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Current practice in External QA reviews

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# Current practice in External QA reviews

- The findings are based on a survey by ENQA on QA Procedures across Europe and beyond (occasional papers 14), and also on individual experience in review practices.
- They are entirely the responsibility of the authors of the study and the presenter.

# Introductory notes

- The impact of the Bologna Process on the development of external QA proceedings is substantial:
  - Alignment to the European Standards & Guidelines (third part)
  - Outcomes-oriented approach assessed (learning outcomes)
  - A shift to accreditation, in line with the overall objective of Bologna: stimulate and support mobility of students via recognition procedures

# Overall questions:

- ESG to be seen as generic principles, adaptable to the national context
- Or strict rules that require strict observance?
- How far does tolerance go? Acceptance of diversity of systems; choice between programme and institutional level reviews
- *Procedures* for 'evaluation' or for 'accreditation'

# Impact of recent changes on the behaviour of QA agencies

- Through the ESG the impact of agencies on internal QA on an institutional level has grown.
- What agencies rate highest in external reviews:
- at program level: qualifications of staff (1), curriculum/syllabus (2), facilities & resources (3), internal QA procedures(4), mission/goals (5)
- at institutional level: after (4) come 'management & organisation (2), (5), (1) & (3)

# Interpretation of some tendencies

- Involvement of stakeholders in Ext. QA:
  - Shift from teaching to learning focus, accountability towards society
  - Assessment of students is rated high, based on their attainment of L.O.
  - More emphasis on SH in ‘institutional ‘reviews’; idem for research assessment
  - (impact on society is deemed higher)

# Results of new trends

- 4 Common features of European QA in HE, also in reviews at HEIs :

Independence, self-evaluations, visits by experts & published reports.

- External QA procedures gaining ground in cross-border education (joint/collaborative programs): reliance on ESG.
- Impact of the NQF & the FQEHEA