ENQA Leadership Programme
The Role of Stakeholders in External Quality Assurance
8 November 2018

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Statement of Purpose

- Current stakeholder involvement in QA processes in the project group members' QA agencies.

- How the agencies could move from a tendency for external quality assurance, which is supervisory in nature to a system which is 'improvement oriented' through stakeholder involvement

- The presentation will refer to the relevant ESG with regards to stakeholder involvement and stakeholder management

Stakeholder definition

According to Freeman (1968) stakeholders are those **groups who can affect or are affected by the achievement of an organization's purpose [...]** Every agency should/must take its stakeholders into account in a systematic fashion

Stakeholder classification

	Power	Legitimacy	Urgency
Latent stakeholder			
Dormant stakeholder (1)	▓		
Discretionary stakeholder (2)		▓	
Demanding stakeholder (3)			▓
Salient/Expectant stakeholder			
Dominant stakeholder (4)	▓	▓	
Dependent stakeholder (5)		▓	▓
Dangerous stakeholder (6)	▓		▓
Definitive stakeholder			
Definitive Stakeholder (7)	▓	▓	▓

Stakeholder identification

Government

(e.g. Ministry responsible for HE and research)*

International QA Bodies (e.g. ENQA, EQAR)

External Evaluation Committees

QA Bodies

Students

HEIs

Academics

Employers

Competitors

Society (Unions, prof. bodies, families etc)

	Catalunya Spain	Cyprus	UK
Governments	Definitive	Dominant	Discretionary
HEI	Dependent	Definitive	Dominant
Academics	Discretionary	Dependent	Discretionary
Students	Discretionary	Dependent	Discretionary
EU QA Bodies	Definitive	Definitive	Definitive
Society	Dependent	Dormant	Discretionary
International QA Bodies	Discretionary	Definitive	Not applicable
External advisory/evaluation committees	Dominant	Dominant	Dominant
Competitors			Dangerous
The Charity Commission			Definitive

ESGs relating to stakeholder involvement

We identified the key ESGs with regards to stakeholder involvement and stakeholder management at the level of the quality assurance agencies. These are 2.2 (designing methodologies fit for purpose); 2.3 (implementing processes); 2.7 (complaints and appeals) 3.1 (activities, policy and processes for quality assurance); 3.2 (official status); 3.3 (independence); 3.6 (internal quality assurance and professional conduct) and 3.7 (cyclical external review of agencies)

ENQA

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

ESGs relating to stakeholder involvement

Using our official ENQA reports and/or self-assessments, each quality assurance agency mapped its approach to stakeholder involvement and mangement against the relevant ESGs to establish where there was a correlation and where there were gaps

Overall – there was a strong correlation – for more detail – read our paper

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Case study conclusions

BAC case study conclusions (1/2)

- There is no doubt that the benefits of working well with stakeholders, for any quality assurance agency, far outweigh any challenges that may present themselves.

- The involvement of stakeholders in focus groups looking at up-dating the various schemes is now well established in BAC's working practices.

- The involvement of students and educational stakeholders in our decision-making body is key – this is where accreditation decisions are made so is key to our QA processes

BAC case study conclusions

- How can we make more use of stakeholders in our overall management and governance and how can we attract a wider range of stakeholders?

- BAC will continue to give this whole area considerable thought in the future and will actively explore ways to improve and deepen the use of stakeholders. It will acknowledge the challenges whilst ensuring that the way it works can be enrichened going forward.

AQU case study conclusions (1/2)

The procedure for developing new methodology for the PhD accreditation was studied in regards to stakeholder involvement in producing it.

Implementing this procedure has got many benefits:

1. The involvement of stakeholders in the definition of the methodology that will apply to their programs accreditation so they feel heard.

2. The methodology approved takes into account the institutional context not only the legal framework.

3. AQU ensures that methodology will not be rejected by institutions.

4. The consultation process helps to disseminate quality culture

AQU case study conclusions (2/2)

AQU regularly surveys the opinion of stakeholders about their collaboration.

1. They especially appreciate the technical quality of the guides and procedures and the consultation processes.

2. Nevertheless, they would like to have a more thorough feed-back on which of their suggestions have been introduced and why. So this is a clear area for improvement in the procedure.

