dem Arbeitsmarkt. (Angehende) Studierende und AbsolventInnen müssen ihre Eigenverantwortlichkeit erkennen, ihre Optionen und Chancen wahrnehmen und so ein individuelles Employability-Profil entwickeln. Dabei haben die Universitäten ihre Studierenden bestmöglich zu unterstützen und die Diskussion und Kommunikation an der Schnittstelle zum

Arbeitsmarkt zu intensivieren. Dieser wiederum muss an der (Weiter-)entwicklung seiner Kompetenzanforderungen arbeiten und sie an die Bildungseinrichtungen rückkoppeln.

Literaturhinweis:
Pasternack u. a. 2006: Die Trends der Hochschulbildung und ihre Konsequenzen. Wissenschaftlicher Bericht für das BM für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur der Republik Österreich. Wien: bm:bwk.

7

Austrian Trends

Trends für Österreich

Österreichische
Qualitätssicherungsagentur
Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance

Podiumsdiskussion: Überlegungen zur Weiterentwicklung der Qualitätssicherung im österreichischen Hochschulwesen

Christoph Badelt, Österreichische Universitätenkonferenz,
Samir Al-Mobayyed, Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft,
Friedrich Faulhammer, Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung,
Ferry Stocker, Österreichische Fachhochschulkonferenz,
Heinrich Schmidinger, Vorstandsvorsitzender der AQA,
Gerhard Riemer, Industriellenvereinigung und
Anke Hanft, Leiterin der Wissenschaftlichen Steuerungsgruppe der AQA, Moderation.

Anke Hanft (Wissenschaftliche Steuerungsgruppe der AQA):
Meine Damen und Herren, ich darf die letzte Runde einläuten. Mir haben die verschiedenen Vorträge und Diskussionen viele Anregungen gegeben. Ich konnte dazu lernen und das ist doch das Beste was man von einer Tagung mitnehmen kann.

Wir hatten ein Forum, in dem es um Studierendenbeteiligung in Fragen der Qualitätssicherung ging. Wir beobachten nicht nur hier in Österreich, sondern auch in anderen Ländern, dass wir inzwischen zwar über sehr elaborierte Verfahren der Studierendenbeteiligung z. B. in Form der an vielen Hochschulen systematisch eingeführten Lehrveranstaltungsevaluation verfügen. Wir beobachten aber auch, dass die Beteiligung an Veranstaltungsevaluationen mehr und mehr zurück geht. Selbst bei Veranstaltungen mit 200 Studierenden erhalten wir nicht mehr als fünf oder sechs Reaktionen auf die Evaluation. Wir beobachten auch bei den Audits, dass es zwar generell eine hohe Bereitschaft der Studierenden an der Mitwirkung gibt, dass sich aber die tatsächliche Teilnahme doch sehr beschränkt. Ich würde Sie, Herr Al-Mobayyed, gerne fragen, können Sie Ursachen benennen, weshalb Studierendenbeteiligung zwar angemahnt wird, das Engagement aber mehr und mehr zurück geht?

Samir Al-Mobayyed (Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft):
Als Einstieg möchte ich nur einmal sagen, dass die Studierendenstimme an Universitäten sehr wichtig ist. Deswegen ist es auch wichtig, dass man bei den ganzen Evaluierungen auch Studierende mit einbezieht. Was an dem momentanen Modell zu kritisieren wäre ist, dass die Evaluierungen momentan ohne Konsequenzen bleiben. Es ist nach dem § 14 UG 2002 vorgesehen, dass es diese Evaluierungen gibt, aber nicht was die Konsequenzen sind. Es muss dem Universitätspersonal berichtet werden, es kann andiskutiert werden, aber in Wirklichkeit, wenn die Evaluierung des jeweiligen Professors, der jeweiligen Professorin negativ ausfällt, hat das keinerlei Wirkungen bzw. Konsequenzen. Das ist sicherlich ein Kritikpunkt, wo sich die Studierenden nicht ernst genommen fühlen und das Interesse an solchen Evaluierungen weiter mitzumachen sinkt.

Dann gibt es auch im Absatz 2 des § 14 UG internationale Evaluierungen. Das muss aber auf den Vorschlag des Universitätsrats, Rektorats oder des jeweiligen Ministers, der jeweiligen Ministerin geschehen. Das kommt auch nicht so häufig vor. Aber das Wichtigste an dem Sachverhalt ist, dass das Feedback zu wenig ernst genommen wird. Und deshalb verstehe ich, dass die Studierenden etwas frustriert sind und sagen, der jeweilige Professor, die jeweilige Professorin war in der Lehrveranstaltung katastrophal – und es gibt solche Lehrenden – und wenn ich das dann schreib und der Gesamtbericht fällt negativ aus, weiß ich das nicht einmal, weil die Ergebnisse nicht einmal veröffentlicht werden bzw. dem Studierenden zugänglich sind. Die wissen nicht wie das ausgeht, die wissen nur dieser Professor, diese Professorin hat diesen Ruf. Das belegen dann mehrere Gespräche mit andere Studierenden, dann belegt man diesen Kurs und man macht genau die gleiche Erfahrung. Da passiert überhaupt nichts. Ganz im Gegenteil, ich habe immer das Gefühl, dass die Kollegen und Kolleginnen der Professoren und Professorinnen soweit zusammen halten, dass man sich nicht traut irgendwas zu sagen, weil man dann bei Prüfungen Schlimmeres befürchten muss.

Anke Hanft:
Vielen Dank! Ich denke, wir kommen gleich noch einmal auf dieses Problem zurück. Zunächst möchte ich Herrn Stocker von der Fachhochschulkonferenz (FHK) und Herrn Badelt von der Universitätenkonferenz (UNIKO) eine Frage stellen. Wir haben heute Morgen über Nutzen gesprochen, wir haben gesagt, Qualitätssicherung intern und extern muss stark nutzenorientiert sein. Die Verfahren sollen effektiv sein und zu Ergebnissen führen, die zu einer Verbesserung oder Entwicklung des Systems beitragen. Die Hochschulen leisten auf diesem Gebiet einiges, es bewegt sich also etwas. Meine Frage an Sie beide ist: Was erwarten sich die Hochschulen von einer externen Qualitätssicherung? Werden Qualitätssicherungsagenturen gebraucht und wenn ja, wofür werden sie gebraucht? Was ist aus Ihrer Sicht die Funktion der externen Qualitätssicherungsagenturen?

Ferry Stocker (Österreichische Fachhochschulkonferenz):
Ich glaube, das muss man im Kontext der Entwicklung dieser Hochschulen sehen. Im Kontext der Fachhochschulen, die im Konzert der österreichischen Hochschulen eine relativ junge Einrichtung waren, habe ich persönlich und die Kolleginnen und Kollegen, mit denen ich spreche, die externen Evaluierung als sehr wichtiges Instrument empfunden. Das war die Programmevaluierung oder die institutionelle Evaluierung, das ist etwas worauf ich im Rückblick keinesfalls verzichten möchte. Das hat, wie gesagt, auch mit der Institution, mit dem Entwicklungsstand der Institution zu tun, keine Frage. Es gibt helle Seiten, es gibt dunklere Seiten. Es ist wie bei jedem Qualitätsmanagementsystem und jedem Instrument eine Frage, wie man es tut. Der große Vorteil ist natürlich, man bekommt eine externe Sichtwiese, man hat eine bestimmte, systematische, gesamte Blickrichtung entweder auf einen Studiengang oder auf eine Institution. Hier trifft man dann – und das ist leider ein Prozess der nach Glück oder Zufall läuft, je nachdem wie die Peergruppe zusammengesetzt ist – auf sehr kompetente Gesprächspartner und Gesprächspartnerinnen, die ein verlässliches, abgestütztes Außenbild vermitteln können. Das ist für die Weiterentwicklung unabdingbar und sehr wichtig.

