Promoting Quality by Networking

ICA Week of Conferences,
Zagreb, June 18, 2010

Thomas Guggenberger
Overview

1. Why co-operate in quality assurance, quality development?
2. How to co-operate?
3. Added value & pitfalls
Some questions

1. How to introduce learning outcomes? And why?
2. How to convince my colleagues that we need to redesign this course/programme?
3. How to design a fair, transparent evaluation?
4. How to „survive“ a system accreditation, a quality audit?
5. Which questionnaire?
6. How to improve individual/institutional performance?
7. How to achieve better results with fewer resources?
How to co-operate?

1. ELLS QA network
2. EUA: Quality Culture project
3. QUALITY project
4. Co-operative benchmarking
5. QM network of Austrian universities
6. Indicator development at BOKU
1. Euro League of Life Sciences: QA Support Group

Objectives:

• To carry out an exchange of information between the ELLS universities in the area of quality assurance, evaluation, benchmarking and quality development with special emphasis on teaching and learning

• To improve and further develop the quality of courses and international Master programmes

• To improve evaluation procedures and follow up processes

Members: Experts from all member universities
          Student association
          ICA
Guidelines for Curriculum Development of Joint Master programmes

1. Need
2. Degree profile
3. Programme structure and mobility
4. Learning, teaching and assessment
5. Admission
6. Master thesis and degree
7. Management and resources
8. Quality assurance
Criteria: Learning, Teaching & Assessment

I. Teaching and learning activities must be designed to achieve the intended learning outcomes, consider the student group and the context of the programme.

- The focus is on student centred learning approaches.
- Teaching and learning activities are innovative,
- The added value of the joint programme must be effective,
- The international dimensions of these activities must be addressed.
Recommendation: Learning Outcomes

Example for Bloom's Taxonomy after Anderson et al. 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Action verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>E.g. create, design, construct, compose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>E.g. critique, appraise, judge, assess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>E.g. analyze, contrast, distinguish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>E.g. apply, use, execute, calculate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>E.g. explain, compare, infer, summarize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>E.g. recall, retrieve, recognize, identify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of quality criteria

1. Need
2. Profile
3. Structure
4. Teaching
5. Admission
6. Thesis
7. Mgmt.
8. Evaluation
9. Enhancement

Compliance with standards
Appropriate aims
Purpose met
Feedback, esp. from students
Continuous enhancement
# Guidelines: Thesis Evaluation Form

Guidelines: Curriculum Development

## 4.8 Thesis Evaluation Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Grade points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem definition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- relevant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- clear phrasing</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- concise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research design</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- theoretical framework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- research methods</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Execution</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- scientific level</td>
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<tr>
<td>- good communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research results</td>
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<tr>
<td>- teen cases</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis, interpretation, conclusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- understandable</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification, the unexpected, variables used</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity and reporting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure of the thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade?

Sale, name and signature of the examiner

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*Guidelines developed by the University of Vienna, adapted by ICA University*
*Grades: see internal grading system, implementation of the ECTS System*
Lessons learnt

1. Different approaches at ELLS institutions – “one“ QA system
2. Main focus: implementation of Bologna
3. Higher level of commitment through joint MSc.
4. Student participation valuable
2. European University Association – EUA
Quality Culture Rd. III: Implementing Bologna Reforms

Objectives:

• To increase awareness for the need to develop an internal quality culture in institutions, and promote the introduction of internal quality management to improve quality levels

• Ensure the wide dissemination of existing best practice in the field

• Contribute to the Bologna process by increasing the attractiveness of European higher education
Implementing Bologna Reforms

1. SWOT Analysis on the implementation of Bologna reform:
   curriculum
   teaching and learning
   internationalisation
   profile, competitors
   job market
   funding

2. Action Plan
Quality Culture Round III
One Project – Two Objectives

Network

- Discussion of common understanding of QC
- Identification of common issues
- Synthesising action plans to common network report
- Finalising network report

- 1st network meeting
- SWOT analysis
- 2nd network meeting
- Institutional action plan
- Draft network report
- 3rd network meeting

- Institutional presentation

Institution

- Internal discussion → Creation of an internal QC group
- Internal discussion → Analysis of the institution
- Feedback on SWOT analysis
- Internal discussion → Action plan on how to implement QC

- After end of project

Report as a guideline for HEIs on how to implement quality culture

ICA Week of Conferences 2010 | Thomas Guggenberger

Università für Bodenkultur Wien
Lessons learnt

1. Need to build up a quality culture,
2. Great diversity of Higher Education in Europe,
3. Low level of commitment,
4. No need to come up with a joint product
3. QUALITY project

**Objectives:**

- to establish quality assurance criteria and indicators which can be used to assess the quality of International European Master degree programmes delivered at one or more institutions.

