

INQAAHE

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

Pre-Forum workshop:

Quality assurance for quality assurance agencies

Workshop leaders:

Signe Ploug Hansen,

Director of Methodology at The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) (sph@eva.dk)

&

Rafael Llavori,

Head of the Unit for International Relations of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA) (rllavori@aneca.es)

Who are we and where do we work?

Signe Ploug Hansen:

- **Director of Methodology**
- **Responsible for implementing and improving internal quality assurance (IQA) at EVA**
- **Initiator of the ENQA IQA group and member of its steering group**
- **Facilitated a similar workshop at the INQAAHE forum in 2006**

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA):

- **Independent agency under the Danish Ministry of Education**
- **Established in 1999**
- **Covers the entire Danish educational system**

Rafael Llavori:

- **Head of Unit for International Relations**
- **Member of the Board of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, ENQA**
- **Coordinator of the CINTAS project on the Design of IQA systems in agencies**
- **Member of the Board of Directors of RIACES Network of Accreditation Agencies**

The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation in Spain (ANECA):

- **Independent agency under the Spanish Ministry of Education**
- **Established in 2002**
- **Covers the Spanish higher education system**

Programme

- 1. Objectives of the workshop (9.00-9.15)**
- 2. Purposes of internal quality assurance (IQA) and good practice as defined by INQAAHE and ENQA (9.15-9.30)**
- 3. The CINTAS project (9.30-11.45)**
- 4. Examples: An IQA policy of a specific agency and a regional IQA cooperation among agencies (11.45-12.15)**
- 5. Lessons learned from the workshop (12.15-12.30)**

A coffee break of 15 minutes at app. 10.30

1. Objectives of the workshop

- **Introduce basic purposes of internal quality assurance (IQA) and international expectations to the IQA of quality assurance agencies (QAA's)**
- **Present a model that QAA's agencies may use to establish or develop their internal quality assurance**
- **Provide knowledge of examples of IQA mechanisms and regional cooperation on IQA**
- **Provide possibility for the participants to discuss and share ideas in smaller groups**

- **Do these objectives match your expectations ?**

2. Purposes of internal quality assurance (IQA) and good practice of IQA as defined by INQAAHE and ENQA

Why do agencies need internal quality assurance?

Common *internal* purposes:

- Provide information about the degree to which they fulfil their mission and goals
- Support the improvement of their own performance
- Ensure follow-up on internal and external feed-back and recommendations for improvement

Common *external* purposes:

- demonstrate to stakeholders that agencies are serious in wishing to improve their own performance
- Investigate the impact of the agency

Other relevant purposes to mention?

INQAAHE „Guidelines of Good Practice“

Quality Assurance of the External Quality Assurance Agency (EQAA)

The EQAA has a system of continuous quality assurance of its own activities that emphasises flexibility in response to the changing nature of higher education, the effectiveness of its operations, and its contribution towards the achievement of its objectives.

The EQAA conducts internal self-review of its own activities, including consideration of its own effects and value. The review includes data and analysis.

The EQAA is subject to external reviews at regular intervals. There is evidence that any required actions are implemented and disclosed.

Examples of Sources of Evidence:

- Quality assurance policy/system/activities/plan
- Internal feedback (e.g. by staff supervisors or decision-making body)
- Self reviews
- Examples of ongoing internal processes for continuous quality assurance
- External feedback from institutions or other stakeholders
- Reports from external reviews
- Use of feedback from reviews for improvement

The European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance agencies

- **Standard 3.8 (accountability procedures):**

Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

- **Guidelines:**

These procedures are expected to include the following:

1. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
2. Documentation which demonstrates that:
 - the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance;
 - the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;
 - the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
 - the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.
3. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years

3. CINTAS PROJECT

Internal Quality of the Evaluation Agencies for Higher Education

CINTAS Project

“La Garantía de Calidad Interna de las
Agencias s de Evaluación” Proyecto

CINTAS

Internal Quality Assurance Systems
of the Agencies

CINTAS Project



Project to support the development of **Internal Quality Assurance Systems** regardless their particular approach and nature.

The aim of this project is to provide support for the development and implementation of **Internal Quality Assurance Systems (IQAS)** within the agencies or external quality assurance bodies within RIACES framework.

CINTAS Project



RIACES launches this proposal like a joint project between external quality assurance bodies.

