

## ENQA webinar on online site visits and external quality assurance in times of COVID-19

16 June 2020

### Transcript of webinar chat box

- 02:33:32 PM            Gieks Sugiyono: FYI, BAN-PT has just started online site visit this week"
- 02:38:22 PM            Erato Ioannou: In Cyprus we have amended the law and it now allows for online site visits
- 02:40:06 PM            Nabil RI Kadhi: Commission for Academic Accreditation in United Arab Emirates is conducting visit online now. My institution had an experience there
- 02:42:45 PM            Aslihan Nasir: In Turkey, we'll implement a hybrid model. Almost 75% of the site visits will be virtual and the rest will be face to face.
- 02:43:52 PM            Maria Kelo – ENQA: Are there some more among you in addition to Cyprus who need changes in the law to allow for online visits?
- 02:44:21 PM            Fiona Crozier: Aslihan, how will you decide which are virtual and which physical?
- 02:45:31 PM            Maria Kelo – ENQA: And is anybody considering a hybrid model for each visit, such as local experts in person and international online?
- 02:45:53 PM            Charlotte Elam: Since mid-March UKĀ,, has conducted 9 site-visits for institutional reviews online. Hs worked very well! Shorter sessions, longer breaks advisable! Currently conducting a survey to get more feedback from HEIs and panels.
- 02:46:33 PM            Aslihan Nasir: Actually, all of the follow up visits will be online. For institutional evaluation and accreditation, the first two phases will be virtual for all HEIs.
- 02:46:36 PM            Nabil RI Kadhi: CAA uses mix of locally based and international expert but by time of Covid-19 all experts are conducting the visit online from their home countries
- 02:47:14 PM            Maria E. Weber: AQ Austria - the Board needed to change its procedure on decision making - as for now - it can also take accred. decisions by circular resolutions - and not as foreseen only with physical decision making. In addition the Board decided that all ongoing programme accreditations (around 20 ) are conducted via virtual site visits. all institutional acc. procedures have been postponed to autumn.
- 02:47:41 PM            Nabil RI Kadhi: duration extended from 3 to 5 days as some time consideration is there due to different time zones, Practically 03-04 hrs daily as meetings with a limit to 10 participants including the experts maximum. some are made in // with one to one
- 02:48:03 PM            OLGUN CICEK: Thanks Maria. I think this would be the best option until the pandemic is over.
- 02:48:05 PM            Maria Kelo – ENQA: Oh yes Maria Weber, the physical meeting requirements may go beyond site visit to decision making - another important point to consider

- 02:49:23 PM Ahmad Jammal: Universities can prepare a video about all facilities and physical resources"
- 02:49:26 PM Lali Giorgidze Yes Maria, this is us - NCEQE, Georgia, we need a change in the law to allow for online visits
- 02:49:27 PM Aslihan Nasir: @fiona But the last phase in which we are making interviews with academic and administrative staff, we'll make face to face visit to see the real contributions of the stakeholders, and to observe the actual atmosphere.
- 02:49:32 PM Diana Morriss: At BAC in the UK - we already do some of our shorter interim reviews online for some time - we are now considering extending this to our full and reaccreditation reviews and are getting stakeholder input to our proposals - so this webinar is very useful
- 02:49:52 PM María Angeles Serrano: Thank you Peter we are following these principles in ANECA for virtual visits
- 02:49:59 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: Virtual tour of the campuses is made part of the visit. All stockholders (staff, students, academics, boards) kept same
- 02:50:08 PM Maria E. Weber: Virtual site visits can not be 1:1 like ""normal site visits - tailor make, focused - prior to the virtual site visit we asked the panel members to analyze the applications even more thorough and identify questions to be asked prior. the HEI were asked to answer a set of questions prior to the meetings. the site visits as such where then focused on particular open issues for clarifications.
- 02:50:34 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Virtual tour of the campus - very interesting idea!
- 02:51:02 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: yep and live not recorded very interesting
- 02:51:32 PM Maria E. Weber: since also panel members were in home office, home schooling, home what so ever - we are really thankful that the majority was willing and open to still participate in the workload intensive alternative modes of review.
- 02:51:50 PM Ahmad Jammal: BAU in Lebanon prepared a complete video for the Commission about the evolution and the facilities and resources and labs
- 02:52:03 PM Maria E. Weber: in some cases we asked for video statements and shared them with the experts
- 02:52:13 PM LILIAN Kek: Was online visits optional in your country? In some areas where internet connection is poor, we are using a blended approach, including recordings, proctoring, but these would require further verifications
- 02:52:33 PM Fiona Crozier: Has anyone trained experts on-line? I think Peter mentioned it briefly...

