

## Feedback for EKKA Commendations and Recommendations

2012-2017

60 experts

### Preparation for the Visit

#### I. *The structure of the self-evaluation report (SER).*

##### **Commendations:**

The structure of the report is suitable and there is a good set of leading questions and assessment guidelines.

##### **Recommendations:**

It is suggested that the report should be read and checked for inconsistencies, beforehand, by a person that wasn't involved in the stages of preparation of the report.

It is suggested that the correctness of the English language should be checked.

It is suggested that the **duplications and repetitions** should be checked and eliminated. (EKKA: to pay attention in the training)

It is suggested that SER should be **less descriptive but contain links** to statistical data (student'/staff recruitment, progression and achievement), facts that present the ground of the written statements, and the strengths should be specified in a more convincing way.

It is suggested that at the end of the SER should be included the summary section and the recommendation section.

It is suggested that in SER should be included the information regarding the forms of assessment in the study programmes, quality assurance procedures (approval, changes, surveillance and action, action plans, the standards of the awards for study programmes), and what the success criteria are.

It is suggested that some examples of Reports that are up to the standards should be presented to the Committee.

It is suggested that in SER should be added the Programme Management standard, a summary of the research achievements, and it should be clearly specified what the level of research expected by the government is.

It is suggested that a section in SER where the SPG of one institution is compared to the similar SPG of another institution, should be included.

It is suggested that the institutions to be appropriately instructed to write, in the beginning, a general section that is common to every SP instead of giving single SP reports.

It is suggested that the structure of SER to be closer to a checklist than to a free form text.

It is suggested that in SER should be presented detailed information regarding the interaction between the SPG and the society.

### Template to universities – how to present key data (in the guidelines)

#### *II. The introductory seminar and materials provided by EKKA*

##### **Commendations:**

The seminar and the information materials were clear, useful, informative, and helpful.

##### **Recommendations:**

It is suggested that EKKA should offer some guides regarding the internal work of the committee and the roles of the members.

Because of the big amount of information, it is suggested that the presentations and part of the material should be sent beforehand for review.

It is suggested that the working process should be covered as well as an explanation of what will be expected in the report.

It is suggested that the copies of the slides should be handed to the members of the committee in order to find the needed information easily.

It is suggested that the information regarding the quality system of the HEI of Estonia should have been “deeper”.

It is suggested that more elaboration about the differences between Estonian system and that of the countries the committee members come from should be formulated.

It is suggested that other platform for cooperative work on documents than Dropbox, should be provided.

It is suggested that if the standards of EKKA are not important for the assessment of SPG, they should be left out when making the introduction for a committee that will assess SPG.

It is suggested that all the statistics given during the introduction should be given as a file format to each member of the committee.

### Ekspertide koolituse info kodulehele ülikoolidele teadmiseks?

**III. *Requirements/criteria for each assessment area allow evaluating the quality of a study programme group / institution appropriately.***

**Commendations:**

All major fields of possible concern are covered. The requirements, standards and criteria are well expressed, suitable, and help the panel to focus their questions and discussions.

**Recommendations:**

It is suggested that there is a need of emphasis that the panel is expected to answer to the assessment criteria only.

It is suggested that there should be other assessment criteria for other areas in addition to the “content of a programme” area, as: quality assurance processes, procedures for managing change, how student feedback is not just gathered but taken on board and responded to, and the effectiveness of the staff development.

It is suggested that the criteria “content of the education” should be also included.

It is suggested that beside the focus on the contents of the curriculum, such criteria of the quality systems as: consistency and repeatability should be also considered.

It is suggested that more time for reading the materials/documentation is needed in between the meetings.

It is suggested that it should be clearly stipulated that the criteria “service to society” has as focus the activities of the university in conjunction with the society in wider terms rather than R&D cooperation with business only.

It is suggested that if there are strict requirements for the SPG assessment, they should be given higher priority in the seminar.

It is suggested that there was a misunderstanding because of the differences between the criteria regarding higher education applied in Estonia and other countries the committee members were accustomed with.

It is suggested that differences between institutions (Colleges and Universities) should be taken into account when it comes to assessment criteria.

## Visit

### *IV. Appropriate access to additional information was provided during the visit.*

#### **Commendations:**

Additional information was available, rapidly provided, and helpful.

#### **Recommendations:**

It is suggested that some needed, important materials were available only in Estonian language, so the translation should be prepared beforehand in order to save time.

It is suggested that the access to the publication lists should be provided so that the committee can form a better picture regarding the scientific performance (even if the assessment of research wasn't asked to be applied).

It is suggested that the committee should be informed about the existing information systems (intranet of the institution, information system of the library).

It is suggested that the schedule was very tight and because of lack of time some reviewing processes and details of actual assessment were skipped. Thus, more time for the reading of materials, in between the meetings, should be provided.

It is suggested that because of lack of time, some materials (action plans of the university) should be presented or sent to the experts in advance (one day before the visit).

It is suggested that there was lack of examples of student work, no exam scripts for scrutiny, lack of documentation regarding teaching and assessment. In the UK, an "external examiner" system operates in order to ensure maintenance of standards. On his/her annual visit, the following would be available for inspection in relation to each module: Module templates, Schemes of work and lesson plans, Assessment plan, Copies of assessment front sheets and task sheets; practical logbooks, Samples of marked work, Mentoring records, Examples of handouts and other teaching materials, Module feedback questionnaire analysis, Additional learning experiences (industrial visits, etc.), Internal verification records, External examiner reports and action plans, Module leaders' report forms. These should be offered for scrutiny.

It is suggested that should be provided extreme examples of assessment and graduation thesis. Moreover, a representative selection of theses (MSc & BSc) should be made available for the panel.

Koordinaatorid – nii head kui halvad näited lõputöödest külastuseks.

*V. The organization of the visit (length of the interviews, logistics, provision of translation etc.) was appropriate.*

**Commendations:**

The visit was very well organized; the logistics was very well handled; the length of meetings was appropriate; having short slots for panel reflection seems a good idea.

**Recommendations:**

It is suggested that more time is needed for large and diverse institutions in order to meet students in their studying environment and for more possibilities to meet staff members.

It is suggested that the delegations, for the interviews, should be smaller.

It is suggested that the questions and the roles of committee members should be assigned and discussed before coming to Estonia.

It suggested that time for the work with documents of the institutions on site should be allocated instead of providing those documents before or after the meetings.

It is suggested that many of the meetings were repetitive, running through the same issues, thus it would be more efficient to address common issues at a meeting with the senior manager (e.g. institute director and the leader of each programme to present the existing common issues) in this way the programme specific sessions could be shorter and the conversations could be more efficient.

It is suggested that the number of meetings and the extent of visits should be more rational.

It is suggested that there is no enough time allocated for certain interviews and the division of the committee for various interviews is not a good idea, thus the time needed for different interviews should be better planed.

It is suggested that more time is needed for the discussions of the panel about the progress of the “findings” and conclusions of the day.

It is suggested that the responses from the Institutes should be as focused as possible this will give the possibility for the panel members to go through all the questions carefully.

It is suggested that more time in the evenings should be allocated for writing the report, even before the last day.

It is suggested that more time is needed for meetings **with middle management** (e.g. head of the department)

**Suggestion from EKKA – work in the evenings as well**

**VI. *The coordinator provided professional support during the visit.***

**Commendations:**

The coordinators were extremely professional, competent, supportive, and efficient; the visits and the additional materials were prepared very well.