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„Identifying Barriers in Promoting the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance at Institutional Level“

IBAR

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Project "Identifying barriers in promoting European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance at institutional level" (IBAR)

IBAR WP11: The National study (Information and Quality)
The Netherlands

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Introduction

The ESG emphasizes the role of information in internal quality assurance explicitly in couple of standards. Information is seen as important resource to institution and to the students (ESG1.6, ESG1.7). The institutional quality assurance processes as envisaged in the ESG should include collection of information to inform about the institution:

a) student progression and success rates;
b) employability of graduates;
c) students satisfaction with programmes;
d) effectiveness of teaching staff;
e) profile of the student population;
f) learning resources available and their costs;
g) institution´s own key performance indicators.

Further, the ESG foresees the following information to be collected to inform all the stakeholders, and especially the students:

h) offered study programs;
i) intended learning outcomes of the offered study programmes,
j) awarded qualification;
k) teaching, learning and assessment procedures;
l) learning opportunities available to students;
m) views and employment destinations of past students;
n) profile of the student population

To study the implementation of the above mentioned ESG Standards the national and institutional policies and practices related to information gathering and provision in relation to institutional quality assurance has been analysed. The report's aim is to highlight on the one hand barriers and on the other hand examples of good practice observed in the implementation of these standards in the selected Dutch higher education institutions.

In the following we present the findings of the four case studies (two universities A and C, and two HBO institutions B and D) on information provision to sustain and enhance their quality. We conclude by identifying the key barriers to ESG implementation and good practices as found in our case studies. The main characteristics of Dutch cases were presented in WP 5. Within the institutions we have studied different faculties/schools – we chose faculties/schools focusing on 'hard' sciences, such as chemistry or life sciences and on the 'soft' sciences, such as business and management.

Findings

Q1 Policy, regulations or practice at <u>national level</u> referring to the provision of information about HEIs and by HEIs

The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) as well as the national accreditation framework address the need to collect and provide information to the public (students) regarding study programmes, their quality and the overall university. (WHW 2010). The NVAO Dutch accreditation framework requires the institutions which want to accredit their programmes to provide information on a set of indicators. The monitoring protocol of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science provides guidelines for data monitoring for the institutional audit departments.

According to the WHW and the Guidelines for the Central Register of Higher Education Enrolment (*Centraal Register Inschrijvingen Hoger Onderwijs* - CRI-HO) which is managed by the Office of Education Implementation (*Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs*[1] *(*DUO), the institutions are required to register data with the CRI-HO concerning the enrolment, deregistration and certification of students. The manner and time of the data's provision is established in the CRI-HO regulations.

In addition, the institutions are required to provide data on the number of students each year to Statistics Netherlands (CBS). The time and format are prescribed.

In 2011 the Dutch University Association (VSNU) and the Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences Board (HBORaad) have come to General agreements (*Hoofdlijnenakkoorden*) with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture regarding performance agreements. It has been agreed that in 2012 each university will present, discuss and sign a performance agreement with the Ministry for the coming four years. Among the mandatory indicators in those performance agreements are indicators on study performance (dropout in the first year, switch of programme in the first year, bachelor success rate) as well as indicators on quality (student satisfaction rating, percentage of students in excellence tracks or programmes). Other mandatory indicators refer to the quality of teaching staff and teaching intensity in bachelor programmes (contact hours). performance indicators there are quality measures, such as quality of teachers and intensity of teaching. In addition to the mandatory indicators (institutions can choose their own indicators of performance. The indicators of performance agreements can be linked with the ESG standards.

Following the general agreements (regarding the performance agreements), NVAO also adjusted the definitions of the performance indicators for the programme and institutional accreditation.

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[1] The Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO) is the executive organization of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. DUO came into existence on January 1st 2010. DUO makes education possible by funding education institutions, by supplying student grants and by subsidising school fees. By managing the application, selection and placement of students in higher education. By recognizing diplomas, organizing state and school exams. By increasing data on education for information products. By acting as the National Europass Centre of the Netherlands and by cooperation. See also http://www.duo.nl/organisatie/open_onderwijsdata/default.asp

NVAO has reformulated the definitions of dropout rates, success rates, student-teacher ratio, qualifications of the teaching staff and education intensity (contact hours) that will be adopted with effect from 1 May 2012 for the accreditation of higher education programmes in the Netherlands. The definitions for these indicators in the current assessment frameworks were not sufficiently clear, which means that the data supplied was insufficiently comparable.

According to the NVAO document, in formulating these definitions, wherever possible NVAO aimed to tie in with the indicators recently agreed upon in the General Agreements (*Hoofdlijnenakkoorden*) between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the Dutch University Association (VSNU) and the Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences Board (HBO-Raad) and the Dutch Council for Training and Education (NRTO). In some instances, the level of the individual programmes has been a leading factor in the definitions of these indicators. In addition, NVAO has formulated definitions regarding dropout rates and success rates of master’s programmes in line with the indicators in place for bachelor’s programmes.[2]

Further, the VSNU organized employability WO Monitor and the HBO-Raad organized HBO-monitor are important sources of external information about the satisfaction of graduates with their former studies.

The satisfaction of students with their studies is also nationally evaluated with the help of the National Student Survey (see WP 9 for details).

Q 2. Institutional policy and practice regarding collection and analysis of information connected to aspects a) – g):

a) student progression and success rates;
b) employability of graduates;
c) students satisfaction with programmes;
d) effectiveness of teaching staff;
e) profile of the student population;
f) learning resources available and their costs;
g) institution´s own key performance indicators.

Institution A

It is part of institutional policy to collect and analyse information connected to aspects a) - g). The institution is also committed to collect information within the framework of accreditation by different stakeholders as the ministry, but also VSNU and the performance agreements with the Ministry. The policy and practice regarding the collection and analysis of information connected to the aspects a) – g) is the following:

Student progression and success rates are collected by the central university administration (Quality and Strategic Information Office) and reported in Education Monitor publication, and the University Annual report.

[2] http://nvao.com/news/item/new_definitions_of_dropout_rates_success_rates_student-teacher_ratio_the_qualifications_of_teaching_staff_and_education_intensity/48

The key indicators for education include the total number of students, new student enrolments, the number of graduates (specified for Bachelor degree and Master degree) and success rates (specified in re-enrolment, drop out, success and transfer rates of BSc cohorts and MSc cohorts, % of MSc students following a MSc programme in the same university as the BSc). These indicators are used for the institutional monitoring, performance agreements with the Ministry and other outside stakeholders. The data is collected annually.

Information on the **employability of graduates** is collected via a national employability WO-monitor, and although this is a country wide exercise, it is part of the institutional policy to participate. Every two years (since 2009) the University participates in the Employment Monitor (WO-monitor) which is nationally organized under the coordination of VSNU. This questionnaire is issued to the graduates one year after graduation The university carries out also Career Monitor study of its total alumni body for nearly 40 years administered every five years via a questionnaire. The questions pertain to current and previous jobs, connection between jobs and education, and changes in jobs.