Auf der anderen Seite muss man kritisch betrachten, dass erstens in Folge des starken Wachstums des Sektors und der Notwendigkeit, sehr viele Evaluationen durchzuführen, die Regelungsdichte gestiegen ist. Es haben sehr viele Evaluationen statt gefunden und damit entsteht, das ist auch heute Vormittag immer wieder diskutiert worden, eine Tendenz zur „Routinisierung". Die Gefahr ist, dass man nach bestimmten Checklisten blind irgendetwas abhakt. Auf der einen Seite „pointless; waste of time and energy", auf der anderen Seite war sehr interessant, dass Peter Williams nur im Bezug auf die Programmevaluation gesagt hat, dass im Wesentlichen die Gefahr des „Window-Dressing" besteht. Ich sehe hier keinen grundsätzlichen Unterschied, warum nicht auch bei externen Evaluationen ganze Programme oder Institutionen das Window-Dressing versuchen sollten. Und daher – und das ist immer wieder heute gefallen – die Frage der Qualitätskultur. Da muss man alle Beteiligten mitnehmen, es ist wunderschön was der Kollege von der Studierendenvertretung gesagt hat. Wenn die Erwartung vorhanden ist auf der einen Seite, dass wir, noch dazu in einem anonymen Modus, einen Professor, „eine Professorin abschießen können", dann muss man als seriöse Hochschule diese Erwartung nicht erfüllen. Das ist unmöglich. Auf der anderen Seite gilt es natürlich, die Studenten und Studentinnen als Träger des Prozesses mehr mit hineinzunehmen, ihnen mitzuteilen, welches Instrument wie gehandhabt wird und zu welchen Konsequenzen führt. Man kann ja diese Lehrveranstaltungs-Evaluation, die anonym ist, nicht dazu missbrauchen, dass ein „härterer Typ" eliminiert wird. Das kann nicht sein. Und daher, auf Ihre Frage zurückkommend, selbstverständlich ja zur externen Evaluation, zur externen Blickweise! Und es hängt von zwei Dingen ab: Wie haben sie die Qualitätskultur implementiert im Hause. Da habe ich generelle und spezielle Bedenken, keine Frage, weil ob wir in all unseren Institutionen eine offene Diskurskultur haben, möchte ich einmal in Frage stellen. Gerade eine Hochschule sollte konstitutiv und diskursiv von Infragestellung leben, auch was die Studierenden sagen. Das heißt, es müssen die Leute mittun, die Internen, die Studierenden und die, die evaluieren kommen, mit der Erwartung begrüßt werden, was können wir jetzt lernen. Und das ist die Kultur, die Einstellung und die fehlt, wenn es ein Massenprozess wird. Dann wird es zu einer stupiden Abarbeitung von Checklisten, dann habe ich einen schönen Bericht und dann ist das Qualitätsmanagement, ich habe ein Marketinginstrument, ein Controllinginstrument, ein Feigenblatt. Um noch einen Schritt weiter zu gehen: Und das degeneriert in das, was wir bei den Banken jetzt sehen. Wir haben seit 15 Jahren Risikomanagementsysteme aufgebaut und jetzt hunderte Milliarden Verluste. Das kann nicht sein.

Anke Hanft:
Herr Badelt, Sie haben für Ihre Hochschule ein Quality-Label erworben. Haben Sie damit eine dauerhafte Qualitätskultur implementiert, oder haben Sie Ihre Qualitätsbemühungen mit dem Erreichen des Labels abgeschlossen und gehen nun zum Tagesgeschäft über?

Christoph Badelt (Österreichische Universitätenkonferenz):
Ja ich schließe aus der zweiten Formulierung der Frage, dass Sie mich jetzt gar nicht so sehr als Präsidenten der UNIKO sondern als Rektor der Wirtschaftsuni-

versität apostrophieren, und das wollte ich Sie auch bitten, dass ich in dieser Rolle antworten kann, weil es auch authentischer ist. Sie haben nichts davon, wenn ich Ihnen jetzt theoretische Erkenntnisse referiere. Ich würde gerne ganz aus der Praxis referieren. Die Wirtschaftsuniversität ist die erste und bislang einzige österreichische Universität die international voll akkreditiert ist, von der EFMD, dieses Equis Gütesiegel, das weltweit etwas mehr als 100 Business Schools haben. Das ist schon ein, relativ auf die gesamte Welt bezogen, ziemlich selektives Verfahren. In Deutschland haben es nur zwei. Es geht jetzt nicht um Propaganda, sondern was wir daraus gelernt haben.

Drei Aspekte: Erstens, diese Akkreditierung und das Verfahren dahin war einer der wichtigsten Schübe zur Verbesserung der Wirtschaftsuniversität der letzten Jahre. Es war eine enorme Herausforderung, sich einem sehr umfassenden Kriterienkatalog zu stellen und darauf hinzuarbeiten das zu erfüllen und vor allem die gesamte Universität mit zunehmen. Und zwar die Studierenden genauso wie das Personal im weitesten Sinn des Wortes. Natürlich haben wir uns vorher informiert und eines haben wir gelernt: Das fürchterlichste bei so einem intelligenten Akkreditierungsprozess ist, wenn das Rektorat wunderschöne Papiere produziert und dann kommen die Peers und die sind aber gescheit genug, die waren drei Tage da und haben zwei Mal eine Stunde mit dem Rektorat geredet, und sonst mit mehr als 100 Personen aus dem Haus, die sie bestimmt haben nach der Funktion. Also, die waren nicht so blöd das zu glauben was wir ihnen erzählen, sondern haben sich auch ein umfassendes Bild gemacht. Und das haben wir auch gewusst, und alleine das Jahr der Vorbereitung mit dem Self-Assessment Report, den wir verhandelt haben: Können wir das sagen? Steht die Universität zu diesen Zielen? Alleine schon dieser Prozess, selbst wenn wir nicht erfolgreich gewesen wären, wäre das ganz wichtig gewesen.

Und weil Sie fragen, jetzt haben wir das Siegel, wir haben es für 3 Jahre und wir haben jetzt vorige Woche in einer Rektoratsklausur den nächsten Akkreditierungsprozess im Herbst 2009 beschlossen, dann für hoffentlich fünf Jahre und wir fangen jetzt den nächsten Prozess an. Und was steht da drinnen. Wir haben hier eine Liste von Dingen bekommen, die sie als verbesserungswürdig ansehen und wir checken jetzt: Haben wir das erreicht? Wo haben wir noch Mängel und dergleichen mehr. Das ist ein permanenter Verbesserungsprozess. Also das ist einmal für uns selbst, möchte ich sagen.

Der zweite Aspekt ist die internationale Perspektive. Ich sage Ihnen, dass wir im Grunde genommen, wären wir nicht Mitglied in diesem Club, dann könnten wir international nichts mehr darstellen. Wir bekämen keine guten Partner mehr für Austauschprogramme, schon gar nicht für Joint Degrees und was noch viel wichtiger ist, wir würden international nicht wahrgenommen. Es ist die Akkreditierung zum Beispiel die Voraussetzung dafür, in internationale Rankings hineinzukommen. Sie kommen damit überhaupt erst in die Situation sich international zu präsentieren. Und in Wahrheit überlegen wir im Augenblick, ob wir nicht zwei andere internationale Gütesiegel anstreben. Das ist die so genannte Triple Crown, die sie brauchen, um in allen Aspekten relativ gut zu sein. Da kommt man dann schon auf die andere Seite, weil irgendwann sagen dann meine Faculty Members zu mir, aber eigentlich wollen wir Lehren und Forschen und nicht nur akkreditieren.

Und ein Drittes: Man sollte nicht übersehen, dass diese internationale Akkreditierung massive Konsequenzen für die einzelnen Universitätsangehörigen hat.

Sowohl für die Studierenden und dann Absolvierenden, als auch für die Karriereperspektive der Nachwuchswissenschaftler und Nachwuchswissenschaftlerinnen. Ich kenne Fälle, vorläufig sind es noch einzelne, wo sich WU Absolventen im Ausland beworben haben und die Leute, die die Wirtschaftsuniversität an sich nicht gekannt haben, nur gefragt haben: ist das eine akkreditierte Universität? Eine der Akkreditierungsauflagen war: Ihr seid viel zu wenig international was die Professorenschaft betrifft, denn Deutsche werden nicht als „international" akzeptiert. International sind nur Leute aus einem anderen Sprachraum und Kulturkreis. Da gibt es Nachholbedarf, und wenn wir jetzt aktiv auf die Jagd nach Spitzenpersonen für Professorenstellen gehen, ist es schon vorgekommen, dass die Leute als erstes wissen wollten, ob die Universität akkreditiert ist. Und umgekehrt kenne ich schon zwei Fälle von WU Dozenten, die sich in der USA beworben haben, und zwei haben gesagt, dass sie nur deshalb in die zweite Runde gekommen sind, weil sie von einer akkreditierten Universität kommen. Einer wurde nicht genommen, weil ein anderes, stärker in den USA dominierendes Gütesiegel, das AACSB, weil wir das noch nicht haben.

Was ich damit sagen möchte, in einer Welt der zunehmenden Komplexität und in einer Welt, wo sich Institutionen etablieren können, bei denen die Qualität nicht stimmt, werden solche nach Außen wirksamen Zeichen immer wichtiger, weil sie einfach Informationsverdichtung betreiben. Und deswegen ist es in unser aller höchsten Sinn, und das war sicher der wichtigste Schritt den die Wirtschaftsuniversität in den letzten Jahren gesetzt hat.

Anke Hanft:
Ich habe den Eindruck, Sie auf Ihr Lieblingsthema angesprochen zu haben. Wenn ich dennoch noch einmal auf die Ausgangsfrage zurück kommen darf, geht es Ihnen bei dieser Akkreditierung um erstens die internationale Anerkennung und Reputation oder zweitens darum einen realen Qualitätsentwicklungs- und Verbesserungsprozesse einzuleiten?

