Experiences in the process of implementing criteria at NEAA, Bulgaria

Workshop

Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

Banja Luka, 9-10 March 2010

Objectives

- Why criteria
- Methods of evaluation
- Quality assurance and Ranking
- Modern universities
- The NEAA model of 2006
- Compliance with ESG
- The need for a new model (2010)

Terminology: the same term may have different connotations or even different meanings

Evaluation, internal assessment, external review, measurement, examining, testing, etc. (*methods of examining the performance of HEIs and for interpreting the data collected*)

Evaluation is interpreted as a comparison of the standard (how things should be) to the implementation (the real state of things) and feedback information for their convergence/divergence. The success of the evaluation process depends on the composition and work of the external assessors

2 methods:
a relative and an absolute one

- CRM is a method designed to provide an *absolute measure* of performance that is interpretable in terms of a clearly defined domain of learning tasks (QA)
- NRM is a method designed to provide a *relative measure* of performance in terms of one's comparative standing in some known group (Ranking)

Quality assurance

- **The Bergen communiqué of May 2005**:

  Most evaluation and accreditation is carried out on a national or regional basis. It is expected that these local exercises will become more comparable and more European through the use of *European Standards and Guidelines* and the involvement of foreign experts.

Ranking

- **The Bergen communiqué of May 2005**:

  The Commission currently supports an initiative for an alternative European ranking system which would take account of diversity in terms of languages, subject areas, profiles, student services, research and teaching quality.

Etymology

- Criterion: from Greek κριτήριον, *kriterion* "means for judging, standard," from *krites* "judge“; an accepted standard used in making a decision or judgment about something (often used in the plural: “criteria”, also “criterions”)

University objectives as criteria for evaluation

- A “clearly defined domain of learning tasks”?
- What are university objectives?
- What are modern universities?

By the end of the 19th century, the Humboldtian university model, also known as the German model, was established in Europe (conceived by Wilhelm von Humboldt). The goal was to demonstrate the process of the discovery of knowledge and to teach students to “take account of fundamental laws of science in all their thinking”. Humboldt envisioned university education as a student-centered research work. Professors had to serve as models of how to “intelligently produce knowledge” so that students could observe the “act of creation” of knowledge. The professors’ professional role expanded from lecturing to investigating. Thus research became “an integral part of the professor’s task”.

