



ITEps Consortium experience with the European Approach

Peter Elting & Bjørn Aksel Flatås

ITEps consortium experience with the European approach

- ITEps consortium experiences
 - organising the partners
 - joint consortium understanding of standards
 - justifying the European approach
 - preparing the self-evaluation
 - improvement recommendations
- Reflection on European Approach experiences from the Norwegian perspective



Organising the partners

- NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, NL
- University South-East Norway, NO
- University College Absalon, DK



Joint consortium understanding of standards

- Standard 1.2: Joint design and delivery
 - Joint development of the programme → same language
 - Common programme and course learning outcomes
 - Common Quality Assurance System
 - International subject groups (currency, assessments, exchange, ...)
change learning outcomes after Ok governing body
 - Exchange of lecturers / students
 - 4 eyes principle subject end assessments
 - Student representatives in governing body



Justifying the European approach

- All partners are accredited institutes
- NHL Stenden needs external quality assurance at programme level
- USN has a self-accrediting status: seen as quality improvement trajectory and partnership
- National approach vs European approach
 - International programme
 - One process instead of 3 or more processes
 - Trustworthiness towards international consortia / schools
 - Expanding the consortium
 - Framework more tailored towards joint programmes
 - Workload comparable

Preparing the self-evaluation (1/3)

- Developing a document stating what is needed per standard
- Meeting with NVAO about:
 - the meaning of some standards, especially when all partners are accredited (e.g. standard 9: Quality assurance)
 - which documents are needed
 - initial accreditation, what about standard 2.3: achievement and the Dutch standard: graduation guarantee and financial provisions



Preparing the self-evaluation (2/3)

- A project plan was developed (incl. financial paragraph)
- Transparency: It is a project from the consortium and very important is: all stakeholders and bodies were involved.
- The project organisation consisted of
 - writing group
 - organisational group → University level
 - resonance group
 - workgroupsAll partners were represented in each group

All the outcomes were discussed on consortium level in the programme council (coordinators and students), steering committee (deans, externals, coordinators, students) and subject groups and on University level in student meetings, staff meetings, if applicable: examination committees, programme advisory committees etc.

- Trial of the site-visit: to streamline expectations, also some criticism
- Start looking very early for good panel members



Preparing the self evaluation (3/3)

Challenges in the implementation process

- To keep ALL subject groups minds on the job
 - necessary is the support from the steering committee
- Shortage of TIME: 1 month before the deadline of submitting the necessary documents to the NVAO, the Danish partner withdraw from the accreditation process as a full partner.
 - implications according to the joint programme agreement
 - implications for all documents (NVAO)
 - implications for the site visit (NVAO)
- Definition of a joint programme: leading to double/multiple degrees of joint degrees. ITEps is according to the consortium and visitation panel a joint programme leading to a single degree. The way to a double degree / joint degree was impossible: contradictory regulations or too artificial with no added value for graduates.



Improvement recommendations from a consortium point of view

- Maybe an addendum to the framework in case of an initial accreditation
- Maybe it is possible to have a limited framework in case the consortium consist of all accredited institutions (by EQAR registered accreditation organisations)



Norwegian perspective

Why EA:

- Strengthening of existing partnership – (NHL Stenden needed EA)
- Added benefit USN: quality guarantee

National standards/regulations/accreditation criteria vs. EA approach:

- USN has self-accrediting status: meets and exceeds national standards (NOKUT)
- Pragmatic and comparative approach to EA

Challenges

- Necessity (do all involved parties need EA)
- Predictability (Does the input justify output)
- Institutional ownership and support (all inn???)



Thank you & Discussion

Email: peter.elting@nhlstenden.com

bjorn.flatas@usn.no

