

Subject	Operating an External Quality Agency
Segment	Reviewer Roles and Training
Topic	3.1 Overview

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Please note that this is a text-only version. All links and animations are not activated in this version. It is recommended that you view the topic online for an interactive learning experience.

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1. Introduction



It is often said that quality assurance based on team visits is no better or worse than the quality of the members of the team. Excellent written standards and processes are wasted if team members are not informed about those standards and trained in how to apply them. The quality of visiting teams depends on recruitment of volunteers, selection of members for each visiting team, and training of members before they serve on the team.

Every external quality assurance agency (QA agency) is dependent on a good core of permanent staff to be responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of the agency. As it is very unlikely, however, that agencies would be able to employ sufficient staff to undertake its review processes without involvement of external reviewers, an essential part of operating a quality assurance agency is the identification and training of external reviewers who will be involved in the reviews as members of review teams. Furthermore, the agency must be clear about what it expects from its reviewers who are charged with the responsibility of making the judgments that form the basis of reports of the review.

This module focuses on the tasks that a reviewer undertakes. The module discusses the range of roles to be played, the profiles of effective reviewers and ways of recruiting them. The training of reviewers is also covered with examples of different approaches to training, depending on the circumstances. This module includes a number of examples of programs and handouts that can be used by trainers.

2. Module Overview

Reviewer Roles and Training – Overview

Let us review the topics we will cover in this module.

Reviewer Roles and Profiles

This topic discusses the different approaches that exist for identifying and formulating the roles of the reviewers and ensuring that they perform their roles accordingly. It discusses the profiles of effective reviewers and ways of recruiting

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them. The topic also deals with ways to constitute effective review teams or panels while balancing the skills and expertise of the individual reviewers.

Training of Reviewers

This topic discusses the training of reviewers with examples of different approaches to training, depending on the circumstances. The topic provides a set of resources, including examples of workshops and handouts, which can be used by trainers for designing programs.

3. Objectives

Objectives: Reviewer Roles and Training

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to

- define key terms related to QA reviews and the role of reviewers
- discuss the importance of mapping reviewer roles and profiles for an effective quality assurance review
- describe the different approaches to training reviewers with reference to the context in which the quality assurance review is to be conducted
- identify strategies for constituting effective review teams

4. Reading

Reading: Suggested Reading and References

These items are available on the website of the agency responsible for them. As these publications are frequently updated, you should check the list of websites (below) of the relevant QA agencies to make sure you have the most recent versions of references mentioned in the text.

- EUA, Institution Evaluation Program (IEP), [Guidelines for participating Institutions](#), Brussels, 2008.
- Higher Education Quality Committee, [HEQC Institutional Audits Manual 2007](#), Pretoria 2007.
- HKCAAVQ [Guidelines on Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Qualifications Framework QF Levels 1 – 3](#) version 1.0, Hong Kong, May 2008.
- HKCAAVQ [Guidelines on Initial Evaluation and Program Validation – QF Levels 4 to 7](#), version 1.0, HONG Kong, May 2008.
- [INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance](#), 2007.
- Middle States Association on Higher Education, [Team Visits: Conducting and Hosting an Evaluation Visit](#), Philadelphia 2006.
- NZUAAU, [Audit Manual 2007](#). Retrieved on 8 May 2009.
- OAQ Quality Audits 2007/08, [Guide to external evaluation, Recommendations for Experts](#). Retrieved on 8 May 2009.
- [QAA Institutional Audit Handbook](#), 2006. Retrieved on 8 May 2009.
- [QAA Institutional Audit Report: Canterbury Christ Church University College](#) May 2005. Retrieved on 8 May 2009.
- [QAC Audit Manual](#). Retrieved on 6 March 2009.
- [Quality Assurance Arrangements in Higher Education in the Broader Asia-Pacific Region](#), APQN.

Websites: There are websites mentioned at different points in this module so you will need to refer to them from time to time. You may also need to use other websites for some of the Discussion tasks in different topics included in the module. You can

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link to quality assurance websites through the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (INQAAHE) at the following URL:

<http://www.inqaahe.org/members/list-full.php>

Note that there several categories of membership of INQAAHE and hence other lists to consult if you do not find an agency you are trying to locate.

5. Terminology

Reminder:

These QA materials were written by an international team and so, inevitably, there is a variety of terms used throughout the text. The Syllabus section of this subject includes an overview to help you comprehend individual terms and their meanings in the QA context. You will need to consult this list from time to time!