Detailed goals

- ✓ To set up a common **reference framework** for quality assurance that could be used within the scope of RIACES.
 - ✓ To support external quality assurance bodies in the **development of their IQAS**.
 - ✓ To develop a procedure that facilitates the **review of external quality assurance bodies** .
-

Internal Quality Assurance



References at the global level



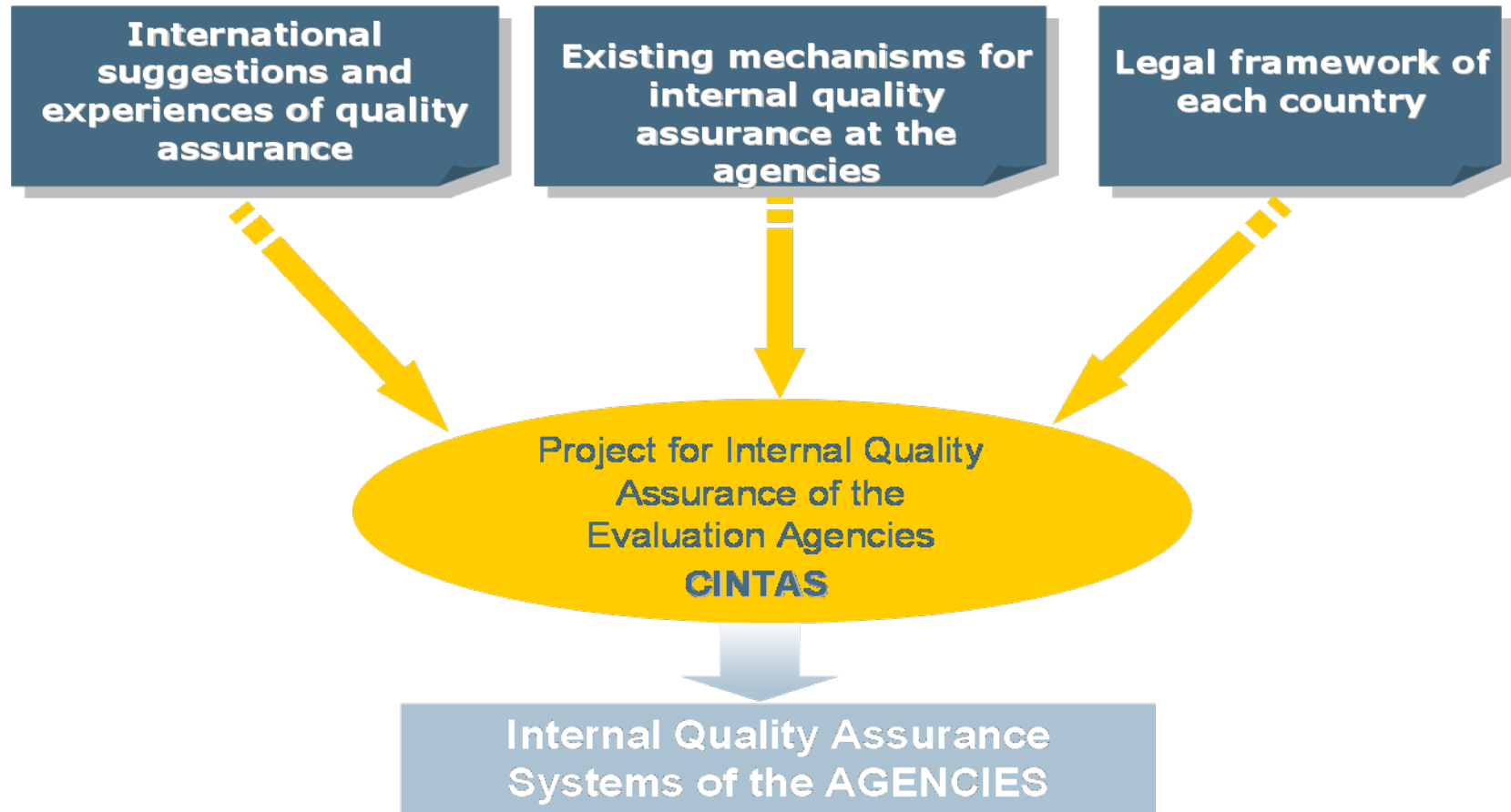
Guidelines for Quality Provision in Trans-border Higher Education

