

Table of Contents

General Introduction	2
About VLUHR QA	2
Review Principles	3
Chapter 1. Preparatory Phase	4
Chapter 2. Self-evaluation.....	5
2.1. Aims and objectives.....	5
2.2. General structure	5
2.3. Content	6
Chapter 3. Review panel.....	7
3.1. Mission of the review panel.....	7
3.2. Criteria for the selection of the panel	7
3.3. Selection procedure	8
3.3.1. Selection via VLUHR QA.....	8
3.3.2. Selection via the programme	9
3.3.3. Selection of the student	10
3.4. Panel members' roles and responsibilities.....	10
Chapter 4. Review process	12
4.1. Training for panel members	12
4.2. Preparatory meeting with the programme	12
4.3. Site visit	12
4.4. Reporting	13
4.5. Follow-up.....	15
4.6. Withdrawal	16
4.7. Complaints	16
Chapter 5. Annexes.....	17

General Introduction

This manual describes the methods and practices used by VLUHR QA to carry out programme reviews. This manual is intended for the programmes and institutions involved, as well as the members of the panels.

The manual applies to registered institutions, public institutions for post-initial education, scientific research and scientific education, and the recognised faculties of Protestant theology, regarding the accreditation by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) in Flemish higher education.¹ Because the manual focuses on both review and improvement, it can also be used by institutions that wish to validate the quality of their programmes from an external perspective without accreditation.

The alignment of the framework with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG, 2015) and the application of internationally recognised methods and practices make it possible to use this manual for the review of foreign programmes, whether or not the purpose is accreditation.

The outline structure of this manual follows the main phases of the review process: the preparatory phase (chapter 1), writing the self-evaluation report (chapter 2), selecting the review panel (chapter 3), followed by the review by the panel, their reporting and the publication of the report (chapter 4).

About VLUHR QA

VLUHR QA is an autonomous quality assurance agency that operates an evaluation body as well as a centre of expertise in the development of quality culture in higher education. Its membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and its registration in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)² guarantee that the methods and processes used by VLUHR QA are in compliance with the aforementioned ESG.

As a recognised and respected partner in the coordination of programme reviews, VLUHR QA places a strong emphasis on the robustness of the whole review process. To do so, it provides a manual with a template, a clear procedure for the selection of panel members, standardised training for panel members, a well-established site visit format and clear reports that underpin the findings, judgements and recommendations. VLUHR QA emphasises a tailor made approach, wherein the uniqueness of the programme and the institution takes centre. Its staff members act as both project manager and secretary. As the single point of contact for the programmes and institutions, they safeguard a thorough preparation of the process.

VLUHR QA is managed by its own board. The VLUHR QA Board consists of international quality assurance experts who guarantee the quality of the programme reviews carried out. VLUHR QA is based in the centre of Brussels, in the heart of Europe.

¹ This manual also applies for review of a programme with a limited accreditation. For those kind of reviews, however, separate working methods and practices apply for certain aspects, which are described in Annex 6.

² <https://www.eqar.eu/register/agencies/agency/?id=45>.

Review Principles

The quality of a programme is demonstrated by eight quality features. These features are the characteristics of a high-quality higher education programme and tie in with the ESG.

For each programme whose quality is satisfactory, the presence of the following quality features is guaranteed.

1. The programme's learning outcomes constitute a transparent and programme-specific interpretation of the international requirements regarding level, content, and orientation.
2. The programme's curriculum ties in with the most recent developments in the discipline, takes account of the developments in the professional field, and is relevant to society.
3. The staff allocated to the programme provide the students with optimum opportunities for achieving the learning outcomes.
4. The programme offers the students adequate and easily accessible services, facilities, and counselling.
5. The teaching and learning environment encourages the students to play an active role in the learning process and fosters smooth study progress.
6. The assessment of students reflects the learning process and concretises the intended learning outcomes.
7. The programme provides comprehensive and readable information on all stages of study.
8. Information regarding the quality of the programme is publicly accessible.

