

Evaluating activities and projects in internationalisation

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What is evaluation?

- Evaluation is the systematic appraisal of the success and quality of a project or an activity. It is a joint learning process for all those involved;
- