



2025 European Quality Assurance Forum
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2025

**Empowering higher education institutions
through strategic and foresighted QA**



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On QA – disaster – dinos and being ready!



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Being foresighted ...

WHAT
HAPPENS

THINGS MY MOM
THOUGHT WOULD
HAPPEN

WHAT I
MIGHT HAVE
WORRIED
ABOUT

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Being prepared ...



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Karl Popper – All life is problem solving



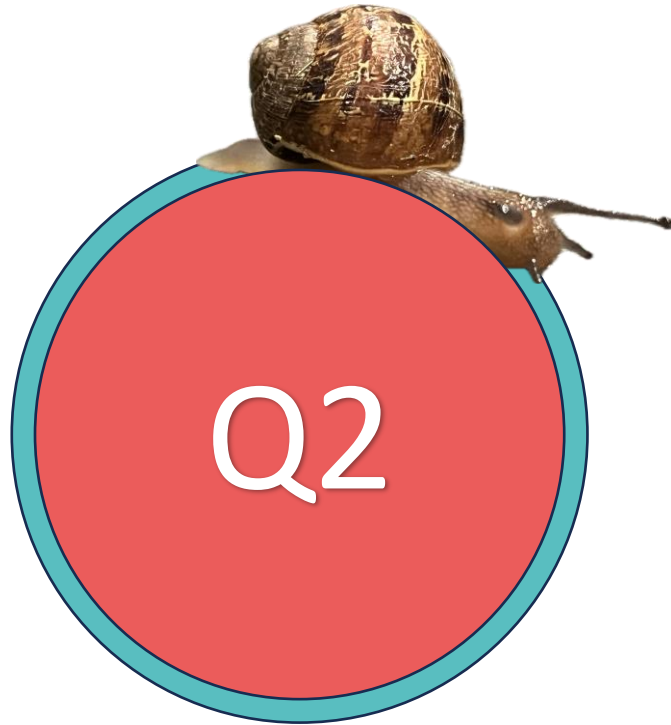
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Being prepared in QA ...

Before the context
– complex game
of choice



Being prepared by being un- or less prepared



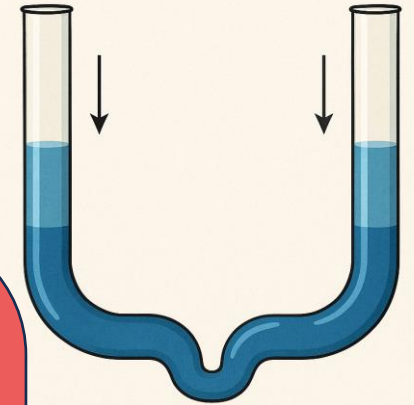
- NO STANDARDS, NO CRITERIA
- DIGITALISATION OF PROCESSES WAS ONGOING
- OPEN AND FLEXIBLE TO HEI
- SWIFT TRANSITION TO ONLINE DIALOGUE
- QUICK EVALUATION OF THIS TRANSITION
- FRAMEWORKS UPDATED – ONLINE PROCEDURES
- ALREADY HAD A FLEXIBLE OFFICE POLICY

Contextual problem solving (D. Batens; T. Nickles)

1. The problem you try to solve
2. The participants in the problem solving process
3. The contextual certainties
4. Relevant claims considered to be true
5. Methodological guidelines, values and norms

We know what a problem is once we have defined the constraints on the possible solutions.

PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNICATING VESSELS



Goethe's wise lesson...



“In der
beschränkung
zeigt sich erst
der meister” or
how Goethe
inspires
external
quality
assurance to
be flexible to
change.

Deserved TRUST



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Boning and decorating based on deserved trust

- 8 Quality Features – ESG-based
- 4 questions – Holy Trinity of QA
- Critical reflection = documentation, contextualisation, appreciation, lessons learned

OPEN
DIALOGUE

RESPONSIBILITY LIES
WITH THOSE
RESPONSIBLE

EQA SHOULD NOT
HINDER, RATHER
STIMULATE
INNOVATION AND
INNOVATIVE
CHANGE

Traditional approaches	NVAO's Appreciative Approach
Focus on compliance, conformation	Focus on responsibility, on ownership
"Does the shape fit into the mold?"	"Do they play the game with the chosen rules?"
Is the chosen model the right one?	Does the chosen model work?
What is missing?	How does it work?
Searching for missing things and exposing them	Expose chances and possibilities
Standards are central	Standards are not important
Templates, criteria, rules, guidelines, ...	Straightforward information, no templates, no ...
Thinking and working from standards	Thinking and working around quality
Report with facts, considerations and judgements	Report as a research report and with a holistic judgement



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Appreciative, agile and tailored to the context

Question 1: Is the educational policy in line with the educational vision of the institution and the societal challenges it is facing within its own context?

Flemish Universities – societal challenges – regional, national, European, global – 2019-2025:

- Future oriented education
- Digitalisation
- Sustainability
- Environmental awareness
- Lifelong learning
- Diversity

- RELATIONSHIP MANAGERS
- TOUR OF FLANDERS
- RESONANCE GROUP
- OVERVIEW REPORTS
- THEMATIC OWNERSHIP
- EXTERNAL, INDEPENDENT EXPERTS
- (SYSTEM-WIDE ANALYSIS)

IN THE
CONTEXT



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Appreciative, agile and tailored to the context

Question 3: Within this policy, is the quality of each accredited programme confirmed in an internationally accepted manner?