In addition, a programme ensures the involvement of internal and external stakeholders on the one hand and external and independent peers and experts on the other hand, in a continuous pursuit of quality development. If applicable, the programme must also comply with relevant regulations with respect to the admission of graduates to corresponding posts or professions.³

³ In the case of accreditation by NVAO, the review principles mentioned above form the basis on which the accreditation is or is not granted.

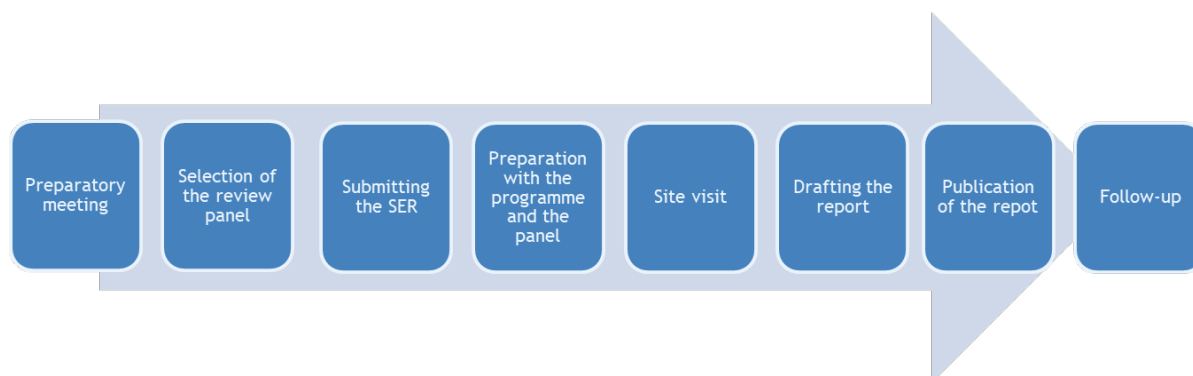
Chapter 1. Preparatory Phase

The preparation of the procedure starts as soon as VLUHR QA receives a written application from the institution requesting a review of their programme. In the case of a review for the purpose of accreditation, the institution preferably submits the application 18 months before the end of the current accreditation.

As soon as the application has been received, VLUHR QA organises an information meeting during which the set-up and the course of the programme review is explained in more detail. During this meeting, there is a detailed discussion on the framework for programme accreditation, the composition of the panel, the self-evaluation to be carried out, and the specific details of the programme. The programme provides the necessary administrative and legal details via the application form (annex 1).

VLUHR QA is committed to a smooth review process first and attaches great importance to the transparent flow of information with all stakeholders. The programme will be assigned one contact person from VLUHR QA, who acts as project manager during the process and who prepares the practical aspects of the review. They provide information about the review procedures to the programme and the panel. The project manager is responsible for ensuring that the manual is followed. They also act as a secretary and are therefore responsible for preparing the site visit and taking minutes during the meetings, as well as for drafting and publishing the programme report. The project manager is not a member of the review panel. The programme is expected to appoint a single contact person, thus ensuring clear communication.

The review procedure takes approximately one year, from the first preparatory meeting until the publication of a public report. Two years after the publication of the report, a follow-up procedure takes place.



Chapter 2. Self-evaluation

2.1. Aims and objectives

In order to enable a thorough review of the programme, the necessary information is collected before the site visit by the panel, in the form of a critical self-evaluation report (SER).

The self-evaluation report has a dual purpose.

1. It serves as a primary information source for the panel in preparing for the site visit, during its interviews with the stakeholders and when reviewing the programme.
2. The process of preparing for and writing the self-evaluation report is also intended to stimulate internal consultation within the programme, thus ensuring its own internal quality assurance.

2.2. General structure

The SER is a document that stands alone and can be read independently. The programme is explicitly encouraged to make use of the space offered and to set its own accents within the boundaries of the review principles, specifically the eight quality features. The focus should be on the essence and the uniqueness of the programme.

The self-evaluation report is the result of a joint and structured consultation and should offer a critical, analytical and future-oriented reflection on the programme as a whole.

