

Subject

Management summary NVAO-NL Internal Quality Assurance 2019-2020

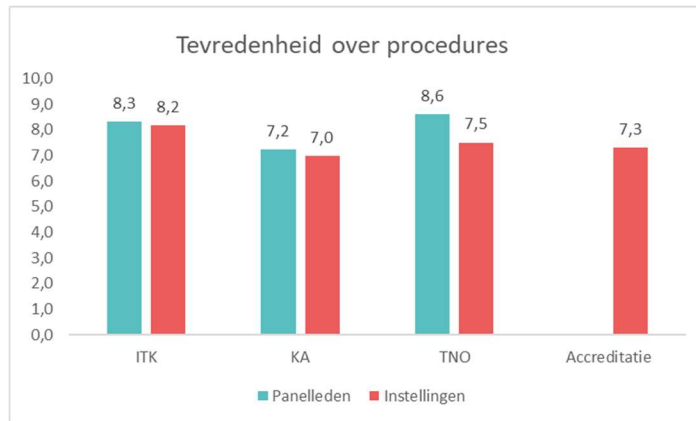
In 2019 and 2020, NVAO introduced several amendments to its internal quality assurance system. The amendments were aimed at gaining a better perspective of the extent to which NVAO is realising its values and strategic goals, in addition to questioning stakeholders regarding their satisfaction with the manner in which NVAO is conducting its procedures. Appropriate online evaluations have been developed in the purview of this new objective, whilst NVAO will expand its dialogues with stakeholders.

2020 saw the introduction of the new instruments to collect feedback on the Institutional Audit, the Quality Agreements, the Initial Accreditation, and the processing of applications for accreditation and related procedures. In addition to online surveys, focus meetings have been conducted with various parties involved. The evaluations have produced a positive response and NVAO is grateful for the cooperation of panel members, secretaries, and contact persons in the institutions. All this has resulted in an initial Institutional Audit Report in accordance with the new set-up. The report reflects the findings per procedure and presents general conclusions and points for improvement.

Outcomes

Across the board, a positive image emerges from the evaluations and focus meetings on procedures involving NVAO panel assessments. Stakeholders have a positive impression of NVAO, although they value NVAO's professionalism and expertise slightly higher than its degree of transparency and openness. In this respect, the scores awarded by panel members are slightly higher than those awarded by institutions. The picture differs slightly from one procedure to the next, but the trend can be observed in all the outcomes. A similar picture emerges with respect to the processing of accreditations by NVAO. Only the institutions have been asked to provide feedback on this process.

The positive picture is confirmed by the scores on strategic themes pursued by NVAO: across the board, the scores are positive, yet confidence, autonomy, and consistency score higher than transparency. The comments to the evaluations reveal that institutions and panel members are satisfied with what NVAO does and appreciate the manner in which NVAO staff perform their duties. Each of the two groups holds its own perspective, which is reflected in the scores. When asked to award a score to the aggregate procedures the stakeholders value NVAO as follows:



Legenda:

Graph title: Satisfaction with procedures

ITK = Institutional audit

KA = Quality agreements

TNO = Initial accreditation

Accreditatie = Accreditation

Panelleden = Panel members

Instellingen = Institutions

Points for improvement

The comments entered in the surveys indicate several points for improvement for NVAO, relating to its communications regarding procedures, the composition of assessment panels, its internal decision-making, or the progress in processing applications. Many respondents mentioned that they have observed differences between process coordinators or those processing applications in terms of working methods. There are no indications that this is resulting in differences in decision-making. Furthermore, with respect to the processing of accreditation applications, several respondents point out that in some cases, errors in documents require rectification.

Conclusions

The first round of institutional audits under the new system warrants the conclusion that NVAO is appreciated in the field, especially when it comes to professionalism and expertise. Most of its strategic values are properly substantiated in actual practice. Points for improvement have also been identified: communication during the procedures is capable of improvement. Calibration and consultation regarding the working methods of process coordinators remain necessary, as does the prevention of errors in documents. NVAO will work on that. In addition, it is essential to preserve the positive appreciation of the stakeholders.

In the year ahead, NVAO will once more conduct surveys regarding its core procedures, such as the processing of accreditations and initial accreditations. It will also collect feedback regarding the online working methods that have been used in recent times. Furthermore, NVAO will evaluate the processing of panel composition approvals and re-open the dialogue with stakeholders to give more depth to the pictures emerging from the evaluations.