- 02:53:04 PM Naim Gashi: In Kosovo, we have completed the process of online evaluation of higher education institutions. The evaluation was made by international experts. We are now continuing the evaluation of academic programs.
- 02:53:12 PM Erato Ioannou: Expert training can be done online too?
- 02:53:16 PM Gieks Sugiyono: How do we ensure that the participants involved are those who are designated and authorised to do so?
- 02:53:41 PM Jordan Petrescu: would it be advisable to proceed online evaluation for Medical study programs ????
- 02:53:44 PM Maria E. Weber: we use also in non covid times online tools to prepare experts for site visits - prior to prep meetings before site visits and in addition to voluntary prep workshops
- 02:53:45 PM LILIAN Kek: In cases where using online site visits does not yield the expected outcomes, what are some options taken?"
- 02:53:56 PM: OLGUN CICEK: In the US, QM (Quality Matters) is doing it online
- 02:53:57 PM: Anne Karine SØRSKÅR: In Norway we had training of experts online
- 02:54:32 PM Aslihan Nasir: As THEQC, we already gave an online training for the team leaders Fiona.
- 02:54:50 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: for sure experts need to adjust in process and kind of questions. Being member of panel myself i can assure that guideline for online visits are needed
- 02:54:57 PM Fiona Crozier: @Anne - did the training go well?
- 02:55:13 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: As to training of experts, yes, this can be done online. Of course as for any online education or training, the methods need to be adjusted
- 02:55:23 PM Anne Karine SØRSKÅR: yes, I think so.
- 02:55:29 PM Fiona Crozier: and @Aslihan! Same question!
- 02:55:31 PM Maria Browning: ECCE (for European and S. African chiropractic programmes) considered online visits that were due March 2020 and institutions were keen (as less cost) but ECCE evaluation team experts were not keen as felt students may not be back before December and experts would miss important conversations regarding the accreditation that occur over dinner etc. So we postponed 2 visits for 12 months. However, this gives the institutions a extra year of accreditation.
- 02:55:44 PM OLGUN CICEK: It is time and cost saving as well for all
- 02:55:44 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: Participant open their camera and prior to visit a CV with photo and ID can be requested for authenticity. Same in online you trust that the speaker are the one claiming to be so i don't see extra challenge there

02:56:11 PM Gieks Sugiyono: During the site visit we have to look at the facilities provided to students, How to ensure that the equipments are theirs, adequate and functions properly?

02:56:19 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Guidelines for online visits - what are the most important elements on which guidance is needed?

02:56:45 PM OLGUN CICEK: assessment/qiz/assignment

02:57:27 PM Maria Browning: that student experience matches expectations

02:57:49 PM Fiona Crozier: @Maria K - I think guideline on team private discussions are also needed. The private team meetings are a v important part of any site visit

02:57:50 PM Mairead Boland: We found it useful to divide guidance into role (institutional representative, external stakeholder, review team member (and roles on review team - chair, etc.) and QA agency support - we also divided guidance into guidance for before, during and after the meeting.

02:58:15 PM Aslihan Nasir: As THEQC, we've added some indicators to rubrics for the quality assurance of online education as well.

02:58:45 PM Mairead Boland: We asked the institution to circulate guidance for institutional participants and stakeholders in advance of the review visit. A lot of the guidance focussed on technology and meeting etiquette.

