Internationalisation of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe

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Chapter Nine

Quality and the Internationalisation in Higher Education

1. Introduction

Quality and internationalisation are closely related issues. They are both key strategic issues in higher education at the turn of the century. Quality relates to internationalisation in the way in which internationalisation contributes to the improvement of the quality of higher education, and in the way one assesses and enhances or maintains the quality of internationalisation activities and strategies.

The increasing preoccupation with quality in higher education is linked to the call for accountability by national governments, the corporate world and students. Not only are they the main sources of funding for higher education, they also have a vested interest in the products of higher education. This has recently become more evident as a result of the changing nature of the relationship between higher education institutions and national governments, the corporate world and students. Sources of income for institutions are becoming more diversified (public funding, contract funding and fees) and as the relationship between institutions of higher education and their governments becomes more distant (deregulation, lump sum financing, long term contracts), the contributions of the corporate world and students become relatively higher and with that their demands for quality assurance. Audit, assessment and accreditation as approaches to quality assurance have become terms in daily use in higher education.

As institutions of higher education develop internationalisation strategies, the assessment and enhancement of these strategies also becomes more important. This has resulted in a call for an internationalisation quality review instrument. For that purpose, the 'Internationalisation Quality Review Process' (IQRP) was designed as a pilot project of the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) of the ‘Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’ (OECD), in co-operation with the Academic Co-operation Association (ACA), and implemented by these two organisations together with the European Association of Universities (CRE) as a service, the ‘Internationalisation Quality Review’ (IQR).

The development of new transnational forms of education delivery, in response to the globalisation of our societies and of higher education, has also called for quality assessment. The instruments used for quality assurance of national education cannot be copied integrally to these transnational education forms. Given the different origin and nature of transnational education

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81 This chapter is based on the book by Jane Knight and Hans De Wit (1999): Quality and Internationalisation in Higher Education, in particular our joint chapters 3 and 10. With permission of Jane Knight and the publisher, OECD, these two chapters have been incorporated in the text of this chapter in an updated version. The author, however, is solely responsible for the current text and the opinions expressed in it.

82 For an analysis of the trend to greater quality assessment in higher education and its meanings, see El-Khawas (1998), Woodhouse (1999), and Brennan (1999).
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compared to internationalisation, the same is true for internationalisation quality review instruments. At the same time, there is a link and certain overlap between internationalisation and transnational education and for that reason between the quality assurance instruments used.

An important argument for the internationalisation of higher education is the contribution it should make to improving the quality of higher education. In the academic context this argument is considered to be a crucial one, or even according to Wächter et al. (1999) the only academic argument for internationalisation, which is – as noted in the previous chapter – an overly narrow approach.

The truth of this argument is difficult to measure, as Overbeek (1997) has observed for Dutch internationalisation policies, and is also dependent on its relevance in comparison to other rationales used. For instance, in study abroad programmes of American institutions of higher education, the driving rationale is ‘social learning’ – the confrontation of students with other societies and their language and culture – to overcome parochialism (institutional rationale) and to maintain a dominant position as a superpower in the world by understanding other societies (national rationale). One could argue that in this case the contribution to the quality of learning is not manifest, although within the concept of liberal arts and taking into account that these programmes are mainly directed to liberal arts students, one can argue the opposite.

However, it is important to include the international dimension in the quality assessment of learning and research programmes in order to measure the potential impact of internationalisation on their quality, something still rarely done. When the international dimension becomes a more integrated part of the mission, planning process and overall strategy of the institution, this dimension has to become a natural element of the quality approaches to higher education, as do the instruments used for its assessment.

In the first part of this chapter the focus will be on the quality assessment and assurance of internationalisation, based on the experiences with THE IQRP. A brief description of the project and its concept and reflect on the lessons learned is given. In the second part, the IQR service will be related to other instruments for quality assurance used in relation to transnational and international education. The chapter will close with reflections on the incorporation of the international dimension in higher education quality assurance approaches.

2. The IQRP Project and Process

2.1. An Introduction to the IQRP Project and Process

The IQRP project is an initiative undertaken by the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in collaboration with the Academic Co-operation Association (ACA). Since 1994, IMHE has had an active programme focusing on a cross-country analysis of institutional-level strategies for the internationalisation of higher education. Two important

83 Two publications have been the result of this programme: De Wit, 1995, and Knight and de Wit, 1997. The authors have been consultants for IMHE/OECD for this project.
issues and concerns have emerged from this work: i) quality assessment and assurance of these strategies; and ii) the contribution that internationalisation has made to enhancing the quality of higher education. At an IMHE Seminar on Internationalisation Strategies held in October of 1995 it was decided to proceed with a pilot project on quality assurance and internationalisation and to co-operate with ACA.

During the first phase of the project, 1995–97, IMHE/OECD and ACA jointly developed the IQRP instrument and documents and tested the IQRP in three different institutions: University of Helsinki, Finland; Bentley College in Boston, the United States; and Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. Members of the IQRP project team participated in the pilots as external peer reviewers so that ways to improve the process could be noted. Based on the experiences and lessons learned from the pilots and the feedback from experts, the team was encouraged to revise the IQRP documents and to pilot the process in a wider group of institutions and countries. Thus, phase two of the project, 1997–98, was planned and focused on two primary objectives: i) revising the original materials and ii) testing the IQRP in different types of educational institutions in a wider variety of country/cultural contexts. During phase two, the IQRP was piloted in six more institutions: National University of Mexico; Warsaw School of Economics, Poland; Tartu University, Estonia; Moi University, Kenya; Universiti Sains Malaysia; and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia.

Rationale for the pilot project

The key role of internationalisation and its contribution to higher education is gaining more recognition around the world, in both developed and developing countries. As internationalisation matures, both as a concept and process, it is important that institutions of higher education address the issue of quality assessment and assurance of their international dimension. Most processes of quality assessment are focused on activities, projects and programmes. Overbeek (1997, 57) observes this for the Dutch case, where monitoring and evaluation were restricted to the study abroad experience of Dutch students, and a check on the broader strategy of internationalisation was lacking.

If the internationalisation of higher education is understood to mean "the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research and service function of the institution", then it is critical to address the quality issue from three perspectives.

The first perspective refers to the inclusion of the international dimension as a key component in the general academic quality review systems operational at the institutional or system level. This is based on the premise that an international dimension is part of the university/college mission and major functions and is thus included as one of many elements addressed in the quality review procedures.

The second perspective looks at the quality of specific internationalisation policies, procedures and programmes (i.e. international students, work/study abroad, student/faculty exchanges, research, language instruction, technical assistance, etc.).
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The third perspective concerns the internationalisation of quality assurance procedures themselves. These procedures are in general nationally based. It is increasingly acknowledged that quality assurance procedures benefit from an international approach and input.

The purpose of the IQRP project is to bring attention to the importance and complementarity of the various perspectives and to develop a process which would guide institutions in undertaking a quality assessment and assurance review of their specific internationalisation initiatives.

