Promoting Quality by Networking

ICA Week of Conferences,
Zagreb, June 18, 2010

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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 convice 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 <u>exchange of information</u> between the ELLS universities in the area of quality assurance, evaluation, benchmarking and quality development with special emphasis on teaching and learning

• To <u>improve</u> and further develop the <u>quality</u> of courses and international Master programmes

• To <u>improve evaluation procedures</u> 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

GUIDELINES

FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF
JOINT MASTER PROGRAMMES

QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPPORT TEAM
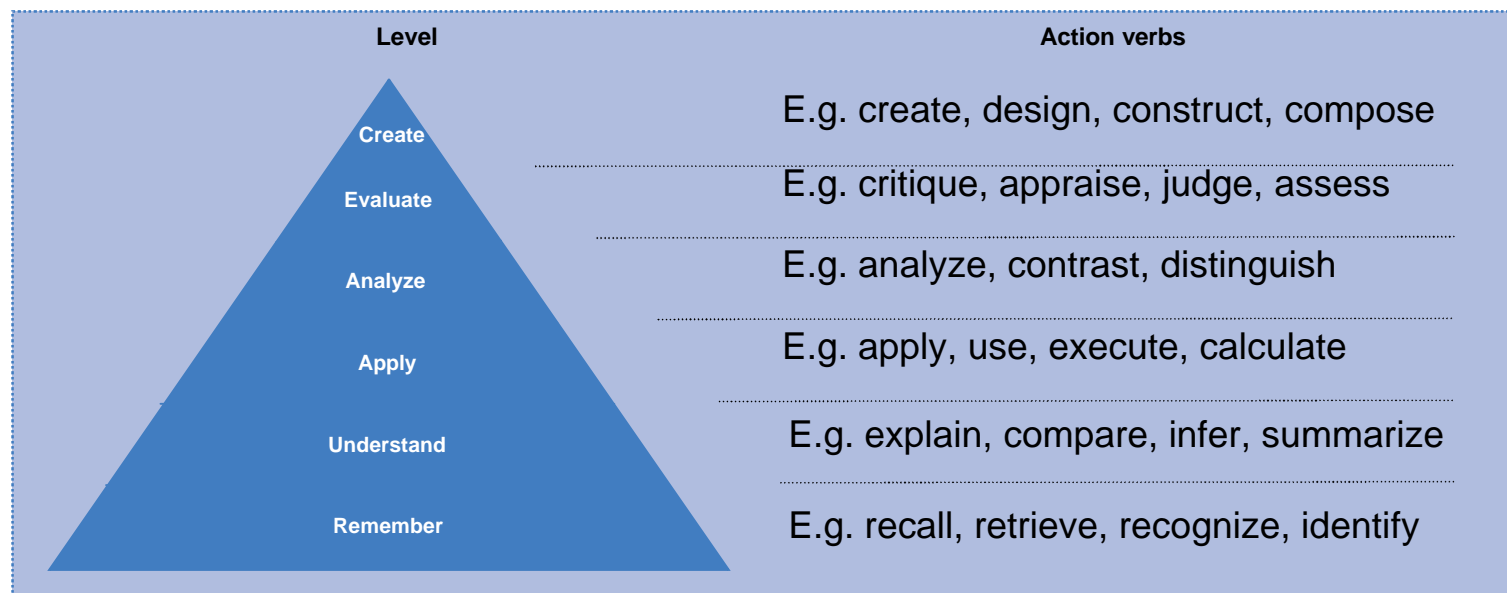
Euroleague
FOR LIFE SCIENCES

Criteria: Learning, Teaching & Assessment

I. Teaching and learning activities must be designed to achieve the <u>intended learning outcomes</u>, consider the <u>student group</u> and the <u>context</u> 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.
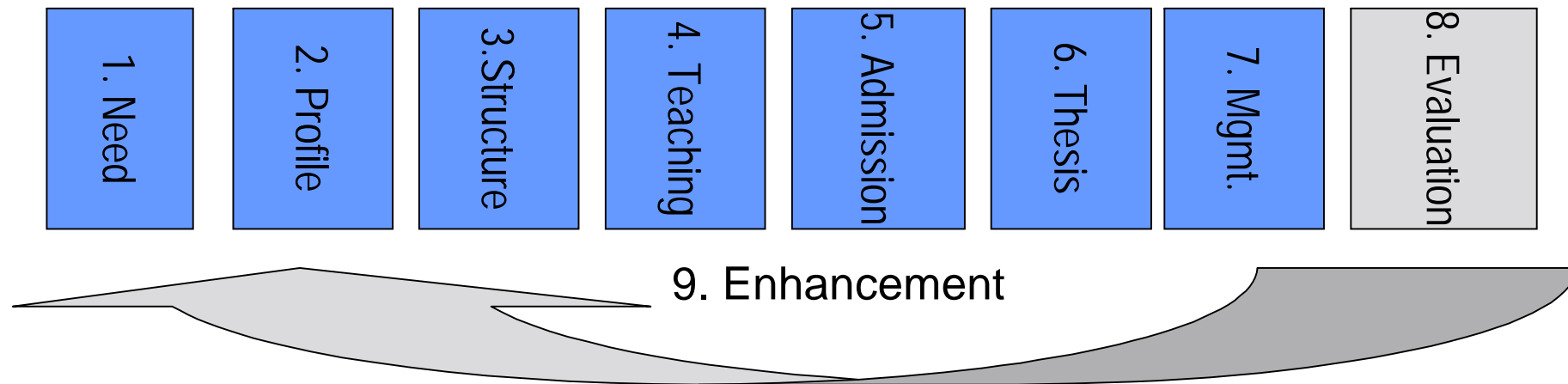
Recommendation: Learning Outcomes