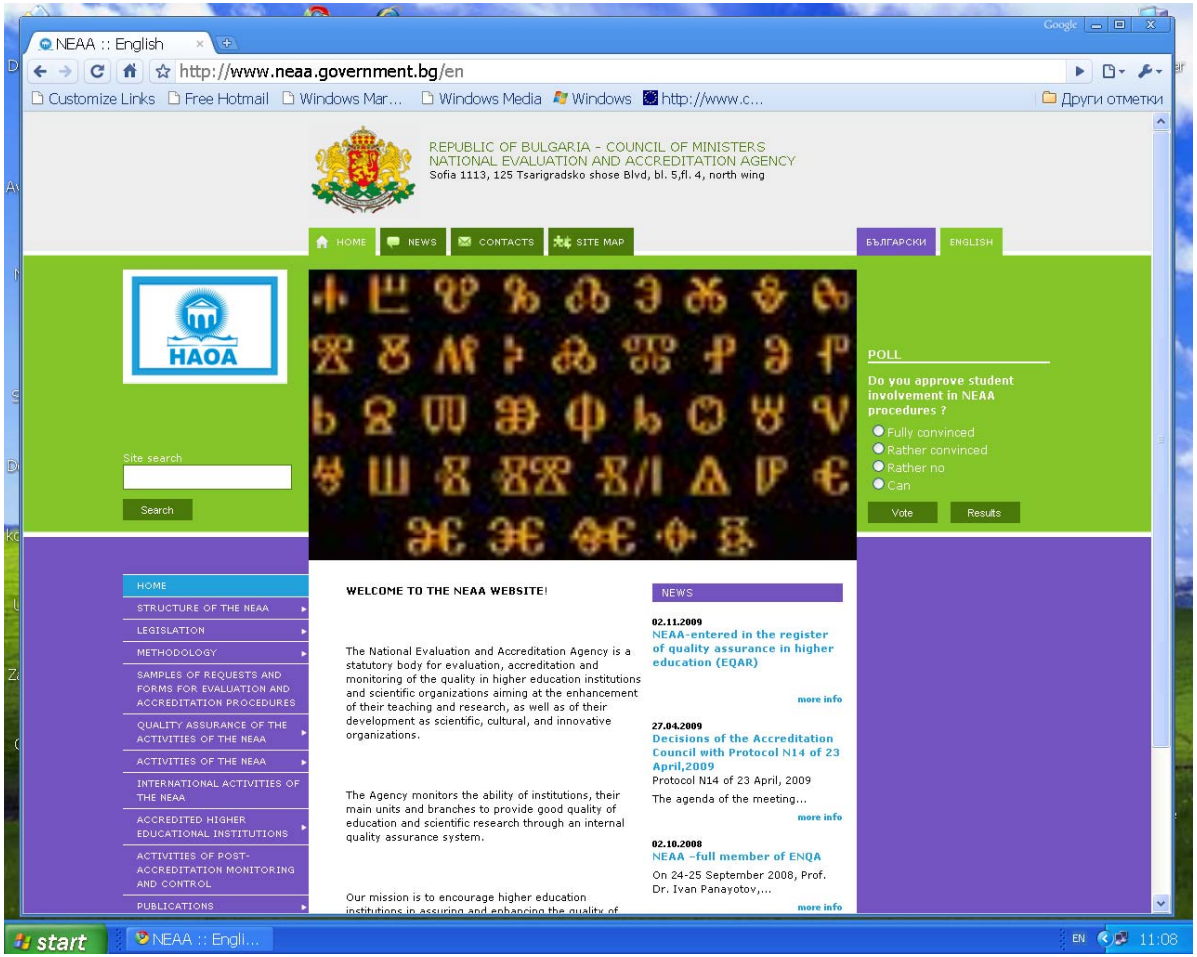
NEAA's orientations

- (a) authentic implementation of Humboldt's idea of a university ("freedom of scientific research, teaching and study"),
- (b) a comprehensive and exhaustive model (an all-inclusive and in-depth approach)

The model of 2006: 3 criterial domains

1. Teaching
2. Research
3. Management

For information



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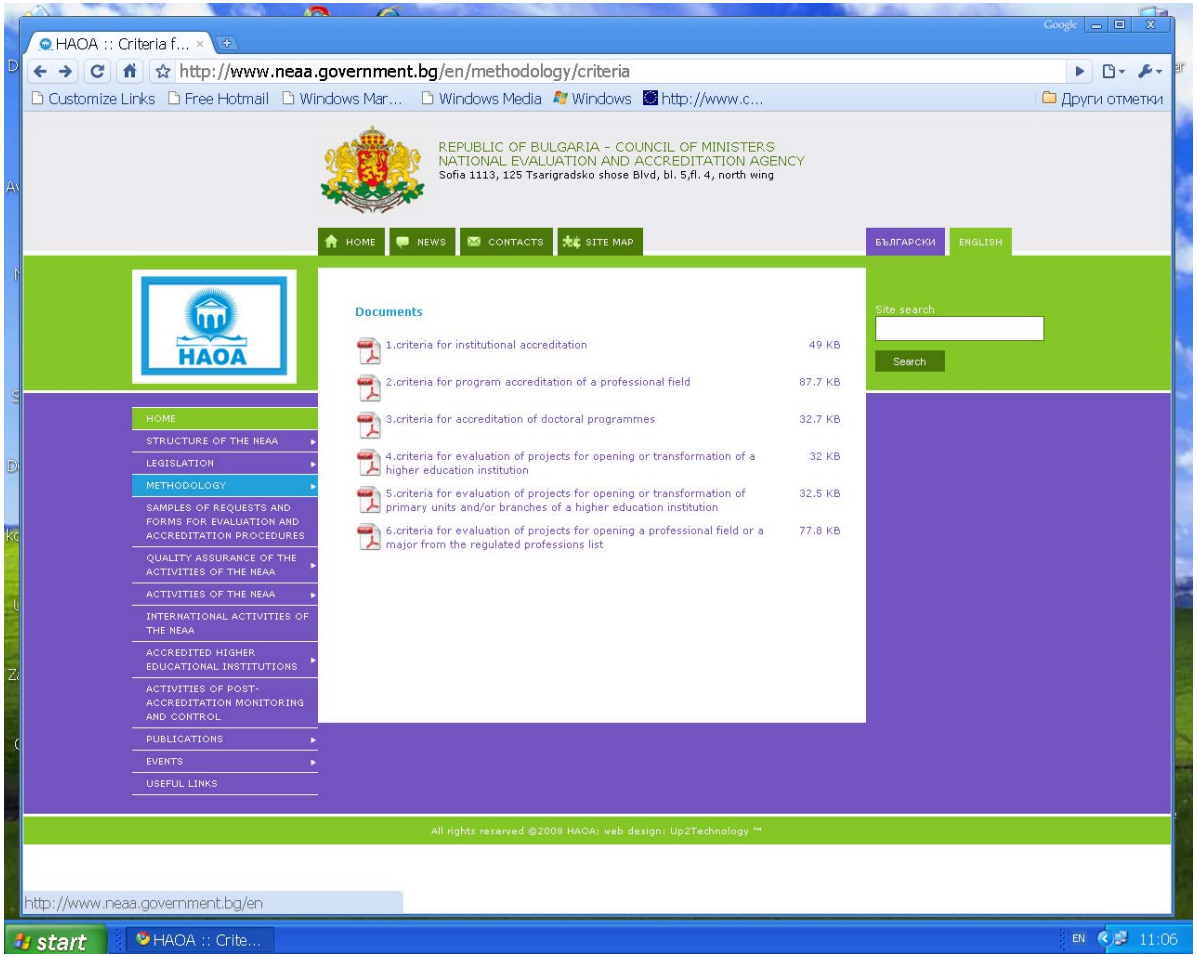