Student satisfaction with programmes is collected in four different ways. First of all, students evaluate courses after each period by filling out questionnaires. They evaluate their individual courses (supervisors) of theses and internships. Further, they fill in the National Student Survey, the alumni survey WO-Monitor, the Programme Graduates Evaluationsand the International Student Barometer.

- Firstly, the institution itself organizes course evaluations carried out via student questionnaires. Course evaluations include an online survey after each course where students are asked about their satisfaction with the teaching, course materials, clarify of learning outcomes. The questionnaires are send to all students, who registered for a course. The results of evaluations are sent to contact person of the course, lecturers, the programme directors and chair holders. As noted in the review report of the institution, 45% of students fill in these questionnaires. Similarly, after each finished individual course, such as thesis, a questionnaire is filled out by students. The invitations are sent out 10 times a year for this questionnaire. Once per year reports per chair and programme are created and sent to the programme directors. All the results of evaluations are aggregated and made available to the Examining Boards annual report and is send to the Chairs of departments.

- Further, student satisfaction at the institutional level, per programme, is measured externally via the National Student Survey (the NSE). On a yearly basis, the NSE collects information via e-mail; the survey contains 43 questions. Data is collected on: the content of the program, the acquired skills, preparation for the professional career, teachers, information from the study program, study facilities, assessments and evaluations, course scheduling, study burden and study support. The NSE is also part of the new performance agreements with the ministry (see under question 3: the use and purpose of the information).

- Student satisfaction is also measured by the International Student Barometer (ISB), which tracks the opinions of international students across two points in the academic year. The survey forms part of a wider ongoing study and is independently administered for the university by the International Graduate Insight Group (i-graduate.org).

- Finally, student satisfaction with studies at the university is also measured in the WO-Monitor where two questions pertain to this- are students overall satisfied with the studies (would they repeat them in the same institution and the same major) and if their studies are relevant to the labour market. Student satisfaction with programmes is also measured with Student Graduates Questionnaires. Upon graduation each student receives a questionnaire in which his opinion is asked about the programme, the competences gained during the study, the facilities and study conditions and the plans of the student after graduation. The evaluation reports are annually put together per programme, discussed by the Board of the Education Institute and sent to the Programme Directors.

Information on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** is collected in different ways. Both the course evaluations, the National Student Evaluations and the programme accreditation monitor the quality of the teachers. In the evaluations, the students are asked how satisfied they are with their teachers (as part of the course evaluation). Additional information is obtained through the annual review talk with each member of the teaching staff. These personal talks between the staff member and (usually) the chair holder are held annually and here also the student satisfaction results are included (as noted in the review report- in 65% of the cases). The effectiveness of teaching staff also relates to obtained qualifications. Institution A collects information on the number of staff with a BKO (teaching qualification, see WP10) and with the PhD degree. A didactical qualification is required for all teachers. Staff also have a possibility to express their opinion about the satisfaction via staff survey.

The student administration collects information on **the profile of the student population** with respect to the male/female proportion, students with disabilities, previous level of education, nationality and the number of exchange student and this is part of institutional policy. (See WP6 for more information) The performance agreements in addition state that figures on drop-out rates, switching students and completion rates are important, thus this data is also collected.

With respect to **learning resources available and their costs**, some information is collected in the student evaluations (both the institutional as well as in the national student survey) where questions are asked about the general satisfaction with student support. Student feedback is also collected via student representatives in the board of the education institute.

The **institution´s own key performance indicators are**: # total number of students enrolled/per programme/major, # switch and drop-out, # success rates, # NSE quality indicators (average grade), % of peer reviewed courses, % of programmes with more than 12 contact hours first year BSc, % staff holding UTQ, BSc and MSc programmes in English, distance learning tracks, % of bachelor students with courses abroad, # of Minors, # of tenure trackers, ECTS-label, DS label, set up of a distance learning track. Most of these indicators are part of the institutional policy and are collected annually. At large, they are also laid down in the performance agreements with the ministry.

Institution B

It is part of institutional policy to collect and analyse information connected to aspects a) - g). The institution is also obliged to collect information within the framework of accreditation by different stakeholders as the ministry, but also the independent Validation Committee for Quality Assurance in Research[3] (VKO) and the HBO-Raad. The policy and practice regarding the collection and analysis of information connected to the aspects a) – g) is the following:

Student progression and success rates are collected by the education administration (education office) and reported on in the annual report. The key

[3] The independent Validation Committee for Quality Assurance in Research (VKO) assesses whether the universities of applied sciences provide sufficient guarantees for the quality of their research. In doing so, the Committee makes use of review reports drawn up by external committees which the universities of applied sciences set up themselves. The review committees assess both the academic quality and the social relevance of the research. In doing so, the committees consider all the possible benefits of publications, presentations, products, innovations in professional practice and improvements in education. The Validation Committee for Quality Assurance in Research then assesses, for instance, the independence and soundness of the evaluations. The VKO has been in operation since may 2009. See also http://www.vkohogescholen.nl/

indicators for education include the total number of students, the number of new students, the number of graduates (specified for Bachelor degree, Associate Degree and Master degree) and success rates (specified in numbers of graduates and the average duration of studies). As part of the performance agreements institution B made with the Ministry in 2012, the annual drop-out rate is also collected from now on; prior it was once in every six years in relation to the accreditation. Further, drop-out rates, switching students and study success need to be collected as part of the performance agreements.

The education administration works closely together with several institutions such as Studielink, DUO and Nuffic to coordinate the services.

Information on the **employability of graduates** is collected via a national monitor (the HBO monitor), and although this is a country wide exercise, it is part of the institutional policy to participate. This information is collected once a year from alumni who graduated 1.5 years ago. Data is collected on the position of graduates on the labour market and how the former studies were connected to the professional field. Domain specific questions about the competences and labour market are also asked.

Student satisfaction with programmes is collected in three different ways.

- Firstly, the institution itself organizes course evaluations (per module, per programme) every quarter. While the course evaluations are standardised, the programme evaluations are not (yet). Also, not all study programs make use of program evaluation. The quality coordinator analyses the results of the program evaluation and sends these to the program director. In addition to this formal course evaluation, there is also an informal team evaluation for most courses. A specific evaluation for the internships and examination assignments is also in place in Institution B. These evaluations differ per study programme as there is no institution wide format available.

- Secondly, student satisfaction at the institutional level, per programme, is measured externally via the National Student Survey (the NSE). On a yearly basis, the NSE collects information via e-mail; the survey contains 10 – 15 questions. Data is collected on the content of the program, the acquired skills, preparation for the professional career, teachers, information from the study program, study facilities, assessments and evaluations, timetables (studieroosters), study burden and study support. The NSE is also part of the new performance agreements with the ministry (see under question 3: the use and purpose of the information).

- Thirdly, the national HBO monitor for alumni annually collects information on student satisfaction at both institutional and cluster level, as well as on the program level for the large education programs.

Information on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** is collected in different ways. Both the course evaluations, the National Student Evaluations and the programme (institutional) accreditation monitor the quality of the teachers. In the evaluations, the students are asked how satisfied they are with the teachers (as part of the course evaluation). Additional information is obtained through the annual review talks with each member of the teaching staff. These personal talks between the staff member and (usually) the programme director are held annually and here also the student satisfaction results are included. The effectiveness of teaching staff also relates to obtained qualifications. Institution B collects information on the number of staff with a Ma/PhD degree. A didactical qualification is required for all teachers. For further information, see the WP-10 report.

