GENERAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES OF EXPERTS – EXPERIENCED REVIEWER'S VIEW

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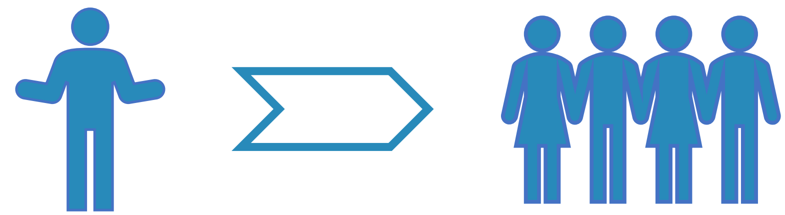
OVERVIEW

- Act as a team
- Proceed according to the code of conduct
- Follow your role and responsibilities

ACT AS A TEAM



- Panel composition:
  - a chair
  - a secretary
  - a student
  - a regular member

- ENQA coordinator
  - gives support throughout the whole review;
  - ensures the consistency of the process;
  - not a panel member.

Each one’s role is important!

Each one’s contribution is expected!

External review – a team’s work:
- Get involved + involve
- Continuous responsibility from the start to the end of the process (12-16 months)

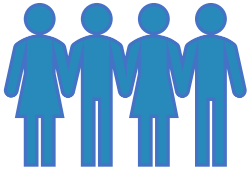
ACT AS A TEAM

- Be aware of the many DIFFERENCES and take advantage of their strength:
  - different countries;
  - different profile:

    students, academics, consultants and quality technicians;
  - differences in quality culture;
  - varies backgrounds in assessment process.

Each panel member looks at the ESG in its own way

The panel has to come to a final agreement.



PROCEED ACCORDING TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct for reviewers
https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/ENQA-Code-of-Conduct-for-reviewers.pdf

- Reviewer's duties:
  - **Confidentiality and discretion**
    Self-assessment report/ interview material/ evidence material/ panels meetings and discussions - are confidential
  - **Conflict of interest**
    Act with strict impartiality and objectivity
  - **Integrity**
    Be honest, do not offer or accept any gifts or special favors
  - **Finance**
    Follow the ENQA financial guidelines, practice economy in the use of resources

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- Principles of good practice:
  - **Openness and cooperation**

    Be as open and clear as possible in the discussions
    Be tolerant and courteous
    Respect the varied cultures and backgrounds of each participant in the review process
  - **Communication**

    Ask questions in a friendly, constructive manner
    Raise concrete questions and avoid personal questions
  - **Commitment to competency and professionalism**

    Exercise and maintain professional competence at all times

FOLLOW YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

All panel members

Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews
https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/ENQA-Guidelines-2021.pdf

Guidelines for ENQA Targeted Reviews
https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines-for-ENQA-Targeted-Reviews_v3.pdf

Following your nomination into the panel:

Read the guiding documents:

- Good understanding of ESG – essential
- Terms of Reference
- Use and interpretation of ESG by EQAR

FOLLOW YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

All panel members

■ **Reception of the SAR**:

Read and ANALYSE the review documentation:

Documents from the Agency:

- **SAR + Annexes** [Statement on enhancement area - in targeted reviews]
- Website **[+links from the SAR]**
- Additional documents [on request]

ENQA documents:

- **Previous ERR**
- **Decision by the Board [areas for development]**
- Appeal case files

EQAR documents:

- **Approval of application for [Renewal] of Registration**
- Substantial changes report
- **Register Committee's decision [areas flagged]**

FOLLOW YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

All panel members

- **Before the site visit:**
  - Challenges: much information; unfamiliar system; unfamiliar organization of the agency; unfamiliar terminology; confusing presentation(?)
  - Try to find the overall coherent picture; try to understand **the Agency's** intentions and priorities. It is easier to assess the Agency's performance in this light
  - Make notes of what strikes you as odd, or as potential weaknesses in system/agency
  - Think about possible questions or points of clarification
  - Consider whether more evidence is needed – standard by standard
  - Contribute to filling-in the tentative **Mapping grid on ESG**
  - Get acquainted with the rest of the panel (kick-off meeting, pre-visit meeting)
  - Respond swiftly to emails
  - Learn from other panel members

FOLLOW YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

Secretary

Before the site visit:

- Agree on communication with the team and the agency
- Agree on the site visit schedule (secretary – chair – agency resource person)
- Regular reminders and follow up, establish the deadlines
- Agree on demands of the overall process
- Coordinate team commentaries and assessment

Prepare:

- documents for the pre-visit meeting with the agency resource person and the site visit itself (check list –summary with comments-questions…)
- outline the draft report: introduction, HE system, agency organization
- in collaboration with the coordinator, arrange logistics: have contact information, travel times etc.