1. Teaching (criteria for institutional accreditation) *detail*

1. Educational activities of the higher education institution (HEI)

1.1 The HEI provides education in accordance with its educational mission, goals, and tasks

1.1.1 The HEI has a documented mission, goals and tasks, which are publicly announced and are the basis for its educational policies aimed at the needs of the society at the regional and national level

1.1.2 The HEI is organized in the chosen academic degrees (specialist, bachelor, master, doctor) and forms (full-time, part-time, evening, distance education) as well as for further qualification in accordance with its goals, tasks and capacity

1. Teaching (criteria for programme accreditation) *detail*

1. Educational activities of the higher education institution (HEI)

1.1 Teaching is carried out in accordance with the necessary academic documentation for each of the degrees and forms of education

1.1.1 Qualification characteristics, curricula and syllabi have been developed for each of the academic degrees. Their content and quality are in conformity with the goals of the degree within the field of study (branch of knowledge, professional field, etc.)

1.1.2 The current educational documentation is periodically analyzed and updated, and compared to similar documentation from other local and international universities

2. Research (criteria for institutional accreditation) *detail*

2.1 The HE institution organizes, maintains and develops the scientific research (artistic and creative) activities of the faculty

2.1.1 Conditions have been created to ensure faculty participation in research projects in the main HE institution's structures (institutes, departments, branches, labs, working groups, etc.)

2.1.2 Faculty scientific research (artistic and creative) activities are being maintained:

- For scientific publications in paper or electronic format (monographs, studies, articles), for textbooks and class-related materials, and for participation in scientific forums in the country and abroad

2. Research (criteria for programme accreditation) *detail*

2.1 Faculty scientific research (artistic and creative) activities are being organized, maintained and developed within the professional field (major of the regulated professions list)

2.1.1 The participation of the faculty from the professional field (major of the regulated professions list) in research (artistic and creative, etc.) projects of the primary HE institution's units and other research structures (institutes, laboratories, sectors, departments, groups etc.) is ensured

2.1.2 Faculty scientific research (artistic and creative) activities are being maintained:

- For scientific publications in paper or electronic format (monographs, studies, articles) locally or abroad, for textbooks and class-related materials
- For participation in national and international conferences, symposia, etc.
- For expert activities, consultant services, etc.
- For inherent creative, art, sports, etc. activities

3. Management (criteria for institutional accreditation) *detail*

3.1 The HE institution has developed an overall organizational system for management of the educational and scientific activities.

3.1.1. Management structure has been built organizationally and functionally. Rules and regulations for the structure and activities of the HE institution and its units have been developed, accepted, and published

3.1.2 The efficiency of the structures and their activities are periodically discussed to promote the HE institution development

3.1.3 Procedures have been developed and actions are taken in regard to the results of institutional and program accreditations and other independent external and internal evaluations that have been carried out