Christoph Badelt:
Darf ich noch einen Satz sagen. Ich habe auch Konstellationen gehabt, bei denen mir die Equis Akkreditierung genutzt hat etwas im Haus durchzusetzen, wo vorher die Widerstände zu groß waren. Wie dann die Peers gekommen und dann natürlich sofort die Hand in die Wunde gelegt haben, kann ich jetzt sagen: schauts liebe Leute.

Anke Hanft:
Ich möchte überleiten auf die andere Seite, die der externen Qualitätssicherung, obwohl das in diesem Fall nur bedingt stimmt, denn Herr Schmidinger ist sowohl Rektor, als auch im Vorstand der AQA. Darf ich Sie dennoch bitten, die Position der externen Qualitätssicherung einzunehmen und fragen, worin Sie eigentlich den Nutzen von Qualitätssicherungsagenturen für Hochschulen aus der Perspektive der Agenturen sehen?

Heinrich Schmidinger (Vorstandsvorsitzender der AQA):
Zunächst glaube ich ganz prinzipiell, dass es ohne eine externe Qualitätssicherung nicht gehen kann. Es braucht eine Rechenschaftslegung nach Außen. Natürlich ist es auch – Christoph Badelt hat es gerade gesagt – für eine Hochschule nach Innen wichtig, dass sie sich vor sich selbst rechtfertigt, in den Spiegel schaut. Man kann aber nicht immer nur in den eigenen Spiegel schauen, es muss einem auch von außen einer aufgespannt werden. Und da kommt es wiederum sehr darauf an, was man unter einer externen Evaluierung versteht. Was soll das Ziel davon sein? Da ist es bei uns, in der AQA, das Ziel, die Hochschulen bei ihrer eigenen Qualitätssicherung und –entwicklung zu unterstützen. Das Ziel ist nicht die bloße Beurteilung <das ist gut, das ist schlecht>. Das UG 2002 legt fest: Der ganze tertiäre Bildungssektor habe dafür zu sorgen, dass es eigene qualitätssichernde Systeme in den diversen Hochschuleinrichtungen gibt; genau dem hat die AQA Unterstützung zu bieten, darin sehe ich ihren eigentlichen Wert.

Wenn ich anknüpfen darf an das, was bereits die Vorredner gesagt haben: Natürlich ist es immer wichtig, uns zu fragen und es auch zu verbalisieren, wie es Christoph Badelt getan hat: Was ist wirklich der Nutzen davon? Wir akkreditieren und evaluieren momentan so viel wie noch nie. Eben deshalb immer mehr die Frage: Was bringt uns das? Kommen wir damit voran? Natürlich wollen wir immer mehr Qualität erhalten, trotzdem erscheint es mir wichtig, dass man sich das auch fragt: Welchen Qualitätssprung haben wir bis jetzt wirklich erreicht? Es muss in anderen Worten ein zwischenzeitliches Resümee gezogen werden. Ich habe mich das gerade gestern gefragt. Gestern fand eine Veranstaltung über die Finanzierung der Universitäten statt. Dabei spielten unter anderem die internationalen Rankings, beispielsweise das Shanghai Ranking, eine große Rolle. Sehe ich es richtig, landen die Universitäten im Jahresvergleich plus-minus immer auf den gleichen Rängen. Setze ich dies zur heutigen Tagung in Beziehung, so frage ich mich erneut: Jetzt evaluieren und akkreditieren wir schon so lange Zeit. Wo aber sind wir damit hingekommen? Welcher Effekt resultiert daraus? Ich komme aus einer Universität die sehr viel evaluiert hat. Wir haben alle vier Fakultäten evaluiert, kürzlich auch die Schwerpunktsetzung unserer Universität evaluieren lassen. Insofern stehe ich der Sache durchaus positiv gegenüber.

Das Wertvollste an diesen Prozessen war vor allem der interne Prozess. Es sind besonders Reflexionsschritte eingeleitet worden, die es vorher so nicht gab. Und aus diesen Reflexionsschritten ist wiederum einiges hervor gegangen, das man anders niemals hätte schaffen können. Gleichzeitig besteht auch bei uns die Gefahr, dass zu wenig daraus resultiert, oder dass zumindest die Leute den Eindruck haben, es würde nicht genug daraus resultieren. Kommt es dazu, wird das Ganze irgendwann ins Gegenteil umschlagen – mit der Konsequenz, dass viele Angehörige einer Universität einfach nicht mehr mitspielen. Umso wichtiger, dass man sich auch dies immer wieder sagt und vorhält. Den Nutzen, der heraus kommt, muss man sich verbalisiert vor Augen führen. Darin liegt für mich eine Herausforderung in der nächsten Zeit. Wie können wir den Nutzen dingfest machen, wie können wir ihn messen? Darüber muss eine Diskussion stattfinden.

Anke Hanft:
Vielen Dank! Dann darf ich überleiten zu Herrn Riemer. Ich freue mich, Sie hier als Vertreter der Wirtschaft begrüßen zu dürfen. Sie haben langjährige Erfahrungen in der Nutzung von Qualitätssicherungssystemen, vor allem der Iso-Normierung. Dabei handelt es sich um ein System, das in vielen Unternehmen verbreitet, berühmt und berüchtigt ist. Inzwischen denken auch einige Hochschulen über den Einsatz dieses Verfahrens nach. Wie würden Sie dies vor dem Hintergrund der besonderen Anforderungen im Hochschulsektor beurteilen? Wo wären die Anforderungen, die Sie formulieren würden und zwar konkret mit Blick darauf: Reicht eine interne Qualitätssicherung, oder muss auch eine externe Unterstützung der internen Qualitätsentwicklung erfolgen?

Gerhard Riemer (Industriellenvereinigung):
Es ist nach wie vor klares Ziel der Industriellenvereinigung (IV) den Innovations-Standort Österreich im europäischen Ranking zu verbessern und vom „Innovation Follower" zu einem der „Innovation Leader" zu entwickeln. Dabei spielt auch die Qualität unserer Universitäten und Hochschulen und zwar in Lehre und in Forschung sowie die Qualität unserer Absolventinnen und Absolventen eine sehr wichtige Rolle. Die Industriellenvereinigung hat sich schon vor vielen Jahren für die Qualitätssicherung, eine verbesserte Verlässlichkeit von Bildungs- und Hochschuleinrichtungen eingesetzt und dies u. a. auch als Mitbegründer der FIBAA schon vor Jahren erkannt. Die österreichischen Spitzeneinrichtungen stehen nicht nur im europäischen, sondern im internationalen Wettbewerb und daher ist es wichtig, die eigene Positionierung zu kennen und zu wissen welche Einrichtungen und warum besser sind.

Der FHS Sektor ist den Universitäten was Qualitätssicherung betrifft einen guten Schritt voraus. Der FHS Rat prüft die Zulassung von Studien, Qualitätskontrolle ist vorgeschrieben und bei großen Versäumnissen besteht auch die Möglichkeit Studiengänge zu schließen. Auch wenn ich von den Universitäten immer wieder höre wie viele Studiengänge bereits akkreditiert sind, ist mir der aktuelle Prozentsatz nicht bekannt; gehe davon aus, dass er sich in sehr begrenztem Rahmen bewegt.

Eine überzogene breit angelegt Evaluierung über die ganze Bandbreite der Studien halte ich aber auch nicht für das „Non plus Ultra", Deutschland hat hier sicher etwas über das Ziel geschossen. Den nunmehr diskutierten Weg einer Systemevaluierung halte ich für ein richtiges Unterfangen.

Ich halte die von der Wirtschaftsuniversität – aber auch von anderen Universitäten – begonnenen Equis Überprüfung für extrem wichtig und notwendig, um Qualitätsbewusstsein im internen Prozess stärker zu verankern. Wenn Leistung gemessen wird, beginnt sich jeder mehr zu engagieren, was wiederum zu einer Qualitätsverbesserung führen sollte. Vor allem sollten die Anregungen/die Kritik aus der Studentenschaft ernst genommen werden. Andererseits sind auch die Wirtschaft/die Unternehmen gefordert, den Universitäten Feedback über die Qualität ihrer Absolventinnen und Absolventen und über die Kooperations- und Forschungsqualitäten zu geben. Bei der Erbringung von TOP-Leistungen bzw. -Erfahrungen der Universität für/mit Unternehmen sollte dies auch verstärkt von der Wirtschaft nach außen kommuniziert werde. Damit könnte auch eine stärkere externe Evaluierung unter Einbeziehung der Wirtschaft erreicht werden.

Evaluierung wird aber nur dann zu echten Verbesserungsprozessen führen, wenn die Ergebnisse entsprechende Auswirkungen haben: z. B.: in Form von besonderer Anerkennung, von fringe benefits oder in der Zuteilung zusätzlicher verfügbaren Budgets.