3. Another area for improvement is to get a greater student involvement in processes and methodology construction which should be accomplished in the permanent Student Commission.

CYQAA case study conclusions (1/2)

Basic principle: high sense of responsibility towards students and society in regard to high quality higher education.

Cyprus' higher education can serve the government objective for establishing Cyprus as a regional center for quality education. CYQAA has adopted this objective and is working towards this direction alongside and in close collaboration with its stakeholders.

Accreditation works for the benefit of students, HEIs, employers, and the society in general as it ensures that the graduates will have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities, that is the learning outcomes reflected in the criteria of external evaluation.
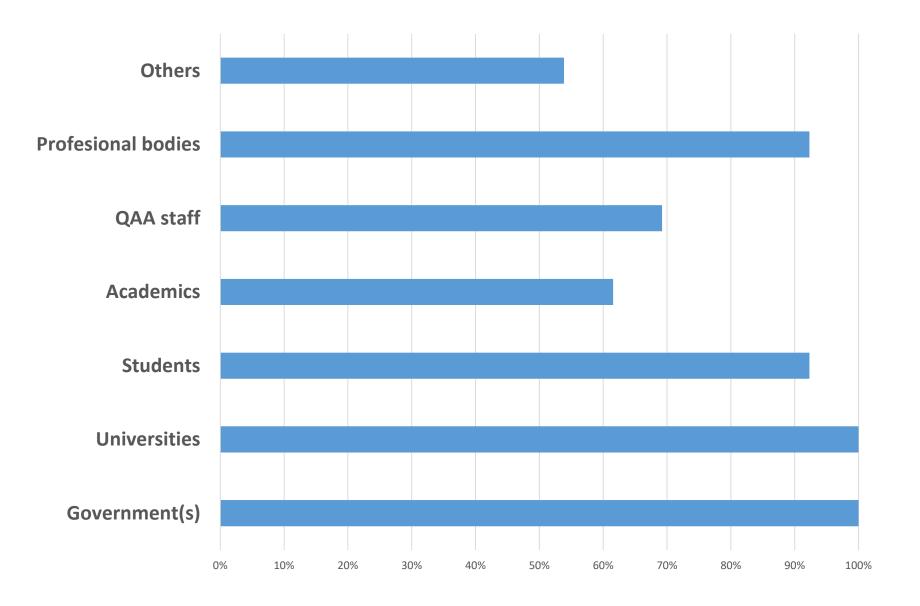
CYQAA case study conclusions (2/2)

The Agency's role is catalytic in supporting HEIs. It has assumed a leading role.

With the cooperation of all stakeholders (ie the government, HEIs, and European QA organizations) it will be able to act in a subsidiary way so that HEIs can respond to an ever changing HE landscape while ensuring that the academic qualifications acquired by students and their experience during their studies remain at the forefront of their mission.