Internal Quality Assurance Systems

International Standards Comparison

Crterios	INQAHE	ENQA	ECA	OECD-UNESCO	APQN
Declaración de la misión	1	3.3; 3.5	1; 13		1.2
Relación Agencia e institución	2	2.2;2.6	16	20.4	1
Toma de decisiones	3	3.6; 3.7	3; 4		7
Comité externo	4	2.4; 3.6; 3.8	15	20.7	4
Información pública	5	3.7	8; 9	20.4	7
Documentación	6		17	20.7; 20.1	6
Recursos	7	3.4	5		6
Sistemas de apelación	8	3.7	10		
Revisión externa de la Agencia	9	2.8; 3.8	6; 7	20.6	8
Colaboración con otras Agencias	10	x	11	20.2; 20.3	
Estatus y reconocimiento oficial		3; 2	2		1
Elementos de la revisión externa		x			

CINTAS Project Rationale



Participants in CINTAS Project



- ✓ **Coordinating body (ANECA)**
 - To provide counseling and training.
 - To take part in the **ex-ante** evaluation process.
 - To follow-up of IQA implementations.

 - ✓ **Participating bodies (Costa Rica, Colombia, Uruguay, Cuba, Bolivia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, CCA)**
 - To design IQAS.
 - To submit their IQAS to an evaluation.
 - After the evaluation, to implement the IQAS.
-

CINTAS Project

Principles

- The coordinating and participating bodies are part of the same team.
 - The difference between both kind of partners is the background of the coordinating bodies.
 - For the participating and coordinating bodies, CINTAS is a chance to learn from good practices developed by other agencies.
 - For the coordinating bodies, CINTAS is a chance to rethink their own IQAS while supporting other agencies in solving their problems related to external quality assurance in HEIs. A truly learning experience in two directions.
-

Approach for training and guidance

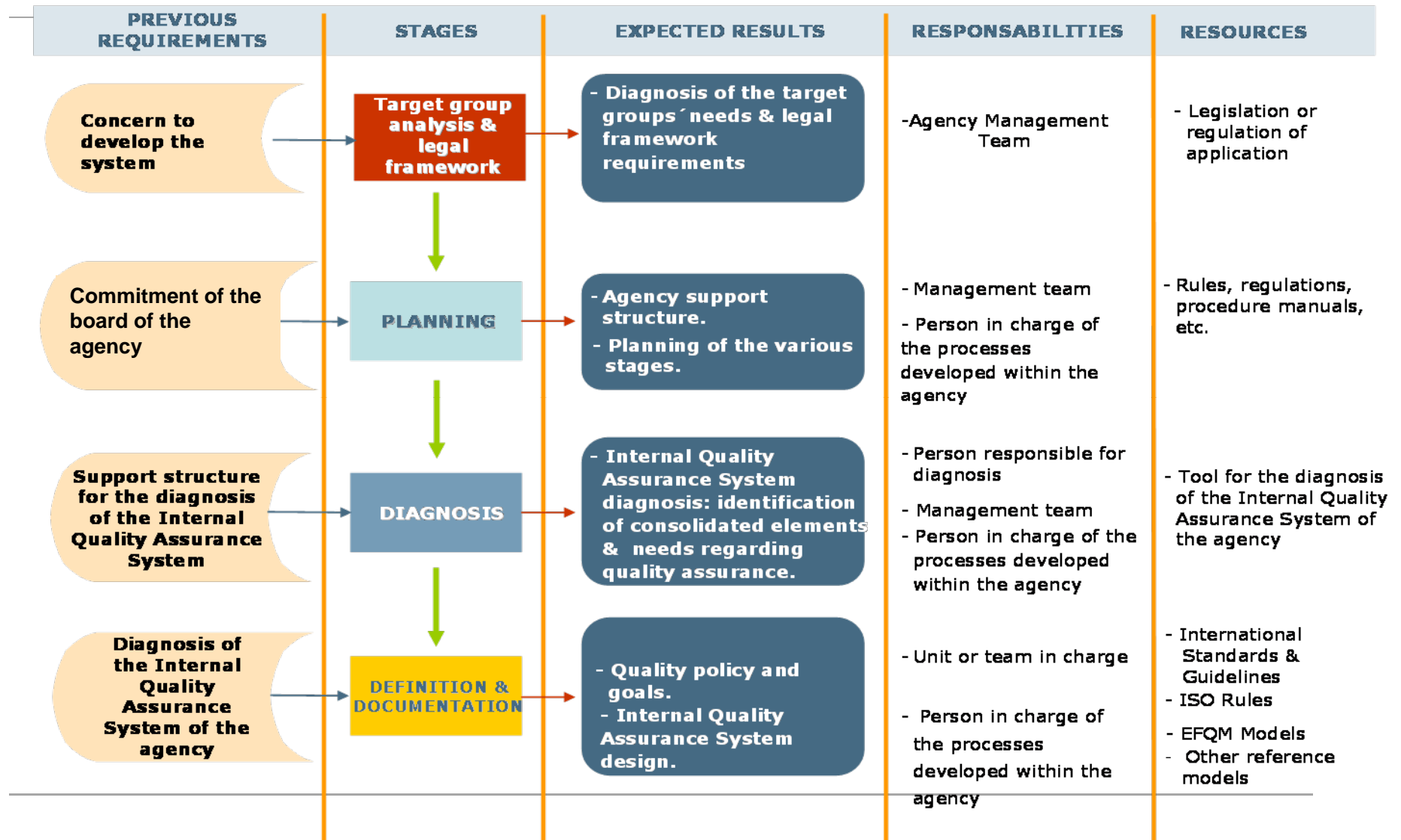
- ✓ Participating and coordinating bodies **share the same problems related to external review but in different contexts** (legal, HEI, quality culture...).
- ✓ Methods for training and guidance sessions:
 - ✓ **Analysis and discussion of the problems** in different contexts.
 - ✓ Review of best practices make the solutions easier.
 - ✓ **Best practices from different countries.**
- ✓ RIACES criteria (*lineamientos*) compliance must be understood in the **context of each country** (the case of CCA).