Wie wichtig Top-Leistung und Qualität in Wissenschaft und Forschung ist, zeigt sich auch bei den in Österreich angesiedelten „Leading Competence Units". 103 Leitbetriebe investieren ca. 33% in F&E und beschäftigen ca. 30 bis 50% der wirtschaftsnahen AbsolventInnen. Wenn es nicht gelingt besser zu werden bzw. zumindest zu bleiben (beim Nachwuchs an Naturwissenschaftern und Naturwissenschafterinnen, Technikern und in den Forschungsleistungen etc.) könnte es sein, das internationale Unternehmen (ob Headquarter oder Niederlassung) ihr Engagement in Österreich überdenken. Ich kann nur betonen, dass enge, gut funktionierende Kooperationen mit Universitäten entscheidende Faktoren für Unternehmen und damit für den Standort sind.

Anke Hanft:
Danke! Herr Sektionschef Faulhammer, es sind einige Dinge gesagt worden, die an die Politik adressiert waren. Zum Beispiel, dass die österreichischen Hochschulen, was Qualitätssicherung anbelangt, im Vergleich zu den deutschen Hochschulen untersteuert seien. Dies berührt auch die Rolle der AQA, was zum Beispiel darin sichtbar wird, dass Sie auf einem Präsentations-Slide mit einem Fragezeichen versehen war. Von außen betrachten gibt es bezüglich der Qualitätssicherung zwei Wahrnehmungen. Die eine ist, dass in Österreich, zumindest was die öffentlichen Universitäten anbelangt, im Vergleich zu anderen Ländern, wenig passiert, wenig verpflichtendes passiert und dass zum Anderen dieses System, das in Österreich vorhanden ist, wenig transparent ist. Sie wissen das und Sie haben sich von Seiten des Ministeriums auch Gedanken gemacht wie man das verändern könnte. Vielleicht können Sie ein paar Grundlinien skizzieren, wie ein neues System aussehen könnte?

Friedrich Faulhammer (Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung):
Das mit der Untersteuerung ist ja ein interessantes Bild. Da ist mir zunächst das Autofahren eingefallen, da heißt es ein Auto untersteuert und in der Kurve könnte das Konsequenzen haben. Die Beobachtung, dass die österreichischen Universitäten untersteuert seien, in Bezug auf die Qualitätssicherung, kommt insofern nicht überraschend, als seit dem UG 2002 in der Ausprägung der ersten Leistungsvereinbarungsperiode die Unis generell untersteuert sind. Das ist gar kein Befund, den wir im Ministerium gemacht haben, sondern das ist etwas, das uns vom Wissenschaftsrat, vom Rat für Forschungs- und Technologieentwicklung und auch von vielen Rektoren bei der Aufarbeitung der Erfahrungen mit dieser ersten Leistungsvereinbarungsrunde gesagt wird. . Sie haben zwar nicht das Wort Untersteuerung verwendet, aber sie haben gesagt, dass sie sich schon erwartet hätten, dass das Ministerium stärker sagt, was es von uns will. Wir waren also in dieser ersten Runde sehr rezeptiv und sehr konsensorientiert, weil für uns auch klar war, dass diese erste Runde der Leistungsvereinbarungen eine Lernrunde ist. Auch eine Lernrunde und eine Implementierungsrunde bei der Qualitätssiche-

rung. Das UG 2002 hatte erstmals festgelegt, dass die Universitäten ein flächendeckendes Qualitätsmanagementsystem zu entwickeln haben. Und zum damaligen Zeitpunkt war das keineswegs so, dass alle Universitäten schon eines hatten, oder überhaupt Vorstellungen darüber entwickelt waren. In der Zwischenzeit wissen wir, und das ist auch in jeder Leistungsvereinbarung enthalten, dass dieser Prozess der Qualitätsmanagemententwicklung stattzufinden hat, vereinbart wurde und auch tatsächlich stattfindet. Wir können das in den jährlichen Berichten nachlesen, dass hier vieles auf dem Weg ist und ich konnte ja bei der Begrüßung darauf hinweisen, dass auch einige Universitäten bei dem AQA-Pilot „Quality Audit“ mitmachen. Dem Befund oder der Beobachtung, dass die österreichischen Universitäten untersteuert sind, würde ich gar nicht widersprechen und wir sind in der Vorbereitung, hier und generell stärker steuernd einzugreifen. Dass die Kollegen und Kolleginnen aus dem Ausland vielfach nicht verstehen was da abgeht, weil es da einen Akkreditierungsrat und einen Fachhochschulrat und die AQA gibt. Auch die Pädagogischen Hochschulen haben wieder eine andere Form der Qualitätssicherung. Das beunruhigt mich insofern nicht sehr, weil wir es gewöhnt sind, dass das schwer verstanden wird. Wenn ich denke, wenn ich mit deutschen Kollegen und Kolleginnen zusammenkomme und ihnen beschreibe, dass die österreichischen Fachhochschulen nicht vom Staat eingerichtet, sondern privatrechtliche Anbieter sind, die akkreditiert werden, löst das immer noch, obwohl es das System seit nun 14 Jahren gibt, großes Erstaunen aus. Also insofern ist da auch die Lernwilligkeit und die Offenheit, sich mit unterschiedlichen Systemen zu beschäftigen, nicht extrem ausgeprägt. Die AQA ist eine Einrichtung, die sehr bewusst nicht als Akkreditierungseinrichtung geschaffen wurde, und wo wir jetzt gemeinsam überlegen, wie wir im Universitätsbereich im engeren Sinn ein externes Qualitätssicherungssystem entwickeln können, das auch den europäischen Erfordernissen entspricht.

Rektor Badelt hat zum Nutzen gesagt, dass die Wirtschaftsuniversität die einzige Universität Österreichs ist, die das hat und übrigens in Deutschland gibt’s auch nur zwei. Und zweitens geht es um die Verbesserungspotentiale. Also da ist natürlich auch sehr stark dieser Marketingaspekt enthalten. Die EFMD gibt es nicht in allen Bereichen, nicht in allen Fachbereichen und auch nicht für alle Universitäten als ganzes. Ich werde für die Universität Wien nicht eine Akkreditierungseinrichtung international etabliert finden, die die ganze Universität Wien mit einem schönen Siegel oder einer Krone versehen kann, das wird nicht gehen. Daher meinen wir, dass wir darüber nachdenken sollten, dass wir eine österreichische Qualitätssicherungseinrichtung entwickeln, die den gesamten tertiären Bereich übersieht. In dieser soll es auch ein Zusammenwirken, wie auch immer, der bisherigen Qualitätssicherer geben (Fachhochschulrat, AQA, Akkreditierungsrat), wo gemeinsame Standards entwickelt werden, und gemeinsame Standards die für alle Hochschulbereiche inklusive Pädagogische Hochschulen dann in Österreich zur Anwendung kommen können.

Dass es externe Qualitätssicherung geben soll, da sind wir uns einig. Ich glaube niemand hat hier widersprochen, die Diskussion findet vielmehr darüber statt, ob es notwendig ist, solch eine Einrichtung in Österreich zu haben. Da meinen wir, dass es sehr wohl sinnvoll und notwendig ist, weil eigentlich nicht einsehbar ist, dass Österreich als EU-Mitgliedsland überhaupt keine Qualitätssicherungseinrichtung für den tertiären Sektor entwickelt. Zumal wir schon Einrichtungen haben, wir haben Ressourcen, wir haben Know-how in dem Bereich und daher ist es sehr sinnvoll, eine solche gemeinsame Einrichtung zu schaffen, die dann durch die Sicherung von Mindeststandards im Hochschulbereich auch für die entsprechende Transparenz sorgen kann.

Das ist ein zweiter Aspekt den ich hier gerne einbringen möchte, denn auch im Fachhochschulrat und auch im Akkreditierungsrat, in den Verfahren geht es nicht so sehr darum zu schauen, ob ich an der 1., 5. oder 10. Stelle im Ranking bin, sondern sichergestellt ist, dass unsere Hochschulen zumindest den europäischen Standards entsprechen. Und ob die übererfüllt werden oder nicht, ist eine zweite Frage. Aber es sollte sichergestellt sein, dass alle Hochschuleinrichtungen, die bei uns Angebote auf dem Markt haben, diese Mindeststandards erfüllen. Diese Einrichtung könnte sich dann auch registrieren lassen bei dem neuen jetzt gerade in die Gänge kommenden Europäischen Register für Qualitätssicherungseinrichtungen. Insofern war der Beitritt der AQA zur ENQA nur der erste Schritt, denn der kommende, viel wichtigere Schritt ist, dass die österreichischen Qualitätssicherungseinrichtungen auch in das europäische Register eingetragen sind. Denn nur dann ist sichergestellt, dass auch im europäischen Kontext diese Einrichtung anerkannt wird.