The student administration collects information on **the profile of the student population** with respect to the male/female proportion, students with disabilities, previous level of education, nationality and the number of exchange students. This is part of institutional policy.

With respect to **learning resources available and their costs**, some information is collected in the student evaluations (both the institutional as well as in the national student survey) where questions are asked about the general satisfaction with student support. The services of the education office have recently been evaluated per study programme. Given the institution's three different locations, there used to be different practices that are currently in the process of synchronisation. This concerns the processes of enrolment, scheduling the classes and assessments, the registration of the grades and internships.

The **institution´s own key performance indicators are**: # total number of students enrolled/per programme/major, # switch and drop-out, # success rates, # NSE quality indicators (average grade), # percentage MA/PhD degrees among educational staff, # education intensity (contact hours), # overhead relation, # percentage foreign students, # number of programmes having international competences included in their final competences. Most of these indicators are part of the institutional policy and are collected annually. At large, they are also laid down in the performance agreements with the ministry.

Institution C

It is part of institutional policy to collect and analyse information connected to aspects a) - g). The institution is also committed to collect information within the framework of accreditation by different stakeholders as the ministry, Central Register of Higher Education Study Programmes, the National Statistical Office of the Netherlands, but also VSNU and the performance agreements with the Ministry. The policy and practice regarding the collection and analysis of information connected to the aspects a) – g) is the following.

Student progression and success rates are collected by the central university administration (Department of Student Services, vision of statistics) and reported in the University Annual report. The division is responsible to provide data on enrolments and drop-out rates to a range of internal and external stakeholders: to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, to DUO and to the National Statistics Office, as well as university Executive Board and faculty Boards. The same unit monitors preliminary registration statistics, intake and study success. The Internal Audit Department also monitors the provision of study progress data.

The key indicators for education include the total number of students, new student enrolments, the number of graduates (specified for Bachelor degree and Master degree) and success rates (specified in re-enrolment, drop out, success and transfer rates of BSc cohorts and MSc cohorts, % of MSc students following a MSc programme in the same university as the BSc). These indicators are used for the institutional monitoring as well as for the VSNU, performance agreements with the Ministry and other outside stakeholders. The data is collected annually.

Information on the **employability of graduates** is collected via a national employability WO-monitor. The last monitor in which the University participates in the Employment Monitor (WO-monitor) which is nationally organized under the auspices of VSNU (2011 the latest one). This questionnaire is issued to the graduates one year after graduation The university also has a career and alumni affairs office which provides information about the employability of graduates to the students as well as to the employers.

The Marketing and Communication Department registers high school pupils who participate in the orientation activities as well as the university alumni in the 'relationship management system'

Student satisfaction with programmes is collected in three different ways. First of all, students evaluate courses after each quartile by filling out questionnaires. They evaluate their individual courses (supervisors) of theses and internships. Further, they fill in the National Student Survey, the alumni survey.

- Firstly, the institution itself organizes course evaluations carried out by a central quality assurance unit. In the faculties, the Faculty Board is the ultimate responsible for the education evaluation. Frequently used instruments include standardized questionnaires, interviews with students (or student panels) and/or teachers, observation of education and the analysis of exam results. Which instrument (or combination of instruments) is the most suitable in a certain situation depends on the exact question that needs to be answered, but also on practical circumstances (e.g., the number of students).

- Further, student satisfaction at the institutional level, per programme, is measured externally via the National Student Survey (the NSE). On a yearly basis, the NSE collects information via e-mail; the survey contains 10 – 15 questions. Data is collected on: the content of the program, the acquired skills, preparation for the professional career, teachers, information from the study program, study facilities, assessments and evaluations, course scheduling, study burden and study support. The NSE is also part of the new performance agreements with the ministry (see under question 3: the use and purpose of the information).

- Finally, student satisfaction with studies at the university is also measured in the WO-Monitor where two questions pertain to this- are students overall satisfied with the studies (would they repeat them in the same institution and the same major) and if their studies are relevant to the labour market.

Information on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** is collected in different ways. Both the course evaluations, the National Student Evaluations and the programme accreditation monitor the quality of the teachers. In the evaluations, the students are asked how satisfied they are with the teachers (as part of the course evaluation). Additional information is obtained through the annual review talk with each member of the teaching staff. These personal talks between the staff member and (usually) the programme director are held annually and here also the student satisfaction results are included. Institution C collects information on the number of staff with a BKO (teaching qualification, see WP10). A didactical qualification is required for all new academic staff to get a permanent contract. Staff also have a possibility to express their opinion about the satisfaction via staff survey.

The student administration collects information on **the profile of the student population** with respect to the male/female proportion, students with disabilities, previous level of education, nationality this is part of institutional policy. The performance agreements in addition state that figures on drop-out rates, switching students and completion rates are important, thus this data is also collected.

With respect to **learning resources available and their costs**, some information is collected in the student evaluations (both the institutional as well as in the national student survey) where questions are asked about the general satisfaction with student support. Student feedback is also collected via student representatives in the programme committees as well as in the student representation at the faculty and central university levels.

The **institution´s own key performance indicators in education are**: # total number of students enrolled/per programme/major, # switch and drop-out, the success rate of the undergraduate students graduating within 4years (time to degree), # of degrees conferred, NSE quality indicators (average grade), % staff holding UTQ, BSc and MSc programmes in English, % of undergraduate students participating in the Honours programme, # of hours of teaching/tutoring per week, # of academic staff tenure trackers. Most of these indicators are part of the institutional policy and are collected annually. At large, they are also laid down in the performance agreements with the ministry.

Institution D

Institution D does not have an institutional policy on the collection and analysis of information, yet collects a range of data for different purposes like the annual report (provided to the Ministry of Education, the supervisory board, the participation council) accreditation or internal management.

In its annual report, institution D presents key indicators as well as strategic indicators. The key indicators for education include **the number of new students, the total number of students, the market share of new students, the rate of students having obtained a diploma after five years in higher education, student satisfaction and satisfaction with graduates of the professional field.** Key indicators to the management of institution D include employees satisfaction, sick leave ratio, productivity, solvency and liquidity. The strategic indicators institution D formulates are divided in five subcategories: **intensity of education** (# contact hours per week, # of study hours per week, % of individual exams); **relation of studies to the professional field** (# of sustainable and relevant co-operations); **internationalisation** (# participation in international projects/networks/% students with high international experience); **excellence** (# Institution D's enterprises /# of doorstrom/movers from UAS to University); **professionalisation** (% lecturers with an academic background/% lecturers engaged in practical research). For each of the indicators the current performance score is presented as well as a target to be reached in the coming year. Institution D has an information service center which is responsible to provide statistical reports. Overall there are no problems experienced with regard to the collection of the previously mentioned information, because the information comes from the institution’s own administration and databases.

In addition to that, institution D collects data on the following aspects, mentioned in the ESG: **employability of graduates, effectiveness of teaching staff, profile of the student population, learning resources and their costs**. Parts of these data are provided through the annual UAS survey (HBO Monitor), other data is collected because in the accreditation institution D needs to demonstrate to possess knowledge about them.