Joint and structured

During the review process, the self-evaluation report is considered to be a document that is supported by the entire programme. Therefore, it is important that all stakeholders who play an active role in the programme are involved in drawing up the self-evaluation report. The report is a structured document that is transparent and accessible to an external reader.

Critical, analytical and future-oriented

The self-evaluation report shows how and to what extent the programme meets the review principles. The strong points as well as the points requiring attention are discussed. The discussion should not be limited to an enumeration of facts, but it should contain a clear analysis. It is also expected that the programme explicitly mentions the follow-up of the recommendations of the previous panel.

In addition to a critical review of the past and the present, the report must also give a clear view of the ambitions of the programme, seeing as it is a future-oriented instrument. How does the programme intend to tackle possible hurdles and how does it intend to continue to develop itself in the future?

Programme as a whole

The focus of the self-evaluation report is on the programme as a whole (bachelor/banaba/master/manama). The report also provides sufficient specific information on the different programme locations and/or possible trajectories for working students, full-time/part-time tracks, day/evening education and/or distinct forms of certification.

Other stipulations

Language	The self-evaluation report is drawn up in the official language of the programme. Exceptions to this rule are discussed with VLUHR QA.
Form	One self-evaluation report is drawn up per bachelor's programme and its subsequent master's programme, also when a programme has different programme locations and/or possible trajectories for working students, full-time/part-time tracks, day/evening education and/or

distinct forms of certification. In other cases, a separate self-evaluation report is submitted. In mutual consultation between the programme and VLUHR QA, exceptions can be made.

Scope	<p>A self-evaluation report for one programme is maximum 15,000 words (including the introduction and conclusion, excluding the appendices).</p> <p>The report for a programme with different programme locations and/or possible trajectories for working students, full-time/part-time tracks, day/evening education and/or distinct forms of certification amounts to a maximum of 20,000 words, regardless of the number of different tracks and locations.</p> <p>A self-evaluation report covering a bachelor's programme and its subsequent master's programme is maximum 30,000 words.</p>
Delivery	<p>An editable version of the SER is submitted electronically to VLUHR QA no later than 3 months before the site visit.</p>

A self-evaluation report that does not comply with the stipulations above will be returned to the programme for revision. The revised report must be sent to VLUHR QA within 10 working days.

2.3. Content

In the self-evaluation report, the programme must demonstrate that the quality of its education is guaranteed. The assurance of the quality of the programme is based on the eight aforementioned quality features, which are a translation of the ESG. However, the quality features are not distinct standards that should lead to a separate review and should therefore not be dealt with separately in the self-evaluation report.

The self-evaluation report pays attention to the context in which the programme is organised and to the way in which internal and external stakeholders, peers, and experts are being involved. If applicable, the programme must also comply with relevant regulations with respect to the admission of graduates to corresponding posts or professions.

The above determines the basis and scope for the review. The self-evaluation report enables the panel to carry out an examination of the quality of the programme. The format of the self-evaluation report is not specified, so the programme can decide on this autonomously.

Chapter 3. Review panel

3.1. Mission of the review panel

Based on the self-evaluation report of the programme and through interviews conducted on the spot, the panel is expected to:

- provide a reasoned and substantiated judgement on the quality of the programme as a whole,
- formulate recommendations for quality improvement where possible, and
- inform society about their findings.

Review

The panel examines the quality of the programme. The basic philosophy of the quality assurance system dictates that the review is based on the assumption that the quality of the programme meets the review principle. The contrary must be substantiated in detail by the panel.

This examination results in a holistic and well-founded judgement that is transparent. The judgement is substantiated by the positive and critical elements of the conducted examination and is substantiated by findings and considerations. If possible, the panel also uses appealing and representative examples.

Each panel member first formulates individual findings and considerations. Afterwards, the panel jointly records the motivations and the final verdict. Consensus is sought in this process. The panel concludes whether the programme meets or does not meet the predetermined review principles.

Recommend

In addition to giving an opinion, the panel is expected to make constructive recommendations in order to achieve quality improvement wherever possible. In doing so, the panel should take into account the context of the programme and the feasibility of the recommendations. Recommendations are formulated as concretely as possible and are summarised in a separate list at the end of the report.