Objectives of the IQRP pilot project

Three major objectives have governed the activities of phases one and two of the project:
- To increase awareness of the need for quality assessment and assurance in the internationalisation of higher education.
- To develop a review process whereby individual institutions can adapt and use a set of guidelines/framework to assess and enhance the quality of their internationalisation strategies according to their own aims and objectives.
- To strengthen the contribution that internationalisation makes to the quality of higher education.

Assumptions

There are a number of assumptions which have formed the foundation of the pilot project. They are listed below and complement a set of guiding principles which have guided and shaped the methodology and instruments of the IQRP.

The IQRP is based on principles of self-assessment and peer review and is guided by the institution's own mission and aims. While the review process and framework are intended to be international in application, acknowledgement and recognition of differences among institutions and countries is essential.

The self-assessment and external peer review reports on the pilot institutions are for their use only. There is no intention to publish the reports or make any comparisons across institutions. The development and refinement of the process and the self-assessment guidelines is the primary objective and intended outcome of the project.

It is important to recognise that higher education quality review systems, even at the institutional level, benefit from an international perspective and input. This is especially true for the Internationalisation Quality Review Process and therefore importance was given to ensuring that the IQRP is developed by an international team, is tested in different countries and is international in application.

Pilot institutions

The IQRP project team worked with a small number of institutions from different countries in the testing of the IQRP instrument. With this group of selected pilot institutions the
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IQRP team members served as external peer reviewers in order to monitor the effectiveness of the document and guidelines. In choosing pilot institutions to test the IQRP, a number of factors were taken into consideration.

One element was the stage of the internationalisation process at the institution. It was important to test the IQRP at different levels of the development of the international dimension. It became clear that the IQRP could also work well as a planning tool for those institutions in the initial phase of developing an institution-wide internationalisation strategy.

It was also important that the IQRP was piloted in a diversity of country and cultural contexts in which to ensure that lessons were learned from experience where there are different approaches and assumptions about evaluation. For instance, the fact that the IQRP is based on the concepts of self-assessment and peer review may not be appropriate or successfully used in certain cultural contexts.

It was intended that the IQRP would be tested in institutions with different educational orientations or purposes, i.e. technical institutes, specialised colleges, comprehensive universities, undergraduate colleges, polytechnics, etc.

The testing of the IQRP in eight countries in five different parts of the world provided valuable information for the design of the final guidelines. Three comprehensive institutions (Helsinki, Monash and Tartu) and two specialised institutions (Bentley and Warsaw) with well-developed strategies for internationalisation used the IQRP to assess their strategies. Two comprehensive universities (Mexico and Moi) used the IQRP to assist in moving from a marginal and implicit international dimension to a central and explicit internationalisation strategy. One comprehensive university (Sains Malaysia) used the IQRP to create awareness of the importance of an internationalisation strategy by assessing certain parts of the institution. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology used the IQRP to further the mainstreaming of the international dimension throughout all functions of the university, including their off-shore programmes.

2.2. The IQRP framework

The IQRP pilot project followed a framework for self-assessment and peer review which was documented in the project document "The Development of an Internationalisation Quality Review Process at the Level of Higher Education Institutions" (ACA, IMHE/OECD, March 1996) for pilot phase one, and the project document "The Development of an Internationalisation Quality Review Process for Higher Education Institutions" (IMHE/OECD in consultation with ACA, March 1997) for pilot phase two. During the two phases changes were made in the framework, based on the experiences in the pilot institutions. Some of the more important changes are described later. This section describes the principles of the IQRP, its operational framework, the outline for self-assessment and the peer review.
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The purposes and principles of the IQRP

The IQRP is a process whereby individual academic institutions assess and enhance the quality of their internationalisation efforts according to their own stated aims and objectives. The review includes procedures and guidelines to be adapted and used in both a self-assessment exercise and an external peer review.

Purpose of the IQRP

The purpose of the IQRP is to assist institutions of higher education to assess and improve the quality of their international dimension by focusing on the identification of:
- The achievement of the institution’s stated policy (goals and objectives) for internationalisation, and its implementation strategy.
- The integration of an international dimension into the primary functions and priorities of the institution.
- The inclusion of internationalisation as a key theme area in the institution’s overall quality assurance system.

Guiding principles of the IQRP

The starting point for the review is the institution's own stated aims and objectives. The review process assesses the extent to which institutions actually achieve the aims and objectives which they set for themselves. The assessment of the relationship between objectives and actual achievement is the core of the quality issue.

The purpose of the self-assessment process is to provide a critical self-evaluation of a variety of aspects related to the quality of the international dimension of the institution. The more emphasis given to self-assessment, the more self-assessment will function as a means of training and assisting the institution to take responsibility for its own quality improvement. Self-assessment should not be seen as an exercise to produce information for the external peer review team, but rather as an opportunity to conduct an analysis of the extent and quality of internationalisation initiatives.

The purpose of the external peer review is to mirror the self-assessment process and to provide feedback and a complementary analysis to the self-assessment by the institution, from a different, external and international perspective. The emphasis is not on actual fact-finding, inspection or evaluation.

Whilst the review process is intended to be international in application, acknowledgement and recognition of differences among institutions and countries is essential.

The self-assessment and external peer review reports are for the use of the evaluated institution only. The reports are owned by the institution and can only be published by the evaluated institution or with its explicit approval.
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The review process is not intended to prescribe practices or advocate uniformity or standardisation of internationalisation approaches or procedures. There is no explicit or implicit comparison with other institutions involved, it is an exercise for self-improvement.  

The review process is seen as part of an ongoing cycle of advocating, planning, implementing, rewarding, reviewing and improving the internationalisation strategy of the institution.

Who should conduct an IQRP?

The IQRP guidelines and framework are designed in such a way that they are applicable in a great variety of circumstances. Experience of the use of the IQRP has indicated that the IQRP can be used in:
- University and non-university sectors of higher education.
- Small and large institutions, comprehensive and specialised institutions. Private and public institutions.
- Institutions wishing to assess an existing strategy for internationalisation but also institutions wishing to initiate such a strategy.
- Institutions in both developed and developing countries.

The specific circumstances of the institution and of the objectives have to be taken into consideration in the implementation of the IQRP. This implies a flexible use of the guidelines. Whilst the IQRP is guided by the institution’s own goals and objectives for internationalisation, there are major areas which are common to many institutions and which the review process addresses.

The operational framework of the IQRP

The emphasis and orientation of an self-assessment exercise is on the analysis of the quality of the international dimension of the institution. It should not merely be a description of the various internationalisation initiatives. At the same time, it is recognised that, in particular for those institutions that intend to use the IQRP to initiate an internationalisation strategy, a qualitative and quantitative inventory of international activities will be an important basis for the assessment.

Self-assessment

a) Role and structure of the self-assessment team

A self-assessment team (SAT) is formed at institutional level and is given the mandate to:
- Collect the necessary information.

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84 As will be described further on, this does not exclude the possibility for an institution to combine the IQRP with other quality assurance procedures such as benchmarking, ISO 9000, Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE) certification or Total Quality Management (TOM).
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- Undertake a critical analysis of the provision for and the quality of internationalisation, as well of the contribution of internationalisation to higher education.
- Prepare the self-assessment report (SAR).
- Engage the commitment of various parties inside and outside the institution to the whole process.

