



In addition to receiving the results in the form of a report (previously described), they are also stored on the computer application in Excel tables. Together with the graphic report, this information is then sent to the specialist in charge of the process who may then carry out a more thorough analysis.

All of this information is analysed by the specialist in charge and by the corresponding Assessment Commission. It is also presented to the Director of the Agency and is dealt with in ACSUCYL's Quality Committee, with a view to including improvements in the process or pinpointing strengths and weaknesses.

Publication of the results from these satisfaction surveys has recently begun with a view to promoting transparency in the processes being conducted and to informing society regarding user satisfaction with the service provided by the Agency.

These reports are published at the conclusion of the assessment process and are made publicly available on ACSUCYL's webpage, in the section corresponding to the outcomes of the specific assessment process as well as in the general section dealing with ACSUCYL's publications.

These reports are structured into various sections; a short introduction concerning the process followed, number of surveys sent, response rate, information regarding the issues addressed in the questionnaire, etc., graphical representations of the outcomes organised by the major areas into which the survey carried out is structured, together with brief notes concerning the results to emerge.

By publishing these reports, the stakeholders involved in ACSUCYL's activities, universities, those applying for evaluation, society at large, etc., are given an insight into the outcomes of the surveys in which they have been requested to participate and into the areas where ACSUCYL needs to improve in order to consolidate and enhance the quality of the work it is carrying out with a view to ultimately improving the overall quality of ACSUCYL.

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## 2) Distinctive Quality Feature Internationalisation NVAO

### Context

The international dimension of higher education has become more central on the agenda of European and national governments, institutions of higher education and their representative bodies, student organisations and quality assurance agencies. Increasing competition in higher education and the commercialisation and cross-border delivery of higher education, have challenged the value traditionally attached to international cooperation (exchange and partnership). At



the same time, internationalisation of the curriculum and the teaching and learning process (also referred to as 'internationalisation at home') has become as relevant as the traditional focus on mobility (both degree mobility and mobility as part of your home degree).

Internationalisation has indeed become an indicator for quality in higher education, and at the same time there is more debate about the quality of internationalisation itself.

The diversity of approaches, activities and strategies towards internationalisation together with its increasing significance justifies an external assessment of the quality of internationalisation.

The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) and the Dutch and Flemish higher education institutions are convinced of the importance of internationalisation for education. In order to underline this, NVAO has developed a specific assessment procedure for the quality of internationalisation. Within the NVAO's accreditation system this procedure can result in the award of a distinctive (quality) feature regarding internationalisation for a programme.

The distinctive quality feature for internationalisation aims to:

- Enhance the level of internationalisation in HEIs
- Provide transparent information to teachers and HEIs about potential partner programmes & institutions
- Be used as an additional information tool for students
- Give an incentive to those concerned with internationalisation
- "Reward" good and excellent forms of internationalisation

In December 2009, the distinctive (quality) feature's assessment framework and the proposed procedure were presented to NVAO's international partner agencies. When developing the framework, it was deemed necessary to develop it in such a way that it could be used by other quality assurance and accreditation agencies in Europe.

#### Procedure

To test the assessment framework and procedure, NVAO organised a pilot project for which more than twenty programmes volunteered. Since participation in the pilot requires quite some effort (project fee, writing a self-evaluation report, one day site visit, etc.), the huge number of programmes willing to take part clearly demonstrates the demand and interest for having the quality of internationalisation externally assessed and certified.

The framework takes the ambition level as stated in the policy statement as a starting point. By doing this all types of internationalisation can be assessed. Even a teacher training programme with a strong focus on the local multicultural situation can participate, as long as this type of internationalisation has an impact on the quality of the programme.

The assessment of the intended and achieved international and intercultural learning outcomes are the key elements of the framework. In addition, the



international component should also be visible in the staff, the services and the composition of the student population. An experienced and authoritative international panel assesses the quality of the internationalisation. For the assessment of the standards a four-point grading scale is used (unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good, excellent). The overall decision of the expert panel is also on this four-point scale. A certificate or a distinctive (quality) feature can only be awarded if a programme's internationalisation is considered to be either good or excellent.

### Guiding principles

The Distinctive (Quality) feature for Internationalisation follows the following principles:

1. The assessment takes place at programme level
2. Starting point is the programme's ambition level as defined in a policy statement
3. Internationalisation must have an impact on the quality of the programme
4. Internationalisation needs to be reflected in the intended and achieved learning outcomes;
5. Other elements to be assessed: teaching and learning, staff, services and students
6. Assessment takes place by experienced and authoritative experts
7. Four-point grading scale (unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good, excellent) at standard & programme level

### The assessment framework

The framework consist of 6 standards and each of these standards consists of one or more criteria. You can download the framework here:  
[www.nvao.net/download.php?id=707](http://www.nvao.net/download.php?id=707).

More information: [a.aerden@nvao.net](mailto:a.aerden@nvao.net) or [m.frederiks@nvao.net](mailto:m.frederiks@nvao.net)

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### 3) QAA

When QAA was reviewed for re-confirmation of ENQA membership in 2008, one of only two areas where we were found to be substantially, rather than fully, complaint was the use of student reviewers. Student reviewers have been successfully working in Scotland since 2003, and they were fully introduced in England and Wales at the beginning of 2010. All the feedback and evaluation available indicates that they play a crucial role in safeguarding the student interest, and are treated as equals within the audit team.

Use of student reviewers is only one aspect of QAA's student engagement strategy; we have now pushed our student interaction well beyond the formalised review processes. Students have always been able to feed into the audit and review processes through written submissions and meetings with the