Q3. What is the institutional policy and practice regarding use of information connected to aspects a) – g)? For what purpose is it used (decision-making, corrective action, improvement, innovation)?

Institution A

At programme level, information is used for the purpose of improvement. The programme director collects feedback on all elements of the study programme from programme evaluations (The Education Monitor, BSc- and MSc student graduates questionnaires, BSc1 questionnaires, self-evaluations of study programme reviews, from professional field via the Career monitor and feedback from professional field committees and from external evaluations such as NSE, WO monitor, study programme visitations and visitation committee reports. The feedback is taken into consideration at the study programme level and the course and institute levels. The results from the study programme evaluations and the external evaluations feed into the institutional processes, they are recorded in the Education Institute annual report. The report is reviewed by the Executive Board on a yearly basis. After the meeting, the Education Institute Board is advised to focus on specific issues which have come out of the evaluations.

The programme and institution accreditation reports provide important information for improvement as noted by the university policy documents and reports. The results of the course evaluations which evaluate teachers are confidential. The student feedback is taken into consideration by the Programme Committees and Programme Directors. As a result of discussions questions are addressed to the chair groups so that the courses can be adjusted both from the organizational and the content point of view. Institution A considers it utmost important that its students are satisfied with the study programs, the performance agreements state. Information collected on **students satisfaction with programmes** is used in the annual year plan for the institution and as input for the study programmes. Both the internal and external student evaluations are used to improve the study programmes (Performance agreements, 2012).

At the institute level, the PDCA is used. The results feed into the Strategic Plan and other policy documents. The plan at the Institute level included a number of performance and development instruments, such as chair group plan, annual financial education framework and budget, quality assurance plan including assessment policy, admissions policy, study handbook, education schedule, facilities services, library and ICT provisions, ECTS quality certification, Performance and Development and university teaching qualifications instruments. The plan is the policy instrument for the implementation of the overall university strategy. The information is collected and analysed and the suggestions for improvement are put forward by the Executive Board. Information from NSE and ISB are also used and feed into the Quality Plan at the institutional level. In the past, the issues have been related to student accommodation catering on campus, student portal development, information provision for international students, Bachelor student drop-out rate investigation.

Information on **student progression and success rates** is used in the yearly plans of a programme; every programme director uses it to check whether the study progress (doorstroomsnelheid) is satisfactory, and if there are not too many students taking too long time to graduate. This information is also used as an indication to see if the supervision is sufficient. The drop-out rates are furthermore insightful to evaluate whether students have been provided with the correct information about the study (studievoorlichting). In the performance agreements it is furthermore stated that it is institutional policy to support potential students in the best possible way in making an informed study choice with the purpose of limiting (and reducing) the drop-out rates.

Data on **employability of graduates** from WO-monitor is used in the Check phase of the institute and programme PDCA cycles. This information is discussed with the working field and specifically the professional advisory committees to ensure that the programmes meet the labour market needs. The results of the WO-monitor are used as source for the Higher Education Study choice Guide (Keuzegids Hoger Onderwijs).

In the performance agreements, the agreed indicators for **quality of education** are the NSE results as suggested by the indicators of the VSNU and Ministry agreement, and in addition- a peer-review evaluation of courses every six years indicator is introduced by the institution A. The NSE score is used as a benchmark to compare the quality of the study programs and as a source for the Dutch Higher Education Choice Guide (Keuzegids Hoger Onderwijs).

The institutional management uses the data on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** in the annual appraisal meetings of the chair holder with each lecturer. It is institutional policy and part of the collective employment agreement to use this information formally for evaluation and promotion. Data on the UTQ qualification is included in the performance agreements.

Different data is collected on the **profile of the student population**. Information whether students have disabilities is used as information for programme directors to see whether additional support/facilities are needed The objective of the institution is namely to ensure that students with a function disability are as little troubled by this as possible during their study time. This institution aims to further develop itself as an international institution..

Institution A collects information on **learning resources available to students and their costs** and they use this information to improve the facilities. This year a new education building opens as the numbers of students are increasing. This is in response to the increasing student numbers the last five years..

Information on the **institution´s own key performance indicators** is considered as one of the instruments to monitor the performance of the study program in its entirety. At the institutional management level, this information is considered an instrument to improve the study quality of this institution. The accreditation of University A as well as the study programmes are important tools for reflection for the university management ensure the quality of education.

Institution B

At programme level, information is used for the purpose of improvement. The programme director is responsible for the results of all evaluation instruments and shares the results with the study program committee (*opleidingscommissie*) and other involved. The study program committee can advise the study director (*opleidingsdirecteur*) on how the results can be incorporated in the next PDCA cycle of the study program. The study director uses the results and feedback to formulate points of improvements. Together with the results of the evaluations these are presented as a year plan and management review to the direction. The direction on its turn compares the results with the ambitions stated in the strategic plan and advices the study program director about the plans and direction. If the points of improvements are related to the quality of the services of the supporting departments, the study program director discusses these with the head of the respective department.

At the institutional level, information is used to assure the quality of the education. The direction of institution B is informed by the study program directors and head of the departments responsible for the supporting services. This information includes a status update of the points of improvements set for the respective year, but also the results from the programme and course evaluation, information from the education office and accreditation as well as other instruments at institutional level to evaluate the development of the institution. Based on this information, the year plan and the management review (that reflects the points of improvements, the direction checks whether the education provided matches the vision and mission of the institution. This is done a few times a year. In this way, the status update of the year plan is an instrument in the implementation of the vision and policy of the institution.

Information on **student progression and success rates** is used in the yearly plans of a programme; programme directors use it to check whether the study progress (*doorstroomsnelheid)* is satisfactory and if there are not too many students taking too long time to graduate. This information is also used as an indication to see if the supervision is sufficient. The drop-out rates are furthermore insightful to evaluate whether students have been provided with the correct information about the programme (*studievoorlichting*). This information is considered as one of the instruments to monitor the performance of study programmes in their entirety. In the performance agreements it is furthermore stated that it is institutional policy to support potential students in the best possible way in making an informed study choice with the purpose of limiting (and reducing) the drop-out rates.

Data on **employability of graduates** is used in the annual plans for every programme. This information is discussed with the working field and specifically with professional advisory committees. The results of the HBO monitor (see under question 2) are used as source for the Study Guide of Higher Education Choice .

Institution B considers it important that its students are satisfied with the study programs as seen from the performance agreements. Information collected on **students satisfaction with programmes** is used in the annual year plan for the institution and as input for the study programmes. Both the internal and external student evaluations are used to improve the study programmes (Performance agreements, 2012).

The internal results on *the institutional course evaluations* are set up to have an immediate impact on education and educational facilities. The purpose of the internal student satisfaction evaluations is to collect information on how the content and organisation of the courses can be improved. With regard to the analysis of the institutional course evaluation, action is taken when student satisfaction is below 50%. This indicates to the institution that there is a particular bottleneck. If necessary, additional evaluation takes place to further specify the specific problem. In case of courses with a low number of students, a specific table for analysing the evaluations is available. In addition to this formal course evaluation, there is also an informal evaluation team for most courses. In this case the course is discussed with all the participating staff members and actions for improvement are determined. At institution B there is also a specific evaluation for the internships and examination assignments. These evaluations differ per study programme as there is no institution wide format available. The purpose of these evaluations is to improve the educational programme, as well as to improve the education support if the evaluation indicates in this direction.