02:58:47 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: One way to authenticate in some degree the attendance is to have personal tokens, sent to a professional or institutional email. And of course at the end we have a trust based approach where at the end we cannot check everything but need to ensure good guidance and basic checks, and then go ahead

02:59:09 PM: Nabil RI Kadhi: many aspects in guidelines such as making sure the participant is not referring to document in front or having other in the room etc so time of questions, cutting some how the answer and redirect on another topic is among techniques to have

02:59:33 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Thanks, good ideas. And yes, meetings between experts are fundamental!

02:59:38 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: also the list of SMs required in advance has to be changed now for better preparation and focus of questions

03:00:00 PM LILIAN Kek: MQA produce a generic guideline explaining the what, and whys of online visit, principles involve. We also have specific guidelines for the institutions, assessors on the how and preparations required.

03:00:30 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Ideally, what we are planning to do for our own reviews online, is to have two separate meeting rooms/tools: one for the interviews and one for the panel only. To add an extra layer of privacy for the panel and ensure nobody follows the conversation who should not.

June 16, 2020 03:01:00 PM,mboland@qqi.ie,"Mairead Boland","QQI did the same, Maria - we set up an all-day private review team meeting that reviewers could join at any point during the day"

- 03:01:03 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: same happen here two spaces used
- 03:01:18 PM Maria E. Weber: AQ Austria has also informed HEI - generic guideline - on changes in procedures / postponements, changes in decision making etc.
- 03:01:38 PM Dr. Peter Mall: we are also using break-out rooms for smaller discussion rounds.
- 03:01:44 PM Mairead Boland: We decided to create separate meetings for sessions with different stakeholder groups to ensure that no-one joined the wrong meeting
- 03:01:46 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Recording or not recording? What to do in case of technical hiccups?
- 03:02:16 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: AS HEI we internally drafted some additional point of interest and needed for consideration points as the visit was online and we took them in consideration in the preparation and the conduct of the meetings
- 03:02:19 PM Dr. Peter Mall: We are generally not recording. Only in special cases this may be possible.
- 03:02:23 PM Fiona Crozier: Sounds good Maria, I think the expectations on experts are high in an online situation. It would be easy to lose the 'thread' of a review, perhaps, if everyone is joining from home...
- 03:02:31 PM Mairead Boland: Yes, QQI also created parallel sessions for academic staff and students, Peter - worked very well, but a little awkward in Teams, which is our chosen platform - Zoom appears more convenient for breakout rooms
- 03:02:50 PM Maria E. Weber: recording or not recording is also a question of data protection etc. rules and laws - we did not want to make it too complicated.
- 03:03:12 PM Maria E. Weber: AQ Austria used GoToMeeting - stabile, good experience with this tool
- 03:03:16 PM: LILIAN Kek: Online visits require lots of advance preparation and planning for all parties involved. Any good advice from those who did online visits? What are key success factors?
- 03:03:18 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: So if no recording, maybe two people need to take notes is one falls off-line mid-way a meeting?
- 03:03:22 PM Mairead Boland: We chose not to record, Maria - for data protection, and we were also concerned that it could lead to stilted conversation - or a reluctance by participants to contribute
- 03:03:24 PM Dr. Peter Mall: Breakout-Rooms in Zoom work well, other systems I don't know.
- 03:03:38 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: country rules on social platforms and recording make it difficult to record all time so i do not believe such is something to do

