

# How to maximise the benefits of the external review – future planning and development

## AEQES as a case study

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NATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN 2020



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Social  
Fund

## AEQES as a case study

*The EHEA is characterised by its diversity of political systems, higher education systems, socio-cultural and educational traditions, languages, aspirations and expectations.*

2015 ESG, intro (page 8)



# Outline

1. background data: the HE sector in FR-speaking community within which AEQES operates
2. AEQES' mission statement and key features
3. ENQA reviews timeline
4. maximising benefits...
5. future planning and developments
6. conclusions



# background

## Key features of Belgium

- Constitutional parliamentary monarchy
- A federal government, 3 communities, 3 regions
- Population of 11 million inhabitants

[further information : [www.belgium.be](http://www.belgium.be)]

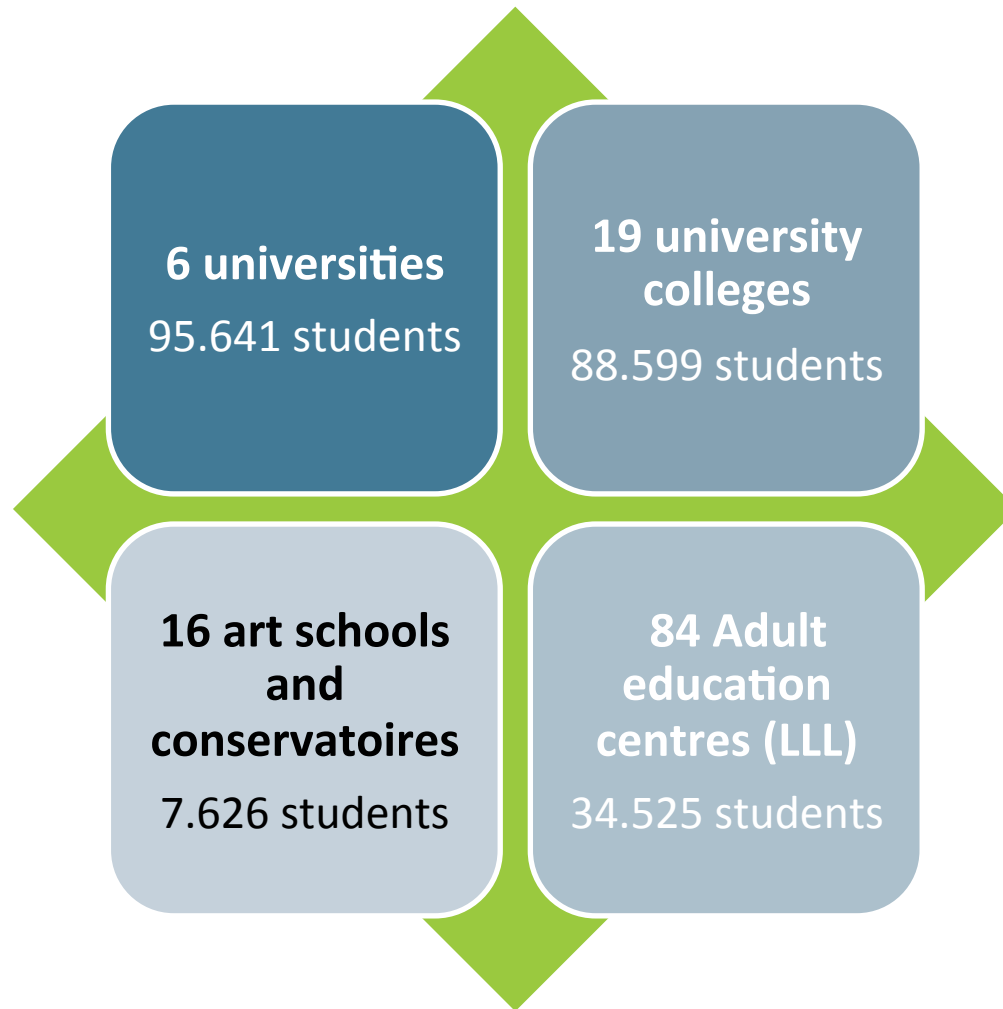
## Higher education in Federation Wallonia-Brussels

- Communities are competent for education, culture, research and people-related affairs
- Long academic tradition, great variety of HE providers and study programmes
- HE is a public good : social dimension
- Approx. 226.400 students
- 79 % in Bachelor; 16 % in Master and 4 % in PhD



# HE Sector in FWB

Figures 2015/16



# AEQES mission statement

*AEQES is an independent public sector agency, practising formative evaluation based on a dialogue between all stakeholders within the French Community. Fully embedded in the European context, the Agency is responsible for assessing the quality of higher education and working for its continuous improvement.*

*[...]*

See [http://www.aeqes.be/english\\_about\\_us.cfm](http://www.aeqes.be/english_about_us.cfm)



