ENQA Leadership Development Programme

EQA Communication

- Shirley Gibbins   RCVS, UK

- Maria E. Weber   AQ, Austria

- Dagmar Provijn   NVAO, Netherlands

- Ulf Hedbjörk   UKÄ, Sweden

- Kaija Kumpas-Lenk   EKKA, Estonia

- Caroline Natland   NOKUT, Norway

What do we mean by EQA Communication?

- We were required to consider how and what we communicate as quality assurance agencies

- We looked at:
  - EQA Reports and how these are conveyed
  - Other types of EQA
  - Who we are trying to reach
  - Suggestions for future approaches

How we approached the task

- We agreed that it would be most useful to have representation from all available agencies on the LDP

- Survey generated from the key questions

- Responses indicated that QA agencies are mostly national agencies with a legislative requirement
  - Everyone considers their agency to be independent
  - Three respondents considered themselves to be private, with either a subject specific or a regulatory function

Agencies and Staffing

- Most agencies (7/15 or 47%) had fewer than 20 staff members

- Two (13%) agencies had between 30-50 staff members

- Three (20%) agencies had between 60-80 staff members and only two had 100 or over

  - Clear to see that most QA agencies are quite small and each member of staff may well have large job roles. BUT the upside is that with small teams, developments to EQA communications may be easier

Who is communicating?

- Most agencies have staff dedicated to Communications
  - However, not all of the communications staff are dedicated to EQA Communications

- There appears to be a move towards more dedicated staff for communication

Responsible for communication

12%

25%

63%
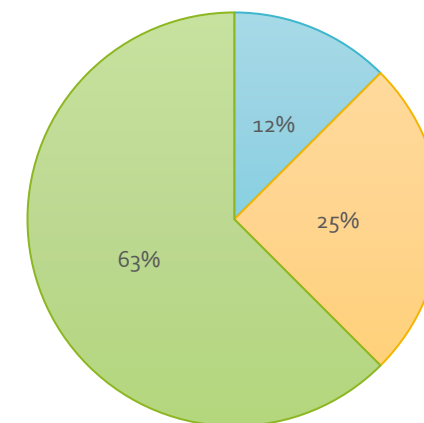
□ Everyone □ A few people □ Dedicated staff

How are they communicating?

- The role of communications personnel is very diverse
  - Development of content
  - Distribution of content
  - Transfer of information
  - Coordination function

- Generally everyone felt they had a role in the communication of EQA results

Who are they communicating with?

- Stakeholders were identified as diverse and often agency specific:
  - HEIs
  - Students
  - Vocational/continuing education providers
  - Policy makers
  - State agencies or regulatory bodies
  - Labour market
 - International contacts

What are they communicating?

- Respondents identified the following as their interpretation of what is communicated as 'EQA':
  - Institutional audit
  - Accreditation
  - Programme evaluation
  - Supervision of providers
  - Focused reviews
  - Thematic analysis
  - Support for HEI enhancement
  - Review of QA agencies
  - International review

How is this communicated?

- Communication channels that are most utilised:
  - Agency website
    - Reports, newsletters, press releases
  - Seminars and workshops
  - Social media

- Some other agencies are also utilising:
  - Online magazine
  - HEI training sessions/consultations
  - Annual conferences/presentation of papers
  - Telephone/teleconference
  - Stakeholder meetings

Is it effective?

- **YES!! Only one respondent felt it was not effective**
  - However, four respondents felt that there was no way of measuring the effectiveness
  - And this does not reflect the impact of the communication
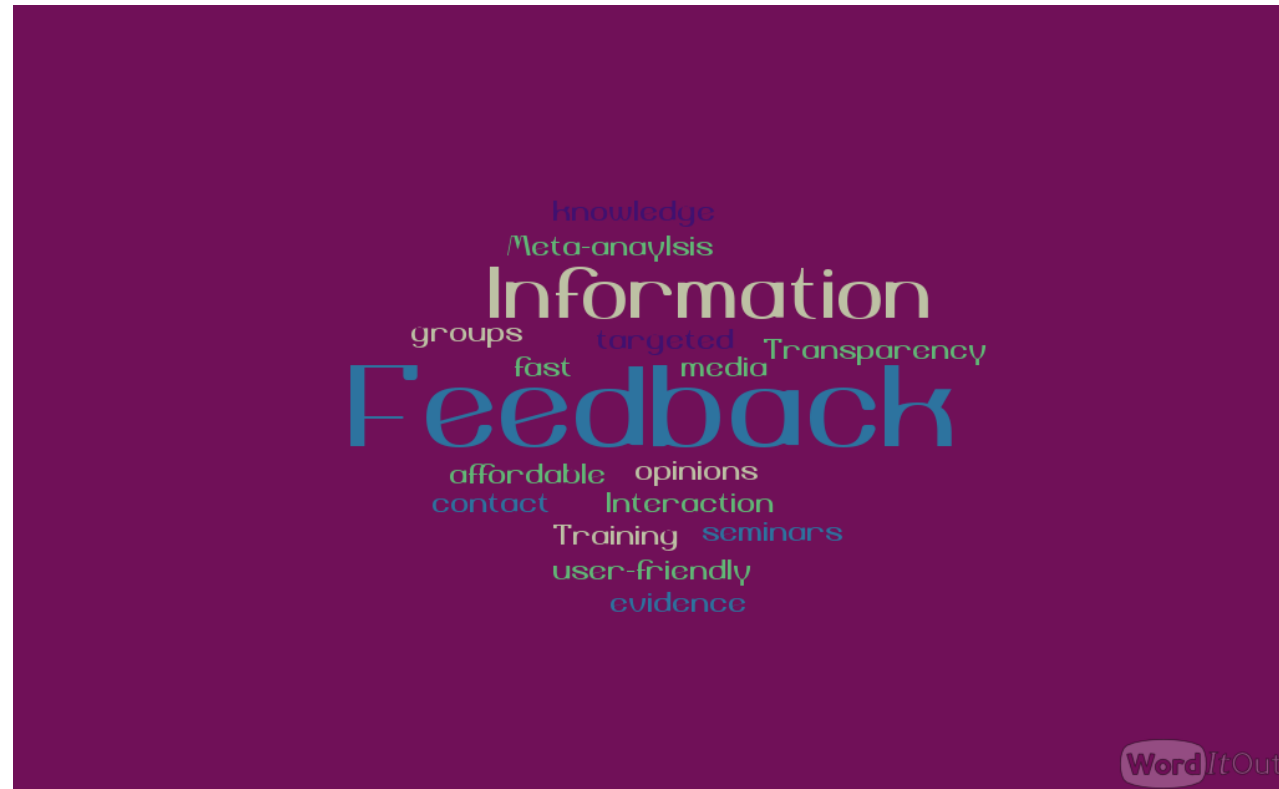
How could it be improved?

- Improve upon existing communication of EQA results

- Extend communication sources that can be used, allowing for a more holistic perspective

- International platform for sharing information on new developments and good practices in EQA

- **Sharing best practice**

Looking forward...

- QA agencies are required to communicate quality assurance diplomatically, whilst ensuring the communication is relevant to the various stakeholders

- Communication is currently facilitated across a wide variety of processes, and each agency is required to determine how this is most effective for them

- The content and delivery of quality assurance must be accessible and achievable

- Understanding of reach and effectiveness could be better assessed and understood