- 03:03:45 PM OLGUN CICEK: If not recorded how do you assure the evidences for future reference?
- 03:04:00 PM Dr. Peter Mall: We always have two hosts for backup reasons
- 03:04:16 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: did you record in face to face the meetings? No is that a PB for later proofs NO. same for online
- 03:04:18 PM Mairead Boland: Olgun, evidence is provided in the form of the coordinating reviewer's notes
- 03:04:34 PM Duska Radmanovic: Very useful experiences. We have developed procedures for these situation and are about to test it in one follow-up visit after letter of expectations since it would be much easier to perform it.
- 03:04:46 PM OLGUN CICEK: Thanks I refer online interviews
- 03:04:51 PM Dr. Peter Mall: Liek Esther is just saying, normal meetings are also not recorded
- 03:04:55 PM Alastair Delaney: We do not record either. We would not record in person so don't want to do so online.
- 03:05:14 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: yes i mean no need to record the online interview and that is not a pb for later same as the f to f interviews
- 03:05:39 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: Absolutely Delaney that is my point
- 03:05:40 PM Maria E. Weber: Key success factor n1 = committed engaged staff - re-planning all planned before - increase of workload - covid meant also for a lot of us - combine work from home/with family/school etc. obligations and still continue with procedures - HEI were waiting for decisions and start of new programmes - so the WORKLOAD was/is very high!
- 03:06:13 PM Mairead Boland: Yes, Maria - agree that it has been a particularly busy couple of months!
- 03:06:16 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Ok, thanks, makes sense. But indeed back-up note taker would be a good idea in case the principal note taker/secretary falls off-line (something comparable happening in a physical meeting would be more easily noticed by others :-))
- 03:07:42 PM Mairead Boland: Yes, good point, Maria, re back-up note taker!
- 03:08:03 PM LILIAN Kek: Thanks Maria. This is gonna be a new normal for all of us
- 03:08:13 PM OLGUN CICEK: That is the alternative for recording :)
- 03:09:06 PM Charlotte Elam: UKÄ project managers have been taking turns to act as “back-office” support during sessions, use of chat, etc (co-host)
- 03:09:28 PM Erato Ioannou: What about writing the report. Our experts used to gather together and write the report.

- 03:09:33 PM Mairead Boland: Some concern around the authenticity of the process in comparison to site visits has also been raised to QQI by some of our institutions.
- 03:09:49 PM Marvin Oxenham: Once the pandemic subsides, are online visits going to be an acceptable option in the new normal are these just 'exceptional measures' that we will abandon as second class?
- 03:10:27 PM Maria E. Weber: AQ Austria - our experts use Confluence to write the report
- 03:10:37 PM Erato Ioannou: Marvin, I guess we will judge based on the experience gained
- 03:10:40 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Marvin how for the moment we see it from the European/ESG point of view, is that a physical visit would be the normal requirement, as soon as that will become again possible.
- 03:10:48 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: I believe a blended model of visit will be adapted after the Covid-19
- 03:11:01 PM Fiona Crozier: @Marvin, personally, I hope it will be some kind of hybrid
- 03:11:05 PM Mairead Boland: I think a blended model could work very well also
- 03:11:09 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: However I imagine some hybrid models will be introduced: short site visits, for example, and checking more of the facts online in a pre-meeting for example
- 03:11:10 PM OLGUN CICEK: @Marvin I think the Hybrid, Hyflex will be more practice in the future
- 03:11:12 PM Mairead Boland: There are certainly some elements of the virtual experience that would be worth carrying with us when we move back to 'normality' (whenever that is!)
- 03:11:21 PM Maria E. Weber: we do take notes and share them, but the experts are responsible to take notes, collecting information relevant for the report.
- 03:11:28 PM Fiona Crozier: I certainly prefer on-site for lots of reasons
- 03:11:34 PM OLGUN CICEK: Also ESG might be revised Post Covid-19 as well
- 03:11:38 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Great, I see that most people think a hybrid model is the way to go
- 03:12:03 PM Maria E. Weber: why should the ESG be revised because of covid?
- 03:12:15 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: yep it is also saving time and cost for all. Hybrid is good and fair enough
- 03:12:43 PM Luis Velón: I do not see necessary the revision of ESGs