Butcher inspecting the meat he is selling to others!?

IN THE
CONTEXT



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Appreciative, agile and tailored to the context

Question 3: Within this policy, is the quality of each accredited programme confirmed in an internationally accepted manner? (OWN CONDUCT)

“In addition, it is ascertained how the institution ensures the involvement of internal and external stakeholders on the one hand and external and independent peers and experts on the other hand.”

IN THE
CONTEXT



Evaluation and end product...

- Finished 18 institutional reviews (+3)(+2)
- Evaluation of the Flemish quality assurance system 2019-2025

- 5 of 18 (of 13/16 university colleges) had a positive institutional review decision with limited validity
- 3 already had an additional institutional review that is limited to the elements to which the conditions apply, 2 still to come in some 2 years

Evaluation and end product...

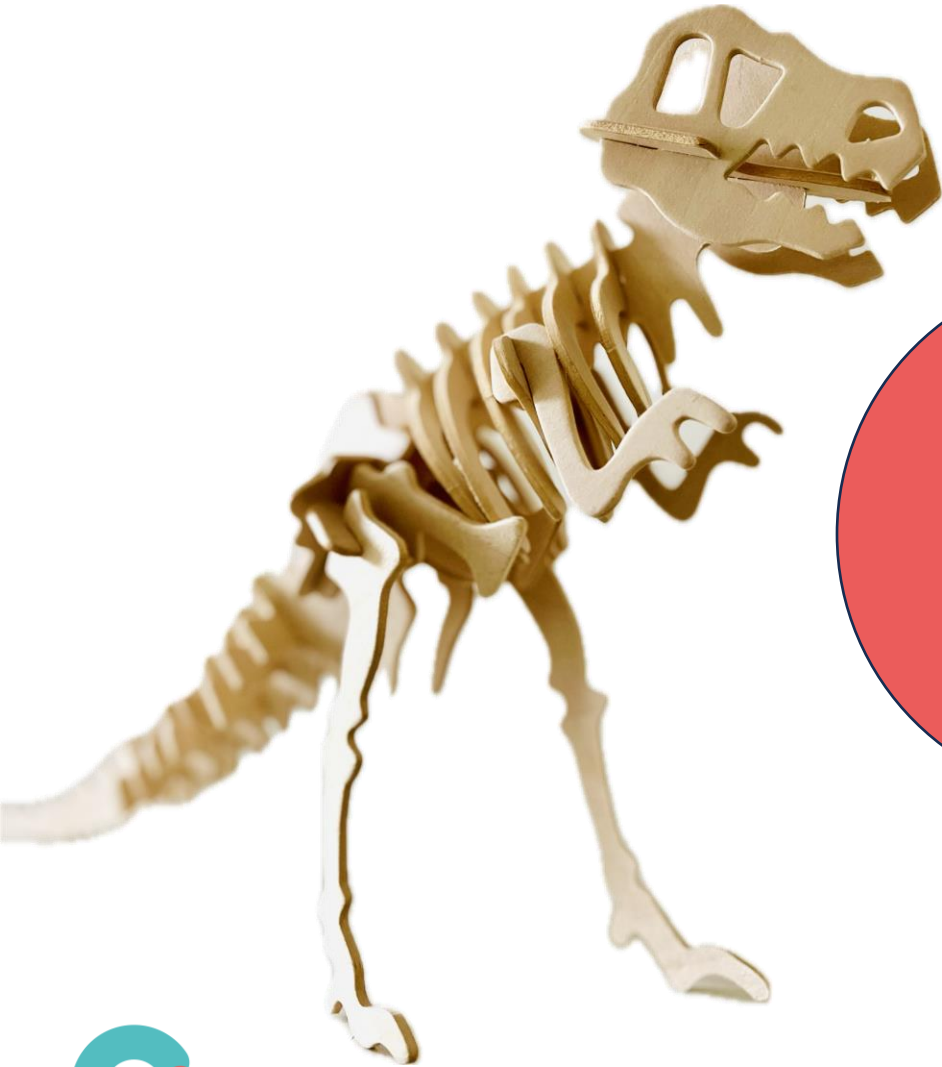
- Evaluation by IDEA Consult, demand of Flemish Government
- Main outcome: system (and its operationalisation) succeeds in validly and reliably monitoring, demonstrating, and safeguarding the quality of higher education.

- Consistency and comparability of the assessment reports
- Updating domain-specific learning outcomes
- Feasibility institutional review for small institutions
- Relevance initial accreditation (gatekeeper needed)?
- Burden – continuous and meaningful
- Procedure additional institutional review?

RESONANCE GROUP (Cabinet of Minister, Department of Education, VLIR, VLHORA, VVS (VLUHR-QA as observer))

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Foresight by strategic trust



Q3

Q4



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A last question

Q5





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THANKS!

