

2nd European Quality Assurance Forum:

Implementing and Using Quality Assurance: Strategy and Practice

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 1 May 2007

The second European Quality Assurance Forum 2007 explores how to implement external and internal quality assurance processes and how to use the outcomes. The focus is on perspectives and frameworks for action and the exchange of examples of how to undertake evaluations. The European Standards and Guidelines will be examined as a guide to helping the implementation process, especially in the light of the London meeting of ministers in May 2007.

Following the success of the first European Quality Assurance Forum that was organised in 2006 at the Technical University of Munich, this second Forum, funded by the Socrates Programme and co-organised by ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE, will explore progress to date in implementing the standards and guidelines in higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies and aims at developing a common understanding of ways to develop further a European dimension for quality assurance.

The second Forum will be organised on **15–17 November 2007**. Please block the date in your calendar. (The host institution will be announced in March 2007.)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Forum participants will have a choice of three types of sessions:

- Institutional case studies geared at learning from specific examples
- Generic sessions to discuss broad aspects of QA
- Practical workshops that give hands-on advice on how to implement a specific tool

The Forum Organising Committee is inviting contributions to be presented in these track sessions. In this context, the organisers seek three types of contributions:

- **Individual papers:** An individual paper will be allocated to a working group where it will be presented with one or two other papers. The author is only responsible for his or her paper.
- **Session proposals:** A session proposal includes two to three papers on a specific topic. The authors are responsible for organising and chairing the working group.
- **Workshop proposals:** A workshop proposal will focus on providing participants with hands-on practical advice on how to implement a specific QA tool. Those proposing a workshop will be responsible for chairing it.

CONFERENCE THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

The Forum Organising Committee welcomes any contributions on the sub-themes listed below. These themes can be the topics of individual papers, sessions or, if appropriate, workshops.

I. Implementing quality

- Internal QA policy and procedures in higher education institutions or QA agencies
- Internal programme reviews in higher education institutions
- Evaluation of teaching and learning, including the design and use of teaching evaluation questionnaires
- Learning resources
- Student support and assessment
- Criteria and indicators
- Implementing learning outcomes
- Implementation of ESG – this could include a comparative approach
- External QA procedures: what works, what does not work

II. Using quality

- Reporting quality outcomes and providing information to stakeholders
- Institutional formation system
- Impact and unintended consequences of QA
- QA as a strategic tool for higher education institutions
- Review of QA agencies
- Assuring the quality of joint degrees by higher education institutions or QA agencies

III. Broad considerations of QA

- The European dimension of QA assurance, this can include, for instance, consideration of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- Designing and implementing an external accountability system, this can include, for instance, a presentation of a specific way to assure quality by QA agencies, trends in QA in Europe, a comparison of QA methods, etc.
- Quality assurance and the knowledge society: How can QA promote creativity in higher education?

PUBLICATION

A post-conference publication will be produced, based on a selection of the papers presented at the Forum. This publication is intended to contribute to the sustainability of the Forum's outcomes by providing a wider audience with up-to-date information on current debates on internal and external quality processes in Europe.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE PROPOSALS

1. *Paper and session proposals* will be assessed by members of the Forum Organising Committee for compliance with the criteria for acceptance.
 - The paper or session provides a substantial basis for discussion in the parallel sessions. Particularly, it identifies clearly the success and obstacles in implementing a specific QA aspect.
 - There is a clear focus of the paper or session that will be of interest to the participants of the conference.
 - The argument, development, and structure of the paper are logical, coherent and understandable.

Further details on how to structure your paper can be found in annex.

2. *Workshop proposals* will be evaluated in terms of the currency of the topic, the objectives of the workshop and the details of how the workshop will be run. Any supplementary documentation would be useful. For instance, a workshop proposal on comparing different kinds of teaching evaluation questionnaires would include the questionnaires that will be discussed during the workshop.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION

A paper proposal should:

- Indicate the conference sub-theme
- State the topic covered in the paper
- Identify the author(s) and, in the case of co-authored papers, indicate who will be responsible for presenting the paper at the Forum
- Identify the organisation of the author(s)
- Be outlined in no more than 1000 words
- Be accompanied by a 100–150 word abstract
- Specify any audio-visual requirements

A session proposal should:

- Indicate the conference sub-theme
- State the topic covered in the session
- Identify the chair of the session and his or her organisation
- Identify the authors/facilitators and their respective organisations
- Include a maximum of three short papers by three different authors or specify the way in which the workshop will operate
- Be outlined in no more than 3000 words (about 1000 words per paper) or a detailed account of up to 1000 words of the workshop session
- Be accompanied by a 100–150 word abstract
- Specify any audio-visual requirements

A workshop proposal should include:

- The theme of the workshop
- The main objectives
- Identify the chair of the workshop and his or her organisation
- Explain the activity

- Specify the optimal number of participants
- Specify any audio-visual requirements

PROCEDURE

Authors are requested to submit an outline (1000 words) of their paper or session proposal on the EUA website (<http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=345>). This outline will be evaluated by the Forum Organising Committee. The proposals that have been accepted will receive comments along which lines the full paper (maximum 3000 words) should be developed. In a second selection round, papers for the publication will be selected.