FOLLOW YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

Chair

Before the site visit:

- Take the lead! Responsibility for the entire process: agree about the process, e.g., themes, who asks what, in what order, avoid overlap
- Communicate with the secretary to carefully [co]set the visit schedule
- Coordinate the elaboration of the mapping grid on ESG as a tool for preparing the interviews:
  - a tentative filled-in mapping grid can be setup before the pre-visit meeting, where the matter is discussed, and the mapping grid is finalized
  - **Mapping grid** on ESG and the **visit schedule** have to be used first separately, then put together
- Divide the work, but not from an early stage
- Encourage thorough discussions within the panel (strongly advise to have at least 1, better 2 preparatory meetings before the visit); ensure equal engagement of all panel members
- Agree with the panel the lead persons [and supporting ones] for interviews

FOLLOW YOUR
ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

All panel members

■ During the site visit:

- Talk openly within the panel
- Take into account the circumstances and context of the agency's operations
- Keep [detailed] notes from the meetings
- Gather evidence in order to have an informed opinion for the panel's discussion [in time]
- Be extra attentive to consultancy work

  During the run of interviews:

  - Participation of all members in the interviews (secretary – less, maybe…)
  - There is little time to spare, use it wisely
  - Be sensitive to language issues (e.g., 'Why didn't you?' → 'Tell us more about…')
  - Help participants in understanding your questions

FOLLOW YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

Secretary

During the site visit:

- Organize:

  At the end of the first day: discuss the findings and what needs to be done the next day, check that you have evidence to support each decision

  At the end of the second day: go through all the standards and check if all team agrees with the decisions and recommendations

- Review if all issues are clear, thus it is useful to sit near the chair during the visit
- Take useful and complete notes
- Make sure the focus area of enhancement selected by the Agency is sufficiently covered

FOLLOW YOUR
ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES

Chair

- **During the site visit**:
  - Allow **recap** after each interview session and at the end of the day –reflect on what you learned and still need to learn
  - Structure the outcomes of discussions:
    - what seems to be the most pertinent topics (potential weaknesses/ shortcomings),
    - what seems to be strong points
    - what will need further clarification
    - where more information/documentation is needed
    - what are **recurring themes, start signaling** to the agency

SOME NOTES ON THE FINAL DAY OF THE VISIT

The site visit usually starts with an interview with the leadership

After having heard all the other groups, those inputs from the first day may now stand in a different light. So, take advantage of meeting the leadership in the final day, for:

- Last clarifications
- Leadership's response to non-consensual view shared in other interviews
- Leadership's assessment of strengths and weaknesses – and current development plans; can be connected to the focus area of enhancement

SOME NOTES ON THE FINAL DAY OF THE VISIT

At the end of the visit time must be allotted for a longer panel meeting where to consider what should go into the report, including:

- Degree of compliance on each standard, with core (keyword) argumentation
  - ?Holistic assessments in the strait jacket of standard compliance?
- Commendations and recommendations; (and improvement suggestions – if already available);
- Reflections on the focus area of enhancement

SOME NOTES ON THE FINAL DAY OF THE VISIT

Before providing final debriefing to the Agency – **agree** within the panel on your main findings in relation to each ESG

At the end provide a meaningful, yet brief feedback:

- outline the main results
- focus on key areas of development
- address the focus area of enhancement (in targeted reviews)
- do not go into detail
- do not convey firmly judgments
- do not say something that might be contradicted in the final report!
- use a positive tone, give encouragement

BEFORE GOING HOME

Report drafting – the main responsibility of the Secretary, but input expected

Timeline for report production (example)

Date	Review steps
	Everybody sends their notes/main points per assigned standards to the secretary
	Secretary sends the first draft of the report to the panel for commenting
	Panel sends their comments to the secretary
	Secretary sends the second draft of the report to the panel for commenting
	Panel sends their comments to the secretary
	Chair and secretary agree on the final version
	Secretary sends the finalised draft to the coordinator for pre-screening (agreed by all panel members)
	Coordinator sends the comments to the secretary (with everybody in copy)
	Secretary sends the finalised draft to the agency for factual check
	Agency‘s response pointing out errors of fact (if any) (two weeks)
	Chair submits the finalised review report to ENQA (agreed by all panel members after the agency's response has been considered); ENQA sends the report to the ARC for scrutiny (two weeks)
	ENQA ARC members submit their scrutinies
	ENQA ARC holds a meeting, next day the meeting minutes are adopted and notes for the Board sent out together with scrutinies
	Consideration of report by the Board of ENQA

TO CONCLUDE

- The external review is a team effort
- Do not forget your role and set of responsibilities
- Positive attitude to the panel and the agency
- It’s a working process, led by dialogic approach

THANK YOU!

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