An important challenge that lies ahead is that of building trust via a more active involvement of the stakeholders.
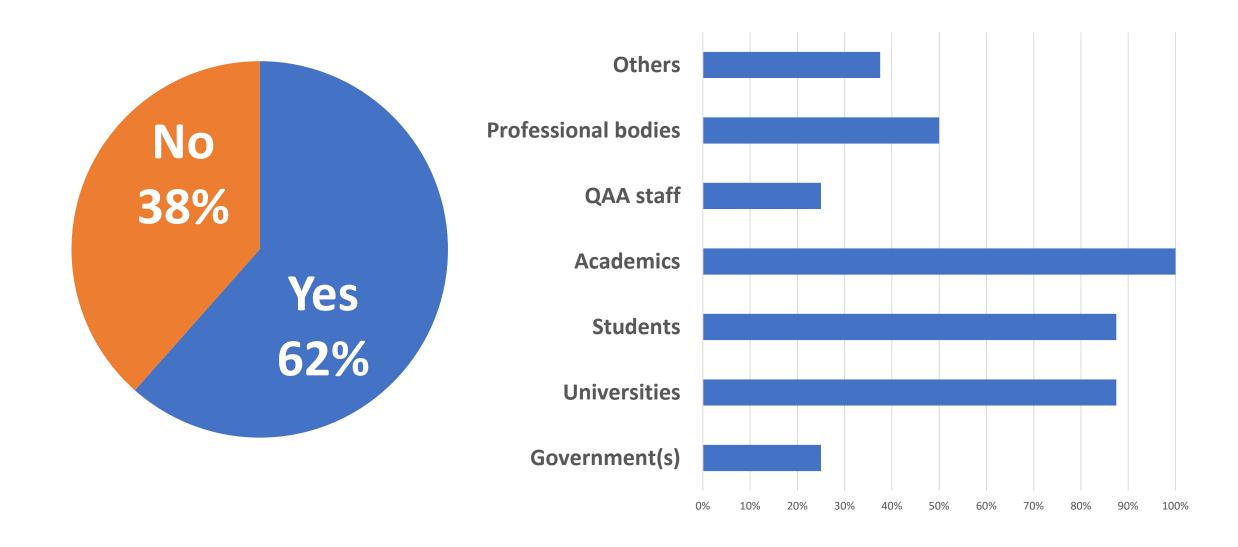
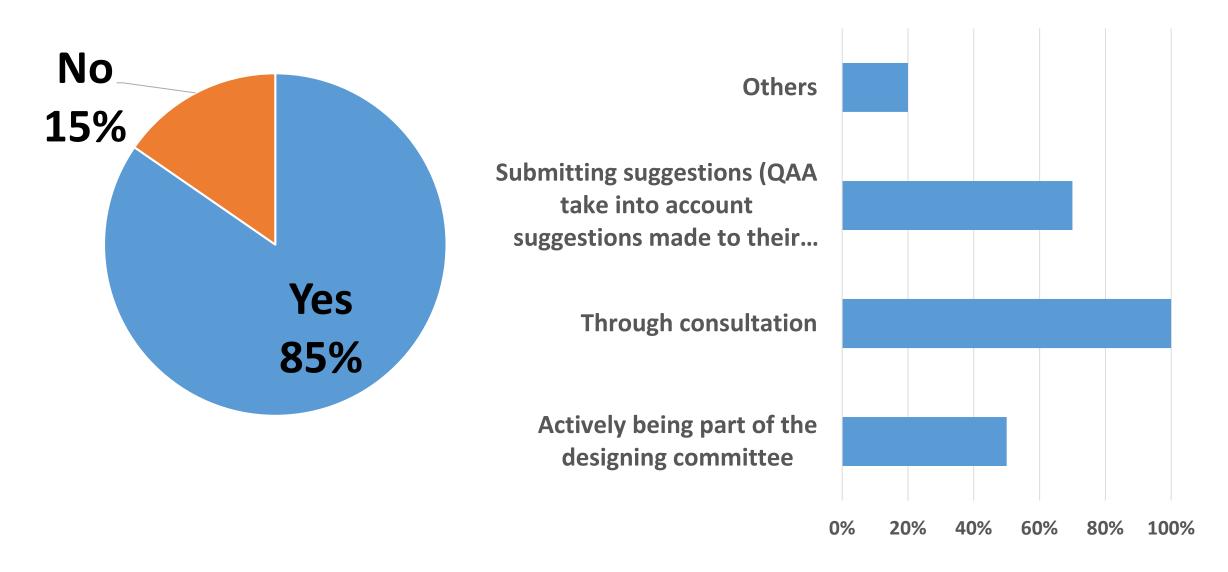# Stakeholders for QAAs participating in the Leadership programme

100% QAA have identified Goverments and Universities as main stakeholders and more than 90% Students and Professional Bodies