The institution chooses the members of the team to reflect the internal organisation and aims of the institution. Ideally, the SAT should consist of (central and departmental level) representatives of both the administrative and academic staff as well as of international and domestic students. In order for the team to be functional and accomplish its task in a relatively short period of time the group should be relatively small and the members should be administratively supported to undertake the work.

The full endorsement and active involvement of the institutional leadership is essential for the success of the self-assessment team.

The SAT has a chairperson and a secretary. It is recommended that the key person in the institution responsible for internationalisation strategy and policy be the chair of the SAT. The secretary is responsible for organising the work of the SAT and for co-ordinating the preparation of its report.

The SAT exchanges comments with the peer review team (PRT) on the self-assessment report prior to its visit, prepares the programme of the visit in conjunction with the PRT and discusses the draft peer review report with the PRT. The secretary of the SAT plays an important role in the liaison with the secretary of the PRT.

b) The design of the self-assessment process

It is important to emphasise that the whole purpose of the self-assessment is to analyse the international dimension, not merely to describe it. Collecting data to build a profile of all the different activities, programmes, policies and procedures related to the international dimension of the institution is only a first step. It is certainly an important and rather time-consuming step, in particular for those institutions that use the IQRP as an instrument to assist in the preparation of an internationalisation strategy and that do not yet have mechanisms in place to make a quantitative and qualitative description of these activities, programmes, procedures and policies. But the analysis of an institution's performance and achievements according to their articulated aims and objectives for internationalisation is critical to assess and eventually assure the quality of the international dimension and the contribution internationalisation makes to the primary functions of the institution. The process must indicate directions for improvement and change of the internationalisation strategy of the institution, which follow from the diagnosis itself.

The self-assessment report should give a reasonable profile of the institution, reflecting its particular directions, priorities and the effectiveness of its operations, and aimed at giving directions for improvement and change. The self-assessment should recognise and reflect the potential diversity of rationales and strategies between faculties and schools.
This self-assessment should not primarily be regarded as a descriptive exercise, but rather as a critical analysis of the institution's performance and achievements in the field of internationalisation. Besides providing the necessary information, an analysis should be made of strong and weak points, indicating how well the various internationalisation efforts are being realised, and formulating potential avenues to improvement.

Terminology often differs from country to country and from institution to institution. Institutions should use the terminology which they find appropriate for their situation. It is helpful to add a note of explanation so that the peer review team understands the use of these terms in their institutional context.

c) General outline of the self-assessment

The self-assessment outline is designed as a template for the process of analysing the aims and objectives, the performance and achievements, the strengths and the weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats with regard to the international dimension of the institution. It needs to be emphasised that it is the international dimension which is being reviewed and analysed. For instance, in the case of curriculum activities and research initiatives, it is how the international dimension is addressed and integrated which is under review, not the curriculum or research itself. The outline is a starting point and a guide for the institution to undertake the preparation of their self-assessment. It is not intended to be a coercive structure. There may be questions and issues included in the outline which are not relevant or appropriate to the mandate of the specific institution. In other instances, there may be important items which have not been included in the outline which the SAT wants to address and therefore these should be added.

The main categories of the outline for the self-assessment are as follows:
- Context.
- Internationalisation policies and strategies.
- Organisational and support structures.
- Academic programmes and students.
- Research and scholarly collaboration.
- Human resources management.
- Contracts and services.
- Conclusions and recommendations.

d) The self-assessment report

After the self-assessment exercise has been completed, the preparation of the self-assessment report is the next step in the IQRP. The report should be limited to a maximum of 20–30 pages plus possible annexes. It is most helpful if it follows as much as possible the general pattern of the self-assessment outline, with the caveat that not all the categories and questions in the outline may be appropriate or relevant for each institution. It is also important to stress that the self-assessment team may add issues not covered by the framework but considered relevant. Thus the self-assessment outline should be considered as a guide only, intended to introduce many of the areas and issues to be considered and to encourage the teams to undertake an analytical approach.
The self-assessment report will be much more than a description of the type and extent of internationalisation efforts; it is meant to critically assess and address ways to assure and improve the quality of internationalisation of the teaching, research and public service functions of the institution in the light of existing issues and forthcoming challenges.

The language of the self-assessment report will in part be guided by the make-up of the PRT. During the initial stages of the IQRP the secretary of the SAT decides in collaboration with the secretary of the PRT the working language of the PRT site visit and also the language of the self-assessment report. If a language other than the native language is used for the SAT report and PRT reports, it is assumed that the supporting documents, such as data annexes, can be in the institution's national language.

The peer review team members should receive the self-assessment report at least one month prior to the visit. The institution sends the secretary of the PRT one copy of the SAT report for each of the PRT members plus two additional copies for the IQRP archive.

The peer review process

a) Membership of the peer review team

The peer review team (PRT) can vary in size but requires a minimum of three members and usually consists of three/four members; all must be external and independent of the institution undergoing the IQRP. The experts appointed to the PRT should have a general understanding of quality assessment and assurance, a particular expertise in the internationalisation of higher education, and be knowledgeable and experienced in higher education.

The PRT chairperson should be preferably a senior academic with expertise in higher education governance and also the development and management of international relations/programmes of institutions of higher education. Knowledge of recent developments in the internationalisation of higher education globally is also essential. The expertise and experience of the other members should relate to the priority areas of the institution's aims and objectives for internationalisation. They should be knowledgeable in academic culture and governance. It is considered an additional asset to have a team member with prior experience in quality assurance review exercises.

The composition of the PRT is primarily international, but it may include one member from the institution's home country or a member with considerable experience in and knowledge of higher education in the country (but not related to the institution itself). At least one member of the PRT should come from another continent than the institution's home country. The first person is likely to be able to provide the PRT with insight in the national context, the second person is likely to be able to provide the PRT with a perspective beyond the regional context.

One member of the PRT serves as secretary and is responsible for organising the work of the PRT and for co-ordinating the preparation of its report. The secretary of the PRT is also the
liaison person with the secretary of the SAT for the response of the PRT to the self-assessment report, and the preparation of terms of reference for the site visit.

The secretary of the PRT prepares a written agreement with the institution on the terms under which the self-assessment and peer review reports will be placed in the IQRP archives of IMHE. The following options are available:
- The documents will not be included in the archives.
- The documents will be included but permission for use by parties other than the institution has to be granted by the institution on each occasion.
- The documents will be included and permission is granted by the institution to IMHE to provide a copy of the documents upon request.

In the last two cases, the SAT secretary is responsible for providing two copies of the self-assessment and peer review reports to IMHE.

The institution is responsible for all costs related to the peer review. It is important to clarify and agree upon all the financial aspects of the review before individuals are invited to become members of the PRT.

b) Responsibilities of the peer review team

The task of the PRT is to examine:
- The goals for internationalisation of the institution and whether they are clearly formulated.
- How these goals are translated into the institution's curriculum, research and public service functions and if the institution is providing the necessary support and infrastructure for successful internationalisation.
- How the institution monitors its internationalisation efforts.
- The institution's capacity to change; and its autonomy in order to improve its internationalisation strategies.
- The adequacy of its diagnosis and proposals for change and improvement.