Inform

The panel informs the public on its findings by publishing a report on the website of VLUHR QA.

3.2. Criteria for the selection of the panel

The mission of the panel stands or falls by the quality of the panel that will assess the programme(s). It is important that the review panel be established in such a way that a meaningful discussion can result between the panel and the programme. A panel must therefore be authoritative, independent and expert.

Authoritative

To ensure a constructive, substantial discussion between peers and to ensure that the final review is supported by the programme, it is important for the panel to be composed of respected specialist peers who have acquired sufficient authority within the discipline. In order to guarantee this authoritative status, the programme is actively involved in the panel selection process. For the same reason, the presence of international experts is compulsory.

Independent

Since the review process has to be able to take place without influence from any interested party whatsoever, the panel is subject to strict requirements in terms of independence (annex 3). During the selection process, the independence of the individual panel members is explicitly checked. Each panel member signs a declaration of independence before commencing their duties.

Expert

The expertise present on the review panel must encompass the entire subject area covered by the programme, must include insight into national and international developments in the discipline, must pay attention to the educational structure and internal quality assurance system of the programme and must have sufficient insight into the structure of higher education system in the involved countries.

The following criteria therefore apply to the selection of the panel:

- **Subject-specific expertise** is focused on the developments in the discipline. A subject-specific expert teaches or has taught within the same or a similar programme with the same orientation, and contributes to the development of the professional practice, the discipline or the field of study.
- **International expertise** is represented on the panel in order to enable it to verify whether the programme meets common international standards in terms of content, orientation, and level, and insofar as applicable, whether it meets the requirements that the international professional field sets for graduates. International expertise is represented by at least one member of the panel who is active outside of Flanders.
- **The professional field expert** commands a good overview of the requirements that the professional field sets for graduates.
- **Educational expertise** refers to recent experience in teaching or educational development at the relevant programme level and to expertise regarding the education and learning/teaching formats provided by the programme.
- The term **student-related expertise** enables the panel to verify whether the programme is student-centred and safeguards the interests of students in such aspects as the information provision, student facilities, student counselling and guidance, and student participation. Preferably, student experts have experience as a student representative within a programme or institution.
- **Evaluation expertise** enables the panel to assess whether the programme is capable of assuring the quality of education.

A combination of these types of expertise should be represented on the review panel.

The panel members should still be active in their field of expertise when the panel is appointed. The student member must have graduated no longer than one year before the time that the panel is appointed.

Each panel member has an active knowledge of the language in which the procedure will be carried out.

The panel is as balanced as possible to incorporate various perspectives.

3.3. Selection procedure

When a review takes place with the purpose of accreditation, the selection procedure will be coordinated by VLUHR QA. In any other case, the programme has the choice of either shaping the composition of the panel itself or outsource the work to VLUHR QA. In both cases, the QA Board monitors the authority, independence and expertise of the panel.

A panel consists of at least four members, including at least one student.

3.3.1. Selection via VLUHR QA

Proposal of candidates

The programme proposes candidates in accordance with the criteria and stipulations from §3.2. The proposal consists of two lists: a list of possible candidate chairs and a list of possible candidate members. A completed CV-form is supplied for each candidate (annex 2). Candidates for whom no CV-form is submitted are not included in the remainder of the procedure.

VLUHR QA makes a proposal for the selection of the panel by ranking the candidate panel members.

If requested by the programme or if the proposal of the programme does not comply with the criteria, then VLUHR QA can propose candidates. In that case, the programme will be informed.

Approval of the proposal

The proposal of candidates is submitted for approval to the QA Board, which verifies whether the criteria for the selection of the panel were met. If the proposal is not approved by the QA Board, a new proposal must be made by VLUHR QA and the programme.