Among others we find other public organisations, labour market organisations, scientific associations, private institutes, ENQA and eqar
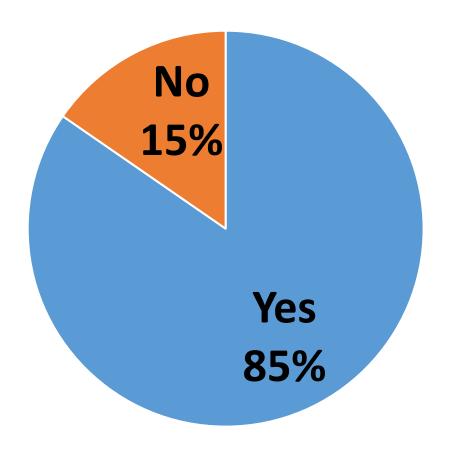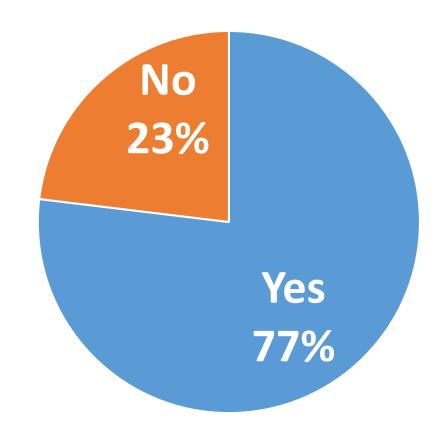
Stakeholders involvement in Governing Bodies
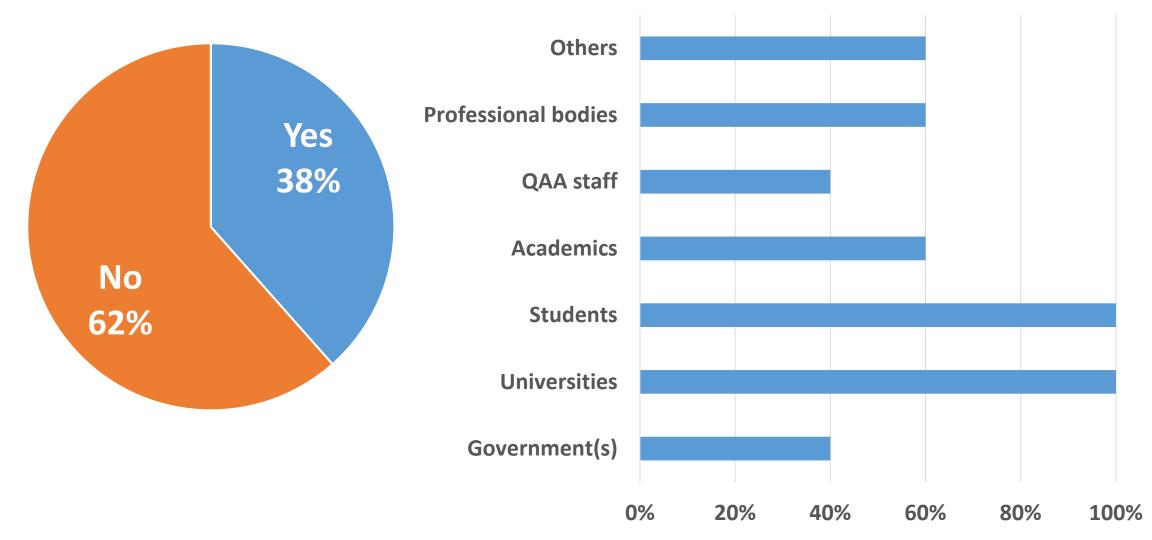
Do stakeholders participate in the methodology design?

Pie chart:
- Yes 85%
- No 15%

Bar chart:
- Others
- Submitting suggestions (QAA take into account suggestions made to their...
- Through consultation
- Actively being part of the designing committee

Axis: 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Do stakeholders participate in the assessment procedures design?

No 15%

Yes 85%

Do stakeholders participate in QAA meta-assessment procedures or QAA self-assessment activities?