The PRT members should receive the self-assessment report at least one month prior to the visit. After thoroughly reviewing it, the PRT may provide general comments to the self-assessment team prior to the site visit. The PRT pays then a two- to three-day visit to the institution and produces a detailed report (20–30 pages) for the institution no later than two months after the site visit.

c) Design of the peer review process

Ideally the PRT meets once before the actual site visit to discuss the self-assessment report, finalise the terms of reference for the visit and agree on the division of labour among the team members. It is preferable that this meeting takes place at the institution where the IQRP is being carried out, and also includes a meeting with the self-assessment team to discuss the comments on the self-assessment report and to prepare the programme.
It is acknowledged that in many cases, for reasons of costs and time, such a preparatory visit will not be possible. In that case, the secretary of the PRT establishes active communication with the other PRT members to receive their comments on the self-assessment report and suggestions for the terms of reference and the programme of the site visit. It is then also recommended that the secretary pays a preparatory visit to the institution to discuss the comments on the self-assessment report and finalise the terms of reference and the programme with the SAT.

The PRT has on site a half- or one-day planning meeting prior to the commencement of the official PRT programme.

Based on the initial review of the self-assessment report and discussions of the PRT, a decision is made as to whether additional information is needed before the site visit. Prior to the site visit a list of specific issues to be addressed and individuals/groups to be met is prepared by the PRT and forwarded to the self-assessment team.

The institution prepares a detailed schedule for the PRT visit, which may vary in length between three and four days. The team should meet key persons among selected administrative and academic staff, students and graduates, and, if possible, representatives of other bodies (both inside and outside the institution) responsible for or involved in international activities. Where appropriate, it may be useful to visit the units where students or staff receive assistance and service as well as other related facilities of the institution. In some cases it may be appropriate for PRT members to visit locations and programmes of the institution in other parts of the world. The schedule also includes meetings with the self-assessment team, the leadership of the institution, chief academic and administrative staff responsible for international activities and related support services.

At the end of the site visit, the PRT meets with the SAT to comment on the site visit and discuss the plans for the preparation of the PRT report and its presentation to the institution. The PRT also meets with the senior leaders of the institution to give a brief report, oral and preliminary, on the visit.

d) The peer review team report

The major issues to be addressed in the PRT report are the following:
- Is the institution's self-assessment report on internationalisation sufficiently analytical and constructively critical?
- Are the strengths and weaknesses of the institution's international activities clearly articulated and the plans for improvements clearly presented and realistic?
- Is the institution achieving the aims and objectives it has set for itself?
- How do the institution's vision and goals relate to the development and sustainability of its international activities within the totality?
- What action is required of the institution in order to monitor progress and provide continuing impetus?

The PRT prepares a draft report and sends it to the chairperson of the SAT within two months after the site visit. The draft version of the PRT report is meant for review and comment.
before the final version is submitted. This provides the institution with the opportunity to correct any factual errors and errors of interpretation. The institution provides feedback to the PRT within two weeks of the receipt of the draft version of the report. It is up to the PRT to decide whether to include the recommended changes in the report or not. Any required changes are made by the PRT and the final report is sent to the institution. The institution receives five copies of the report. It is up to the institution to decide how many additional copies it will make for internal and external use. The institution has complete ownership of the report. The report is strictly confidential if the institution wishes to consider it as such.

The follow-up activities and other uses of the PRT report are the responsibility of the institution. It is suggested that both the self-assessment report and the PRT report be made available at least internally. Given the self-assessment process has taken place with active participation by many individuals and groups in the institution, it is important that they are included in an open discussion or planning session on the comments and suggestions made in both the SAT and PRT reports. In other words, the use of and follow-up to the reports is an integral part of the process of assessing, assuring and improving the internationalisation strategies.

Follow-up phase

The institution may add a follow-up phase to the IQR, approximately one and a half to two years after the PRT report has been delivered. This is particularly important in those cases in which the IQR is used to start a process for the development of an internationalisation strategy within an institution. This follow-up phase can take place with or without involvement of an external peer review. As part of this follow-up phase the self-assessment team writes a document analysing the progress in implementing the recommendations made by the SAT and PRT and the internationalisation strategy. It makes recommendations for further actions. This report is the basis for a one- to two-day site visit by the PRT to give their views on progress and recommendations for further action.

The decision to include a follow-up phase in the IQR should preferably be taken at the beginning of the IQRP and at latest at the end of the PRT visit.

3. From the pilot project IQR to the IQR service

In 1998, when the IQR pilot project came to an end, discussions started about the implementation of the IQR as an instrument to assess internationalisation strategies of European universities. The Association of European Universities (CRE) showed interest. CRE already had an instrument for assessing institutions of higher education in Europe, the so-called ‘Programme of Institutional Quality Audits’. CRE was also responsible for a project to evaluate the European Policy Statements that European institutions of higher education had been obliged to write as the basis for their applications under SOCRATES (Barblan et al., 1998). The growing importance of internationalisation strategies in Europe, demonstrated for example by the institutional audits and the European Policy review, encouraged CRE to decide to use internationalisation as the first choice for a focused audit in European universities. Instead of developing a new instrument, it was decided to work together with IMHE/OECD and ACA in adapting the IQR into an
instrument relevant for the European context. It was agreed that CRE would administer the ‘Internationalisation Quality Review’ (IQR) as a joint service with IMHE/OECD and ACA.  

The Universiteit van Amsterdam expressed interest in a review of its internationalisation strategy, and volunteered to use the IQR service. Because of time constraints, the university was not able to wait for the adaptation of the IQRP guidelines and offered to act as an IQR pilot project, using the IQRP guidelines as a basis. In this sense, the Universiteit van Amsterdam might be considered more as an additional pilot case for the IQR than as the first institution undergoing the IQR, although the experiences of the Universiteit van Amsterdam are considered to be relevant for the further refinement of the IQR service.

4. Reflections on Using the IQRP

The pilot cases of the IQRP have provided insights and information on using the IQRP to assess and enhance the international dimension of higher education. Based on the original the IQRP reflections and the experience with the IQRP at the Universiteit van Amsterdam, an updated version of the experiences gained and lessons learned from the use of the instrument, and a reflection on its future application to other institutions is given.

4.1. Application of the IQRP in different contexts

Use in different educational contexts

One of the most complex issues in the design of the guidelines for the ‘Internationalisation Quality Review Process’ was to take into account the diversity of cultures and systems in higher education. As already stated, a guiding principle for the project was that “the review process be international in application ... and that acknowledgement and recognition of differences among institutions and countries is essential.” Therefore a key factor in selecting the pilot institutions was diversity. The final selection included nine institutions in eight countries on five different continents.

During the review of the lessons learned from the pilot case studies, there was consensus that the IQRP was useful and effective in different types of institutions in different regions of the world. The pilot case studies have demonstrated that the IQRP is relevant to and adaptable to the following differences in educational contexts:

• Differences between private and public institutions.
• Differences between the university and non-university sectors.
• Differences between large, comprehensive universities and specialised institutions.
• Differences between undergraduate colleges, research universities and professional schools.