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

Level	Action verbs
Create	E.g. create, design, construct, compose
Evaluate	E.g. critique, appraise, judge, assess
Analyze	E.g. analyze, contrast, distinguish
Apply	E.g. apply, use, execute, calculate
Understand	E.g. explain, compare, infer, summarize
Remember	E.g. recall, retrieve, recognize, identify

Evaluation of quality criteria

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| 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

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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

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2. European University Association – EUA
Quality Culture Rd. III: Implementing Bologna Reforms

Objectives:

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

• Ensure the wide dissemination of existing <u>best practice</u> in the field

• Contribute to the <u>Bologna</u> process by increasing the attractiveness of European higher education

Implementing Bologna Reforms

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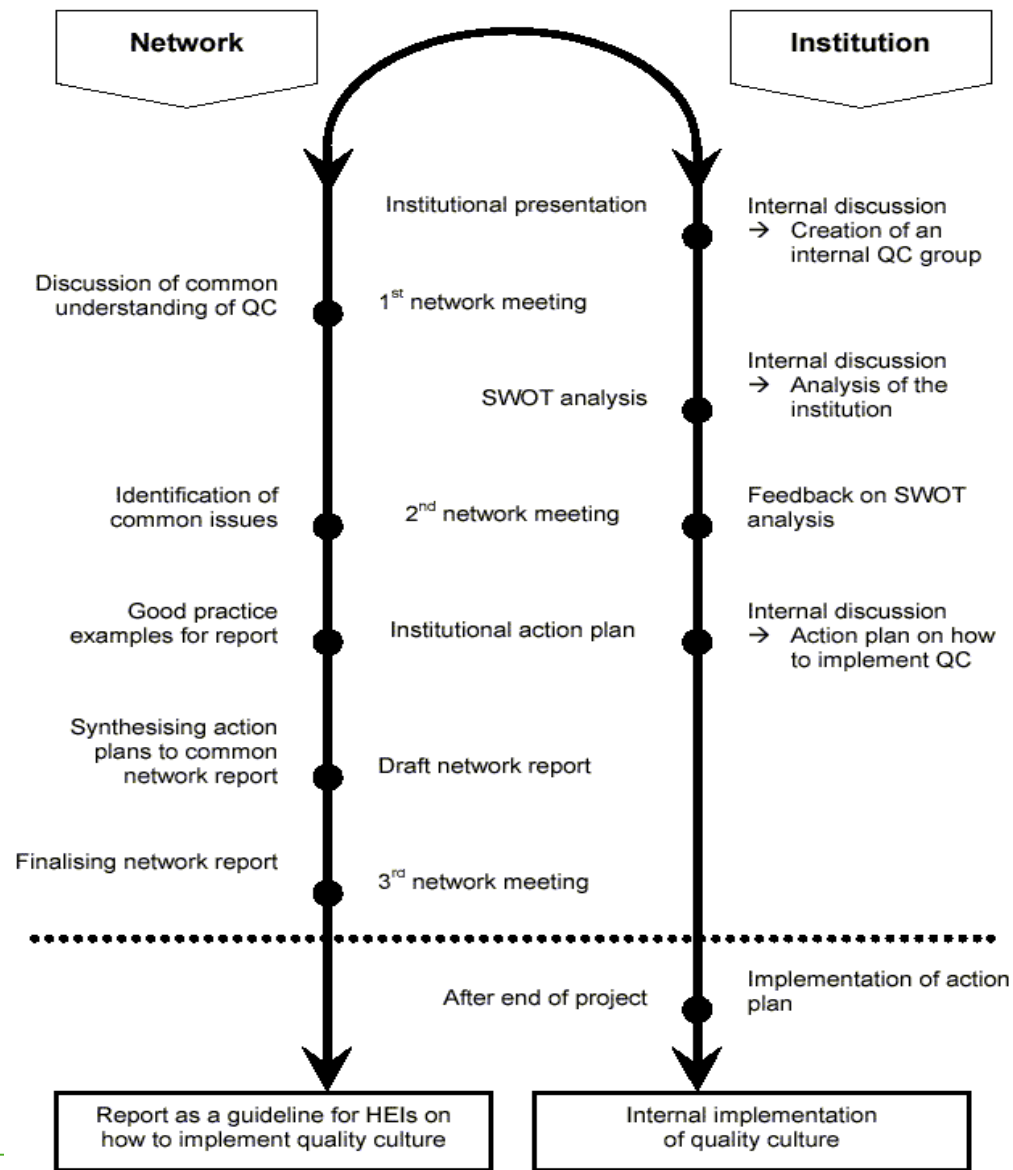
1. SWOT Analysis on the implementation of Bologna reform:

curriculum

teaching and learning

internationalisation

profile, competitors

job market

funding

2. Action Plan

Quality Culture Round III
One Project – Two Objectives

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 <u>criteria</u> and <u>indicators</u> 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 <u>accreditation agency</u> 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:

