

QACEP CONFERENCE

Evaluation Report: a tool to support self- evaluation activity of HEI's Continuing Education Programmes

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Pilot Evaluation

Pilot exercise aimed at verifying the applicability of the theoretical concepts developed in the previous phases of the project through the testing of specific tools based on the QACEP Framework and practical organisational solutions.

Tools Developed

➤ **Questionnaire Model:**

- to collect data on some characteristics and features of CEP leavers (learners who had just completed or were about to complete the programme)
- to collect their opinions on the learning experience

➤ **Template for an Evaluation Report on Continuing Education Programmes:**

- to support self-evaluation activities of HEIs' CEPs
- to report in a well organised document the relevant information which is needed to provide informed judgements and to highlight quality factors about the CE programme's aims, teaching and learning methods environment.

Testing of the tools

Choice of CEPs to test the tools was made by each partner, resulting in heterogeneity in types of programme (in terms of size, credits, length, learning objectives, target groups..)

20 CEPs

Involvement of CEPs staff (programme managers / directors)

Both tools were made available on-line to facilitate ease of use

Tools developed

Testing

<p>Student Evaluation Questionnaire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey involving CEPs participants (learners who had just completed or were about to complete the programme). • The web platform for the on-line questionnaire was developed by one partner and communication to participants sent by HEIs • Results of the survey were made available for the self-evaluation activity
<p>Evaluation Report on Continuing Education Programmes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot Self-evaluation of CEPs: programme managers / directors asked to self-evaluate different aspects of the programme following the report indication • Data was collected directly from participants and a detailed report was generated for each programme according to a specified format.

The **QACEP Evaluation Report** is a tool which support the self-evaluation of a Continuing Education Programme.

This Report:

- was developed with the aim to test the applicability of the theoretical concepts developed in the designed QACEP Framework
- should be applicable in different context

The self-evaluation activity is conducted by considering a list of **key elements** identified as crucial for the successful performance of CEPs.

The Evaluation Report is composed of a **Programme Overview** and of the following **Sections**:

- **Programme design** (stakeholders involved; target groups, programme goal and objectives, structure of the programme, educational concepts)
- **Services** (administrative services, tutoring and guidance, placement)
- **Resources** (personnel, infrastructures, financial resources)
- **QA system** (internal QA system of the programme; roles and responsibilities)
- **Communication** (methods and tools)
- **Figures of the programme** (n. of applicants; n. of students enrolled; n. of students who successfully completed the study programme; students' opinion, etc.)

The information reported should be the contents produced and the results obtained **at different times during the whole life of the programme**:

- **during the planning phase** (identification of target groups, admission of students, programme goals, etc....) □
- **during the implementation** (timetable of activities, infrastructural supports, etc....)
- **during the monitoring activities** (no. of applicants, no. of enrolled students, students' opinion, etc...).

The **self-evaluation fields** are located at the end of each section.

The self-evaluation fields require an analysis of main **strengths and weaknesses** of each element.

Through this self-analysis every programme has to highlight its **best practices** (considering its main strengths) and has to plan **improvement actions** (considering its weaknesses) .

This document is used for **programme ex-post evaluation**.

- In **QACEP Pilot**, data are collected in the **QACEP Intranet –based Web form, which** includes all the fields required by the Evaluation Report.
 - The QACEP Web Form “**simulates**” a **database** (or databases) where the information concerning a programme are collected during the whole life of the Programme itself.
 - As in QACEP Pilot we could consider **programmes already concluded** (because of QACEP project schedule), we collected and entered in the Web Form all the contents at the same time, even if they had been produced in different moments
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In QACEP Pilot, Partners were asked to give **feedback** on the Evaluation Report, mainly on these points:

- Comments on the **work's organisation** with **programme managers**
- Comments on **the list of information** required by the Evaluation Report
- Comments on the **results/achievements** of the self-evaluation activity, using the Evaluation Report
- Comments on the use of the **Web Form**

- Evaluation Report must be presented to programme managers as **a service**, highlighting the **benefits of this work** and pointing out that this is not just an additional work
- Interaction between programme staff and Quality Assurance staff during the self-evaluation process was very appreciated by programme managers involved in the project
- The first step for every partner was the detailed analysis of the document with all the programme managers involved in the project

Suggestions:

the document must be linked to existing tools and adapted to local needs

some of the benefits, obtained by using the Evaluation Report, must be pointed out:

- *checklist for design of news CEPs or to review the existing ones;*
- *facilities in the planning of programmes;*
- *using a common language for discussion across programmes,*
- *providing information and metrics for external stakeholders, especially potential funders;*
- *using a systematic and standardized QA approach*

The list is **very comprehensive** and **facilitates self-reflection**.

Suggestions:

- to simplify the list of information required and avoid overlapped information and/or duplicated questions;
- to clarify vocabulary and to customise information and figures to suit different kind of programmes (programme self-financed; community based programmes supported by University);
- to add some fields, such as benchmarking, list of similar products offered by competition; innovation aspects (institutional, technological).

All the partners found good feedback from programme directors for the Evaluation Report.

- It is a useful guide to check some critical issues/key elements linked with the programme content;
- It is a tool to help us to clarify what is needed to be achieved;
- Evaluation Report includes both subjective and objective aspects and it allows to share information among different actors (officers, programme directors, programme staff).

Suggestions:

- It would be useful to include in the Evaluation Report a **final overall SWOT analysis** of every element, considering also quantitative data
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The Web Form should simulate a real integrated database for CEPs, which lack for most of the partners.

The benefits of using the Web Form and an integrated approach to the collection and the analysis of data means that:

- work does not have to be repeated
- the database of all information required to evaluate the programme is pre-existing at the time of the self-evaluation exercise.

With integrated databases, **information is fed to the information systems only once** and at the time in which it is produced: this facilitates work and avoid mistakes, due to copy-paste

***Evaluation Report on Continuing Education Programme
is a very helpful tool:***

- to assist programme managers in the analysis of the programme
- to establish **weaknesses**
- to plan **improvement actions**;

- to help institutions in the **internal review procedures**;

- to help both **programme managers** and **institutions** to clarify what is needed to be achieved.

It can be used for both monitoring and reviewing.



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