

enqa

TEEP 2002

TRANS-NATIONAL EUROPEAN EVALUATION PROJECT (TEEP 2002)

Evaluation Manual

Revised edition



Education and Culture

1. Background for the TEEP project

1.1 The Bologna declaration

Any European perspective on the quality of higher education has since 1999 been strongly influenced by the processes of the follow up to the Bologna Declaration of that year, signed by 29 European Ministers of Education. By signing this declaration the Ministers agreed on coordinating their policies to reach a number of objectives, which they consider to be of primary relevance in order to establish a European area of higher education and also to promote the European system of higher education worldwide. Their agreed objectives, with a target date of 2010, are:

- adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens' employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system;
- adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries;
- establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system - as proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by the receiving universities concerned;
- promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:
 1. students, access to study and training opportunities and related services.
 2. teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights;
- **promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance with a view to develop comparable criteria and methodologies;**
- promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regard to curricular development, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

The ministers undertook 'to attain these objectives - within the framework of our institutional competences and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of university autonomy - to consolidate the European area of higher education' and stated further that 'To that end, we will pursue the ways of intergovernmental cooperation, together with those of non-governmental European organisations with competence on higher education. We expect Universities to again respond promptly and positively and to contribute actively to the success of our endeavour.'

This general background, and the subsequent initiatives and developments between the ministerial meetings in Bologna and Prague and beyond, have provided the major motivation for setting up the Trans-national European Evaluation Project (TEEP). TEEP is supported by the European Commission through the SOCRATES programme. It is part of a package of measures initiated by the European Commission in order to stimulate the Bologna Process (from Prague to

Berlin, the EU-contribution). The project is coordinated through the European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) with the participation of the SOCRATES Thematic Networks of the three disciplines history, physics and veterinary science contributing to the project. Representatives of ENQA, the chairpersons of the SOCRATES Thematic Networks, the European Commission and representatives of the responsible quality assurance agencies constitute the management group of the project. (See annex 5 for a list of the management group members.)

1.2 European trans-national projects on quality in higher education

There are a number of projects that are of particular relevance to the establishment and development of TEEP. The most important projects are :

- the wide-ranging *European Pilot Project* conducted in 1994/1995, supported by the European Commission. Seventeen countries, the fifteen EU members as well as Norway and Iceland, were involved in this project in which a total number of no less than 46 programs within higher education were evaluated simultaneously. The main idea of the project was to test a common methodology for programme evaluations, which was at the same time suitable for national adaptations.
- the international evaluation of electrical engineering programmes in Belgium, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden and Germany, initiated by the Dutch Quality Assurance Agency, VSNU, and conducted in 1991/1992. The purpose of this project was to reach a mutual understanding and recognition of diplomas of the chosen programmes across the countries involved.
- the international research project initiated by CHEPS (Center for Higher Education Policy Studies) and conducted by researchers from The Netherlands, Germany and UK is another example of an international evaluation. In this project from 1991/1992 ten programmes of economy from the three countries mentioned above were evaluated. The project was primarily oriented towards methodological development. More specifically the aim was to develop a valid, reliable and effective methodology for comparing educational quality across the systems of higher education in a number of European countries.
- the two-year project *Tuning Educational Structures in Europe* launched in May 2001 organised by European universities and supported by the European Commission through the SOCRATES programme (<http://www.relint.deusto.es/TUNINGProject/index.htm>). The project aims within the context of the Bologna process to "tune" educational structures in Europe, open a debate on the nature and the importance of subject-specific and general competences involving stakeholders, identify subject-specific and general competences and lastly develop the use of ECTS credits. The first phase of the project came to an end in May 2002 and a second phase to test the key findings in the project is now being envisaged by the coordinators.
- the *Cross-border Quality Assessment of Physics* conducted in 2000/2001 that involved five programmes from four universities placed in three different countries. Four national/regional quality assurance agencies were involved in the conduction of the evaluation. The aim of the project was to compare the programmes and to analyse whether students received equivalent qualifications. The method applied for the evaluation drew heavily on the lessons learned from the evaluation of engineering programmes mentioned above. The overall approach with an international committee responsible for formulating minimum requirements and conducting the site visits resembled the one used in the evaluation of engineering programmes. However, the principles behind the composition of the international committee differed. In the physics evaluation it was decided that the committee members should all be independent of the participating institutions.
- the *International Comparative Evaluation of Programmes in Agricultural Science* conducted by The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA). The evaluation includes programmes offered in Denmark, Germany, Ireland and The Netherlands. The evaluation is a Danish

reflection of the Bologna process and the specific objective of promoting European cooperation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.