The purpose of the *internal evaluation on the study programmess* (data collected after a student finished his or her study) is to measure the quality of the programme. Currently a new standardised programme evaluation is being developed which measures the realisation of the institutional goals; student satisfaction with regard to the professional profile, content, assessments, teachers, didactics; and the organisation and study career guidance of the study programme. These elements are used to evaluate the accreditation standards for the study programmes.

The results of the NSE – *the national student survey* – provide insight about student satisfaction with study programmes. This refers to the satisfaction with the education provided and with the quality of study support. The NSE score is used as a benchmark to compare the quality of the study programmes. This information will also be used for the performance agreements from 2012. In the performance agreements it is furthermore stated that the results of the NSE have also been used to formulate points of improvement at the institutional level (more specifically with regard to the information provision to students).

The institutional management uses the data on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** in the annual appraisal meetings of the team leader with each lecturer. It is institutional policy and part of the collective employment agreement to use this information formally for evaluation and promotion in wage levels. Data on the percentage of staff with a Ma/PhD degree is included in the performance agreements.

Different data is collected on the **profile of the student population**. Information whether students have disabilities is used as information for deans to see whether additional support/facilities are needed (i.e.: dyslexia, autism). The objective of the institution is to ensure that students with a function disability are as little troubled by this as possible during their study time. This institution aims to further develop itself as an international institution. Data on the number of foreign students is collected for the performance agreements.

Institution B collects information on **learning resources available and their costs** but in their own saying this is used too little. According to the quality officer, the facility services should use these data, but this does not work very well yet at this moment. The education office makes use of the student satisfaction collected by the NSE and the HBO-monitor as questions also former and present student satisfaction with study facilities provided by this office. These satisfaction scores are used by the education service to improve its services. The recent evaluation of the processes and systems of the education office (see under question two) was used to write plans for improvement and work towards institution-wide uniformity in processes and systems on the three different locations of the institution.

Information on the **institution´s own key performance indicators** is considered as one of the instruments to monitor the performance of the study program in its entirety. At the institutional management level, this information is considered an instrument to improve the study success of this institution.

Institution C

At programme level, information is used for the purpose of improvement. The study directors collect feedback on all elements of the study programme from programme evaluations, discussions with course coordinators, programme committees. The feedback is taken into consideration at the course, study programme level and faculty Board levels. The results from the study programme evaluations and the external evaluations (NVAO programme accreditations) feed into the institutional processes, they are recorded in the Faculty and University annual reports, University Quality Handbook. The PDCA process is monitored by the quality assurance group at the university central level. (Quality Handbook, Performance agreements, 2012).

Information on **student progression and success rates** is used in the yearly plans of programmes in the faculties; study directors check whether the study progress policy is satisfactory, and if there are not too many students taking too long time to graduate.

In the performance agreements, the agreed indicator for **quality of education** are the NSE results as suggested by the indicators of the VSNU and Ministry agreement, and in addition- a peer-review evaluation of courses every six years indicator is introduced by the institution A. The NSE score is used as a benchmark to compare the quality of the study programs and as a source for the Dutch Higher Education Choice Guide.

The institutional management uses the data on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** in the annual appraisal meetings of the chair holder with each member of academic staff belong to a particular chair. It is institutional policy and part of the collective employment agreement to use this information formally for evaluation and promotion. Data on the UTQ qualification is included in the performance agreements.

Information on the **profile of the student population,** such as whether students have disabilities is used as information for course coordinators and study directors to see whether additional support/facilities are needed.

Institution C uses information on **learning resources available to students and their costs** to improve the facilities. In recent years a new student information portal has been developed to easy the registration of students for exams as well as to improve information flows. Although interviews revealed that the new system is still work in progress, the interviewed students were satisfied with this improvement.

Information on the **institution´s own key performance indicators** is considered as one of the instruments to monitor the performance of the study programs, they are the key ingredients of the PDCA cycle as well as important signals for the university management to ensure the quality of education. The institutional audit from NVAO as well as the performance agreement with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture are strong impetus for the development of these performance indicators.

Institution D

The data that institution D collects are used in different ways and by different stakeholders. To start with, data on **employability of graduates** is collected through the HBO-monitor. Institution D is not obliged to participate in the survey and does also not need to provide these figures in an accreditation. Yet institution D needs to be able to demonstrate what graduates are doing, how engaged are they with the professional field and whether they were educated for the right market. Therefore the survey is very informative for the programme content. The information from this is used for the Planning and Control Cycle (P&C) and is discussed during management review meetings with the central board and the course management in order to improve the study programmes.

Data on **student satisfaction** is collected by the institution after every quarter (see WP 8 & 10 reports) and nationally through the NSE. In the accreditation process institution D needs to demonstrate that they listen to students and take their feedback into account for the programme development/improvement. Therefore, collecting this data is an essential element for the institution D and it receives special attention during the management review. The data from the course evaluations is only available for internal stakeholders like the students, the participation council and the advisory council at the faculty level. The reason for not making the data available to external audience is that the data is rather detailed and at the same time linked to staff members. The results of the NSE, however, are available on the website and can be accessed by all kinds of stakeholders.

Data on the **effectiveness of teaching staff** is collected through the student satisfaction surveys. Next to that the management team has individual meetings with staff members to discuss the performance (see WP 10 for details). This data is on the one hand used for corrective action - if a staff member proves to be ineffective this will be discussed with the management team. Furthermore, data on the effectiveness of teaching staff is part of the accreditation process. Collecting this data takes place under the umbrella of improving the quality of courses.

Different data is collected on the **profile of the student population** (read also PW 6), like age, nationality, educational background. The data partly serves as background information for the annual report and is also used for steering/corrective action. To illustrate, if the data shows that for instance males or females are overrepresented, this will be discussed and addressed at the central level. The use of this is, however, not structurally regulated, but in case of extraordinary figures, attention will be drawn to this. The data is available at the central administration office and officially collected when students register.

Institution D possesses data on the **learning resources** available and its costs. Parts of this are including in the annual report/account and are subject to negotiate the budgets.

In addition, the **NSE results** are central for institution D as well as data on **graduates** and **drop-out rates and intake rates**. Particularly the last two form a major indicator of the institution's own performance set. This data is partially included in the annual report and partially used for the accreditation process.

To sum up, the rationale for data collection is improvement (as part of the quality assurance policy and the accreditation process). Further the various kinds of information are made available for management reports and annual reports which are discussed among the central board and the academy management. Thereby they also have a function regarding future planning. Whereas some of the data are publicly available through the annual report or the HBO monitor and NSE, the institution decides not to publish all the information on their own website. For instance data on the employability of graduates, though considered to be essential also for future students, is only partly published on the institutional website. This is because most of the data is available in the annual reports anyhow and the website should maintain a readable format.