- 03:12:54 PM OLGUN CICEK: That was the discussion in Yerevan meeting since 2015 many things already changed
- 03:12:54 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: On-site has many advantages and allows for a lot of expertise exchanges between the experts that will simply not happen in an online setting. You need sometimes to get a feel for the reviewed, and a physical visit will make that easier to achieve
- 03:13:11 PM Fiona Crozier: But can see the merits of hybrid. It's certainly interesting to think through ALL the consequences
- 03:13:46 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: No, ESG do not need to be revised because of Covid-19, I think! the ESG allow for much more flexibility than people think.
- 03:13:52 PM Marvin Oxenham: ESG 2.3 specifies 'site visit' as what should be included in implementing processes for external assessment.
- 03:14:03 PM Diana Morriss: I think for getting a real 'feel' for an institution - an onsite visit is the best model but for reasons others have mentioned - a blended approach could work very well going forward
- 03:14:12 PM Marvin Oxenham: it does not say 'how' the site should be visited....
- 03:14:18 PM OLGUN CICEK: Online / virtual components could be added
- 03:14:23 PM Fiona Crozier: 2.3 says 'normally a site visit'
- 03:14:23 PM Mairead Boland: Online has advantages in giving access to capacity potentially for wider engagement with provider stakeholders. Downtime is not lost through travel, so far our experience has been very rich
- 03:14:33 PM Charlotte Elam: HEIs were very positive to move ongoing procedures online this spring but start up of new reviews in fall postponed as workload for HEI expected to be v high
- 03:14:36 PM Marvin Oxenham: love the 'normally'!!
- 03:15:32 PM Mairead Boland: I think Alastair's point is very good, it works very well when SER is very strong and provider has a good track record, that certainly gives more assurance in the process.
- 03:15:32 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Of course online also allows for different structuring of the visits, such as e.g. holding different meetings with a time-delay in-between. Which would become too costly if people were to travel several times
- 03:15:43 PM OLGUN CICEK:when the HEIs start online programs the accreditors should be ready to evaluate the QA fas well
- 03:16:01 PM Maria E. Weber: did some of you change the costs for virtual site visits - reduce? increase?
- 03:16:09 PM Mairead Boland: May be more challenging if there are compliance issues arising



- 03:16:14 PM Anne Karine SØRSKÅR: I think that a group consisting of until 7-8 member (experts and QAAs) can communicate well online even if they never meet each other.
- 03:16:15 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: The hybrid model might also differentiate between initial/first time visits and subsequent ones perhaps
- 03:17:20 PM Charlotte Elam: As for report writing, in many of our QA procedures we have for a long time used Skype for going through the draft version with the whole panel
- 03:17:48 PM Duska Radmanovic: The price of visit was reduced related to travel costs of panel members.
- 03:18:31 PM María Angeles Serrano: An important question, as you mentioned before is whether or not to record meetings
- 03:18:50 PM LILIAN Kek: Alastair, do parties involve sign additional consent forms to conduct online visit?
- 03:18:59 PM Mairead Boland: We have done similar, we added extra private private team meetings in advance of review visit, and included more additional private meeting sessions during the review.
- 03:19:05 PM Anne Karine SØRSKÅR: In Norway we started the processes with short ice-breaking meetings just to say hallo to each other
- 03:19:09 PM Maria E. Weber: Hello Duska! we have also reduced the overall price for the SV - for all "covid procedures"...
- 03:19:48 PM Fiona Crozier: Have experts found it easy to come to judgements on-line?
- 03:19:55 PM Duska Radmanovic: We have decided to it wouldn't be fair to charge the HEI for costs that aren't real.
- 03:20:22 PM Maria E. Weber: we usually encourage panels to meet - also without the AQ coordinator - especially for the phase of report writing, we encourage to use online tools ...
- 03:20:25 PM Mairead Boland: The Chair of a recent QQI virtual programme validation/accreditation did organise an informal virtual team dinner and social drink in advance!
- 03:20:31 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: For ENQA's own reviews we charge the travel and accommodation costs on real cost basis, so the overall fee would indeed be reduced for that part (might eventually need to be replaced by online meeting service costs/software cost)
- 03:20:47 PM Maria E. Weber: well the costs - I assume went up as well - but ...
- 03:21:40 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: as no travel no accommodation cost, in total it still should be less even the cost for expert increase because of the time allocated
- 03:21:42 PM Mairead Boland: The challenge is not just in paying more, but in getting review teams that would commit and are able to take greater time from their main role - that may not be feasible

