

MARIA KELO, DIRECTOR, ENQA

HOW HAVE EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES ADAPTED TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

enqa.

- Priority: flexible and supportive towards HEIs
 - **allow HEI to focus** on addressing the current situation and planning for the next academic year
 - **advice and support** on elearning (assessment, student rights, quality...) → recommendations, guidelines, training webinars etc.
 - **reassurance:** exceptional measures do not have a negative impact on accreditation status
- Adjust to online mode for training sessions, conferences, etc.
- Information to and dialogue with national stakeholders, also for changes needed to **national regulations**
 - Evaluation cycle
 - Physical meeting requirements for panels or for decision-making bodies

REVIEWS GOING ONLINE

- For external reviews, two options
 - **Postpone reviews** (ESG do not determine duration) – initially the preferred option
 - **Go (temporarily) online** – increasing, with perspective of “end 2020”
- Mostly hybrid approach:
 - e.g. initial accreditation, follow-up, programme reviews online - institutional/full reviews/reviews of medical and lab-based programmes postponed
- Elaborating guidelines, (re)training experts, experimenting with best tools, addressing safety and confidentiality concerns, boosting preparation

REVIEWS GOING ONLINE - 2

- Issues of cost:
 - **Fees for expert:** generally no intention to lower. Online visits more rather than less labour intensive
 - **Travel costs:** usually on real cost basis → reduced overall expense most likely (and ecological element!)
 - **Strategic issue:** should not be seen as “not a real review”
- To record or not to record? – a big “NO”!
 - We do not do that for one-site visits, why for online?
 - Issues of privacy and permissions, and also of openness of respondents
 - Can find other ways such as double hosting and/or double note-taking to ensure full records

LONGER TERM IMPACT

- Need to ensure that similar quality and validity → **no disadvantage for those going through online in this period**
- An **opportunity to re-think** reviews: the role of experts and the purpose (content, duration, ...) of the physical site-visit
- Wide agreement that (a) **hybrid model(s)** is the future
 - By procedure type
 - By origin of reviewers
 - By purpose/stage of the process (fact collection and check virtually, verification and dialogue during visit)
- Call for guidelines on online visits:
 - Concept, technical elements, experts, structure etc.



THANK
YOU

enqa.