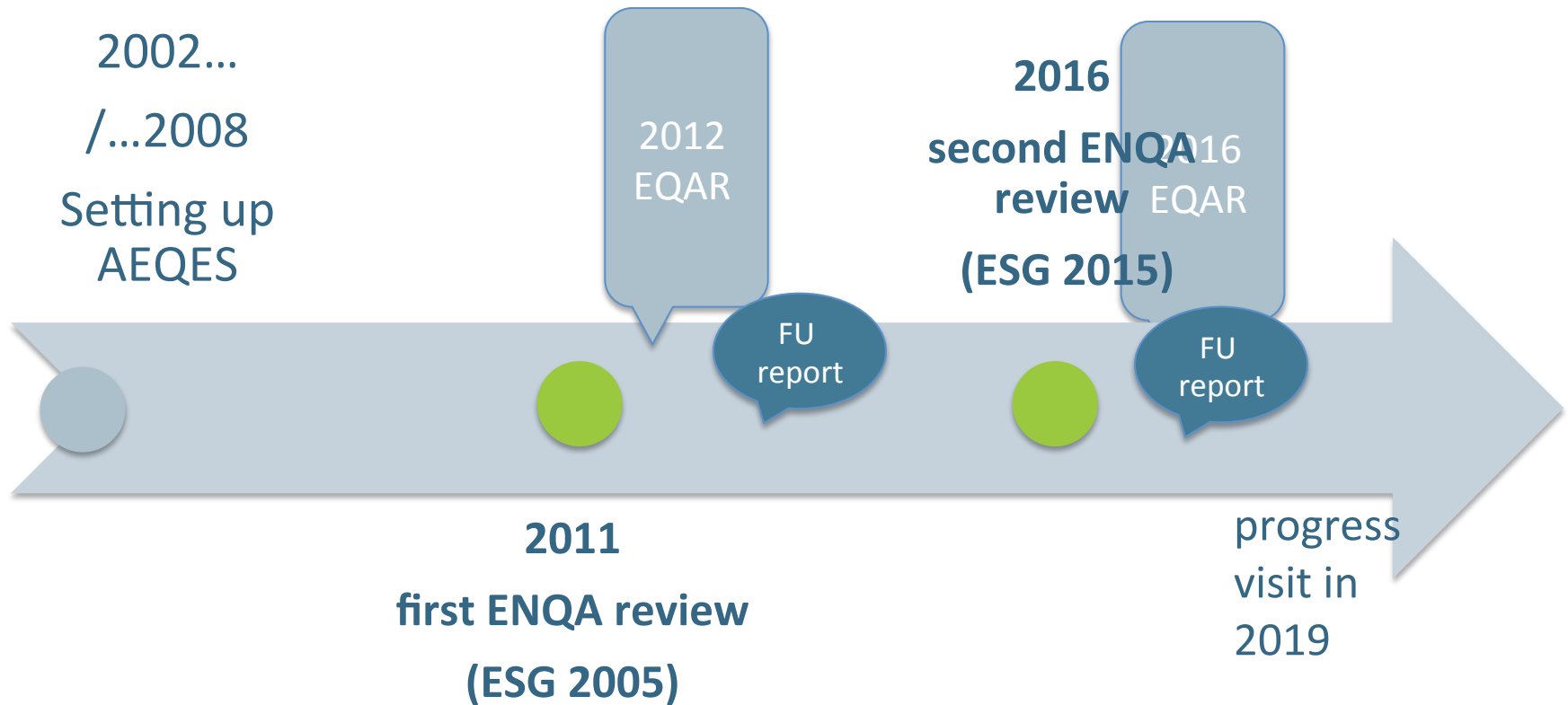
# AEQES key features

- Programme-based quality assurance
- Based on cycles of 10-year planning (with follow-up evaluation after 5 years)
- All similar programmes are evaluated simultaneously (cluster approach) and a transversal study is produced as well for each cluster ; they serve as a base for regular thematic analysis
- Formative QA evaluation process (fitness for purpose approach): no formal effects in terms of institution fundings or authorisation (AEQES is not an accreditation agency)
- No ranking, no scores
- 60 % of the experts are « international »