European ministers have recognized the vital role that quality assurance systems play in ensuring high quality standards and facilitating the comparability of qualifications throughout Europe. They have also encouraged closer cooperation between recognition and quality assurance networks and sought to promote European cooperation in quality assurance.

Whilst debates continue about the relative roles and merits of different quality assurance approaches several notable initiatives have been established. These include:

- development of the roles of ENQA. Reflecting on the Bologna process, the EU Ministers of Education have assigned responsibility for the quality assurance development in Higher Education to the ENQA Network. The ENQA Network is supported by the European Commission through the SOCRATES Network. ENQA have taken actions to disseminate information, experiences, good practices and new developments in the field of quality assessment and quality assurance in higher education between interested parties, public authorities, higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies;
- the pilot scheme 'Promoting a "quality culture" in universities' will help universities to introduce internal quality assurance mechanisms that they can consider their own. The project is supported by the European Commission and conducted by the European University Association (EUA) (<http://www.unige.ch/eua/>). The expected outcome is to create a critical mass of universities having concrete experience with internal quality assurance mechanisms helping them to improve their quality levels and being better prepared for external evaluations;
- the Joint Quality Initiative supported by the Dutch and Flemish governments, and in particular the development of shared descriptors for Bachelors and Masters degrees (<http://www.jointquality.org/>).

1.3 TEEP: an outline

Because of the increasing interest and emphasis on quality assurance as a method to assure transparency and e.g. comparability of the recognition of degrees within Europe, TEEP has been established to seek to develop a European methodology for the use of common criteria and quality assurance at European level.

The project will encompass 5 institutions in each of 3 discipline areas and seek to cover as wide a range of national and European contexts as possible. The project includes both academic and professional discipline areas through its selection of History, Physics and Veterinary Sciences as the three discipline areas involved. The project will draw directly on the findings in terms of definitions of competences of the Tuning project. The link with Tuning and the SOCRATES Thematic Networks is assured by the participation of the chairpersons of the three participating SOCRATES Thematic Networks in the TEEP management group:

Discipline Area	SOCRATES Thematic Network	Chairperson/contactperson
History	CLIOH – European History Network	Prof. Ann Katherine Isaacs isaacs@stm.unipi.it
Veterinary Sciences	ICEVE - Interaction and Co-operation in European Veterinary education	Prof. Tito Fernandes titofernandes@fmv.utl.pt;
Physics	EUPEN - European Physics Education Network	Prof. Hendrik Ferdinande hendrik.ferdinande@rug.ac.be

Three established quality assurance agencies have combined their expertise to oversee the programme of work, with each agency taking particular responsibility for one of the discipline areas:

Discipline area	Agency	Contact	E-mail
History	QAAHE – The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK)	Nick Harris	n.harris@qaa.ac.uk
Veterinary Sciences	AQU - Agency for Quality Assurance in the Catalan University System) (Catalonia)	Josep Grifoll	jgrifollsauri@agenqua.org
Physics	EVA – The Danish Evaluation Institute (Denmark)	Tine Holm	tih@eva.dk

1.4 Objectives of TEEP

The main objectives of TEEP are:

- to develop further a method for trans-national external evaluation building on experiences, such as the Tuning project and the Ba/Ma descriptors developed through the Joint Quality Initiative, using common criteria on the basis of an evaluation process in three different discipline fields;
- to identify possible obstacles which derive from trans-national evaluation and indicate strategies that might be used to overcome them;
- to contribute to more visibility, transparency and compatibility in European higher education.

The evaluation will not include ranking but will allow comparability.