Arrangements with the panel

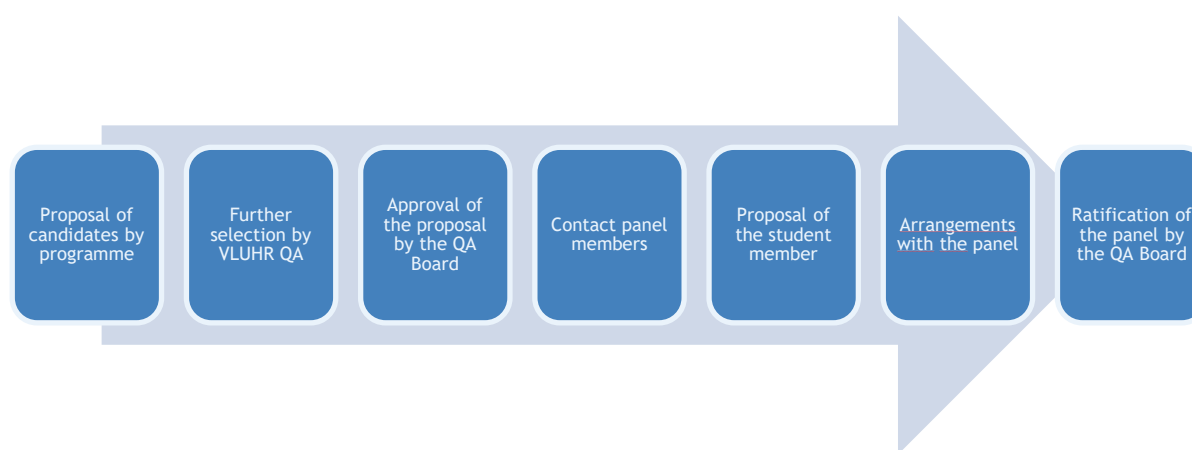
First, VLUHR QA contacts the first ranked chairperson candidate to inquire about their willingness and suitability to participate in the panel as chair. If necessary, VLUHR QA repeats the process outlined above with the candidate chairperson ranked second. In case the list of candidate chairpersons is exhausted, a new proposal for composition has to be drawn up.

VLUHR QA then contacts the proposed candidate panel members, in order of preference, to enquire about their willingness and suitability to participate in the panel. If the first ranked candidate does not accept the position, the next candidate is approached. In the event that the list of candidate members is exhausted, a new proposal of composition must be drawn up.

The participation of panel members is formalised in an agreement with VLUHR QA, which includes a declaration of independence (annex 3).

Ratification of the panel

The QA Board endorses the final composition of the panel. The panel and the programme are informed.



3.3.2. Selection via the programme

Proposal of candidates

The programme proposes candidates in accordance with the criteria and stipulations set out under §3.2. The proposal includes the name of a chair and of two panel members. A completed CV-form is supplied for each candidate (annex 2). Candidates for whom no CV-form is submitted are not included in the remainder of the procedure.

In addition, the programme justifies the way in which the candidate members individually and the panel as a whole meet the above-mentioned criteria.

Approval of the proposal

The proposal is submitted for approval to the QA Board, which verifies whether the criteria for the selection of the panel are met. The QA Board endorses the final composition of the panel, after which the programme and the panel members are informed of this fact.

If the proposal is not approved by the QA Board, the programme receives a motivation letter which stipulates which criteria are not met and why. The programme is then expected to submit a new proposal.

Arrangements with the panel

The programme contacts the chair and members in advance with the request to participate in the panel. The programme also plans a date with the chair and the members for the training and the site visit, in line with the arrangements made with VLUHR QA.

From the moment the proposed panel members are approved by the QA board, VLUHR QA takes over the communication with the panel members. The participation of the panel members is formalised in an agreement with the VLUHR QA, including the declaration of independence (annex 3).

3.3.3. Selection of the student

The candidate student member of the panel is proposed by VLUHR QA, after approval of the programme and possibly on the recommendation of the National Union of Students in Flanders (VVS). The proposal is submitted for approval to the QA Board, which verifies whether the criteria for the selection of the review panel were met.

3.4. Panel members' roles and responsibilities

Each member of the panel is expected to actively contribute to the work of the panel. Nevertheless, all members have their own roles and responsibilities.