NOW: METHODOLOGICAL CHANGES IN DEVELOPMENT

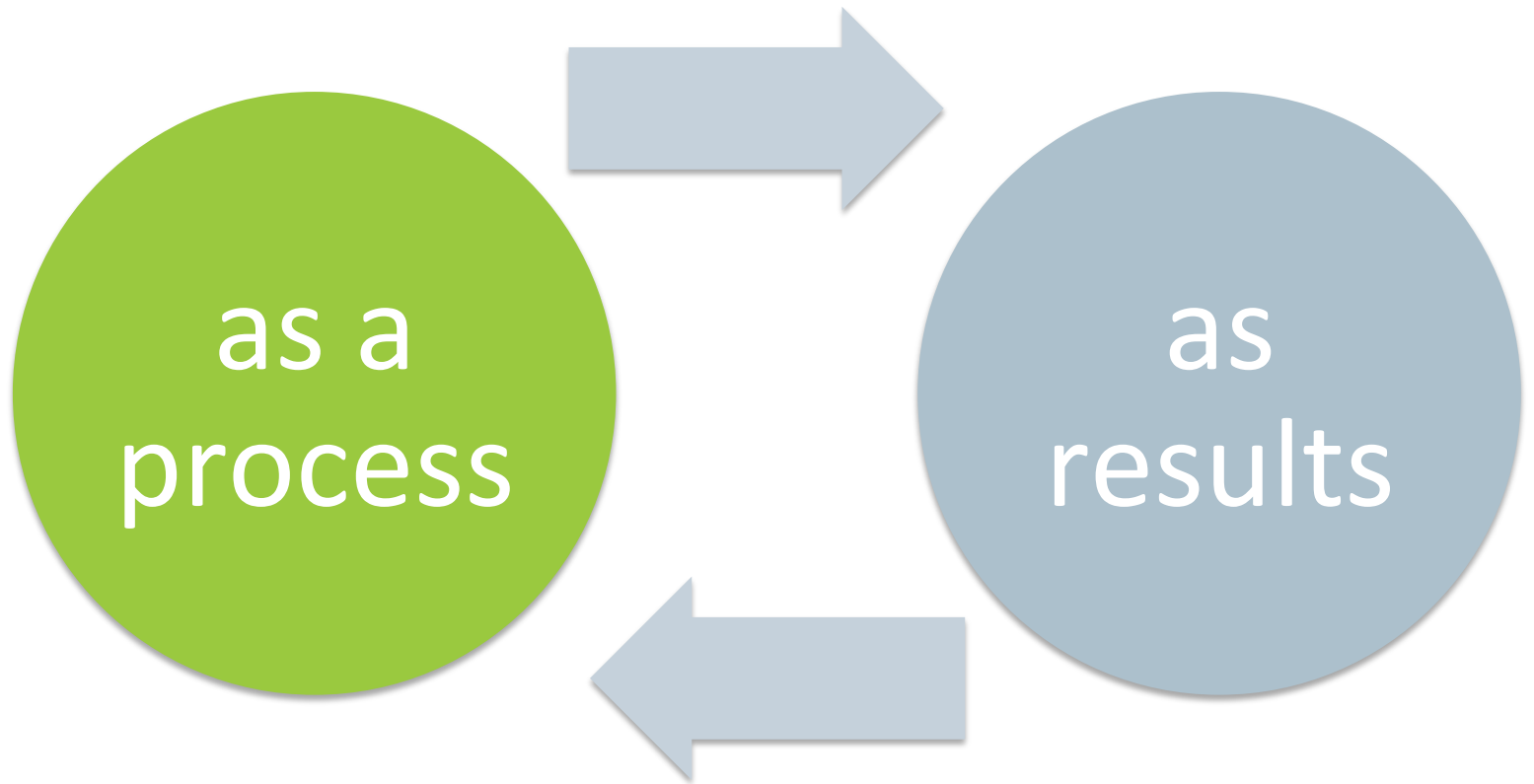


# ENQA reviews timeline





# how to maximise ENQA reviews?



...as results

Lists of recommendations from ENQA and EQAR  
>>>> **concrete ACTION LINES**

Examples of areas for development for AEQES

Evaluation cycle length

Resources and HR independence

Place of students in QA processes

Set of standards (ESG part more apparent)

Dissemination of the thematic analyses

Update of the translation of documents on the website



## further reflexions

Scaling the achievements ?

Contextualisation vs European dimension?  
How strong can benchlearning be?



## ... as a process



## ... as a process that

### STAFF

- gives time for self reflection, tracability and formality
- develops an evidence-based state of mind

### AEQES DECISION BODY

- gives the agency feedback on its activities and processes (including on its communication practices)
- imposes a PACE – supports establishing strategic plans and regular annual plans

### HEIs – ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

- increases or establishes legitimacy and trust « everyone must take its own medicine! »
- shows that the agency experiences transparency as well - from ENQA, from EQAR, from the agency itself

### EXPERTS

- provides more trust, and makes extra information available

### POLICY MAKERS, LABOUR MARKET, WIDER SOCIETY

- guarantees that information is available (AEQES' roadmap: be EQAR registered!)



# AEQES future developments

- wide stakeholders consultancy process (from 2015 on)
- methodological proposal (October 2017)
- endorsed by the gouvernement (Dec 2017)
- PILOT PHASE (2019-2022) + final report
- new Act to be elaborated to frame the changes



## to conclude with

using the review process and results to

- gain legitimacy and trust
- facilitate improvement (clear guidance and political momentum)
- support strategic and operational development of the agency *in due time*



# Thank you !

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