Q4 How <u>effective</u> is collection, analysis and use of information within the institution? Good to address especially: organisational structures; levels of responsibility; extent of formalisation in internal quality assurance processes; plans, reasons for changes and expected benefits (if relevant).

a) student progression and success rates;
b) employability of graduates;
c) students satisfaction with programmes;
d) effectiveness of teaching staff;
e) profile of the student population;
f) learning resources available and their costs;
g) institution´s own key performance indicators.

Institution A

The collection of data on **student progression and success rates** by the education administration are useful and are used in the institution to improve the educational process. The institutional audit committee found out that the amount of information collected is impressive. At the same time, the institutional documents and interviews have shown that serious account is taken of the factors for drop outs and study delay. The Institute of Education together with staff department responsible for education and research have studied the risk factors leading to delay or drop-out. The outcome of the study was that gender, secondary school GPA and study profile were predictive. The information is compared across different years. Such information is passed to the programme teams to inform and coach students and to improve the programs. Further, the university offers training of study skills to the freshmen BSc students (Annual Report, 2011).

The data collected on **the employability of graduates** either through graduate/alumni surveys or through feedback from the professional field are important for programme content improvement (See WP 9). The employability of graduates does not present a problem to the institution, students are usually able to find a job after graduation.

With regard to **student satisfaction**, the institutional audit committee has found out that students rate in NSE the university highly and the results are consistent with the scores students provide in the internal university evaluations. The results are taken into account in the Yearly plan of the institute as well as submitted for comments to the Executive Board . The respective study programme is also informed about the results of student evaluations after each study period.

The results of student evaluation with regard to the **effectiveness of teaching staff** are discussed in the annual appraisal meetings of chair holder with each lecturer. The evaluation results are one of the topics of the annual staff reviews . Measures may be taken such as instructing the lecturer that he/she has to improve the lectures. In some cases it might be decided to change the lecturers for a certain subject (See WP 10.) It has been noted by the institutional audit committee that not 100% of academic lecturers are yet reviewed in this way even though it could be the question of lack of formal registration rather than lack of reviews.

Information about the profile of the **student population** is effective in relation to data on student disabilities. As the international student profile is concerned, the institution uses this information as a steering instrument to gain a more international students. The information has been also useful to ensure the better information provision and services to serve international students' needs. The availability of materials in English such as study guides is one of the positive examples.

Institution A collects information on **learning resources available to students and their costs and it feeds into the PDCA cycle and the education budgeting instrument. Improvements have been made to the facilities for students in the past years and are planned to take place in 2013-2014.** Both the quality and quantity of ICT provisions available for students are monitored, and action is taken by the institution if necessary. The **institution's own key performance indicators** are related to the performance agreements and the institution aims to meet them and are used accordingly.

Institution B

The collection of data on **student progression and success rates** by the education administration can be challenging as the definitions are not always clear cut as noted by the Quality assurance officer. The data collected on **the employability of graduates** via the student surveys usually does not lead to radical changes, as most of the issues are already known.

The employability of graduates does not present a problem to the institution; students are usually well able to find a job after (or already before) graduation. With regard to **student satisfaction**, the results are taken into account in the year plan and the respective programme/course is also informed about the results of student course evaluations after each study period. The results of student evaluation with regard to the **effectiveness of teaching staff** are discussed in the annual appraisal meetings of the team leader with each lecturer. If poor evaluations are given, additional research is done to find the reason. Measures may be taken such as instructing the lecturer that he/she has to improve the lectures. In some cases it might be decided to change the staffing for a certain subject.[4] Information about the profile of the **student population** is effective in relation to data on student disabilities. The deans are informed about this to support students during their study time and make sure the right facilities are in place. As far as internationalisation is concerned, the institution uses this information as a steering instrument to gain more balance in terms of different nationalities. Institution B collects information on **learning resources available and their costs** but in their own view it is not used extensively. The staff services should use these data, but this is not warranted sufficiently so the quality assurance officer states. Both the quality and quantity of ICT provision available to students is monitored, and action is taken by the institution if

[4] In previous reports, the effectiveness of the teaching staff is discussed to a further extent.

necessary. The **institution's own key performance indicators** are related to the performance agreements.

Institution C

The collection of data on **student progression and success rates** by the education administration are useful and are used in the institution to improve the educational process. They are taken into account in the faculty self-reflections. The performance agreements shows that the university has ambitions to increase the percentage of Honours students among its undergraduate student body, to increase the number of staff holding BKO qualification, as well as decrease the drop-out rates as well as study delay. The interviews revealed that faculties are discussing the study delay statistics of the programmes at the Faculty Board and Study Directors levels.

The data collected on **the employability of graduates** either through graduate/alumni surveys or through feedback from the professional field are important for programme improvement. However as reported already in WP 9 report, not all programmes include workfield/alumni insights into their programme reviews (See WP 9). The information on the employability is used by the career center in one of the studied faculties as they are very active in finding internships for their students.

With regard to **student satisfaction**, the NSE scores as well as the course evaluation results feed into the PDCA cycle and are reported to the quality assurance unit at the university central level. This unit gives advice how to improve for the next year based on the results of the previous year and provides information to the CvB. At the course and programme levels, academic staff are informed about the results of student evaluations after each study period.

The evaluation data provide the basis for measures and decision-making that contribute towards improvement of the education provided. Those responsible (the Faculty Board (which has final responsibility) and teachers (who have personal responsibility)) are kept informed of the evaluation results via various channels:

- separate reporting to teachers, teaching coordinators and/or Programme Committees/Evaluation Committees about, e.g., course and curriculum evaluations and academic progress data;
- a final report to the Faculty Board with a supra-course presentation and analysis of the evaluation data, conclusions and recommendations.

The results of student evaluation with regard to the **effectiveness of teaching staff** are discussed in the annual appraisal meetings of chair holder with each academic. The evaluation results feed into the promotion talks. (See WP 10.)

Information about the profile of the **student population** is effective in relation to data on student disabilities. The information database shows what type of specific equipment or facilities are needed and have been used by students over years per faculty and programme. As the international student profile is concerned, the institution uses this information as a steering instrument to gain a more international students at both Bachelor and Master's levels. The information provision in English is ensured at all levels.

Institution C collects information on **learning resources available to students and their costs** and it feeds into the PDCA cycle as well as the financial accounts (and yearly reports). Improvements have been made to the facilities for students in the past years (as mentioned before- the new information system has been created).

Institution D

Institution D did not reveal major problems with regard to the data collection, analysis and use of the information. Institution D has an office responsible for the monitoring of the P&C cycle. The office is in charge to administer the data that is produced internally and needs to be distributed externally/internally to for instance management reports and annual reports. Good information and the availability of data forms an integral part and a basis for the implementation of the institution's quality policy. Monitoring the process with good data is a precondition for the higher continuous improvement aim. Therefore the internal indicators that institution D developed are crucial for the quality assurance process.