No 23%

Yes 77%
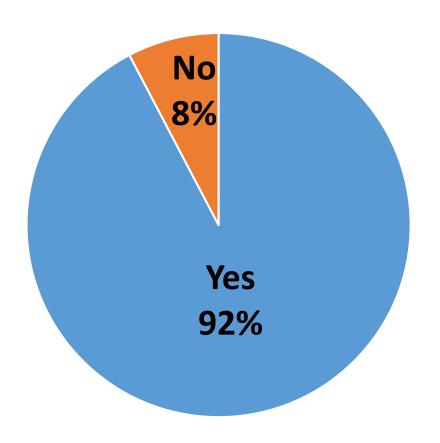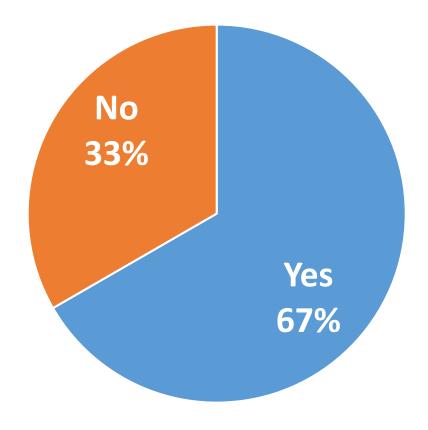
Has your QAA permanent stakeholder committees?

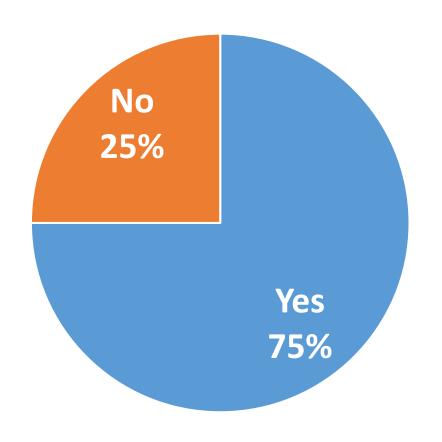**Can stakeholders submit suggestions to QAA about processes and their results?**
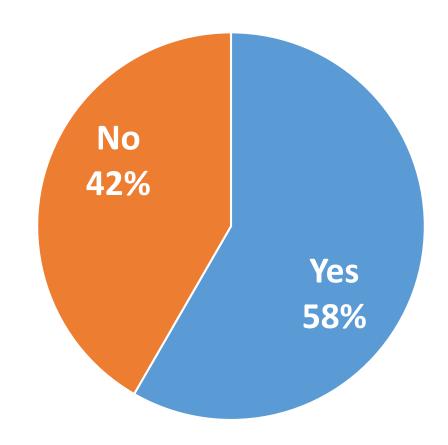
Does your QAA conduct stakeholder satisfaction surveys?

Pie chart 1:
- No 8%
- Yes 92%

Pie chart 2:
- No 33%
- Yes 67%

Can stakeholders apply to be appointed as external reviewers?

No 25%

Yes 75%

Has your QAA well established criteria for the stakeholder appointment?

No 42%

Yes 58%

BENEFITS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Creates greater mutual understanding and builds trust

Increases quality assurance agencies' transparency and accountability

Provides co-responsibility with stakeholders and increases legitimacy of assessment procedures and their results

But
Stronger involvement could lead to a potential clash with independence?

Involvement of stakeholders in methodology design and QAA decision-making bodies

Permanent specific commissions in some agencies, mainly, students and universities

In 92% of cases stakeholders can submit suggestions or complaints about QAA procedures and their results

Stakeholder satisfaction surveys in 2 out of 3 agencies

In 3 out of 4 agencies stakeholders can apply to be appointed as external examiners

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is still room for improving participation of stakeholders in QAA decision making bodies (62%)

To a great extent Governing Body members are appointed by Governments or Parliaments

More involvement of academics in designing methodology and QAA decision-making bodies not only as experts in evaluation committees

Not all agencies have written criteria for stakeholder appointment

The Future

- Supporting education providers in quality management and in strengthening quality culture is one of our agencies' priorities.

- A crucial element to enhancing a quality culture is building trust.

- Our agencies are building trust through various processes such as a common set of evaluation criteria, transparent procedures and compliance with the ESG, but it is understood that these will be developed further.

- It is imperative that trust in the system and the quality assurance mechanisms of our agencies are further strengthened by enhancing stakeholder involvement in policy making and QA procedures in general.

- If our national quality assurance systems gradually move from a regulatory focus to a more improvement oriented and quality culture building model, trust and collaboration should continue to increase.

Question Time

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