During the revision of the IQRP guidelines, particular importance was given to ensuring that the guidelines were applicable and sensitive to different types of higher education institutions.

85 Originally, it was left open whether or not IMHE would administer the IQR service for the rest of the world or look for similar alliances elsewhere. In the end it was decided that the CRE, already using the institutional audit in Latin America under the Columbus programme, would also administer potential interest from elsewhere. The IQRP guidelines, as published in Knight and De Wit (1999) are, however, public domain.
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Therefore, the revised IQRP guidelines have been crafted so that they are flexible enough to recognise and accommodate the variety of higher education institutions which are interested in assessing and assuring the quality of their internationalisation efforts.

Use in different cultural contexts

A key challenge in developing the conceptual and operational frameworks for the IQRP was its application in different cultural contexts. Because the IQRP is based on two fundamental principles, those of self-assessment and peer review, it was very important to be sensitive to different cultural orientations to these principles. The notion of ‘face’ or ‘reputation’ was of particular concern. Would the process of self-assessment result in a ‘promotional or public relations report’ which would identify strengths and accomplishments only and gloss over areas needing improvement? Would the peer review report be credible and accepted if it focused on specific issues and activities which needed further development and enhancement? Would culturally based interpretations of the concepts of internationalisation or globalisation negatively influence the process of reviewing the international dimension? Would the need for an explicit rationale and clearly stated goals and objectives for an internationalisation strategy be problematic in different cultures and regions of the world? These were the types of questions which were being asked during the design and revision stages of the IQRP.

The experiences of the pilot case studies have demonstrated that the flexibility of the IQRP makes it adaptable and useful in different cultural contexts. Of course, the most important principle is that the IQRP respects and adapts to individual situations and fundamental cultural values and beliefs. Therefore, the frameworks and guidelines of the IQRP have intentionally been developed to respect and accommodate different contexts, and in particular the cultural context. The discussion on approaches to self-assessment later in this chapter illustrates the way in which different institutions in different contexts have adapted the self-assessment process to suit their situation.

Use in institutions at different stages of internationalisation

The IQRP project was originally based on the assumption that the IQRP would be most useful for institutions in which a variety of international activities and relationships were already operational and where a comprehensive internationalisation strategy was in place to ensure that there was a holistic and integrated approach to the international dimension. In fact, the experiences of the IQRP at several institutions proved this assumption to be false. There were several institutions at which an explicit internationalisation strategy had not been developed in spite of the many international initiatives and where the IQRP was instrumental in developing such a strategy.

It is interesting to refer to the actual experiences of the pilot institutions to elaborate on this point. The discussion on the different development stages of internationalisation at the pilot institutions is used for illustrative purposes. There is no comparison inferred or intended among or between the institutions.
In institutions such as the University of Helsinki, Bentley College, Monash University, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and the Universiteit van Amsterdam, as expected, a comprehensive internationalisation strategy had been developed and was more or less operational.

The cases of the National University of Mexico and Moi University in Kenya demonstrated that the IQRP can also be used as a planning instrument to help design the overall institution’s strategy for internationalisation. This was done by assessing the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats for a strategic internationalisation plan and/or for the formulation of the international dimension in the overall strategic plan of the institution.

In the case of Moi University, the self-assessment exercise was used as an instrument to help create awareness of the international dimension of higher education and its possible contribution to the overall mandate and goals of the institution. The IQRP was a catalyst and a tool to raise awareness about the importance of the international dimension and to collect and analyse the existing but fragmented international activities, contacts and projects. Through the IQRP, the strengths and weaknesses of the current state of international activities were analysed and priorities for an internationalisation strategy were identified. Thus the first steps towards developing and implementing an overall internationalisation plan were taken through the IQRP.

In the case of the National University of Mexico, one can speak of an ad hoc and marginal approach to internationalisation, but must recognise at the same time an impressive range of international activities, linkages and projects. The institution needed the IQRP to place the selection of international activities into a more explicit and coherent perspective and explore the possibilities for making organisational and programmatic changes for the development of an internationalisation strategy and for the incorporation of the international dimension in the overall strategic plan of the institution.

The case of the Universiteit van Amsterdam has placed question marks against the original assumption that the IQRP would be most useful to institutions where a comprehensive internationalisation strategy was in place. The instrument might be more relevant for institutions that are in the process of developing a strategy or that are in the first stage of such a strategy and want to use the review in order to widen and deepen it than for institutions that want to move from a systematic internationalisation policy of internationalisation, disconnected from the core activities of the institution, to an integrated internationalisation (Teichler, 1999, 9-10), as was the case of the Universiteit van Amsterdam. For such an integrated internationalisation, inclusion of the international dimension in other quality assurance systems and procedures of the institution might be more appropriate. In such a case, an institution still might consider an IQR focused on the programme and organisational strategies for internationalisation in place, but should not expect more than general references to the impact on the overall reform of the institution.

In summary, the experiences with ten case studies have shown that the IQRP can be used by educational institutions at different stages in the development and evolution of a comprehensive internationalisation strategy.

The case of the Universiteit van Amsterdam, however, has shown that it is important to analyse carefully the rationale for and the context in which the institution wants to use the IQRP. The educational context, the external environment of the institution and the stage of development...
of its internationalisation strategy and the relationship between the three are all most relevant. The rationale for and the context in which the institution places its review should be made explicit and clear in advance to both the self-assessment and peer review team. Only in this way can there be a mutual understanding of expectations.

4.2. Practical issues in using the IQRP

The commitment to undertake an IQRP

Implementing a quality review of internationalisation strategy only makes sense under certain conditions. The institution must be clear about the rationale for undertaking a quality review of the international dimension. The different constituency groups, including the leadership and the academic and administrative staff as well as students of the institution, must be committed to all stages of the process of review. This includes the decision to undergo the review, the self-assessment, the peer review and the implementation of conclusions and recommendations.

There must be a clear identification of the follow-up procedures to the review and how to implement any recommendations. Finally, there must be awareness about the resource implications of the review itself and of potential resource implications of the recommendations of the review.

Description versus analysis in the self-assessment

One of the greatest challenges and perhaps striking aspects of the self-assessment exercise was the tendency for the SAT report to be more descriptive than analytical. This is easily understood and can happen for a variety of reasons. In some cases, preparing the SAT report was the first time that the institution attempted to collect information systematically on all international initiatives and policies. Developing a comprehensive picture of the nature and extent of internationalisation activities can be both a very revealing and overwhelming undertaking. In situations where this type of inventory did not exist, the SAT tended to focus more on the collecting of the data than on the analysis of the findings. In other cases, the membership of the SAT was too focused (i.e. international office only). In another instance, the team members were not experienced enough in dealing with academic planning and governance issues at the macro level.