1.5 Anticipated benefits from TEEP

The likely benefits from TEEP should include:

For European Higher Education:

- a method for trans-national evaluation building on predefined criteria which are commonly agreed and which have been tested and offer a dimension of transparency and comparability of the quality of programmes across borders;
- a contribution to the development of the subject on the basis of the recommendations from the experts and good practice from comparable programmes in other countries;

- an opportunity to share experiences with other programmes and peers and the possibility of establishing networks to assure continuous improvement of the programme quality;

For the participating institutions:

- the opportunity for the participating institutions to promote both their institution and the programme as such.
- the opportunity to get feedback in order to help them improve their quality assurance culture

2. Self evaluation – process and themes

2.1 Introduction

The following text presents on the one hand practical information and good advice on the self evaluation process, and on the other hand the themes of the self evaluation. Furthermore the text aims to ensure that the information and judgements provided by each of the participating programmes are presented in a consistent way allowing for comparison across the participating programmes.

2.2 Purpose and organisation of the self evaluation process

The first element in the evaluation is the self evaluation process and the preparation of the self evaluation report is designed to serve three distinct aims:

- to provide a framework to stimulate internal discussions on strengths and weaknesses related to the three themes that are the foci for the evaluation. This should provide opportunities to assist a continuous improvement in the quality of the programme;
- to provide comparable documentation to be used by the panel of experts, in their preparations, site visit, evaluations and reports;
- to invite comments on the utility of the criteria when the framework is applied to different programmes delivered within different national context;

The self evaluation reports together with the information gathered during the site visits (more information on the site visits is provided later in this text) constitute the documentation for the evaluation.

2.3 The self evaluation group

The self evaluation report should be prepared by a self evaluation group under the responsibility of a chairperson. The chairperson will be responsible for co-ordinating the work of the self evaluation group, and will normally also be the contact person between the self evaluation group and the responsible quality assurance agency i.e. QAA for History, AQU for Veterinary Sciences, and EVA for Physics.

The self evaluation group (as well as the chairperson) has to be designated officially by the Board/Council/Committee, responsible for the degree programme involved in the quality evaluation.

The self evaluation group is responsible for the preparation of a self evaluation report which should reflect the results of the group's work. It is recommended that the self evaluation group includes at least one representative from each of the relevant stakeholders at the programme level, including management, staff actively involved in teaching, students and administrative staff. Experience suggests that a good and workable size for the group is five to six members.

The value of the self evaluation process is generally found to increase when there is active participation by as many staff and student representatives as practically possible in the discussions and reflections that lead to the production of the report. This wider participation tends to create a higher sense of ownership in the exercise and in the commitment to bring about the changes suggested by both the self evaluation process and report, and through reflection on the external evaluation report provided by the expert group. It is recommended that a draft of the self evaluation report be discussed among as many staff and students / student representatives as possible. This can provide a more holistic picture with different perspectives of the features of the programme.

2.4 The contact person for the self evaluation group

Each participating programme should nominate a contact person to be responsible for the contact with the responsible agency. We recommend that the contact person be the chairperson of the self evaluation group. The name of the contact person, address, e-mail address and telephone and fax number should be sent to the responsible agency.

2.5 The self evaluation report

It is not intended that the self-evaluation report should cover all aspects of the quality of the programmes. Instead, the proposed self evaluation, and the guidelines to preparing the report, concentrate on three areas:

- context
- competences and learning outcomes;
- quality assurance mechanisms.

A good self evaluation report is not only a combination of factual and descriptive data but most importantly, is analytical. The self evaluation report should include reflection and comment on current strategies and practices and include explanations for the choices and priorities made by the programme. An important emphasis of both the process of preparing the report, and the report itself, is consideration of development and improvement; the process and report should reflect on and suggest possible and relevant future changes to programmes.

- The overall self evaluation report should be presented in English, the working language of the project, with a recommended maximum of **20 pages** in A-4 format (minimum 10pt font size), not including the tables with quantitative data, respecting a fair balance between the three areas mentioned above

The report should be delivered in both a printed version and electronically as a word file.

It should be possible to read the report without any help from attached annexes. However, you are invited to present a limited number of annexes or additional information as evidence to support the information in the self evaluation report to the experts at the site visit.

The deadline for submission of the self evaluation reports to the responsible agency is **Friday 4 January 2003**. It is important that the submission date is kept in order to ensure that the overall timeframe of the evaluation can be kept.