Christoph Badelt:
Also ich will mich hier als Wirtschaftwissenschaftler nicht unbedingt auf eine Technikdiskussion einlassen, aber ich versuch es jetzt einmal, wenn der Jurist Faulhammer ein technisches Bespiel bringt. Ich würde gern das technische Beispiel mit der Unter- und Übersteuerung der Autos in der Kurve weiterführen. Es ist schon klar, es gibt eine Untersteuerung, das ist dann, wenn ein Auto irgendwo dahin schlingert und nur nach dem Gelände dahin rollt. Das ist wahrscheinlich für niemanden gut. Es gibt aber auch so etwas wie eine Übersteuerung. Das Bild bestünde darin, wenn irgendeiner glaubt, dass man Autos so lenken kann, wie man vielleicht U-Bahnen lenken kann, die keinen Fahrer haben. Da sitzt irgendwo ein Computer und glaubt, er kann jetzt alle Unis in eine bestimmte Richtung bringen. Ich weiß schon, Sie, Herr Faulhammer, haben es nicht gesagt, aber was der Sinn meines Beispieles ist, wenn wir die Autonomie ernst nehmen, und ich glaube, dass sich die Autonomie bewährt hat. Die Autonomie der österreichischen Universitäten hat den größten Qualitätsschub für die österreichischen Universitäten gebracht, den es seit Jahrzehnten gegeben hat. Wenn wir die Autonomie ernst nehmen, dann muss natürlich auch die Aufgabe der Qualitätssicherung in die Autonomie der Universitäten übertragen werden und nicht zentral gesteuert werden. Ich habe natürlich jetzt die Sorge, dass gerade aus punktuellen Beobachtungen, es ist irgendwie alles sehr undurchsichtig, das Pendel in die andere Richtung schwingt, dass man eine zentrale Vorgabe macht. Ich würde daher im besten Sinne des Wortes sagen, was wir brauchen ist die Verpflichtung, die durchaus konkreter formuliert werden kann als das im jetzigen UG steht, dass alle Einrichtungen des tertiären Bildungssystems die Verpflichtung haben, sich einer international validen Akkreditierung zu unterwerfen. Das sollte meiner Meinung nach passieren. Ich warne aber vor einer Einheitsakkreditierung, und auch hier will ich wieder sagen, ich will sehr vorsichtig sein, Sie, Herr Faulhammer, haben nicht eine Einheitsakkreditierung genannt, aber etwas hat mich schon ein bisschen nachdenklich gemacht. Es ist natürlich völlig richtig, EFMD gibt es für Business Schools und nicht für Volluniversitäten. Es wird wahrscheinlich über-

haupt nichts Vergleichbares für Volluniversitäten geben. Nur eines muss ich schon sagen: Niemand zwingt die österreichischen Volluniversitäten ihre wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Fakultäten nicht einer EFMD Akkreditierung zu unterziehen. Und von den genannten 110 Business Schools, das war nur eine sprachliche Verkürzung, sind die Mehrheit wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Fakultäten und nicht selbständige Universitäten. Das ist zunächst einmal möglich und das wird auch für andere Fachbereiche möglich sein, es gibt ja nicht nur in den Wirtschaftswissenschaften international akkreditierte Systeme. In Mannheim ist zum Beispiel die Mannheim Business School EFMD akkreditiert und nicht die gesamte Universität Mannheim. Ich glaube, wohin wir gehen müssen, ist die Verpflichtung nach Standards, und da haben wir ja jetzt auf der europäischen Ebene die Orientierungsgrößen, solche Akkreditierungen anzustreben. Aber was anderes ist es, und da wurde auch viel Missverständliches gesagt, die Sicherung von Minimalstandards zu betreiben. Die Sicherung von Minimalstandards, die soll meiner Meinung nach sinnvoller Weise national passieren, vor allem weil es hier auch um Lizenzierungen geht. Aber ich warne davor, die darüber hinaus gehende Qualitätssicherung national zu organisieren, wenn wir in einem Land leben, das so groß ist wie eine chinesische Kleinstadt. Also ich muss Ihnen wirklich sagen, was habe ich von einer nationalen Akkreditierung? Wirklich nichts. Ich muss mich international orientieren. Die Geschichte meiner Universität war, die Universität war 90 Jahre stolz darauf die Nummer eins in Österreich zu sein. Jetzt sind wir 110 Jahre alt und was heißt es die Nummer eins in Österreich zu sein. Das ist heute kein relevantes Kriterium mehr.

Anke Hanft:
Eine Nachfrage: Wozu brauchen wir denn national finanzierte und organisierte Akkreditierungsagenturen?

Christoph Badelt:
Ich würde soweit gehen – und das ist ja durchaus das Selbstverständnis der AQA – wenn die AQA als einziges Ziel hätte die österreichischen Universitäten und Fachhochschulen in Hinblick auf die Qualitätssicherung zu betreuen, dann wäre das ein edles Ziel. Da ist auch viel passiert, aber als Zertifikatsgeber, wäre das ein zu geringer Anspruch von der AQA. Das ist auch der Grund warum sie sich bei der ENQA registrieren lassen haben. Als Vertreter der UNIKO kann ich das ja sagen, ist die AQA auch ein Stück unsere Organisation, das ist ja auch der Sinn, wenn man sich bei der ENQA eintragen lässt, damit man dann auch international mitspielt. Denn der Sinn eines solchen internationalen Systems ist ja, dass es auch konkurrenzierende Akkreditierungseinrichtungen gibt. Und zwar nicht nur konkurrenzierend im Sinne von gegeneinander antretend, sondern ganz legitim, dass die einen mehr Schwerpunkt auf das und die anderen mehr Schwerpunkt auf etwas anderes legen. Und solange das transparent ist, kann das für den Nutzer sogar sehr gut sein.

Gerhard Riemer:
Es reicht nicht, wenn die Wirtschaftsuniversität so ein Zertifikat hat, entscheidend ist vielmehr, wie gut die einzelnen Bereiche sind. Wichtig ist, dass sich die Universität einer Akkreditierung unterzogen hat und einen Akkreditierungsnachweis dafür erhält. Wir benötigen in Österreich eine Akkreditierungseinrichtung die sich weniger auf Qualitätskontrolle, sondern vielmehr auf ein Qualitäts-Coaching – wie erreiche ich gewisse Ziele im internationalen Vergleich – konzentriert und das für den gesamten tertiären Sektor, auch für die Pädagogischen Hochschulen. Ich warne jedoch davor eine Monsterorganisation mit eigener Bürokratie aufzubauen. Vielmehr sollte es eine kleine, schlagkräftige Organisation sein, die sich der Expertise internationaler Fachleute und Einrichtungen bedient und diese nach österreichischem Recht anwendet. Trotz guter Arbeit finde ich die Zusammensetzung des jetzigen Akkreditierungsrats verbesserungswürdig. Hier entscheiden zwar international renommierte Professoren über Wirtschaftswissenschaft, aber die Abnehmer, die Kunden sind – wie etwa in anderen Ländern – in diese Entscheidungsfindung nicht eingebunden. Die Akkreditierungsverfahren sollten auch die Meinungen jener beinhalten, die die Forschungsergebnisse in der Praxis nutzen und umsetzen. Wichtig erscheint mir die Einbindung internationaler Expertisen. Hier wirken ja in der AQA, im Akkreditierungsrat und Wissenschaftsrat genügend Persönlichkeiten mit. Lassen sie mich nochmals betonen wie wichtig es ist, dass Evaluierungsergebnisse oder positive Rankings auch zu Konsequenzen, z. B. im Rahmen der Leistungsvereinbarungen führen müssen, um langfristig wirksam zu sein.

Bei Einführung des UG 2002 war die Autonomie der Universitäten, die strategische Steuerung, der Rektor/das Rektorat als Manager eine ganz entscheidende Forderung. Es ist dazu im Rahmen der Möglichkeiten bereits relativ viel gelungen. Ein Fehler wäre es jedoch und war so auch nicht gedacht, den Prozess, das Beachten der Stärken und der Entwicklung der Universitäten im internationalen Wettbewerb, weitgehend autonom abzuwickeln. Die Schwierigkeit liegt vor allem darin mit begrenzten Mitteln eine hochschulpolitische Steuerung zwischen Universitäten, Fachhochschulen und Pädagogischen zu erreichen und die vorhandenen Mittel optimal einzusetzen. Diese gesamtösterreichische Steuerung muss Aufgabe des Ressorts sein. Wo die Grenzen der Autonomie bzw. die Grenzen der strategischen Steuerung durch das Ressort liegen, werden in den künftigen Diskussionen geklärt werden müssen. Eine Schwächung oder sogar Rücknahme der bisher gut gelungenen Autonomieprozesse der Universitäten fände ich jedoch extrem schade und gefährlich.