For the SAT report to be a useful document for the institution and the PRT, it is necessary for there to be a clear articulation of goals and objectives/targets for internationalising the institution. The importance of having an explicit rationale as well as clearly stated goals and objectives cannot be overstated. It is the rationale, goals and objectives which will guide the SAT and PRT, as the whole exercise is driven by the institution’s mission and aims. Given that the underlying principle of the IQRP is to assess and assure the achievement of the aims and objectives as identified by the institution itself, it is critical that they are clearly stated. They can also provide or drive the framework for the analysis. The analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of internationalisation strategies is at the heart of the IQRP. Therefore a SWOT analysis is critical to ensuring that the SAT report is more than a catalogue of internationalisation initiatives.
The SWOT analysis helps to identify what works well, what can be improved and what are new opportunities.

A second factor in ensuring an analytical approach to the IQRP is the selection of the chair and members of the SAT, and the type of support that is available to the team. The next section will address the importance of selecting the right chair for the SAT and the composition of the team members.

Self-assessment team members

The pilot case studies have indicated how important it is to select carefully the members of the SAT. It is important to have a senior leader of the university who is directly involved in or responsible for internationalisation to head the SAT. This is important for a number of reasons. First is the strong message given to the community about the importance of the international dimension and the IQRP. Second is the leader’s familiarity with the internationalisation work in particular but also the more general policy and governance of the institution. The third relates to the benefit of having a senior person’s insight and influence for the implementation of the final recommendations for improvement. However, there is also a danger in having a senior leader chairing the SAT. This person could push his/her own agenda on the team and the report. Among the pilot case studies there were two in which, from within the institution or from the PRT, questions were raised about the role of the chair in pushing a private agenda. This potential conflict of interest should be taken into account and discussed beforehand. In the case of the Universiteit van Amsterdam, the president of the university chaired the broad SAT and the vice-president for international affairs was one of the two members of the core SAT which wrote the report. Although this delivered the positive input as described above, it also raised questions about the objectivity of the relationship between the team and the board of the institution, which had to accept the report. Although in the end, according to at least to the PRT, there were no indications of lack of objectivity and critical analysis, one can still wonder if this is the right approach.

To ensure that different constituencies of the institution are involved and to avoid a top-down process, it is important to have representatives of teaching and administrative staff as well as students on the committee. Experience has shown that members of the SAT do not necessarily have to be champions and promoters of internationalisation; indeed, this can give a skewed picture of the level of commitment and support for internationalisation within the institution. The non-involved and even the internationalisation ‘nay sayers’ can make a very useful contribution. That being said, one has to be aware of the size of the SAT. Of course it will greatly differ according to the institution but a team of four/six is often the most effective. Consultation with the wider community within the institution is critical and this can be done in a variety of ways to ensure that a broad cross-section of views is heard. The views and voices of both domestic and international students play a central role in the self-assessment process. In some cases, it may also be appropriate for the SAT to have a member external to the institution.

In three cases explicitly, and probably implicitly in some other cases, a distinction was made between a core SAT and a broader SAT which acted as a advisory group to the core team and/or for endorsement of the report. For practical reasons, working on a self-assessment with a broad team is difficult. Most members would not be able and/or willing to give the time needed to collect data, perform many interviews and write a report. An individual or a small team is
therefore selected for this task. In general this is the senior person in charge of international
affairs, one of his/her staff members or an outsider. In the case of the Universiteit van Amsterdam,
for instance, a team consisting of the vice-president for international affairs and a researcher hired
on a temporary basis from the NUFFIC acted as the core SAT. In such cases, one has to be careful
that the report truly reflects the views of the broad SAT. If the number of meetings between the
core and broad team is too limited and/or if the core team pushes its own agenda too hard then this
can be a problem.

Approaches to the self-assessment exercise

The experiences of the pilot case studies have demonstrated that the IQRP framework is
flexible enough to be adapted to different needs and characteristics of institutions. This is
illustrated by the different approaches used to complete the self-assessment exercise. The
guidelines outlined a process whereby the appointed SAT would consult with the different
stakeholder groups on campus, collect information, conduct a SWOT analysis, and be fully
involved in the preparation of the SAT report with recommendations. This process was
successfully adapted to specific situations at different institutions. For instance, as we have
already mentioned, in three institutions the SAT acted as an advisory committee to the leaders
responsible for internationalisation who undertook the preparation of the SAT report, and then
consulted widely in the community for reactions and additions to the report. In another case, both
the SAT and the PRT reports were prepared and then shared with the university for feedback and
support for the recommendations. In another institution, seminars were held with representatives
of the different stakeholder groups, the process was explained and participants were engaged in
the preparation of the SAT and the whole IQRP. It is impossible and ill-advised to indicate which
is the best approach. The culture of each institution is different and must be respected. Therefore,
the IQRP framework and guidelines are deliberately flexible and adaptable to enable them to be
used in the most effective way according to the goals and characteristics of the institution. An
important point, which bears repetition, is the necessity of the university community to be
involved and committed to the process of internationalisation. The Internationalisation Quality
Review Process, including both the self-assessment and peer review, can be a constructive way to
increase awareness, involvement and commitment to internationalisation. It is for this reason that
special attention needs to be given to the composition of the SAT and the best approach to the
self-assessment exercise.

Peer review team members

As with the SAT, the composition of the PRT is also crucial. There are a number of factors
to take into consideration when selecting the members and building the best team. However,
experience has shown that there are two or three key factors. First, it is assumed that all members
are external to the institution and do not have any vested interests or biases. It is important to have
at least one member who is familiar with the local context and culture, i.e. national education
policies, trends and issues, and can brief the other team members if necessary on any critical local
issues. This has been an especially important and successful feature in the pilot case studies. It is
equally important to have at least one team member who comes form outside the country or
region and is knowledgeable about different education systems and policies. Expertise and
practical experience in internationalising an academic institution is absolutely essential,
theoretical understanding is not enough. Experience in a senior management position in academia
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is also advisable, so that both the macro governance and policy issues as well as operational issues are understood. At the Universiteit van Amsterdam, a suggestion was made to include someone from outside academia, from the political or corporate world, in order to include insight from the external environment on the rationales and strategies of the university. This might be relevant in other cases as well.\(^6\)

While it is an advantage to have quality assessment expertise represented on the team, it is not an absolute necessity. In fact, knowledge of best practices of internationalisation in different types of institutions in various countries of the world is probably more useful to the peer review process. Experience has shown that a diversity of backgrounds in the team makes for a perceptive and robust review. In one case, the team was composed only of senior managers and researchers in higher education. Although this team appeared substantial and strong, lack of diversity was perceived as a problem. In this case, different views on internationalisation strategies also had a negative impact on the final result.

Conclusions and recommendations

The process of undergoing a self-assessment exercise is at the heart of quality assessment and assurance and improvement. The PRT is the second step and acts as a mirror to the findings and conclusions of the SAT process and report. The conclusions and recommendations are an essential part of the SAT report. In some pilot case studies there was some hesitation to draw any conclusions or make any recommendations before the PRT visit. This is understandable, as it is helpful to get feedback and external perspectives on the findings of the SAT exercise before the recommended changes are finalised. However, because the PRT serves as a mirror and a feedback mechanism, it is important for the PRT to be aware of the suggested recommendations and discuss them with the SAT and senior leaders of the institution. It is therefore highly recommended that the SAT thinks through and articulates the conclusions and recommendations prior to the PRT visit; then reviews and revises them after the PRT report has been received, and then finally makes a report on the recommendations for quality improvement. As already stated, ownership of and commitment to improvement is an important outcome of the IQRP and this is especially true for the conclusions and recommendations.