Chair and panel members

The chair and the panel members are expected to:

- review the documentation, including the SER and any other information available prior to the site visit;
- indicate if any additional essential documentation should be requested from the programme;
- provide an individual preparation to the project manager;
- respond swiftly to emails from the project manager;
- make appropriate travel arrangements, ensuring that the most economic and sustainable option is used;
- actively participate in all meetings and discussions;
- take occasional notes during the meeting in order to be able to constructively contribute to the panel's decisions;
- contribute to the drafting of the report under the coordination of the project manager;
- carefully read and comment on the initial report and give any comments or amendments before the set deadline;
- contribute to the amendment of the report if requested by the QA board.

More specifically, the chair shall:

- chair the meetings and discussions;
- ensure that all panel members participate in the visit actively and in a balanced way.

Project manager

The QA project manager is not a member of the panel.

The project manager shall:

- discuss the process and its practical arrangements with the programme;
- ensure that the timing of the site visit is feasible;
- select and contact the panel (including the drafting of contracts) following the QA board's consideration and decision on the panel's composition;
- serve as a liaison between the panel and the programme;
- receive the SER and distribute the documentation to the panel members;
- train the panel;
- support the panel in their practical arrangements for hotels and meals;
- take notes during the meetings and during the site visit;
- keep a record of matters that require further clarification and bring these to the attention of the panel;
- support the panel in ensuring that the agreed timetable is respected;
- produce a report based on the documentation provided and the notes taken during the site visit, as well as on the written contribution from the other panel members;
- circulate the report to the panel members for comments, observations, and further contributions. After incorporating any additional suggestions, supply the report to the programme to check its factual accuracy and to comment on the content of the report;
- include the programme's amendments (if any and if accepted by the panel) in the report and produce a final version of the report;
- supply the final report to the QA board and amend the report at the request of the QA board (if necessary) after consultation of the panel;
- prepare publication of the report on the website;
- receive and analyse feedback on the review process.

Chapter 4. Review process

4.1. Training for panel members

Prior to the site visit, the panel members are thoroughly prepared for their tasks. The training serves as a first opportunity for the panel members to get to know each other, to receive further explanations about the review process and to prepare for the activities. Preferably one month before this training, VLUHR QA provides the panel members with the self-evaluation report of the programme.

Informing the panel

During the training, the panel members receive more detailed information on the review and the practical details of how the review process takes place. At the same time, the panel members are instructed on the approach and work methods to be followed. The panel members are also informed about the educational, legal and financial preconditions in which the programme operates.

Preparing the visit

During the training, the visit schedule is discussed and concrete agreements are made about a possible division of tasks within the panel. The panel gets acquainted with the review principle, and is informed to what extent the framework relates to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).

In addition, the panel members join in on a first substantive discussion of the self-evaluation report. The intention is to formulate specific questions and points for attention that must be addressed during the site visit. Finally, the panel members receive a training in communication skills that should allow them to review the programme with an appreciative approach.

4.2. Preparatory meeting with the programme

During a preparatory meeting with the programme, the schedule of the visit is explained and concrete agreements are made regarding the course of the site visit. The schedule for the site visit should preferably be made available to the programme at least one month prior to the visit. The list of interview participants and the practical information are sent to the project manager at least two weeks before the site visit.

4.3. Site visit

Duration and location

The site visit takes one and a half days. A total of two days is allocated for two consecutive programmes (e.g. a bachelor and master programme). If a visit involves more than two programmes, interviews will be clustered in order to make the visit as efficient as possible. The site visit always takes place at the location or campus where the course is offered.

Visit schedule

A visit schedule contains the following items:

- Internal consultation

An internal consultation of the panel takes place at the start of the visit, during which the panel further prepares their visit of the programme. The self-evaluation report and the material made available by the programme are discussed in more detail and the interviews are prepared.

- Interviews

The panel speaks with all stakeholders involved in the programme in order to gain insight into the quality of the programme, namely:

- the programme managers,
- the students,
- the teachers,
- the alumni,
- the professional field, and
- the persons responsible for quality assurance, student guidance, and internationalisation.