CATEGORIES	BENCHMARKS	GENERAL INDICATORS	SPECIFIC INDICATORS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION OF THE DEGREE	KEY VERIFIERS THERE IS EVIDENCE TO SHOW THAT:
1. Needs, Aims, and Learning Outcomes	1.1 Mission Statement	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)*	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?	The mission statement defines the context and concept of the Master degree programme, and indicates an international mission for the degree programme

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

Template*: Process description

Key process	Recruitment and promotion of staff			
Sub process	Promotion of staff/career models			
Process flow/steps	Responsibilities Who is responsible/ makes decisions?	Implementation Who implements?	Information Who has to be informed?	Remarks
1.				
2.				
3.				

* compare with Biedermann et al 2005

Lessons learnt

1. Take indicators <u>and</u> 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 councelling

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,

data base administrators,

QM

Output: List of clearly defined indicators in key performance areas

= clear basis for evaluations, performance contracts, reports

Indicator: Exams

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Number of examined semester contact hours of courses of a department, subdivided by institutes	
Period of data retrieval	According to the evaluation design: 3 or more academic years (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30)
Examined semester hours	The courses are defined through semester hours: One semester hour is a course unit of 45 minutes which is held 15 times per semester.
Data retrieval a	This data retrieval contains all examined semester contact hours which are allocated to a department.
Data retrieval b	This data retrieval contains all examinded semester contact hours of persons who are allocated to the department; this includes also exams of courses delivered by other departments.
Source of data	BOKU Data warehouse
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

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- 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/ heterogenious /with students)

- Do things well and talk about them!

- Once finished – back to the start.
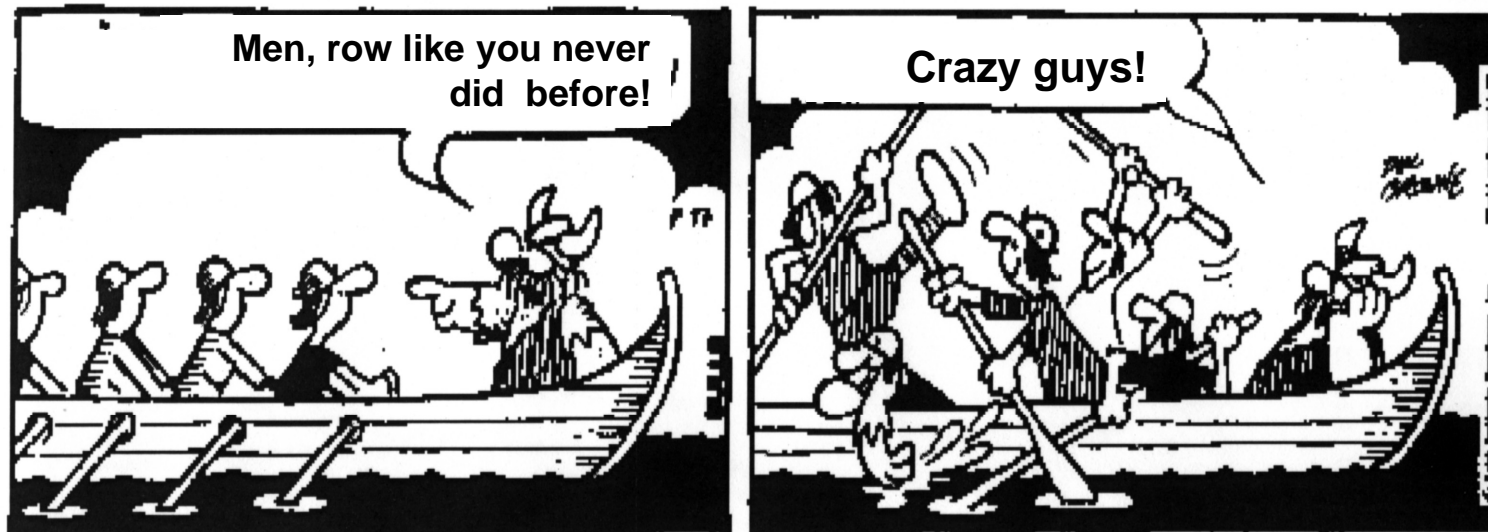
Documents & links:

- QA Group of ELLS: www.euroleague-study.org/supportteams/quality/index.html

- 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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