Q5 What is the institutional policy and practice regarding <u>publication</u> of information connected to aspects h) – n)? What do you keep internal? What do you publish externally? How HEIs verify if the expectations concerning impartiality and objectiveness of published information are fulfilled?

h) offered study programs;
i) intended learning outcomes,
j) awarded qualification;
k) teaching, learning and assessment procedures;
l) learning opportunities available for students;
m) views and employment destinations of past students;
n) profile of the student population

Institution A

Institution A publishes information about the **study programs offered** on its website by chair groups, by level of study, by course. More detailed information regarding the study programs offered can by viewed on the internet in the Study Handbook. Prospective students can also download a brochure or received as a paper copy of the brochure. As described in the WP 7 report, additional information about the study programs is available in the Student Charter that is available on the internet. The Charter consists of two parts – the first part comprises general information about studies at the particular institutions, regulations and codes of conduct (including study assessment) and the other-specific information related to a program. The Study Handbook is part of the Charter. This institution teaches according to competence-based learning. The **intended learning outcomes** are formulated as competences students are to acquire and develop and are translated into the programme curricula and units of study. With regard to the **awarded qualifications**, this information is published in the key indicators on study success rates in the annual report that is also available externally on the website. The internal evaluation reports publish information on the number of incoming and outgoing students as well as the success rates.

At institution A, the **teaching, learning and assessment procedures** are described on the website, in study handbook, the study guides as well as the intranet (see also WP 7 report). The key regulation (OER), study guides and the student Charter provide general information about studies at the institution A, regulations and codes of conduct, and also with detailed descriptions of student assessment policies and procedures and other specific information related to a program. In addition to this information on paper, the students are introduced to the educational concept of Institution A, the study method and the assessments in oral presentations in the beginning of the programme. This information is provided to students by study coordinators, career counsellors, lecturers and information centres related to specific study programmes.

Students are informed about the different **learning opportunities available** (including for example the possibilities to study abroad) and study paths (see WP 6 report) and know whom to contact in case of special support (e.g. study advisors). This information is typically included in the study brochures and internal guides, but is also published externally on the website of the institution.

The study brochures include **views and employment destinations of (past) students**. The experiences of former students are published on the institutional website. Students who finished their studies are requested to evaluate their study programmes (See WP 9). Information about the employability of graduates is published via the national WO-Monitor and the Career Monitor which is carried out on behalf of the institution. Both of them are publicly available.

With respect to the **profile of the student population**, the annual report and the Education Monitor externally publishes the male/female ratio, the number of incoming international students and data about the educational background of students.

Institution B

Institution B publishes information about the **study programs offered** externally on its website. Partial information about how the curriculum is organised is available online. More detailed information regarding the study programs offered can be ordered in print or downloaded as a brochure. As stipulated in the WP 7 report, additional information about the study programs is available in the Student Charter that is available on the internet. The Charter consists of two parts – the first part comprises general information about studies at the particular institutions, regulations and codes of conduct (including study assessment) and the other- specific information related to a programme. In addition, students receive yearly Study Guides, which are also available via student portal on the institution's website. This guide contains information about the study programmes, courses and their descriptions per programme.

This institution teaches according to competence-based learning. The **intended learning outcomes** are formulated as competences students are to acquire and develop and are translated into the units of study. The competences that are assessed are published for each programme and course in the Course Specific Education Regulation ('OER').

With regard to the **awarded qualifications**, this information is published in the key indicators on study success rates in the annual report that is also available externally on the website. The internal evaluation reports publish information on the number incoming and outgoing students as well as the success rates.

At institution B, different **teaching, learning and assessment procedures** are referred to on the website, in study brochures, the study guides as well as the intranet and the e-learning environment (see also WP 7 report). The key regulation (OER), study guides and the student charter provide with general information about studies at the particular institution, regulations and codes of conduct, and also with detailed descriptions of student assessment policies and procedures and other specific information related to a programme. In addition to this information on paper, the concept of education, study method and the assessment procedures are verbally explained to students. This information provision for students goes via study coordinators, career counsellors, term coordinators, lecturers and is also provided by the information centre (Self Reflection reports).

Students are informed about the different **learning opportunities available** (including for example the possibilities to study abroad) and study paths (see WP 6 report) and know whom to contact in case special support is needed. This information is typically included in the study brochures and internal guides, but is also published externally on the website of the institution.

The study brochures include **views and employment destinations of (past) students**. Experiences of (past) students are also published on the website. Students who finished their studies are requested to evaluate their study programme. A system of publishing the results of programme evaluations is under development (Quality assurance policy, 2012). Information about the employability of graduates is published internally. In an aggregated way, the national HBO-Monitor publishes information about the employability of graduates. With respect to the **profile of the student population**, the annual report externally publishes male/female ratio of the student body as well as the number of incoming international students participating in the Erasmus student exchange programme (including both the country and institution of origin). The internal evaluation reports of the respective study programmess furthermore publish data on the educational background of students and whether they are Dutch of foreign (i.e. international students i.e. exchange students).

Institution C

Institution C publishes information about the **study programs offered** on its website by department, by level of study, by course. More detailed information regarding the study programs offered can be downloaded as a study guide. As described in the WP 7 report, additional information about the study programs is available in the Student Charter that is available on the internet. The Charter consists of two parts – the first part comprises general information about studies at the particular institutions, regulations and codes of conduct (including study assessment) and the other- specific information related to a program. Study Guides are also available via student portal on the institution’s website. This guide contains information about the study programs, the courses and their descriptions per program.

This strategic plan notes that it is institutional policy in improve the teaching environment by ensuring the learning outcomes are developed for the programmes and courses. The **intended learning outcomes** are formulated as competences students are to acquire and develop and are translated into the programme curricula and units of study. The competences that are practiced and assessed are published for each programme and course in the Course Specific Education Regulation (‘OER’).

With regard to the **awarded qualifications**, this information is published in the key indicators on study success rates in the annual report that is also available externally on the website. The internal faculty plans and reports publish information on the number of incoming and outgoing students as well as the success rates.

At institution C, the different **teaching, learning and assessment procedures** are described on the website, in the study guides as well as the intranet (see also WP 7 report). The key regulation (OER), study guides and the Student Charter provide general information about studies at the institution C, regulations and codes of conduct, and also with detailed descriptions of student assessment policies and procedures and other specific information related to a programme.

Students are informed about the different **learning opportunities available** (including for example the possibilities to study abroad or to do an internship) (see WP 6 report). This information is included in study brochures and internal guides, but is also published externally on the website of the institution.

With respect to the **profile of the student population**, the annual report externally publishes the male/female ratio as well as the number of incoming international students. The internal evaluation reports of the respective study programs furthermore publish data about the educational background and nationality of students.

Institution D

Institution D publishes detailed information about **study programs offered** on its website. Partially information about how the curriculum is organised is available. Before publishing the information, the department for public relations carefully checks whether it is correct, yet the departments themselves are in charge of providing the right information about the bachelor and master courses. Information about **intended learning outcomes** and body of skills is available and documented (read also WP 7 report), however internally only. Externally the information is only available on request and during the accreditation process for the external committee. Information about the **qualifications awarded** is available both internally and externally on the website. This is because it is essential background information for future students. Whether this information is indeed available is checked during the accreditation process; the quality assurance department supervises this as well. The different kinds of **teaching, learning and assessment procedures** are also referred to on the website/ in study brochures as well as in the internal study guides (read WP 7 report). Every management team of a programme is responsible for the correctness of the information that is provided, and the curriculum team (consisting of 4-6 lecturers, responsible for maintenance and improvement of the curriculum) is in charge for publication and updating. Students are upfront informed about the different learning opportunities and learning paths (read WP 6 report) and know whom to contact in case of special support; this information is typically included in the study brochures and internal guides as well. Further, the study brochures contain information about the satisfaction of the professional field with the students and the employment destinations of alumni students. This kind of information is not structurally presented in figures but rather in forms of examples, prepared by the public relations office. Information about the student population is part of the annual report.

