Criteria and Procedures for Obtaining the Euro-Inf Quality Label

Talk Contents

- The Euro-Inf Framework
- The accreditation procedure
  - Application
  - Assessment
  - Decision
  - Possible outcomes
- The audit team
- Visit schedule
- Criteria
  - Expected programme outcomes

The Euro-Inf Framework

- The Euro-Inf Framework is a set of Standards and Accreditation Criteria for Bachelors and Masters degree programmes in informatics
- The Framework is intended to
  - provide information on study programmes across Europe
  - facilitate mutual transnational recognition of qualifications
  - enhance quality and transparency of educational programmes in informatics and encourage the spread of good practice
  - increase the mobility of students
- The Standards and Criteria represent a quality threshold - all graduates of a Euro-Inf accredited degree are expected to have achieved a defined set of learning outcomes.

The Accreditation Procedure

1. Application

- The Institution submits an application to the EQANIE Secretariat containing relevant preliminary information
- The Secretariat and Accreditation Committee evaluate the application to determine the number of auditors required
- The Secretariat compiles a proposal for the visit (time frame, costs) and requests written acceptance from the Institution
- The Institution formalises the application by accepting the proposal

The Accreditation Procedure

2. Assessment

- The Institution compiles a self-assessment report in accordance with the Euro-Inf guidelines
- The EQANIE Secretariat and Accreditation Committee select an audit team, with one member as convenor
- The audit team visits the Institution and conducts an audit of the applicant department ($1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 days)
- The audit team prepares its draft report which EQANIE forwards to the Institution to be checked for factual accuracy
- The Institution returns the (corrected) report to EQNAIE

The Accreditation Procedure

3. Decision

- The auditors submit their final assessment and recommended decision to the Accreditation Committee
- The Accreditation Committee makes its decision regarding the accreditation
- The Institution is informed of the decision
- The final version of the accreditation report is sent to the Institution
  - (*A list of accredited degrees is maintained on the Internet*)

The Accreditation Procedure

4. Possible Outcomes

- Unconditional accreditation for the full accreditation period
- Conditional accreditation
  - if specific conditions are met by a set deadline (normally 3 months) full accreditation will be granted
- The procedure is suspended
  - major requirements are not being fulfilled but are likely to be within 6 - 18 months
- Unconditional refusal

The Audit Team

- The audit team for a single accreditation usually comprises
  - 2 - 3 professors (academic faculty members)
  - 1 industry representative
- Academic auditors are expected to have
  - proven specialist expertise
  - proven activity in one of the disciplines of informatics
  - (desirably) accreditation or evaluation experience, international experience, experience of HE administration
- Industry auditors are expected to have
  - proven specialist expertise
  - experience of employing graduates of informatics degrees
  - (desirably) accreditation or evaluation experience, international experience, experience of HE administration
- Audit team members must have no conflicts of interest with the Institution being audited

Visit Schedule (typical 1.5 day visit)

17.00	Preliminary meeting of the audit team
08.30	Opening meeting with programme coordinators and institution administrators
09.15	Break, internal discussion
09.30	Meeting with programme coordinators
11.00	Break, internal discussion
11.15	Meeting with students
12.15	Lunch, internal discussion
13.00	Perusal of exam papers, project work, final theses
13.45	Meeting with degree programme teaching staff
14.45	Tour of teaching facilities
15.45	Final internal discussions
16.30	Closing meeting with programme coordinators
17.00	Close

Assessment Criteria

1. **Definition of objectives / prior and final qualifications:** the educational objectives of each degree programme in terms of the learning outcomes to be attained by students during their course of study; the assessment focusses on the implementation of the programme objectives as supported by the learning outcomes of the individual modules.
2. **Inputs:** the resources invested by the Institution in order to implement the degree programme: academic and support staff, teaching and learning facilities, *etc*.
3. **Outcome assessment / quality control:** the operation of effective feedback mechanisms within the Institution's internal quality assurance process and their contribution to the ongoing improvement of the degree programme.

Assessment Criteria

Expected Programme Outcomes

- Quality standards for competences, skills and knowledge that graduates of an accredited degree should have achieved in order to practise as professionals or undertake further study
- Categories of outcomes
  - Underlying Conceptual Basis for Informatics
  - Analysis, Design and Implementation
  - Technological, Methodological and Transferable Skills
  - Other Professional Competences
- Programme outcomes will vary in extent and intensity between First and Second Cycle degrees

Programme Outcomes - First Cycle Degrees

- **Underlying Conceptual Basis for Informatics** - *e.g.*
  - knowledge and understanding of the key aspects and concepts of their informatics discipline, including some at the forefront
  - an awareness of the wider spectrum of informatics disciplines
- **Analysis, Design and Implementation** - *e.g.*
  - understanding the complexity of informatics problems and the feasibility of their solution
  - ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to the design of hardware and/or software which meets specified requirements
  - selection and usage of appropriate process models and programming environments for projects involving traditional applications as well as emerging application areas
  - creation and thorough testing of software systems

Programme Outcomes - First Cycle Degrees

- **Tech., Method. and Transferable Skills** - *e.g.*
  - the ability to undertake literature searches and to use data bases and other sources of information
  - recognition of the need for, and engagement in, life-long learning
- **Other Professional Competences** - *e.g.*
  - ability to complete tasks from different application areas, taking into account technical, economic and social context
  - awareness of project management and business practices, *e.g.* risk and change management; understanding their limitations
  - ability to function effectively as an individual and in a team
  - ability to communicate effectively

Euro-Inf Documents

Documents relating to the Euro-Inf Quality Label:

- Euro-Inf Framework Standards and Accreditation Criteria
- EQANIE Procedural Principles for the Accreditation of Degree Programmes
- Model Euro-Inf Learning Outcomes Matrix
- Form for requesting the Euro-Inf Quality Label

can be found on the EQANIE website at

- **http://www.eqanie.eu/pages/quality-label.php**