Steps for the IQAS design

- 1. Agency analyses its relationship with their stakeholders and its legal frame**
 - 2. Commitment of the Board of the agency to support the road map (planning)**
 - 3. Diagnosis: identification of the already existing elements and those missed**
 - 4. Definition, design and documentation**
-

Guide for the design of Internal Quality Assurance Systems

Stages for the designing of internal quality assurance systems (IQAS)



Approach for designing IQAS in the participating organisations

- ✓ IQAS should fit in to the **local context**: legal, HEIs, background participating bodies...
- ✓ **Step by step process**: First assure external review processes (i.e. accreditation) focus on program or institutional evaluation, only then other activities of the organisation that take part in the project can be assured.
- ✓ Making the IQAS real (**fit for purpose**):
 1. Only for the main processes is basic documentation required (simple flowchart).
 2. Quality control of the main activities in the main processes (registers and indicators, feedback from the institutions, analysis of S/W, improvement or redesign of the processes,...)
 3. Only if these 2 steps have been reached, we can go further with the documentation of the IQAS.
- ✓ **Working for building trust amongst organisations, mutual recognition, etc.**

Criteria for designing IQAS

0. How the agency fulfils the quality requirements to carry out evaluation, certification or accreditation at HE level.

The agency is formally recognised by competent authorities as a body with responsibilities for external evaluation, certification and accreditation activities at HE level.

1. How the Agency defines its mission, its policy and objectives

The Agency is able to promote externally and to consolidate internally a quality culture based on a public and accessible mission, policy and quality objectives.

2. How the agencies develops its relationship with HEI and other stakeholders.

The Agency recognize HEI as the main responsible for the quality of their provisions and its assurance and respect their institutional autonomy.

Guide for the design of Internal Quality Assurance Systems

3. How the agency assures its external evaluation processes

Agencies must be provided with public criteria, mechanisms and procedures for evaluation and accreditation, to ensure that these processes are accomplished with the duly safeguards

4. How the agency take its decisions related to evaluation and accreditation processes

Agencies must be provided with procedures to be able to take independent decisions based on the information and the evidences collected and on pre-defined criteria

5. How the agency assures and enhances the quality of its staff.

Agencies must have mechanisms to ensure that the recruitment, management and training of its personnel are carried out with appropriate safeguards in order for them to carry out their corresponding functions.

Guide for the design of Internal Quality Assurance Systems

6. How the agency assures its material and financial resources

Agencies must be provided with mechanisms, so it can design, manage and improve its services, and material resources in order to develop appropriately its assessment and accreditation activities.

7. How the agency analyses and takes into consideration the outcomes of its assessment activities.

Agencies must be provided with procedures to ensure that outcomes are measured, analysed and used for decision-making and to enhance the quality of its assessments.

8. How the agency publishes information on its evaluation activities and have in place accountability procedures for society .

