How to connect (integrate 😊) QA to the decision-making processes at all levels?

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Purpose of quality assurance

• Impact of quality should be meaningful
• Improvement
  – Main purpose of internal quality evaluation, but not exclusively because external QE works as a catalyst for internal improvement
• Accountability
  – Main purpose of external quality evaluation, but again not exclusively
• Achieving goals (nurturing values), strategic planning, working according institutional values, enhancing QC
  – “Culture eat strategy for breakfast” J.Juran
• Impact on the system; ability to justify and support justified change, but avoid redundancy
Results of QA

- Self-evaluation report
  - Statistics, students evaluations, quantitative and qualitative data ...
  - Sometimes tendency to hide weaknesses
- Report
  - Strict criteria and procedures of evaluation may work against innovation and creativity and relay on bureaucratisation and inflexibility
- Additional qualitative and quantitative data
- Follow-up procedures
- ? Linking evaluation to funding

“all (?) levels of decision making”?

- HEI decision bodies
  - Aim: improvement, accountability
- Government - National level
  - Aim: accreditation, funding, efficiency accountability
- To all of them (including students and employers) QA provide useful information (informed decisions) – is it possible?!
HEI

- Rector
- Faculty
- Department
- Study programme level – network, not always hierarchy
- Individuals (students, teachers)
- Stakeholders, market
- Give them roles in QAS
- All levels of DM should live QC
- Is it possible for QAS to support all of them?
  - Limited resources for QAS

External vs Internal

- External (an event type QA) – more clearer output (easier to see recommendations) but missing local data
  - Important for institutional leadership as well for national DM bodies
- Internal (continuous type of QA) – a lot of data, self-evaluation, sometimes boring procedures
  - Can be used for daily management as well
  - Introduce: Flagging system for importance and make responsibility plan (for different levels of DM) for problem-solving
Practices

- Evaluations available, but limited resources to tackle all the issues – good practice:
  - Exp 1: Initial idea: Pick 3-4 common themes to deal with
    - Decide on responsibilities and levels
    - Add: priorities setting due to risk assessment
    - Help in conflict resolution: external member of QA committee
  - Exp 2: student evaluations – goal: minimal standards; visibility
    - Pick 30 worst cases – development plan - follow up
  - Exp 3: give priority to processes that are important for DM but also individuals (not necessarily for the same reasons 😊)
    - Transparent student assessment
- “Bad practice”: results available but not on time for DM ☹️ or student evaluations are not take into consideration in DM

Other issues

- QAS for administration
- Link between QAS and DM depends very much on organizational structure of HEI
- Problem of dividing DM between academic (Senat) and business affairs (Council)
  - Insufficient communication between two top DM bodies
- Important of consultations (communications) an all levels and between all levels
- Avoid redundancy in data collection and confusion in methodology and be careful in interpretation(s)
  - Correlate internal and external data and methodology as much as possible
Thank you

- Correlate QAS and decision-making processes closely correlated it means that impact of QAS should be meaningful to DM at II levels as well QA agencies
  - Use balanced approaches (common themes vs risk assessment)
- Take into consideration results of external and internal quality evaluation in process of DM but with awareness of context and purpose of different evaluations
- Put in place formal as well as informal periodic consultations (communications) an all levels and between all levels
- Plan your QAS (processes and tools) carefully in order to avoid redundances and to collect what we need for DM (it’s probably for external accreditation as well 😊)