Samir Al-Mobayyed:
Etwas zu den internationalen Evaluierungen. Da bin ich voll und ganz bei meinen Vorrednern. Vor allem im Sinne des Bologna-Umstiegs ist das sehr wichtig. Es wird immer wichtiger, die Ausbildung in Europa zu vereinheitlichen, dass man die Qualität steigert und sichergestellt, dass die zukünftigen Akademiker und Akademikerinnen in der Berufwelt Aufstiegschancen haben und auch international angesehen sind. Wo ich ein bisschen differenzierterer Ansicht bin, ist die Evaluierung intern, innerhalb von Österreich an den einzelnen Hochschulen. Ich weiß nicht, ob es so sinnvoll ist für alle Hochschulen gemeinsam ein eigenes Modell zu kreieren, weil doch jede Hochschule ihre eigenen Besonderheiten hat und man

die Ausbildungen nicht in einen Topf schmeißen kann. Nicht qualitativ, sondern die Herangehensweise eine andere ist. Es fehlt nach wie vor an einem eigenen Modell, damit wir uns nicht wegbewegen vom ursprünglichen Problem, dass Evaluierungen keine Konsequenzen haben. Da denken wir natürlich als Studierende nicht, wie man einen Professor, eine Professorin abschießen kann, sondern es muss einfach ein Druckmittel her, wie man so etwas in Zukunft abstellen kann. Und da bringt es überhaupt nichts, wenn man diese Kompetenz bei den einzelnen Universitäten belässt, weil da ist einfach der Zusammenhalt unter den Professoren und Professorinnen natürlich dementsprechend stärker und die stellen sich natürlich dann immer auf die Seite des jeweiligen Kollegen, der jeweiligen Kollegin. Es gehört einfach eine Evaluierungskompetenz her, von extern, sprich nicht von der eigenen Universität, die das im Auftrag der Universität macht, weil da dann die Anonymität gesichert ist, und da hat man dann auch weniger „Skrupel" den jeweiligen Professor, die jeweilige Professorin auf die Schwachstellen anzusprechen. Die internationalen Evaluierungen beheben meiner Meinung nach dieses Problem nicht.

Friedrich Faulhammer:
Bei den Diskussionen mit Universitäten ist es immer so: Wenn zunächst der Hinweis kommt, wir steuern zu wenig, und wir dann sagen, wir müssen überlegen, wie wir besser steuern, ist die Autonomie schon wieder am Ende. Dabei ist es relativ einfach: Die Autonomie wird dadurch definiert, inwieweit der Rahmen für autonome Entscheidungen gesetzt wird und der ist ja in der Tat vom Gesetz her ziemlich offen. Der wird ausgestaltet durch die Leistungsvereinbarungen. Niemand hindert den Bund daran, schon jetzt Leistungsvereinbarungen zu verhandeln, die einen deutlich geringeren Gestaltungsspielraum ermöglichen, als das bei den jetzigen Leistungsvereinbarungen der Fall ist. Da bräuchte man gar nicht das Gesetz ändern. Das zweite ist die Einheitsakkreditierung. Ich habe nie von Einheitsakkreditierung gesprochen. Ich von meiner Seite würde einem Minister sicher nicht empfehlen, ein gemeinsames System so zu gestalten, dass dann alle österreichischen Hochschulen nur zu dieser Einrichtung gehen dürfen und sonst zu niemanden. Umgekehrt halte ich es auch für einen Eingriff in die Autonomie von Institutionen, wenn man sagt, dass sich alle international anschauen lassen müssen. Ich sehe das auch nicht als unbedingte Notwendigkeit. Da würde ich sagen, das ist autonome Positionierung. Wo möchte ich mich gerne ansiedeln, möchte ich mich in der Top-League ansiedeln, oder reicht es mir, wenn ich gewisse Mindeststandards erfülle. Also da wäre ich viel offener. Das ist eine autonome Entscheidung der Institution und darum plädiere ich auch eher für eine externe Qualitätssicherung, dass wir sagen können: Ja die Einrichtung in Österreich erfüllt die European Standards and Guidelines. Nicht mehr und nicht weniger. Wenn eine Universität sagt, ich möchte aber viel besser sein, dann ist das hervorragend. Aber ich glaube nicht, dass das etwas ist, was im Sinne einer Einheitsakkreditierung allen vorzuschreiben ist. Und noch einmal, ich glaube, dass es für die Hochschullandschaft, damit meine ich alle, Universitäten, Fachhochschulen, Privatuniversitäten und Pädagogische Hochschulen, sinnvoll und notwendig ist eine solche Einrichtung zu haben, die im Land angeboten wird. Den Vergleich mit der chinesischen Kleinstadt kann man auch weiterziehen und sagen: Warum hat man denn so viele Hochschulen und Unis in diesem Land? Weil da würde auch

eine reichen. Das würde ich nicht als Argument dafür gelten lassen, keine Einrichtung für externe Qualitätssicherung in Österreich anzubieten.

Christian Brünner (Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz):
Die erste Wortmeldung von Herrn Kollegen Badelt reizt mich zu folgendem Statement. Es ist vollkommen ok, wenn die Wirtschaftsuniversität sagt, dass sie zwei weitere Labels machen möchte, damit sie sich im elitären Club, im „goldenen Club" befindet. Das ist vollkommen ok, wenn die Universität von Helsinki in der vorhergehenden Arbeitsgruppe sagt, dass sie die beste Universität der Welt sein möchte. In meiner Zeit als Vorsitzender der Rektorenkonferenz hatten wir einmal eine halbe Plenarsitzung lang Argumente diskutiert, warum Österreich keine Nobelpreisträger und Nobelpreisträgerinnen im wissenschaftlichen Bereich produziert. Ist vollkommen ok. Blühende Bäume brauchen aber auch einen gesunden Wald. Ich möchte Ihre Aufmerksamkeit jetzt auf eine Sicht von der Gesamtebene her lenken.

Es geht nicht nur um die Qualität der einzelnen Institution, ob sie fit ist ihre jeweils autonom definierten „purposes" zu erfüllen. Sondern es geht auch um die Diskussion, ob das Gesamtsystem, Bildungssystem, Forschungssystem fit ist, um die Bedürfnisse der Gesellschaft zu befriedigen. Und da gestatten Sie mir ein paar Federstriche. Mobilisiert das System alle Bildungsreserven, welche Art auch immer? Ist das Gesamtsystem im Stande, alle Niveaus, nicht nur die kleine Spitze „Goldener Club" zu bedienen? Ist das System im Stande alle sozioökonomischen oder „Gender Bias" hintan zu halten? Ist es im Stande die regionalen Bedürfnisse zu befriedigen? Ich bin sehr für Internationalisierung und für Internationalität, aber die Regionen haben auch Bedürfnisse und das war der Grund warum regionale Universitäten gegründet wurden und wieso eins der Ziele des Fachhochschulgesetzes war die Einrichtung höherer Bildung zu regionalisieren. Es ist ok, wenn Mainstreams, ganz gleich ob Employability oder im Fachbereich usw. bedient werden. Aber es gibt auch Orchideen die leben wollen. Und es ist auch notwendig, dass dieses System genug Raum für kritische Reflektion, für die Produktion kritischen Potenzials schafft. Wir reden vom Bildungssystem, aber nicht mehr von Bildung. Was sind die Bilder nach denen wir bilden? Gibt es eine entsprechende Diskussion an den Universitäten? Ich habe an meiner Fakultät nie erlebt, was Bildung bei einer juristischen Ausbildung bedeutet. Also das Gesamtsystem schaut, und muss auch schauen, nicht nur nach der Qualität der einzelnen Institution, sondern nach der Qualität des Gesamtsystems. Es könnte die einzelne Universität sagen: Ok, das sollen sie nur tun. Ich will trotzdem in den „Goldenen Club". Das hat aber bei einer Reflektion des Gesamtsystems Auswirkungen auf die Ressourcenallokation. Wir brauchen eben noch Ressourcen, um all diese anderen Aspekte, Niveaus, Fachdisziplinen etc. zu bedienen. Mit anderen Worten, wir brauchen blühende Bäume, keine Frage, aber wir brauchen auch den gesunden Wald. Wenn es auch primär darum geht, dass die Institutionen höherer Bildung zunächst ihre autonom definierten „purposes" höchst qualitativ erfüllen wollen, so meine ich, dass jede einzelne Institution auch die Pflicht hat nachzudenken, ob sie zur Qualität des Gesamtsystems beiträgt. Ich bitte um Entschuldigung, aus Angst, dass es nicht unmittelbar mit der externen Qualitätssicherung einer Institution zu tun hat, aber es war mir wichtig darauf hinzuweisen, denn es geht auch um die Qualität des gesamten Bildungs- und Forschungssystems.