Workshop proposals should be submitted in outline (1000 words). This outline will be evaluated by the Forum Organising Committee. The proposals that have been accepted will receive comments along which lines the full workshop should be developed and include any supporting documentation that will be used during the workshop.

All acknowledgements will be by e-mail. Referees' comments will be communicated electronically. In most cases, authors will receive feedback on their submission, even when rejected.

CALENDAR

1 May 2007: All elements of the proposal must be submitted online in Microsoft Word format on the EUA website (<http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=345>). Submission will be possible from the beginning of April. Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed. Please do not send a hard copy or a PDF file unless specifically requested.

June 2007: Notification of acceptance or rejection will be sent by e-mail to all authors. Accepted proposals will be accompanied by comments. Information regarding the day and time of sessions at the Forum will be provided later.

30 September 2007: The final version of the papers (3000 words) must be submitted online.

FORUM ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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|-------------------|--|
| ENQA: | Emmi Helle and Bruno Curvale |
| ESIB: | Sanja Brus and Anela Beso |
| EUA: | Prof. Henrik Toft Jensen and Dr Andrée Surssock |
| EURASHE: | Prof. Lucien Bollaert and Dr Bryan Maguire |
| Academic advisor: | Prof. Lee Harvey, Director Centre for Research and Evaluation Sheffield Hallam University |

Annex 1: GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS¹

Content

Papers should be original. If there is an overlap with material published elsewhere, details should be given.

The EQAF is an international event aimed at those interested in the theory, practice and policies relating to the control, management, improvement and evaluation of quality in higher education. This has two implications for authors.

First, the paper has to be of interest to a broad readership, which means that (a) the paper draws on international examples, or (b) reports some international comparative research, or (c), if country specific, explains how developments in one country have been informed by international developments, or (d) how developments or research in one country has implications beyond its borders. The aim is to provide readers with information about, and lessons from, ideas and practices that are transportable from other contexts.

Second, the paper should avoid local references or assume that the readership will understand the processes used in a specific institution, or agency or be familiar with the higher education system in a given country. Localised abbreviations or taken-for-granted notions should not be cited without explanation. Some words are ambiguous and should be used with care. 'Faculty' in the UK, for example, is an organisational unit of a university, in the US it means, what in the UK would be called the academic staff. 'School' rarely means a University in the UK, unlike in the US. So it is incumbent on authors to be clear about terminology.

A clear line of argument (or story) should flow through the paper. The paper needs to keep readers interested: they should not struggle to get to the end of the paper.

Institutional Case Studies

The case can be developed from a QA agency's or a higher education institution's perspective as well as from the perspective of a faculty or a department, demonstrating the various tensions and challenges.

Suggested headings:

- The quality assurance approach and/or strategy of the institution
- Legal/national/cultural context and/or constraints
- Stating the specific case and core issues
- Barriers and problems encountered when implementing new practice
- Policies and tools applied to overcome them
- Successes achieved/status to date
- Lessons learned (what would you do differently in retrospect)
- Key issues still to be mastered (this would be particularly helpful in generating discussion during the session)

Methodological Papers

Research methodology should be included in the paper but in an economical way that provides maximum information in as few words as possible. The following should be provided where appropriate: methodological approach including epistemological underpinnings; data sources including sample and population details; sampling method;

¹ These guidelines have been adapted from the guidelines of the journal *Quality in Higher Education*

response rates/drop out rates; how data was collected; forms of analysis (not the name of software packages (e.g. SPSS) but what techniques were used (e.g. cross-tabulation); any methodological concerns. If the methodology is complex and inhibits the 'story' then it is acceptable to put detail in a methodological footnote. Statistical data should be reported in an accessible way – especially where it is fundamental to the argument. Peripheral numerical details, such as significance levels, correlation coefficients, should normally be incorporated into tables or footnotes unless they can be integrated into the text without making it cumbersome and hard to read.

Abstract

The first sentence or two of the abstract should sum up the core idea, argument or thesis of the paper. This should be followed by details of the evidence used to support the argument. The implications of the paper (for different stakeholders) should normally follow.

Length

Contributions to the Forum should be a maximum of 3000 words and should include an abstract of 100–150 words.