The self evaluation reports should be send to:

Discipline Area	Address of submission
History Programmes	Nick Harris The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Southgate House Southgate Street Gloucester GL1 1UB Telephone +44 (0) 1452 557000 Fax +44 (0) 1452 557070 Email : n.harris@qaa.ac.uk

Veterinary Science Programmes	Josep Grifoll AQA Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari a Catalunya Via Laietan, 28, 5a planta 08003 Barcelona tel. 93 268 89 50 fax 93 268 89 51 e-mail: jgrifollsauri@agenqua.o
Physics programmes	Tine Holm EVA The Danish Evaluation Institute Østbanegade 55, 3 DK 2100 København V Tel: + 45 35 55 01 01 Fax: + 45 35 55 10 11 Email: tih@eva.dk

The relevant agency is responsible for sending the reports to the expert panels; this should ensure 'version control'

3. The site visit

3.1 Introduction

The site visit is the second element in the evaluation process. The site visit is based on the self evaluation report and is the additional element in the documentation of the evaluation.

3.2 The purpose and organisation of the site visit

The site visits will be conducted in the period from January to March 2003. A representative from the responsible agency will participate in the visit as secretary for the panel. The site visits will last 1 ½ day.

The purpose of the site visit is twofold:

- to allow the experts to get a comprehensive and clear view of the programme through discussions and interviews with main stakeholders, and to clarify aspects of the self evaluation report;
- to elaborate on and discuss the thoughts put forward in the self evaluation report with a broad group of stakeholders.

4. The expert panels

4.1 The panels and their responsibilities

The visiting panel to each institution will comprise 4 members. The panel members will be drawn from a larger pool of 7 to 8 experts but for continuity it is intended that the panel chairperson and secretary will participate in each visit. The panel members will have the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the evaluation although it is hoped that particular expertise in higher education quality management and discipline interest will be reflected in their individual responsibilities within the work of the panel.

Furthermore the visiting panel will include a student member from the country being visited. The role of the student will be to focus on areas and questions related to the interests of the student body as users of the higher education programme. The student representative will be sought identified through the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB) in consultation with the three discipline-related association or organisations of students.

The panel works as a team although aspects of its work during the visit may be undertaken by parts of the team. The members will, however, not conduct any aspects of the visit on an individual basis.

The panel members will be identified through the ENQA member institutions and the management group (where the SOCRATES Thematic Networks are participating). Proposed panel members for each visit will be selected by the project's management group. All panel members will be provided with information to ensure that they are familiar with the aims, objectives and procedures of the project, and their own roles and tasks within it.

Each panel visit is co-ordinated by the panel chairperson and agency secretary for the discipline area. In the period preceding the visit, the secretary provides advice to the institution on its preparations for the visit, and works with the panel on the initial analysis of documentation. He or she accompanies the team during the visit, providing advice as appropriate. It is the responsibility

of the panel chairperson and secretary to test that the team's findings are supported by adequate and identifiable evidence, and that the panel's report provides information in a succinct and readily accessible form.

5. Intended outcomes and conclusions

5.1 The panel reports

TEEP will result in one report for each of the three disciplines. The reports will be public. The reports will include comments on whether and how the participating programmes appear to be managing quality soundly and effectively and their apparent capacity for and manners in which they fulfil the criteria presented in the project and judgements on the quality of the programmes being offered.

Each discipline report also sets out the panel's views on:

- the characteristics of each programme's approaches and capabilities for managing academic quality with a view to the criteria;
- self evaluation report for each programme;
- opportunities for developmental contributions and activities for each programme.

For each panel a draft report will be prepared and submitted to the participating programmes when all of the visits are finalised. The draft will be made by the team secretary. The institution is asked to provide the secretary with corrections of errors of fact in the draft report and the final report is prepared in the light of the institution's response.

The reports will be completed no later than June 2003.

5.2. The methodological report

Since TEEP is a pilot project for trans-national evaluation that is based on predefined criteria, a report on the methodological experiences, and recommendations for future trans-national evaluations, will be prepared for the European Commission once the evaluation processes are finalised. The report will be prepared by the project group and commented by the management group. This report will also be public.

As mentioned in the introduction to the self evaluation, one of the purposes of the self evaluation is for the participating programmes to reflect on the method and the usefulness of the criteria employed. These reflections should be included at the end of each of the self evaluation reports as they will feed into the preparation of the methodological report.