Claudia-Maria Wolf (Leopold Franzens Universität Innsbruck):
Meine Frage ist eher eine konkrete. Eine die ich seit zwei Jahren immer wieder versuche einzubringen und die Antworten zu sammeln. Wir reden von Akkreditierung, von Über- und Untersteuerung und kommen doch immer wieder aus der Ecke, dass wir sagen, es gibt im UG eine Vorschrift für die Universitäten, eine gesetzliche Verpflichtung, ein Qualitätsmanagement-System aufzubauen. Was aber in der Praxis vor Ort, wenn man Qualitätssicherung an Universitäten betreiben muss, für mich sich als Aufgabe stellt ist herauszufinden, wie wird das Ministerium beurteilen, ob wir es geschafft haben dieses QM-System aufzubauen. Da ist der Knackpunkt bei diesen Diskussionen, die dann immer so klingen, als wären sie abstrakt, weil wir keine zwangsweise Akkreditierung von Universitäten usw. haben. Nur wenn es die gesetzliche Verpflichtung gibt, gehe ich davon aus, dass Sie irgendwann entscheiden werden, ob die Universitäten die Verpflichtung erfüllen. Und dann geht es in meinen Augen um so etwas wie Fairness, das offen zu legen, und es geht eigentlich in meinen Augen gleichzeitig um die Verpflichtung, das man sagt: Hier führen wir die Verpflichtung ein und dann sagen wir auch gleichzeitig, wie wir diese Verpflichtung überprüfen werden, weil es fair ist und eine Chance darstellt. Das sehen sehr viele Kollegen und Kolleginnen, die an den Universitäten in der Qualitätssicherung arbeiten, sehr anders, weil man sich den Freiraum der Gestaltung ja offen halten will. Aber es führt nichts an der Problematik vorbei, wenn Sie uns dazu verpflichten, müssen wir damit rechnen, dass Sie uns irgendwann an dieser Verpflichtung fest machen und dann nach irgendwelchen Kriterien, die wir nicht gekannt haben sagen, aber ihr erfüllt diese nicht. Ich will jetzt nicht unterstellen, dass das bereits passiert, aber es steht dann doch im Raum, dass man sich dem näheren will. Woran werden Sie es denn festmachen und in den letzten Jahren wird immer mehr in den Vorträgen bei verschiedenen Tagungen ausgeführt, wie schwierig es ist zu beurteilen, ob ein System ein System ist und wie schwierig es ist für die ganze Universität, für alle Leistungsbereiche usw. Da fehlen für mich rein vor Ort, als Qualitätsarbeiterin, die Statements des Ministeriums. Wie man denn das immer wieder zusammenfasst, was aus den Diskussionen dann immer wieder als Wissen generiert wird und was es für Sie im Ministerium heißt, auf welchen Punkt Sie es bringen werden und wie Sie uns messen werden irgendwann.

Andreas Raggautz (Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz):
Auch von mir aus universitätsinterner Sicht Anmerkungen zu drei Schlagworten, die gefallen sind. Erstens, für die Universität Graz gesprochen, die Einbeziehung Externer in der Curriculumsentwicklung. Wir haben mittlerweile einen Großteil, zukünftig alle neuen Studienprogramme, einer intern organisierten externen Peer Begutachtung unterworfen. Das geht von „Alter Geschichte" bis „Betriebswirtschaft". Allerdings eine kleine kritische Anmerkung: Wir haben fortgesetzt was im alten Universitätsorganisationsgesetz vorgesehen war, dass bei der Entwicklung neuer Studienpläne auch Arbeitgeber, Arbeitgeberinnen und Arbeitnehmer, Arbeitnehmerinnen, Interessenvertretungen in die Begutachtung einzubeziehen sind. Die Rücklaufquote und Stellungnahmen, egal aus welchem Berufsfeld, zu konkreten Studienprogrammen ist enden wollend und sehr gering. Die Forderung geben wir auch gerne zurück. Wo Universitäten, zumindest die Universität Graz, aktiv auf diese zugehen, kommt wenig Feedback zurück.

Zweitens, Akkreditierung – Auditierung. Das österreichische Hochschulsystem hat mit dem UG 2002, zumindest im deutschsprachigen Raum den Ruf erworben, sehr progressive, neue Wege im Hochschulmanagement, in der Hochschulsteuerung zu bestreiten. Mein Appell, den progressiven Entwurf der AQA, nämlich ein Audit zu machen, nicht Akkreditierung zu machen, auch im Qualitätsmanagement insgesamt weiter zu verfolgen. Den nächsten Schritt, zu machen, nicht mehr das zu machen was „en vogue" ist, Akkreditierungen sondern das was kommt, Auditierung.

Mein dritter Punkt, anknüpfend an das was der Herr Al-Mobayyed gesagt hat, nämlich Konsequenzen. Vollkommen d'accord, es muss Konsequenzen aus Evaluierungen geben. Aber nicht nur im Internen sondern auch im Externen. Verzeihen Sie mir doch einen Seitenhieb auf den heutigen Tag. Wenn wir im Rahmen von Evaluierungen von außen, von Peers festgehalten bekommen, dass das Betreuungsverhältnis – welches, wenn ich mich nicht täusche, sogar bei der Equis-Akkreditierung der Wirtschaftsuniversität als ein kritischer Punkt gesehen wurde –, dass das was österreichische Universitäten unter den Betreuungsverhältnissen leisten müssen, als Ergebnis da steht, es aber politisch nicht möglich ist, daraus Konsequenzen zu ziehen, um die Qualität zu verbessern, muss auch an dieser Schraube aus Qualitätssicht unbedingt gedreht werden.

Achim Hopbach (German Accreditation Council):
Herzlichen Dank, dass ich einen kurzen Kommentar aus Sicht eines Nichtösterreichers abgeben kann. Was mir gar nicht schwer fällt, denn die Debatte ähnelt sehr den Fragen und Antworten, die wir in Deutschland auch haben. An einem Punkt ist es mir aufgefallen, dass sie sogar fast identisch ist. Die Frage: Qualitätssicherung in einem nationalen oder internationalen Kontext zu betreiben. Die Frage ist in Deutschland auch sehr häufig debattiert worden und ich bin immer wieder überrascht, wie im Grunde genommen leichtfertig der Wert einer Qualitätssicherung im nationalen Kontext klein gemacht wird. Es wird sehr häufig gegenübergestellt nationale Qualitätssicherung für Mindeststandards und internationale Qualitätssicherung für Exzellenzstandards. In der Tat ist die Entwicklung auf europäischer Ebene eine ganz andere. Die nationalen Qualitätssicherungssysteme, die in den nationalen Systemen durchgeführten Qualitätssicherungsverfahren ähneln sich, was die prinzipiellen Standards angeht, immer mehr. Dennoch werden wir, das hat eine aktuelle Untersuchung von ENQA gezeigt, nicht zu dem europäischen Qualitätssicherungssystem gelangen. Der nationale Kontext, die nationale Kultur, die nationalen Rechtssysteme spielen eine extrem wichtige Rolle. Deshalb muss das Streben eher sein, die nationale Qualitätssicherung auf ein Niveau zu heben, dass die Nachbarländer neidisch schauen. Das muss das Ziel sein. Rektor Badelt hat ein gutes Beispiel, angeführt. Die Equis-Akkreditierung ist als Marketinginstrument nach außen sehr wichtig. Die AACSB ist noch ein Pluspunkt. Heißt das nun aber, dass die Wirtschaftsuniversität durch dieses zweite Label noch besser geworden ist? Nein! Denn was Equis unter hoher Qualität versteht ist ja nicht das Gleiche was AACSB versteht. Wir haben hier konkurrierende Labels, die mit etwas unterschiedlichen Standards arbeiten und darauf hoffen, dass sich nur das eigene Label durchsetzen wird. Das heißt auch nicht automatisch, dass andere Qualitätssicherungsverfahren, die nationalen Traditionen verhaftet sind, überhaupt nicht dieses Niveau erreichen können. Ich denke,

dass die nationalen, dass die Hochschulen und die ganzen Akteure in der Hochschulpolitik hier im nationalen Kontext, wesentlich selbstbewusster auftreten sollten. Weil wir hier inzwischen soweit sind, dass Qualitätssicherung auf europäische Ebene nach gemeinsamen Standards durchgeführt wird. An diesen Standards müssen wir uns orientieren, das ist selbstverständlich für alle. Und dann im jeweiligen nationalen Kontext, in dem Rechtsrahmen, den wir haben, die Qualitätssicherung so qualitativ hochwertig wie möglich zu gestalten, damit die Nachbarn schauen und sagen: Schaut nach Österreich, nach Deutschland. Wenn dort eine Hochschule, ein Studiengang durch ein Verfahren der Qualitätssicherung gegangen ist. Hut ab, das ist auf sehr hohem Niveau und muss sich nicht verstecken. Ich denke, dass die Debatte in diese Richtung gehen sollte. Für Deutschland ist es wichtig, dass man wesentlich selbstbewusster auftritt und die eigenen Standards anhebt und sich nicht hinter den Mindeststandards versteckt und die Exzellenzstandards von irgendwelchen europäischen oder internationalen Labels dargeboten werden. Das ist denke ich nicht der richtige Weg, um die Qualitätssicherung im nationalen Kontext voran zu bringen.