Q6 What barriers and effective practices are in place as regards collection, use and publication of information in the institution? What can be done to enhance the current policy and practice in this area?

Institution A

Barriers

- The link between the quality monitoring of the programmes and the feedback from the alumni is not always clear
- The communication about study service for international students was identified as one of the issues.

Effective practices

- Information is an integral part of the PDCA cycle at the programme and institute level.
- Institutional data and its publication are helpful to monitor the study success and drop-out rates and compare the institution nationally and internationally.
- The institution provides a lot of information publicly about its courses, regulations and quality.
- The institution takes the student satisfaction with study programmes and feedback about study services quality seriously. At the same time, it uses additional data to ascertain about the quality of the programme, such as peer-review.
- The institution monitors the alumni employability and their satisfaction with the link between education and employability.

Institution B

The collection, use and publication of information of the institution are seen as assets to reduce the drop-out rates and improve study success as these data may be used for steering policy. A barrier recognized by the quality assurance officer in this is that the collection of data on student progression and success rates by the education administration can be challenging as the definitions are not always clear cut.

The information provision towards potential students is highlighted as an important issue by the quality assurance officer, as a well-informed study choice is seen as a possibility to reduce the drop-out rate of the institution. The institution undertakes a variety of activities to inform new students about its study programmes. A potential effective practice to reduce the drop-out rates in the first study year are the intake conversations organised by a few study programmes. These talks have the objective to judge whether the expectations of the students of the study programme are realistic and if the study would suit the potential students.[5] At one of the locations of this institution, information on the transition between the secondary school and the institution is monitored. Also during the study, the institution activities are organised to reduce drop-out. Study career guidance is one of them, as is the introduction of the binding study advice. The performance agreements furthermore make note of the monitoring of exit conversations as a measure to support students in their study choice. In addition to these measures, the improvement of the management information is furthermore mentioned as an instrument to improve the study success rates (Performance agreement, 2012).

In 2011, Institution B started a project to improve the administrative support and information provision to students. This project encompasses several aspects, including uniformity of institutional policy of the support and process that is requested by the institutional accreditation. In line with this project, the performance agreements formulate the following points of improvements: the timely information provision on the timetables and adjustments in these, the information with regard to the results of the assessments and examinations, and the information about the use of the education evaluations.

As regards the collection and use of information for the performance agreements, this institution made the choice to relate as much as possible to the existing sources and measurement instruments. This could be regarded an effective practice.

Institution C

Barriers

- The information circulation for the PDCA implementation is not uniformly organized across different faculties.
- The information about the link with employers and alumni and their input in study programmes is not readily available on the website/reports.
- The employability monitoring seems to be limited in this institution.

Effective practices

- The institution follows the official requirements for data collection for the national agencies.
- A new information system was created to address the information needs and timely registration and management of the study process at this institution.
- Information collection is an integral part of the PDCA cycle at the programme, faculty and central levels.

[5] See also WP12.

- A new digitalization procedures and programmes are established in the faculties to improve the data collection processes from all levels of the institution.
- Institutional data and its publication are helpful to monitor the study success and drop-out rates and compare the institution nationally and internationally
- The course evaluations are automated and processed by a central unit which is helpful for a big institution.
- The institution provides a lot of information to the public about its courses.

Institution D

Barriers:

- No institutional policy on information provision, yet it seems to work very well
- No overview about what range of data is collected

Effective practices:

- Institution D has their own performance set;
- Lots of information is already covered in the accreditation process
- Collection of the information is used for continuous improvement

Conclusions

To summarize, we have observed that the Dutch studied institutions follow the requirements for information gathering from the NVAO accreditation, also as prescribed by the Law on higher education, they provide information about the study programmes to DUO and the National Statistics Agency. Further, following the recent performance agreements with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, they provide the necessary statistics needed for these agreements. The set of indicators used by the Dutch studied institutions is in line with the ESG partly because the national requirements include those indicators and partly due to their own initiative (like employability monitoring).

The range of data is used for the international quality assurance processes -- for the PDCA cycle. Monitoring of the number of enrolments, study success, student satisfaction are very important for the decision-making processes regarding the courses and allocation of funds for the courses, and overall – for the improvement of the study programmes. The main differences between the institutions is that the HBO institutions put more emphasis on the monitoring of the employment of students and the link with employers than the universities. Further, they have stronger emphasis on monitoring at all levels compared to the universities, where differences in the monitoring practices may be seen between different faculties, especially in terms of evaluation of courses.

To sum up, the rationale for data collection is improvement (as part of the quality assurance policy and the accreditation process). Further the various kinds of information are made available for management reports and annual reports which are discussed among the central management of the institutions. Whereas some of the data are publicly available through the annual reports, WO or HBO monitors and NSE, the institutions decide not to publish all the information on their own websites as they may include too much personal information about the staff/students, or are already made available in the reports, such as annual reports.

Barriers and institutional good practices

This review has identified a couple of barriers

- The link between the quality monitoring of the courses and the feedback from the alumni for all programmes is not always clear.
- Institution D does not have an institutional policy on information provision, yet it seems to work very well.
- Institution D does not have an overview about the range of collected data
- The information circulation for the PDCA implementation is not uniformly organized across different faculties in institution C.
- The information about the link with employers and alumni and their input in study programmes is not readily available on the website/reports in institution C.
- The collection of data on student progression and success rates by the education administration can be challenging as the definitions are not always clear cut.

Good practices were also identified in the Dutch case studies:

- The institutions follow the official requirements for data collection for the national agencies.
- Most of institutions have created new information systems to address the information needs and timely registration and management of the study processes.
- Information collection is an integral part of the PDCA cycles at the programme, faculty and central levels.
- A new digitalization procedures and programmes are established in the faculties to improve the data collection processes from all levels of the institution C.
- Institutional data and its publication are helpful to monitor the study success and drop-out rates and compare the institution nationally and internationally.
- Course evaluations are a regular procedure and they serve as one of the performance indicators for the study programme reviews.
- The institutions provide a lot of information to the public about its courses and its study performance.
- Collection of information is used for continuous improvement
- The performance agreements include institutional own indicators.

Recommendations

- The information systems need to be well planned and centrally managed to ensure uniformity across the institution, this is especially important for the big institutions

- The information about the employability of graduates and the link with employers should be readily available for the public on the institutional websites and reports

- Institutional policy on information provision is helpful and can be incorporated in the university strategy.

- The institutions should make better use of the gathered performance information for its own decision-making regarding quality and not only for the compliance with the external agency requirements to improve their internal quality assurance processes.

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