

EDUPROF Network Meeting (2 days) and Study Visit (matchmaking)

Theme *Quality Assurance in Research*

Netherlands, Ireland

23-25 November 2009

Introduction

Research at UAS can be defined as research that is rooted in - and contributes to the improvement and innovation of - professional practice. This is achieved through the generation of knowledge and insights, but also through the provision of usable products and designs and concrete solutions for problems in the field and society. The research is usually of a multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary nature and is embedded in a range of internal and external organisational contexts. Its closely connected to education through its contribution to education activities, lecturer professionalisation and curriculum innovation. Knowledge is circulated and published via a very wide range of channels and to various target groups.

This so-called mode-2 research is thus performed in networks of experts from the field and researchers and (as such) the quality of this research is assessed by a number of parties. This is based, on the one hand, on the recognition that scientifically valid research is concerned and, on the other hand, that its impact on education, professional practice and society is the most important gauge for the quality of this type of research.

So, the excellence of practice-based research is measured particularly on the basis of the relevance and impact of research within professional practice, education and society as a whole. Incidentally, the evaluation and assessment of research on the basis of these perspectives is still in its infancy (worldwide). To date, emphasis in quality assurance systems has always focused strongly on the quality of research in the sense of scientific and academic impact. Traditionally, this impact is measured particularly on the basis of publications, citations and peer reviews. Within several countries and systems, steps are already being taken to find indicators and evaluation methods that place the importance and impact of research in a *broader perspective*. This *broader perspective* on quality and quality assurance will be the central focus of the network meeting.

The topic of quality assurance on applied research is divided into three central sub-themes:

1. Systems of quality assurance concerning UAS research on a national level (day 1 afternoon)
2. Indicators and methods for evaluating UAS research (day 2 morning)
3. Classifications and rankings (day 2 afternoon)

Expert meeting (2 days, 25/30 participants)

1th day: fly-in, lunch, start expert meeting at 13.30 h. until 17.30 h., dinner
2th day: 9.00 – 17.30 h expert meeting

1st day 13.30 – 17.30 h: Systems of quality assurance for research on a national level

Objects of quality assurance for research are to:

- safeguard and improve the quality of research and the organisation surrounding it;
- strengthen the position and image of practice-based research;
- generate management information for the university of applied sciences and the sector;
- account to government and society on how public resources are spent

Which elements of QA are regulated on a national level (government/umbrella's)? Experts from The Netherlands, Ireland and the UK will prepare a brief presentation about how quality assurance is regulated on a national level. Purpose of these is to inform each other about the state of the art in each participating country. After all presentations we try to identify good practices.

2nd day 9.00 – 12.00 h: Indicators and methods for evaluating UAS research

A European consortium of knowledge/academic institutes called SIAMPI has received a grant from the European Commission to produce a ready-to-use set of indicators to measure the (productive) interaction between science and society. The premise of the SIAMPI exercise is that knowledge develops in constant interaction between science and society, in which feedback is given, results are assessed and improvements are suggested by all stakeholders (researchers, universities and funders, but also governmental organisations, NGO's, industries and the general public).

SIAMPI's method will be developed to measure the social impact of research along four tracks of productive interactions:

1. direct personal contacts (ranging from mere meetings to complex arrangements for research collaboration)
2. mediation by specific outputs (expert reports, clinical guidelines, scientific advice etc)
3. transfer of goods (products, social practices, policy tools)
4. funding or other support mechanisms (people, social practices, artefacts and support).

A member of the SIAMPI projectteam will be invited to tell more about this project to introduce this sub-theme.

2nd day 13.30 – 17.30 h: Classifications and rankings

The CHERPA-network has won an open call for tender by the European Commission to develop and test an alternative design for a global ranking of universities. The network will conceptualize and test the feasibility of a multi-dimensional global ranking. In the project, a design for a global ranking of higher education institutions will be developed which avoids the flaws and deficits of existing international rankings and which should provide a valid, fair comparison of institutions. The design will follow the “Berlin Principles on the ranking of higher education institutions” which stress the need to take into account “the linguistic, cultural, economic and historical contexts of the educational systems being ranked”.

A member of this projectteam will be invited to tell more about this project to introduce this sub-theme.

Reporting

We make arrangements for the reporting of what has been discussed in the expert meetings. The reporting will be done in such a way that it contains relevant information to be put on our website.

Tailor-made study visit (3rd day)

Opportunity for participants to visit UAS according to the specific topic of the expert meeting, and visits related to special research subjects/domains (agriculture, health etc.).

Participants are asked to indicate what kind of UAS and partners they are interested in and would like to pay a visit; and which themes and subjects/research domains they prefer.

Based on your preferences, partners will then be linked to an Irish expert/colleague (face to face matchmaking) .