Gilbert Reibnegger (Medizinische Universität Graz):
Wir haben von unseren drei Undergraduate-Programmen zwei international akkreditiert, das dritte ist unterwegs. Es geschieht hier schon etwas an allen Universitäten. Was mir bei der ersten Diskussionsrunde aufgefallen ist, ausgehend von Ihrem Anfangsstatement und mit Ihrem Schlussstatement endend, ein persönlicher Eindruck. Es hat so gewirkt, als ob das Hauptziel der Evaluierung negative Konsequenzen wären. Das ist nicht so gemeint gewesen, da bin ich überzeugt, aber ich glaube wir sollten noch einmal ganz explizit sagen, dass wir nicht als Hauptziel dieser Evaluierungs- und Qualitätssicherungsbestreben haben, einzelne schwarze Schafe zu eliminieren. Natürlich ist das auch ein Nebeneffekt, aber der Hauptpunkt ist doch, dass wir die Qualität vorantreiben wollen. Ich stelle einfach in Abrede was Sie am Anfang gesagt haben, dass hier nichts passiert. Es passiert zumindest an unserer Institution sehr viel und ich bin überzeugt an den anderen Universitäten und Hochschulen ist es das gleiche. Herr Sektionschef, nehmen Sie bitte die Aussage von der Untersteuerung nicht im dem Sinn ernst, dass bei einer allfälligen Reform des UG wohlmöglich die 5% Budgeteinbehaltung realisiert wird, denn so sollte das nicht sein, denn das würde den autonomen Universitäten den Spielraum nehmen.

Friedrich Faulhammer:
Nur kurz zu der konkreten Frage, wie denn das Ministerium beurteilen wird, ob das Qualitätsmanagementsystem ordentlich aufgebaut wurde. Nun, es gibt einige Verpflichtungen im UG, wo das Gesetz selbst nicht sagt, wann das Ergebnis erreicht sein sollte, oder was die Konsequenzen der Zielverfehlung wären. Dafür haben wir die Leistungsvereinbarungen, wo wir mit den Universitäten alle 3 Jahre verhandeln, was in den verschiedenen Bereichen geschehen soll. Und einer der Bereiche ist das Qualitätsmanagement, das heißt das Messen findet alle 3 Jahre statt: Wurden die vereinbarten Schritte eingehalten ja, oder nein. Am Ende dieser Entwicklung, und vielleicht wird das für vereinzelte Unis schon für die nächste Leistungsvereinbarung relevant, kann durchaus stehen, dass ein Ak-

kreditierung/Zertifizierung des eigenen Qualitätsmanagementsystems vereinbart wird, als Ziel, dass am Ende der Periode so eine Zertifizierung einer entsprechend anerkannten, im europäischen Register verankerten Agentur vorzulegen ist. Aber das gilt es mit den einzelnen Universitäten zu verhandeln und auch gemeinsam den Zeitpunkt zu definieren. Das wird keine Überraschung oder überfallsartig sein.

Christoph Badelt:
Zunächst zu Herrn Hopbach. Sie haben das Beispiel AACSB gebracht. Wir haben uns das sehr genau angeschaut und sie haben völlig recht, dass die beiden Akkreditierungen unterschiedliche Schwerpunkte haben. Insofern glaube ich ist es durchaus sinnvoll mehrere anzustreben, weil man dann eben verschiedene Dimensionen in den Vordergrund stellen kann. Gerade als Vertreter einer österreichischen öffentlichen Institution muss ich Ihnen ganz ehrlich sagen, dass ich Bauchweh habe, ob es jemals möglich wird die AACSB Akkreditierung zu erreichen. Ich kann bei derartig hohen Standards der einzelnen Lehrveranstaltungen, die aus der amerikanischen Welt her kommen und dortige Betreuungsrelationen fordern, nicht sicher sagen, ob wir das in dieser Hinsicht erreichen können.

Zur nationalen Qualitätssicherung. Ich glaube gerade das Argument, welches Sie gebracht haben, zeigt, dass natürlich auf der nationalen Ebene die Mindeststandardsicherung geben kann, aber nie die Exzellenzsicherung. Denn da schau ich mir einmal an, das ist ja der Sinn meines Beispiels mit der chinesischen Kleinstadt. Können Sie sich vorstellen, dass eine nationale Organisation, die dann immer auch stark in der Verantwortung des Staates steht, die einzige Wirtschaftsuniversität in diesem Land als nicht standardgemäß bezeichnen könnte? Das wird nicht klappen. International ist es den Leuten völlig egal, ob jetzt die WU akkreditiert ist oder nicht. Da braucht es tatsächlich diese Distanz und noch stärker können sie das für die Universität Wien ansehen. Halten Sie es für denkbar, dass nach irgendeinem österreichischen Akkreditierungssystem die Universität Wien, im Sinne der Mindeststandards nicht akkreditiert wird? Das ist doch absurd. Und deshalb meine ich, bringt das dann auch nichts mehr.

Zu Ihnen Herr Brünner. Es ist mir noch selten so gegangen, dass ich mit jemandem inhaltlich übereinstimme und dass er mir doch so viel Widerspruch abringt. Zunächst einmal zum „Golden Club". Ich meine, der Wirtschaftsuniversität vorzuwerfen, dass sie sich nur um den „Golden Club" kümmere, ist so ziemlich das absurdeste, das ich jemals gehört habe. Mit 10% der Studierenden und einer Betreuungsrelation von 1 zu 290. Sie haben natürlich völlig Recht, es geht nicht um irgendwelche hochgestochenen Ziele von elitären Einrichtungen. Wir reden von österreichischen öffentlichen Institutionen, wie Sie wissen. Sie haben auch Recht, dass es um die Systemrationalität geht. Nur verzeihen Sie mir schon, als Rektor der ich da sitze, rede ich zunächst über jene Bereiche, für die ich verantwortlich bin. Gerade am heutigen Tag über die Systemrationalität zu sprechen ist ja schon ein sehr treffender Einwand, denn wir haben eine tolle Systemrationalität. Nichts gegen die Fachhochschulen, aber die Fachhochschulen haben jetzt Studiengebühren, geregelten Zugang und eine Studienplatzfinanzierung und die Universitäten haben alles drei nicht, mit dem Effekt, dass wer an einer Fachhochschule nicht genommen wird an die Universität geht. Das ist eine wahrhaft rationale Systemsteuerung, die man nur loben kann und heute wird noch einmal eins drauf gesetzt, weil jetzt tun wir noch die letzten Zugangsbeschränkungen … – also jetzt höre ich schon auf zu Polemisieren.

Was ich damit sagen möchte ist, es gibt natürlich in diesem österreichischen System wirklich skandalöse Fehlsteuerungen, was das Bildungssystem betrifft, und die betreffen nicht nur die Lenkungsmechanismen der Qualität, sondern in aller erster Linie die Lenkungsmechanismen der Finanzierung. Denn die Equis-akkreditierte Wirtschaftsuniversität bekommt pro Studierenden nicht einmal die Hälfte vom Studienplatz einer wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Fachhochschule und muss trotzdem international mitspielen. Natürlich betrifft diese Systemsteuerung auch die Frage, wie Sie ganz richtig gesagt haben, ob wir an die Bildungsreserven heran kommen und das ist nicht nur eine Frage des Universitätssystems, sondern noch viel mehr eine Frage des Schulsystems, wozu wir als UNIKO auch öffentlich Stellung genommen haben. Gerade in Tagen, in denen man uns gerne parteipolitische Einseitigkeit vorwirft, sei das auch an die Adresse der anderen Partei gerichtet. Es gibt eine derartige Fülle von Fehlsteuerungen, nur dafür ist die heutige Tagung nicht da gewesen, aber ich finde es gut, dass Sie es erwähnt haben, aber es sollte glaube ich trotzdem heute eher nur eine Randbemerkung sein, allerdings eine, die mich ein bisschen zur Emotionalität bringt.

Samir Al-Mobayyed:
Weil ich die letzte Wortmeldung nicht einfach so stehen lassen kann. Natürlich gibt es auch Professoren, Professorinnen die gut bei den Evaluierungen abschneiden. Dass es nicht immer negative Konsequenzen haben muss, sondern auch Lob, Veranstaltungen wo man die Leute öffentlich anpreist, das ist eine andere Frage. Was die Qualitätssteigerung betrifft, auch bei den Evaluierungen: Generell, wenn es keine Konsequenzen gibt oder geben wird, es gibt sie momentan nicht und wenn es sie auch in ferner Zukunft nicht gibt, leidet die Qualität in der Lehre darunter. Es ist, wenn man sich anschaut, was auf einer Universität momentan abgeht, wenn es um eine jeweilige Lehrveranstaltung geht, dann sprechen Studierende unter einander über den jeweiligen Professor, die jeweilige Professorin und es spricht sich immer weiter um, aber es gibt keine Konsequenzen.

Anke Hanft:
Wir haben also noch genügend Diskussionsstoff für den anschließenden Empfang. Ich möchte mich herzlich für die anregende Diskussion bedanken, auch für die Fragen aus dem Publikum. Ich hoffe sehr, Sie im kommenden Jahr auf der nächsten AQA Tagung wieder begrüßen zu können und wünsche Ihnen noch einen schönen Abend und eine gute Heimreise.