International Quality Assurance Activities of evalag - scope, design and experiences

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evalag – Centre of Competence for Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education

• established in 2000 as foundation under public law by the Land Baden-Wuerttemberg (Germany)

• Fields of activity:
  2001: evaluation; 2006: science support; 2008: quality management; 2009: accreditation

• Staff: 17
evalag – Centre of Competence for Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education

- **Evaluations**
  evalag carries out evaluation procedures (institutional evaluations, subject evaluations, programme evaluations, formative evaluations, evaluations with special concern towards strategic development etc.)

- **Quality Management**
  evalag carries out quality audits and institutional assessments and offers a range of support services (consulting/assistance, workshops etc.)

- **Accreditation**
  evalag carries out programme and system accreditations (and institutional accreditations)

- **Science Support**
  evalag coordinates peer review procedures for research proposals and accompanies the realisation of research projects
Quality Assurance (of Teaching and Learning) in Germany

Programme accreditation
System accreditation
Internal quality management (quality assurance and enhancement)

Evaluation Audit Consulting

external
internal

obligatory
voluntary

HEI
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# International Quality Assurance Activities (I)

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<td>Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek) Kosovo (Mitrovica) Mexico (Nuévo de Leon)</td>
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EVALUATIONSGENTUR
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

- evalag
Assessment Procedure(s)

1. Admittance (and precheck)
2. Preparation of self-documentation
3. Site visit
4. (Second site visit)
5. Assessment report, decision and publication
6. Follow-up

about 6 to 24 months
Procedure(s) – Similarities and Differences
(with regard to german accreditation)

• Similarities
  – At least four steps of peer review procedure
  – Expert panel consists at least of two/three experts from HEIs and a student
  – Publication of full report

• Differences
  – Not always expert from professional practice
  – Language
  – Cultural background of peers and HEI members
  – „Philosophy“ of educational systems
  – YES-NO-Decision (Introduction of accreditation with conditions by evalag)
  – Award of the evalag-label
Composition and Preparation of Expert Panel

- At least one member with knowledge or experience of the national educational system
- International experience of the experts
- Stepwise preparation of the peers
  - official documents (i.e. Eurydice) concerning the educational systems, higher education law, regulations, …
  - Relevant information of the programme/institution
- Continuous contact (personal briefing) between panel members and project officer
- Preparatory meeting before the site-visit to discuss special issues, if possible also a meeting with the rector of the HEI
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Approach

Our mission statement

- **evalag** supports HEIs in their commitment to internal quality assurance
- **evalag** services aim at strengthening the HEIs ability to achieve their own objectives

Cross-border activities support

- the realisation of the Bologna-process
- the internationalisation of higher education - abroad as well as in the HEI of the experts
National versus international procedures

National
• Peers dispose of implicit knowledge of (the national) educational system
• Peers know subject-related standards of (national) scientific community

➢ Reference point are national programmes/quality assurance systems

International
• Peers have a general overview of other educational systems
• Peers know international subject-related standards of scientific community
• Group-dynamic of heterogeneity of expertise

➢ Reference point is a more global feature of programmes / quality assurance systems
Experiences of evalag

• Cross-border activities
  ➢ widen the knowledge (of evalag and the peers) about the progress of the Bologna process,
  ➢ support insight into other educational systems
  ➢ support of trust between educational systems
  ➢ support the development of the HEIs

• HEIs abroad
  – trust especially German educational system and
  – German accreditation agencies (no fear of fraud or corruption)

• Potential area of conflict
  – Latitude of the interpretation of criteria (reference points) with regard to the specifics of the HEI and the educational system
Challenges for evalag

- Is the HEI who demands an assessment really a trustworthy institution?
  - www.anabin.kmk.org
  - precheck

- Has the HEI experience with quality assurance activities?

- Language issues: translation of documents, conversation during the site-visit?

- Risks of fraud or corruption? Misuse of evalag-label?

- Application of the criteria: latitude of interpretation?
  - Are German standards the point of reference?
  - Acceptance of national situation?
Status of ESG and Qualification Framework

- ESG are the basis of evalag-criteria
- Heterogenity of educational systems due to historical and political background (importance of higher education, resources)
- Qualification framework can enhance the comparability of study programmes (i.e. professional bachelor – bachelor)
- We need generic criteria for the assessment of study programmes and institutions
Thank you very much for your attention!