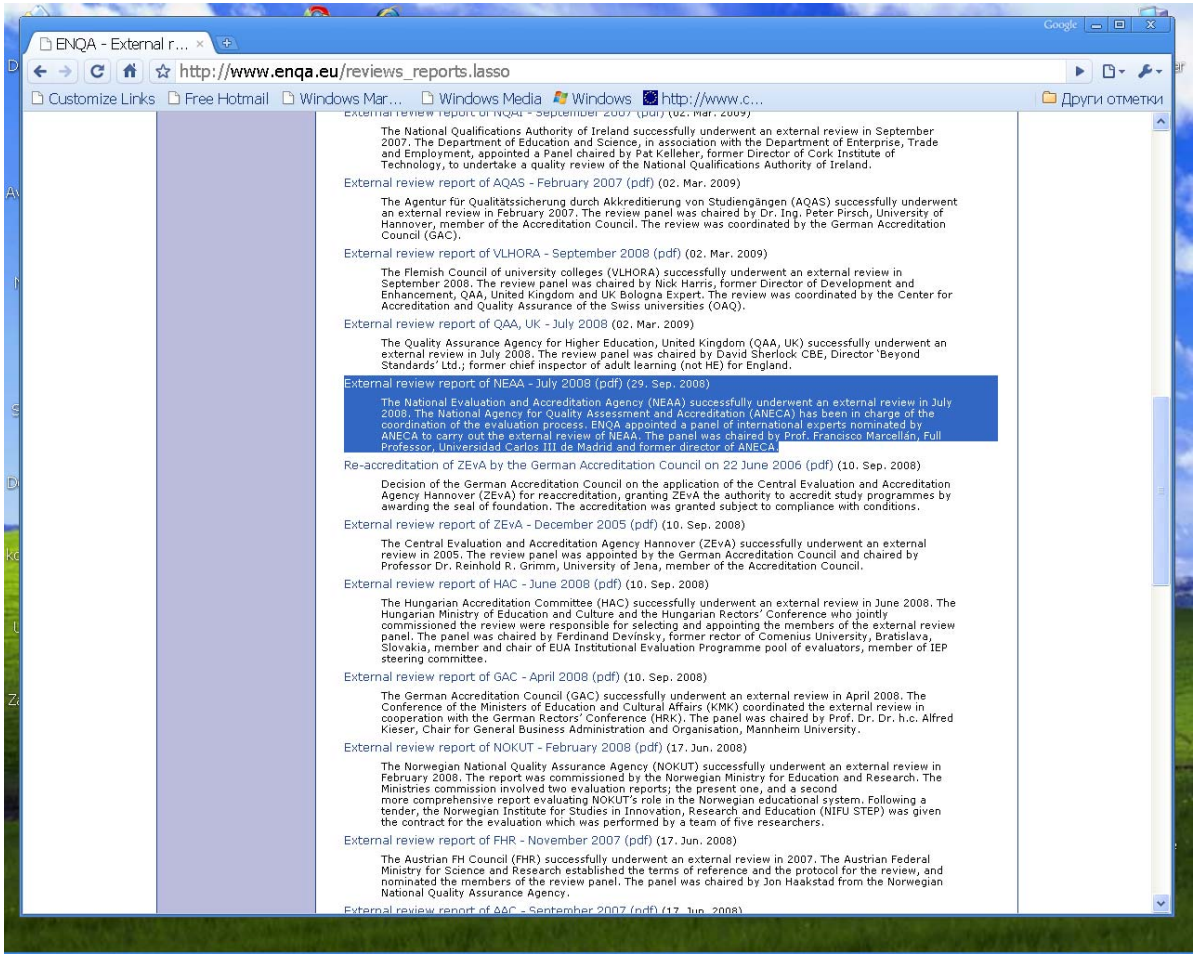
3. Management (criteria for programme accreditation) *detail*

3.1 Organization has been developed for management of the educational process and instruction quality

3.1.1 Rules for education quality management within the professional field (major of the regulated professions list) have been developed, accepted and announced.

3.1.2 The efficiency and the outcomes of the education quality management is periodically discussed and announced

Compliance with ESG: NEAA's principles and criteria



Compliance with ESG: the 4 principles of NEAA

1. “external evaluation guarantees the achievement of the institutional goals”
2. “optimal balance between educational activity and scientific research (art-creating activity)”
3. “recognition of institutional autonomy and responsibility”
4. “co-operation of NEAA with HEIs”

Compliance with ESG: the criteria

ESG 3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

- *Description of the Standard: "The processes, criteria and procedures used by the Agency should be pre-defined and publicly available…"*
- *Conclusion:* The Panel considers that NEAA complies substantially with this Standard (external review of July 2008)

Compliance with ESG: the criteria

- See file

Harmonisation of NEAA's criteria for institutional accreditation with Part 1 of ESG

The need for reform at NEAA in 2006

The need for reform at NEAA in 2010

1. Optimising the system of QA – integrated institutional and programme accreditation
2. The social dimension “includes measures taken by governments to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and to provide them with guidance and counselling services with a view to widening access”.
3. Involving stakeholders (decision-making bodies)
4. Mobility: “We recognise that mobility of students and staff among all participating countries remains one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process.”

The context

- Successful external review of 2008 and full membership status in ENQA
- Successful application and inclusion in EQAR in 2009

The reform: new legislation in 2010

- A new law for academic development
- A new law for higher education
- A new system of quality assurance in higher education at national level

Conclusion: Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009

- *Education, research and innovation*

15. Higher education should be based at all levels on state of the art research and development thus fostering innovation and creativity in society. We recognise the potential of higher education programmes, including those based on applied science, to foster innovation

Thank you for your attention!

questions and discussion