Delegations of stakeholders are, in principle, made up of six to ten people. The student delegation is composed by the student representatives of the programme itself, as much as is possible.

- Facilities visit

Part of the site visit is dedicated to review the programme-specific infrastructure, during which it is possible to make time for short presentations of, for example, the programme-specific use of the electronic learning environment or some innovative educational applications.

- Open consultation and additional interviews by invitation of the panel

In order to give students and staff the opportunity to talk to the panel individually or in a group, there is an open consultation. The panel is also free to invite people themselves. The programme is asked to announce the open consultation and ensure that everyone involved with the programme is aware. Registration for this consultation hour will go directly through the project manager during the visit.

- Cocreative interview

The panel discusses the findings with the programme managers at the end of the site visit, where they enter into a constructive dialogue.

- Preparation for the oral report

After the final interview, the panel withdraws to prepare the oral report. The panel makes a final assessment of the programme using the review principles.

- Oral report

The panel's visit ends with an oral report in which it presents its conclusions and recommendations. At least all interviewed partners are invited to the session. As soon as the reporting has ended, it is no longer allowed for the programme to discuss with the panel.

Information stop

Additional information or documents provided to the review panel after the site visit can no longer be taken into account in the review. However, the panel has the option to submit a motivated request for additional information during the visit. The information requested must reach the project manager no more than five working days after the site visit.

4.4. Reporting

Drafting the report

After the site visit, the project manager writes a report based on the self-evaluation as well as the findings and considerations of the panel members, notes of the interviews and internal deliberations, the oral report, and

any additional information requested during the site visit for clarification. The report has a maximum of 20 pages, without the annexes.

The report contains a holistic and reasoned final review of the programme, as well as findings and considerations that support the substantiation of the judgment. It is reproducible and comprehensible, and clearly shows on which elements and considerations the panel has based its verdict. If possible, the panel will use appealing and representative examples for this purpose. Recommendations and good practices are formulated as concretely as possible and are summarised in a separate list at the end of each report.

If there are different programme locations and/or possible trajectories for working students, full-time/part-time tracks, day/evening education and/or distinct forms of certification, the report must show whether each track or location meets the review principles. Subsequent programmes (e.g. bachelor-master) within one institution can be reviewed in a single report.

First round of feedback

The report is presented to the panel members, discussed and confirmed. After approval by the panel, the report is sent under embargo to the programme for feedback. The programme then has the opportunity to comment on the report, to request a correction of factual errors and to comment on the content. The response of the programme is submitted to the review panel no longer than three weeks after reception of the report.

Edit of the programme report

The panel discusses the response from the programme on the report, after which it confirms the report. The panel also drafts a note in which it explains how it addressed the comments made by the programme. The panel is autonomous in its decision on whether to take the comments from the programme into account. Factual mistakes are corrected in all cases.

Second round of feedback

After approval by the panel, the report and the explanatory notes are sent to the programme under embargo.

Appeal

After the second feedback round, the programme may file an appeal against the report in accordance with the 'regulations for the internal review report appeals procedure' (annex 4). If the internal appeals procedure is used, this will be stated in the report.

Publication of the report

The text will be under embargo until the final publication. This does not mean that the programme cannot adapt its policy to reflect any recommendations from the review panel before the process is completed. The programme is requested, however, pending publication, not to cite the report in published documents or to publish parts of it or of the report in its entirety.

As a final step in the process, the report is submitted to the QA Board which checks whether the report is in line with this manual. The QA Board can ask for additional information and clarification. However, the panel remains the owner of the content of the report.

The report is published. It consists of a general part, the report and a number of mandatory annexes.

