Doctoral Education and Quality Assurance: European perspective

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EUA Council for Doctoral Education

- EUA – European University Association
  - 850 universities and rectors’ conferences in 47 countries
- Developing evidence-based policies
- Advocating these policies
- Promoting development of universities as institutions

- Council for Doctoral Education (CDE)
  - a membership service focused on doctoral education
- Development of doctoral schools
- Doctorate-specific policy development
- 216 members in 33 countries
Drivers behind the development in European doctoral education

- The Bologna Process
  - Inclusion of doctoral education as ‘third cycle’ 2003
  - Salzburg Principles 2005

- The European Research Area
  - “Europe-wide open space for knowledge and technologies in which transnational synergies and complementarities are fully exploited”
  - Linked to..

- Lisbon Strategy/Europe2020
  - Europe as a high level knowledge economý
  - “Smart sustainable and inclusive growth”
Growth in doctorates in Europe

Growth in PhD graduations EU

Source: Eurostat
Note: estimated 2010 and 2004 data for EU
Universities have responded

- Since 2005, we have seen a ‘quiet revolution’ in doctoral education
  - Professional management: The **Rise of the doctoral school**
    - 30% of universities had a doctoral school in 2007
    - 65% in 2009*

- Reform of doctoral programmes
  - Interdisciplinarity
  - Transferable skills
  - Mobility components

*TRENDS V, TRENDS 2010
Salzburg Principles and recommendations

- Salzburg Principles from 2005 – outcomes of an EUA-led project and a Bologna seminar
  - The doctorate is research-based
  - Importance of institutional strategies
  - Diversity

- Salzburg recommendations 2010 – from consultations with CDE members
  - Research as the ‘basis and the difference’ from the other two cycles
  - Space for individual development
  - Autonomy for the institution to choose mission and strategy and to set up the appropriate structures

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European Quality Assurance: Overview

- Different approaches when creating national quality assurance systems: (programme or institutional) accreditation, evaluations or audits
- Level of institutional autonomy in creating internal QA systems varies (www.university-autonomy.eu)
- Countries and also institutions are in different phases in implementing institutional as well as national QA systems

-> There does not exist one European QA, but standards and guidelines providing framework for good practice sharing
EUA’s policy positions on QA

- Main responsibility for QA lies with the institutions
- Context sensitive (institutional and disciplinary diversity)
- Fitness for purpose approach
- Enhancement oriented
- Internal and external evaluations or QA processes should be complementary
- Transparency and co-operation

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How make most out of external QA?

- When developing processes the starting point should be the institutional mission and profile
- Synergy between internal and external QA
- Ensure the link between strategic management and QA processes
- Adopt quality enhancement approach to QA
- The goal should be an institutional quality culture supported by the QA processes, not the processes themselves
“It is necessary to develop **specific systems for quality assurance [for doctoral education]**... there is a strong link between the assessment of the research of the institution and the assessment of the research environments that form the basis of doctoral education.”

Development of systems that combine quality of research, quality of structures and take into account “the professional development of the researcher as well as the progress of the research project.”
ARDE (Accountable Research Environments for Doctoral Education)

- Project funded through the EC Lifelong Learning Programme
  - Survey on external and internal procedures, indicators and ongoing reforms (launched February 2011)
  - Focus group meetings (fall 2011, spring 2012)
  - Workshop 27 September 2012 in Stockholm
Evaluations
Who is looking?

- Doctoral education at a crossroad of assessments due to the nature as both research and education
  - QA
    - Institutional audit and programme accreditation systems (about 50 % of respondents in each category)
  - Research assessments
    - 33 % of respondents indicated that it included doctoral education (60 respondents skipped the question)
  - External funding
    - Large majority of respondents indicated that doctoral education was assessed here as well – will this increase...
What are they looking at?

Indicators

- External evaluation at department/discipline level
- External evaluation of doctoral programmes
- Internal evaluation of doctoral programmes
The result of a good doctoral education is no a good doctoral thesis but **good new doctor**.
Thank you!