Timing of the IQRP

There are three major points to be made with respect to the timing of the IQRP exercise. The first relates to the stage of development of the institution relative to internationalisation. The original expectation was that institutions which were well along the path of internationalisation would be most interested in undertaking an IQRP. However, as discussed in two of the case studies, one of the unexpected outcomes of the project has been the value of the IQRP guidelines as a tool for strategic planning for institutions which are in the early stages of internationalisation. This has been one of the key lessons learned and has expanded the potential use and benefits of the IQRP beyond the initial design and objectives of the project. On the other hand, as we have indicated above, the Universiteit van Amsterdam case suggests that the instrument might be less relevant for institutions that are in the

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\(^6\) At the Universiteit van Amsterdam the proposed candidate had to withdraw at last minute, owing to another urgent obligation. Such factors and the potential financial implications can, therefore, make this option difficult to realise.
process of moving from a systematic internationalisation policy of internationalisation, disconnected from the core activities of the institution, to an integrated internationalisation. For such an integrated internationalisation, inclusion of the international dimension in other quality assurance systems and procedures of the institution might be more appropriate.

The second timing factor relates to the institution’s priority and preoccupation with quality reviews. In recent years has been increasing importance given to quality reviews for reasons of both accountability and improvement. While this is a positive sign, there is also a greater risk of the ‘quality review fatigue’ syndrome being experienced at the institution. It is therefore important to be sensitive to the timing of the IQRP with respect to other evaluation or audit exercises so that there is not undue pressure on the institution. However, another unexpected outcome of the project has been that the IQRP is compatible with other quality review systems and that there are potential benefits in combining the IQRP with other review exercises. Therefore, while attention needs to be given to other institutional reviews, one can also consider the possibility of undertaking an IQRP in conjunction with other exercises. An institution considering an IQRP should consider all factors which may positively or negatively influence the ability to consult a cross-section of the institution and its commitment to the process and the eventual improvements.

The length of time it takes to complete an IQRP – the third factor – is obviously influenced by many factors which are usually institutionally based and therefore differ from institution to institution. Experience has shown that between three and six months is an appropriate period for completion of the exercise. Taking more time can result in ‘review fatigue’ and it may be hard to sustain a high level of commitment and participation. An extended SAT exercise may also be a sign of overemphasis on data collection rather than analysis. After completion and submission of the SAT report, it usually takes another three months at least before the PRT phase is finished and the final report is submitted. Therefore one should aim to have the entire SAT and PRT finished within nine months and then the institution can focus on implementing the recommendations for improvements.

Follow-up phase

At the start of the project, the IQRP was designed as a three-step process: 1) SAT phase; 2) PRT phase and 3) Improvement phase. Several of the pilot studies have indicated that a fourth step, a follow-up PRT exercise approximately one to two years afterwards would be very useful in order to assess the impact of the changes made and the evolution of the strategic planning and institutionalisation of the international dimension. To date, a follow-up exercise has not yet been undertaken, as it would be premature for most of the institutions in this pilot project. There have been some requests, and therefore serious consideration will be given to undertaking follow-up PRT visits. It is for this reason that the idea of a follow-up phase has been introduced into the IQRP guidelines. It may not be necessary for all the members of the original PRT to participate in the follow-up, but it would be important that at least one or two members of the original team guide the follow-up peer review process.
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Focused or comprehensive IQRP

It was clear from the pilot institutions in the project that there are different rationales for why a university or college is interested in doing an IQRP. This was anticipated and for that reason the IQRP was designed to be flexible and adaptable to different types of institutions and different motivations for an IQRP.

An interesting aspect of two of the case studies (UNAM, Mexico, and USM Malaysia) was their focus on only part of the institution, not the whole organisation. In the focused approach, however, it is still important that both academic departments and central administrative or service units are included. In addition, it is essential that a wide selection of faculty members, senior administrators, students, researchers, etc., are consulted by the SAT and PRT. When only the international office and other support units are included in the review, there are significant limitations to understanding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of integrating the international dimension into the teaching, research and service activities of the institution. Similarly, when only administrators are consulted by the SAT or PRT one gets a very skewed view; the opinions and perceptions of faculty, staff and students are important and should not be excluded. Therefore, for both a focused and a comprehensive IQRP it is essential that a cross-section of both academic (teaching/research) and administrative/support units is reviewed; and also that there is broad consultation across the institution.

Ad hoc versus co-ordinated and integrated approach

An interesting and encouraging trend is the gradual shift towards a more strategic approach to internationalising an institution. The process approach to internationalisation has emphasised the concepts of integration and co-ordination and has de-emphasised the fragmented activities approach. The key point is that there is an awareness and a gradual but perceptible change in planning and managing the international dimension.

The fact that the IQRP has been used as a planning tool as well as a review instrument illustrates that institutions are ready to think about internationalisation strategies, and not just a series of isolated activities. Furthermore, institutions are ready and trying to develop an overall institutional action plan to integrate an international dimension into the teaching, research and service activities. The movement towards strategic planning is helping to make internationalisation a central part of the university mission and mandate, not a marginal, ad hoc, optional group of activities.

IQRP guidelines and self-assessment outline

In the two phases of the IQRP pilot project, two different types of guidelines have been used. In the first phase, the team worked with an extensive checklist, addressing the following major areas: the (inter)national context; the institutional profile; governance and organisation systems; academic programmes; research and scholarly collaboration; students; faculty and staff; external relations and services; and conclusions.87

87 Project document The Development of an Internationalisation Quality Review Process at the Level of Higher Education institutions (ACA, IMHE/OECD, March 1996).
In the second phase, the team worked with a more global self-assessment structure, covering six major areas without a detailed checklist: summary of the higher education system and the institutional profile; analysis of the (inter)national context; analysis of the institution's policy and strategies for internationalisation; analysis of the implementation and effects of the internationalisation strategies; analysis of the organisational structure and procedures for internationalisation; and conclusions.

The reason for this change was that when the first three pilot institutions used the checklist, there was a tendency for the self-assessment teams to follow it too closely and to be too descriptive when answering the questions. The checklist also created confusion through the terminology used. Some of the terminology was too culture- and region-bound, such as 'off-shore programmes', a term more familiar to Australian higher education than to Finnish higher education.

In the second phase, it was clear that several institutions found the new self-assessment structure too general and vague and they started to use the checklist of the first phase to help them perform the self-assessment. This was true in particular for those institutions which used the IQRP more as a planning instrument.

