Cross Border Quality Audit
The University of Graz Experience

Brussels, September 19 2013

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Performance and Quality Management
Content

UG in brief
Quality Management System
Quality Audit
Lessons learnt and more
University of Graz

Founded 1585
6 faculties, 123 institutes and centres
Approx. 110 Degree Programs (BA, MA, PHD)
33,000 students, about 19,000 active
4,700 new students
3,000 graduates (165 doctoral degrees)
3,933 staff (2,700 academic staff)
200 millions Euro budget
Development of Quality Management

2000: start course evaluation
2002: 1st mission statement, strategic goals
2003: start research evaluation (5-year interval)
2004: 1st development plan
2004: start internal performance agreements
2005: going live of performance reporting
2008: new course evaluation: competence orientation
2008: 2009: AQA-Audit on internationalization
2010: start graduate tracking
2011: decision on quality concept
2013: Quality Audit by FINHEEC
QM objectives

Establishment and support of a quality culture

Long-term implementation of university’s strategy/strategic plan

Enhancement of transparency of processes

Enhancement of internal communication and identification

Implementation of a quality circle, which correlates objectives, processes and results to enable continuous quality improvement

Applying task-oriented QA instruments
QM cycle UG

Quality Management Cycle of Uni Graz

- Effects analysis
- Situation analysis
- Definition of objectives & indicators
- Designing, organising & implementing activities
- Monitoring & feedback
- Check achievement of objectives & consequences
Application areas

Research

Teaching

Promotion of young researchers

Societal impact

Internationalization

Services

Third mission

LLL
Expectations

towards the audit
• Critical, friendly feedback from external peers
• Recommendations for development
• Realistic presentation of the status quo, no “window dressing“
• Unbiased report, taking into account the Austrian specifics

towards the agency
• Experience in audits, comprehensive audit system
• Should work international, other perspectives
• Competence of peers
• Checking fitness for purpose
• Small reporting and documentation effort
• Registered in the EQAR
• €
Choice of the agency

Desk search: providing comprehensive (teaching AND research) audit

Agency fair: presentation of concepts

Formal selection: invitation of 6 agencies (AT, DE, CH, NL, NO, FI), hearing with 3, EQAR

Negotiation and contracting
QM Audit

Audit criteria by FINHEEC

The quality assurance policy of the higher education institution;
Strategic and operations management
The development of the QA system
Quality assurance of the HEI’s basic duties:
  Degree education
  Research, development an innovation activities
  The societal impact and regional development work
  Internationalisation

The quality assurance system as a whole
# Audit time frame of the University of Graz (UG)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase of the audit process</th>
<th>Actor(s)</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement on the audit</td>
<td>UG and FINHEEC</td>
<td>24 April 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the audit material by UG</td>
<td>UG</td>
<td>17 December 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparations for the site visit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Audit team’s guidelines for the site visit to UG and possible additional material requested from UG</td>
<td>FINHEEC project manager</td>
<td>10 January 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Briefing and discussion event at UG</td>
<td>Chair of the audit team</td>
<td>6 February 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>An event for UG’s actors to discuss the objectives and implementation of the audit</td>
<td>FINHEEC project managers</td>
<td>6 February 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the programme of the site visit (incl. interviewees) by UG and possible additional material requested from UG</td>
<td>UG</td>
<td>13 February 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval of or request for amendments to the programme submitted by UG</td>
<td>Chair of the audit team</td>
<td>18 February 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINHEEC project managers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Site visit</strong></td>
<td>Audit team</td>
<td>11—14 March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final version of the audit report</td>
<td>Audit team</td>
<td>June 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>FINHEEC project managers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Examination and statement of UG to the audit team's report (checking for factual errors and misunderstandings, 3 working days)</td>
<td>UG</td>
<td>June—July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modifications to the report based on the comments by UG if needed</td>
<td>Audit team</td>
<td>June—July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINHEEC project managers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Evaluation Council’s decision on the result of the audit, i.e. whether UG passes the audit or whether a re-audit is needed</td>
<td>FINHEEC</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair/vice-chair of the audit team attends the meeting of the Council and gives a presentation on team’s findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of the report</td>
<td>FINHEEC project managers</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding seminar at UG</td>
<td>Chair/vice-chair of the team</td>
<td>September/October 2013?</td>
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<tr>
<td>FINHEEC project managers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback to FINHEEC</td>
<td>Audit team</td>
<td>September 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>UG</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lessons learnt

Audit assess procedures, not formal rules

Key role of peers and their background (recommendations!)

Clear audit process with flexibility on national regulations

Preparing reports and information not in mother tongue

Providing background information on national HE-system

1 peer confident with national HE-system

Assessment of a comprehensive QMS
- QA must be context sensitive and individualised
- Commitment to a developmental approach in the HEI QA processes
- QA should be inclusive to the whole institutional community
- Ensuring the engagement and capacities of the key actors in QA processes
- Partnership between QA Agencies and HEI
- Risk taking and failure are essential for creating new knowledge
- Sharing experiences in QA, e.g. via platforms of dialogue

Source: „Improving quality, enhancing creativity“. Final report of the QUAEHECA Project. EUA 2009
Thank you!

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