



EUA

European University Association

The European University Association's Institutional Evaluation Programme

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Introduction

- **Objective:** strengthen institutions in a European context
- Equips institutions to deal with challenges by enhancing their capacity to adapt to a changing context
- Evaluations since 1994
- Over 250 institutional evaluations in 39 countries (Europe, Latin America, South Africa)
- Full member of ENQA

IEP's Philosophy

- The distinctive features of the IEP are:
 - ✓ A strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase
 - ✓ A European and international perspective
 - ✓ A peer-review approach
 - ✓ An improvement orientation

Focus of the IEP

- The focus of the IEP is the institution as a whole. It focuses upon:
 - ✓ Decision-making processes and institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management
 - ✓ Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision making and strategic planning as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms. As part of this larger framework the evaluations address the issues on internal quality assurance identified by the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG).
- > A strategic tool for institutional change

Evaluation Guidelines

- **Key questions:**
 - What does the institution do? (Mission)
 - How does it do it? (Activities)
 - How does it know it works? (Quality culture)
 - What does it do to change? (Strategic capacity for change)



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Teams

- European peer review by senior HE leaders (rectors and vice rectors)
- Plus one student representative and a team coordinator (HE or QA professional)
- A stable pool that has accumulated a wealth of international experience
- Annual training focused on emerging HE trends

Procedures

- Self-evaluation process and report
- Two visits:
 - 1st visit: to understand national and institutional constraints and opportunities
 - 2nd visit: to understand strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations
- Team meets all categories of institutional staff, students, plus external stakeholders = about 150 people

Final report

- Contains recommendations and highlights best practices
- Does not include accreditation or any other kind of summative judgement
- Published on IEP web-site

Coordinated evaluations

- Already worked in Catalonia, Ireland, Slovakia, former Yugoslavia (Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia) and Turkey
- Now engaged in Portugal
- Results in a national report that identifies common issues & common recommendations across the sector
- Major aim is to highlight what should change at the system level in order to allow institutions to be innovative and adaptable.

Feedback from Universities

- Has enhanced capacity for change
 - ✓ Self-evaluation phase
- Support to the institution's own impressions
- Enhanced community building/quality culture
- External opinion without accountability purpose seen as useful

Lessons learned

- A single set of standards for HE is not **desirable** since it clashes with the need to have an innovative and diverse HE sector
- **But** it is important that each institution is clear about its own standards
- **And** that each institution is (externally) evaluated in the context of its standards

Lessons learned

- A strong institution is a guarantee of academic freedom for all academic staff
- Strong institutional autonomy is linked to the effective development of an internal quality culture
- A strong institutional core, appropriate devolution of responsibilities to faculties, a well thought-out communication strategy and community building are the pre-conditions for an effective institution

More information

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