

The Danish Evaluation Institute: Developments and Challenges

CHEA International Commission Meeting

January 26, 2006, San Francisco, CA

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EVA's history and set-up

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA):

- Was established in 1999 as the successor of the Evaluation Centre (1992-1999)
- Covers the entire Danish educational system
- Is an independent institution under the Danish Ministry of Education
- Has a Board of Directors with right of initiative
- Has a staff of 78.
- Has a budget of 8 million US dollars plus 1 million US dollars from revenue generating activities

EVA's aims and tasks

- Develop and improve evaluation methods.
- Develop and render quality of education and teaching visible through systematic evaluation.
- Advice and cooperate with public authorities and educational establishments.
- Collect national and international experiences on educational evaluation as a national knowledge centre.

First phase: 2000-2003

- Selected follow-up on the Evaluation Centre's programme reviews of higher education
- Thematic reviews
- Cross-sector reviews
- Cross-national reviews
- International benchmarkings
- Audits
- Accreditations
- Revenue generating activities.

Second phase: 2004-2006

- Audits at university level (12 institutions)
 - from national/Nordic panels to international panels
 - from open format to European standards.
- Accreditation of medium-cycle higher education
 - programme level (138 programmes at 70 institutions)
 - institutional level (18 institutions).

The future

- Moving from fitness-for-purpose to criteria based approach
- Accreditations covering the entire higher education area
- Implementation of the European standards on internal and external quality assurance for higher education
- Increase in revenue generating activities.

Review of EVA

- Cyclical external reviews mandatory for ENQA members
- Review conducted in 2005 by the Swedish National Agency
- First agency to be reviewed against the European standards for external quality assurance agencies
- EVA complies substantially with the standards.

Central challenges

- Follow-up
- Inclusion of students in the panels
- Balance between institutional and programme level
- Balance between improvement and accountability
- Relationship with the ministries, the educational institutions and the media
- Managing the broad mandate.