Agencies must be equipped with mechanisms to ensure that updated information on its evaluation activities and has in place procedures for its own accountability.

Project development

Madrid meeting (2009)

- **Training technicians and board members of external bodies.**
 - **Approach: to discuss about key problems and good practices in IQAS from the point of view of ANECA and other external quality assurance bodies.**
 - **January 2009: El Salvador y Nicaragua.**
 - **November 2009: Uruguay, Cuba, Costa Rica and Bolivia.**
-

Project development



- **1st Costa Rica meeting (April 2008)**
 - **ANECA trained staff of CCA and members of the Costa Rica University focused on:**
 - **Review of foundations of a IQAS in an external review body.**
 - **Analysis of relationships between CCA and target groups (HEIs, regional governments).**



Project development



- **2nd Costa Rica meeting (October 2009)**
 - ANECA reviewed IQAS of The CCA to identify their strength and weakness.
 - CCA and ANECA shared their experiences as external QAA: stakeholders requirements, official status, mission statement, accreditation procedure and other activities, resources, independence, accountability process...
 - ANECA trained members of de board and staff of CCA to improve its IQAS.
 - CCA developed an improvement plan: self-report...



4. Examples: An IQA policy of a specific agency and a regional IQA cooperation among agencies.

Example of an IQA policy: The internal quality assurance policy of the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) 1/2

Objectives:

- **To assure and improve the quality of the most important services and products supplied by EVA**
- **To secure and develop EVA as a professional organisation and workplace**

And in more specific terms....

- **Highlight whether EVA's activities and results reflects its mission and goals**
- **Assess progress in EVA's strategic focus areas in a specific part of a strategy period**
- **Supply measurements which document the quality of EVA's activities for external stakeholders**

Example of an IQA policy: The internal quality assurance policy of the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) 2/2

Principles for the IQA at EVA:

- **Systematic:** EVA ensures that the various phases of internal quality work are cohesive and described.
- **Focus areas for internal quality work:** EVA transforms core internal processes and structures, relationships with external stakeholders, and overall goal achievement by the Institute into focus areas for continuous assessment and quality improvement.
- **Learning:** EVA gathers experience from projects and processes and utilises this to improve future projects and processes.
- **Involvement of external stakeholders:** EVA actively involves its most important target groups in internal quality work.
- **Internal reflection:** EVA always uses interpretation of the results of internal quality work and identification of focus areas and improvement activities as the basis for open and unbiased debate.
- **Follow up:** EVA follows up all its studies and surveys, and there are clear guidelines for which personnel are responsible for implementing follow-up initiatives.
- **Openness:** EVA communicates the results of its internal quality work in a user-friendly manner to relevant recipients such as the Board, the Committee of Representatives, ministries, visitors to the EVA website, etc.
- **External evaluation:** EVA is evaluated by an external panel at least every five years.

An example of a regional IQA network: The ENQA IQA group

- **A group composed of IQA staff members from ENQA member agencies**
- **Established in Copenhagen in 2007**

Purposes:

- **Strive towards ensuring lean, effective and development-oriented IQA systems, mutual inspiration, capacity building in terms of IQA and sharing of experiences.**
- **promote different tools and techniques to help ENQA members develop their own IQA systems suitable for their own particular needs**
- **Ensure the implementation of the European Standards and guidelines by the agencies.**

Activities:

- **Yearly meeting in terms of a 1½ day seminar)**

The report from the 2008 seminar contains examples of IQA systems and activities of agencies in Europe which may inspire others. This report (and other reports published by ENQA) can be found here: <http://www.enqa.eu/pubs.lasso>

5. Lessons learned from the workshop

Individual reflection: "What do I bring home?"

Please use the next 5 minutes to consider what you have learned from this workshop and not least how you intend to use the learning when you get back to your agency (or similar).

And please write down your considerations to make sure that you do not forget them during the course of the upcoming second training session and the 2 day conference!



“Speed dating”: “What do YOU bring home?”

- **Person A presents his/her considerations for 1 minute
(The facilitator will shout “change” when 1 minute has passed)**
- **Person B presents his/her considerations for 1 minute**

The facilitator will now shout “change partner” when that minute has passed and every couple break up and each person turn around to find a new partner.

**When everyone have found a new partner, the exercise is repeated:
Person A presents his/her considerations for 1 minute etc....**

Further questions ?



Thank you all for your participation!