The experiences with the two methods, as described in the case studies chapters and summarised above, have resulted in the development of a third version of the IQRP guidelines. The guidelines include a detailed self-assessment outline which covers the following major categories: context; internationalisation policies and strategies; organisational and support structures; academic programmes and students; research and scholarly collaboration; human resources management; contracts and services; and conclusions and recommendations. Each category requires a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis and contains a list of possibly relevant questions on the ‘what’ and ‘how’, the effectiveness and the possibilities for improvement. The outline is designed in such a way that it is distinctive from and at the same time applicable in combination with other instruments of quality assessment and assurance; and that it can be used at different stages of development of internationalisation, as well as in different regional, cultural and educational contexts.

With the start of the IQR service, it was discussed whether to adapt the guidelines to focus more on strategic aspects of internationalisation in relation to the overall context of the institution and its policy for change. This discussion was influenced by the primary focus on Europe and the assumption that most institutions of higher education in Europe are moving from an isolated to an integrated strategy of internationalisation. The experience of the Universiteit van Amsterdam, the first case study of the IQR service and an institution that claims to be moving from an isolated to an integrated internationalisation strategy, could be used to support both sides of the debate. One can argue that the IQR of the Universiteit van Amsterdam failed to accomplish this objective because of no other guidelines than those of the IQRP were yet available. But one can also argue

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that the instrument is less useful for such an objective, as argued above.

5. Other Quality Assurance Instruments and their relationship to the IQRP

Other quality assurance instruments are being used to assess the international dimension of institutions of higher education: benchmarking, performance indicators, codes of practice, and the GATE certification process. Instruments such as Total Quality Management and ISO 9000 are also sometimes used to assess the international dimension. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology has used ISO 9002 and IQRP in combination, with the IQRP addressing the goals, objectives and strategies for internationalisation, and ISO 9002 the quality of the management systems and processes (Knight and De Wit, 1999, 220).

Benchmarking is, for instance, used in the framework of a project of the Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service to improve the quality of internationalisation through comparisons between institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth. The codes of practice are used in particular by national organisations such as UKCOSA in the UK, CBIE in Canada, NAFSA in the USA and AVCC in Australia, and are mainly statements of principles to which institutions and/or professionals adhere.

The Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE) certification process is designed to assess the quality of transnational education. As has been experienced in the case of Monash University and described by Jane Knight (Knight and De Wit, 1999), the GATE certification process is conceptually and operationally complementary to the IQRP, with GATE addressing the transnational dimension and the IQRP the international dimension of the institution and of its transnational education. In the IQRP of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, members of the peer review team reviewed the international dimension of the off-shore activities of RMIT.

6. The Internationalisation of Quality Assurance and the Quality Assurance of Internationalisation

Several authors (Smith, 1994; Scott, 1996; El-Khawas, 1998; Van der Wende, 1999) stress the relationship between the quality assurance of internationalisation and the internationalisation of quality assurance. Globalisation, decreased government support for education, the knowledge economy, the rapid growth of information technologies: all are directly influencing higher education. It is resulting in major shifts in the rationales and motivations for internationalisation. It is therefore very important that attention is given to developing new quality review instruments and that existing instruments are adapted and applied to internationalisation. It is equally important and an ultimate goal that the international dimension becomes a regularised part of all institutional audits or programme accreditation, observes Jane Knight (1999, 220-221).

Peter Scott (1996) identifies five different levels or models for the quality assurance of internationalisation:

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90 The CHEMS benchmarking project is now also promoted for European institutions in a joint co-operation between CHEMS and ESMU. Internationalisation is one of several issues institutions can use for benchmarking.
1. Conceding that quality rules imposed in the domestic context need not apply to the international arena.

2. Extending existing quality assurance systems designed for the domestic environment to cover the internationalisation of higher education.

3. Adapting quality assurance systems to take better account of the special issues raised by internationalisation.

4. Attempting to create a common currency for quality assurance.

5. Treating the internationalisation of higher education not so much as a series of activities that must be policed, but a national project to be encouraged.

The first two levels are not so much models as policy implications, which should be part of the assessment process. The other three are not mutually exclusive and should be seen not so much as models but as connected measures for improvement of the systems themselves by incorporation of internationalisation as a key factor and by internationalising the system itself. Two issues are crucial in making future quality assessments of internationalisation relevant.

In the first place, it is important to distinguish between three types of quality assessments:

- The assessment of programme and organisational strategies for internationalisation, for which instruments such as benchmarking, ISO and TQM could be used. In this case, the assessment is focused on the improvement of the quality of the programme or the organisation as such. The link to other programme and organisational strategies of the institution and the overall strategy of the institution is extremely marginal. Using the IQR service for such cases makes little sense, because of the limited strategic implications.

- The quality assurance of institutional strategies for internationalisation, for which the IQR service is a useful instrument. In this case the combined programme and organisational strategies of an institution are the objective of the assessment. As the IQRP pilot cases have shown, one can identify different stages in institutional strategies. Although these strategies should be assessed in reference to the overall strategy of the institution, the assessment’s primary focus is on the internationalisation strategy as such.

- The quality assurance of internationalisation as a key factor in an institutional or departmental strategy, for which institution-or discipline-focused audits seem more appropriate. In this case the emphasis is on the integration of the international dimension in the teaching, research and service function of the institution or a discipline/department/faculty.

The IQRP case studies have shown that it is not always clear what type of quality assessment an institution wants. In one case, an institution used the IQRP to review its organisational structure for internationalisation (type one). However, it failed to make this explicit to the peer review team, which resulted in a conflict of expectations as to the focus of the review and the recommendations made.

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An example is the Eurostrat project of CRE, evaluating European policy statements (Barblan et al., 1998). Another example is the instrument that the Council on International Educational Exchange has developed to assess its study abroad programmes.
As the Universiteit van Amsterdam case has shown, the IQR service – although originally designed for that purpose – is of limited use in the third approach. In addition, the university was not sufficiently clear to the peer review team that this was the objective. Incorporating the international dimension into existing instruments and at the same time internationalising these (still largely national) systems is a better approach in these cases.

Before deciding on a quality assessment and the instrument to be used, it is essential to decide what type of instrument is appropriate. In other words: to define the scope of the assessment and the reasons why one wants to do the assessment. The relation between the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the assessment is not always clear at the beginning of the decision-making process on a quality assessment. It is also not always made explicit to the self-assessment and/or the peer review team. This can result in reports and recommendations that were not anticipated by the leadership of the institution when they decided to initiate a quality review.

A second important issue is that the quality assurance of internationalisation has to move beyond national borders. In the words of Scott, a common currency for quality assurance at the regional or even global level should be looked for. Instruments such as GATE for transnational education and the IQR service for the internationalisation of higher education are examples of attempts to design common currencies. The same applies to disciplinary and institutional quality assurance instruments, although here, given the diversity and complexity of educational systems and cultures, regionalisation of the currency is more likely at first than globalisation.

In summary and conclusion, the development of the IQR and other instruments to assess the quality of internationalisation and related programmes and strategies is a sign of the importance that institutions of higher education and (inter)national agencies and governments attach to the assessment of the quality of their international strategies and activities. The IQR is an instrument that – when used carefully, taking into account the observations made in this chapter – can be of use to institutions of higher education in a broad variety of contexts and settings.