NAKVIS Experience with Follow-up Activities in Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures

Klemen Šubic, Nataša Kramar (January 2026)

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ESG 2.3 - Implementing processes

Standard:
External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent
- an external assessment normally including a site visit
- a report resulting from the external assessment
- **a consistent follow-up**

Guidelines (extract):
External quality assurance does not end with the report by the experts. The report provides clear guidance for institutional action. Agencies have a consistent follow-up process - the nature of the follow-up will depend on the design of the external quality assurance.

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Most common: written follow-up reports by HEIs – reporting on how recommendations are addressed, usually through action or improvement plans

Follow-up serves two core purposes:

- **accountability of HEIs**
- **quality enhancement**

Effective follow-up :

- **pre-defined and systematic**
- **consistently applied across procedures**

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EXISTING FOLLOW-UP practices

Standard progress report two years after the decision – suggested opportunities for improvement are addressed

Part of all procedures => special focus when doing sample evaluations

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EXISTING FOLLOW-UP practices

Action plan after two months + progress report two years after the decision

Relevant for procedures where major inconsistencies were found

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EXISTING FOLLOW-UP practices

Action plan after two months + regular progress report + another evaluation after 2/3 years

Extraordinary evaluation where major inconsistencies are found

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EXISTING FOLLOW-UP practices

ED.VITA, pilots of targeted evaluations, improvements of internal IT system

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FOLLOW-UP procedures (new HE Law and Slovenian context)

- Entered into force in August 2025 (accreditation period extended from 5 to 7 years; self-accreditation of study programmes at the universities).
- Potential challenges and risks (longer accreditation period, systemic changes at HEIs, developments across fields and disciplines, technological progress, emerging challenges and solutions…).
- A longer accreditation cycle requires more strategically structured interim incentives and monitoring.

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Solutions related to measures under the HE Act (ZViS-1)

- **Progress report** (goes beyond the action plan - measures, responsible persons, and timeline- to include an analysis of results and impact, supported by long-term indicators for monitoring effectiveness and improvements).
- **Strengthening the developmental and advisory role of NAKVIS** (including analysis of external quality assurance processes and findings to assess the appropriateness and suitability of recommendations).

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FOLLOW-UP (short-term activities and purpose – years 1-3)

- **Action plan** (in two months after decision making – dificiencies and non-compliances are detected).
- **Progress report** (in all accreditation and evaluation procedures, exception extraordinary evaluation).

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FOLLOW-UP (mid-term activities and purpose – years 3-5)

- **Evaluation of a sample of study programmes** (may be conducted by mandatory components or specific evaluation areas, enabling a more targeted and risk-based approach).
- **Progress activities** (workshops and PLA events, enabeling HEIs and HVC to share experiences from external evaluations). Expected benefits include the dissemination of good practices, identification of systemic and administrative barriers, and reflection on the relevance and number of recommendations.

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FOLLOW-UP (long term activities and purpose – year 6 and 7)

- **Year 6 –** preliminary coordination meeting with HEIs (alignment of expectations, preparation and planning of external evaluation)
- **Year 7 – Reaccreditation** procedure or **Targeted review** (we piloted targeted reviews at HVC, procedures are adisory-oriented, areas of assessment agreed with HVC, participation in the selection of experts)

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FAZIT

- **Not** used as a **control mechanism,** but for **learning and development/enhancement** purposes (for EQA and IQA)
- **EHEA – no single best follow-up system in EQA, rather toolbox approach – combination of multiple formal and informal instruments and mechanisms**
- **? Reflection of findings and recommendations (only considered and implemented or were they appropriately identified, useful, improvement-oriented and effective)**

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CONCLUSION

- **The objective** is to strengthen **accountabiltiy of HEIs, to ensure ongoing monitoring,** improvement and **collaboration between EQA and IQA**
- Follow-up should also serve as **an exercise to assess how robust, effective and efficient the EQA system truly is (purpose, objective and impact)**
- **The approach should shift from control toward development, enhancement** and cooperation, incorporating both **mandatory and voluntary mechanisms, designed to reduce administrative burden** while maintaining **proportionality in the measures required and implemented**

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DISCUSSION!

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s·q·a·a
Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

www.nakvis.si

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