- 03:22:11 PM Erato Ioannou: Reviewer compensation remains the same amount per day of work
- 03:22:21 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: with international expert in all cases even paying a higher rate for expert total cost is to be less
- 03:22:21 PM Mairead Boland: in QQI we would be concerned in demanding more time and commitment from reviewers
- 03:23:13 PM Alastair Delaney: Some reviewers were not willing to give more time, but many were so that they could do a good job.
- 03:23:29 PM Maria Kelo - ENQA: We have noticed a lack of motivation in some experts in committing to ENQA's own reviews online: travelling seems to be one of the motivating factors in our case! So in online visits it is almost having the work part only without the fun part...
- 03:23:39 PM Mairead Boland: Although one colleague raised an interesting point earlier - the attraction of a visit abroad for reviewers! The chair of our pilot virtual review was quite disappointed not to have been able to travel to Ireland for the site visit!
- 03:23:44 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: so indeed we need highly committed, motivated and experienced reviewers for online procedures
- 03:24:01 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: absolutely it is commitment matter first
- 03:24:10 PM Duska Radmanovic: Yes, the reviewers compensation per day remains the same. Only change is related to travel and accommodation costs. We have also considered if reviewers will need more time in these special situation.
- 03:24:31 PM Mairead Boland: the challenge for some reviewers now of course is that they may also have more demands from their own institutions in adapting to COVID-19
- 03:24:40 PM Erato Ioannou: The right person is always the key
- 03:24:47 PM Fiona Crozier: I agree - and knowing how intense the final judgement meetings can be, this was the reason for my question
- 03:24:48 PM Luis Velón: Of course the commitment of reviewers is really relevant
- 03:24:49 PM Charlotte Elam: For the second site-visit, for which we could plan for online set-up, many panels preferred to use the travel-time gained to have for eg prep meetings the day before instead of early morning before interviews.
- 03:24:56 PM Mairead Boland: ...and another challenge raised by institutions is the difficulty in completing a self-evaluation process virtually
- 03:25:05 PM Duska Radmanovic: Not only in online visit but in regular process as well.
- 03:25:18 PM Ahmad Jammal: Commitment of reviewers is very important

- 03:26:06 PM Mairead Boland: Guidelines and case studies of practice for institutions in complete their self-evaluation using virtual methodologies would be helpful
- 03:26:12 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: HYBRID will be the new Normal :)
- 03:26:33 PM Nabil RI Kadhi: Guidelines are for sure needed
- 03:26:46 PM Dr. Peter Mall: We kept the financial aspect same as before until now, but have to rethink travel cost and calculate other costs like co-hosting sessions.
- 03:26:58 PM Maria E. Weber: hybrid model
- 03:27:08 PM Diana Morriss: I think the technological skills of the reviewers will also impact on reviewers' commitment and willingness to undertake online reviews
- 03:27:44 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Good point Diana
- 03:27:58 PM Maria Kelo – ENQA: Not everyone feels versed with Zoom etc,
- 03:28:25 PM Mairead Boland: Although, as virtual meetings have become run of the mill for most, we were pleasantly surprised that there were very few technical issues for reviewers during our pilot virtual review
- 03:28:28 PM Mubarak Alkhatnai: How could international visits be hybrid?
- 03:28:33 PM Ahmad Jammal: A training on technological skills is a must for some reviewers
- 03:29:05 PM Mairead Boland: Agree with Alistair, we also will be looking at combined methodologies, and will be carrying forward some virtual aspects within future process
- 03:29:12 PM OLGUN CICEK: Local expert could join on site and international expert online...
- 03:29:20 PM Alastair Delaney: International hybrid - I suppose just doing more desk-based work in advance, and online meetings. Only visiting for shorter period or not sat all and very focused.
- 03:30:02 PM Alastair Delaney: We use MS Teams a lot too. Now has "hands up" and larger number of people on screen.