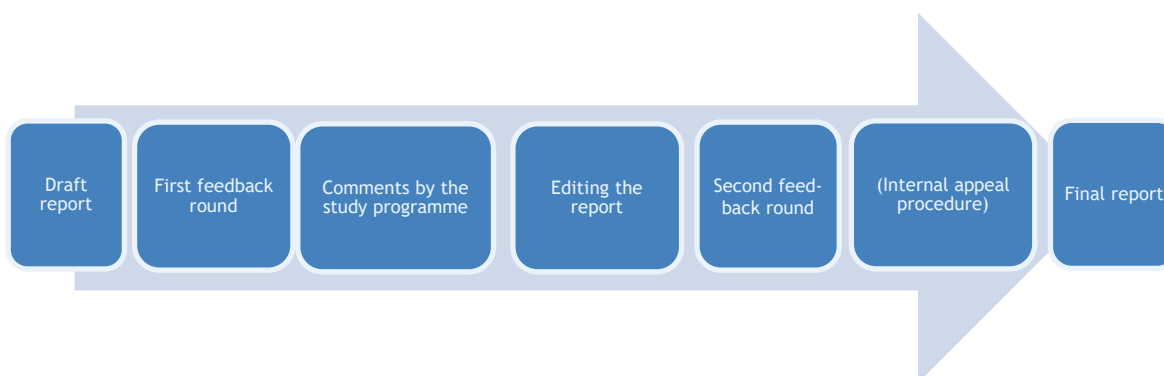
The general part of the report contains an introductory chapter with the panel composition and a brief description of the panel's working methods.

The published report contains an introduction including the composition of the panel and brief description of the review process.

The following annexes are included:

- the CV of the panel members,
- the visit schedule,
- an overview of consulted documents, and
- administrative details of the programme.

The report, which is clearly dated, is placed on the website of VLUHR QA to make it accessible to the public. If applicable, the publication date serves as a reference date for the subsequent accreditation request.



4.5. Follow-up

What is done with the results of the report is a matter for the programme and the institution. It is the responsibility of the programme to take action on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the panel. The initiative for the accreditation application also lies with the programme/institution itself (annex 7).

In the context of the improvement function, quality assurance is a continuous process that does not stop with the publication of the report. The panel's reporting is aimed at promoting the quality assurance process by formulating concrete recommendations regarding the programme. The panel also focuses explicitly on the follow-up of findings and recommendations from a previous review.

VLUHR QA supports the quality culture of a programme by organising a follow-up in which the panel, as a critical friend, discusses the developments since the site visit with the programme.

Objective

The follow-up contributes to the promotion of the quality culture. It stimulates the reflection of the programme on the findings and recommendations of the panel. The procedure is also aimed at the improvement perspective in which the programme and the panel carry out a co-creative dialogue.

Working method

VLUHR QA contacts the programme when the follow-up starts, which is preferably three years after the publication of the review report. The programme provides relevant information as preparation for the interview, during which the programme management further explains which developments the programme has gone through since the visit.

During the follow-up interview, at least one member of the original panel talks to the programme. They are supported in this by the project manager of VLUHR QA. In consultation with VLUHR QA and the programme, the need to possibly add other stakeholders (lecturers, students, etc.) to the discussion or the option of having several separate discussions can be considered. The follow-up interview is designed in a co-creative way.

Reporting

After the follow-up interview, the panel member formulates their findings. Any further recommendations can also be given. The project manager writes minutes on this basis. After approval by the panel member, the minutes are sent to the programme, which can correct factual inaccuracies. After correction, the minutes are sent to the programme and the QA Board. The QA Board can make suggestions and ask for additional information, clarification and explanation.

4.6. Withdrawal

Programmes are given the opportunity to withdraw from the review procedure during the review process, under the following conditions:

- the programme is being discontinued;
- the notice that the programme wishes to withdraw must be given to the QA Board no later than 14 days after the site visit by the review panel;
- the formal decision by the institution, confirming that the programme is being discontinued must be submitted to the QA Board no later than one month after the visit by the review panel;
- the entire cost of the review is borne by the programme.

4.7. Complaints

If a programme is dissatisfied with the review process or with the panel members or project manager involved in the process, they may submit a formal complaint (annex 5).

Chapter 5. Annexes

Annex 1	Review application
Annex 2	CV-form
Annex 3	Code of ethics, rules of conduct and grounds for incompatibility for panel members
Annex 4	Appeals procedure
Annex 5	Complaints procedure
Annex 6	Specificities regarding a review with limited accreditation
Annex 7	Accreditation criteria NVAO