- to set up an international accreditation agency for the Life Sciences

**Co-ordination:** ICA, Dr. Simon Heath, EU funding.

**Main outcomes:**

- ICA Framework for the QA of international Master degree programmes for the applied life sciences and the rural environment,
- Definition an accreditation process,
- Foundation of EAALS
**EAALS framework:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>BENCHMARKS</th>
<th>GENERAL INDICATORS</th>
<th>SPECIFIC INDICATORS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION OF THE DEGREE</th>
<th>KEY VERIFIERS THERE IS EVIDENCE TO SHOW THAT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Needs, Aims, and Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>1.1 Mission Statement</td>
<td>Is there a Mission Statement for the degree programme which defines the context and concept of the degree programme? (Mission Statement presented in facts and figures section in the self evaluation report)</td>
<td>Does the mission statement reflect an international perspective for the degree programme? Why should students from abroad be attracted to enroll on this Master degree programme in this/these country?</td>
<td>The mission statement defines the context and concept of the Master degree programme, and indicates an international mission for the degree programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons learnt

1. Great advantage if one builds on previously existing co-operations
2. Tough time management – output orientation
3. QA/accreditation is an extremely dynamic field
4. Co-operative benchmarking

Objectives: Evaluation of own performance

Identification of measures in order to enhance the performance
Identify basic parameters and influencing factors

Steps: 1. process description
2. international comparison
3. process optimization
4. transfer to other areas
### Key process
Recruitment and promotion of staff

### Sub process
Promotion of staff/career models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process flow/steps</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who is responsible/makes decisions?</td>
<td>Who implements?</td>
<td>Who has to be informed?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* compare with Biedermann et al 2005
Lessons learnt

1. Take indicators and processes for BM
2. Advantage if partners come from Life Sciences
3. LS expert & process expert very recommendable
4. Confidentiality among partners is crucial
5. BM project discontinued
5. QM network of Austrian universities

Members: ~ 50 members from all 22 Austrian universities:

QM,
controlling,
curr. dev,
didactics,
research documentation..

Homepage with an internal discussion forum
3 meetings per year
5. QM network of Austrian universities

Working groups: surveys on graduates
evaluation of scientists
peer counselling
analysis of students’ progression
setting up a QMS
preparation of a quality audit
Lessons learnt

1. Bottom up initiative, very lively
2. Great exchange of experiences & learning from each other
3. Solutions at expert level
4. Good recognition from “outside”
5. Joint lobbying makes the network stronger
6. Indicator working group at BOKU

Objective: Definition of clear indicators at institutional level

Members: Staff responsible for data,

database administrators,

QM

Output: List of clearly defined indicators in key performance areas

= clear basis for evaluations, performance contracts, reports
# Indicator: Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of examined semester contact hours of courses of a department, subdivided by institutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period of data retrieval</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examined semester hours</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data retrieval a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data retrieval b</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source of data</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Responsibility** | Mrs. Schuster – Centre for Teaching and Learning  
Mr. Zamakhovsky – Centre for Computing |
Lessons learnt

1. An indicator discussion may be an emotional issue
2. Once indicators are clearly defined → 😊
3. Ongoing exercise
Added value of networking in QA

- Exchanges of experiences & learning from each other
- May help to introduce changes & innovations
- Joint development: better results, smaller effort
- Joint implementation
- ICA: Specific solutions for Life Sciences can be elaborated
Pitfalls

• Joint development: higher effort, more expensive

• Joint implementation difficult/impossible due to diversity in EHEA

• Lack of confidence, “wrong” partners, too slow/fast

• Lack of support at home institutions → no implementation
Resumee

• More advantages than disadvantages
• Clarify objectives & funding
• Choice of partner institutions
• Composition of the group (only QM/ heterogenous /with students)
• Do things well and talk about them!
• Once finished – back to the start.
Men, row like you never did before!

Crazy guys!
Documents & links:

- European University Association EUA: www.euy.be/eua.index.isp
- Netzwerk QM of Austrian universities: www.qm-netzwerk.at/Home/das_netzwerk/
- EEALS: www.eaals.eu/
- Quality Management at BOKU: www.boku.ac.at/qm.html
Thank you for your attention!

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www.boku.ac.at/qm.html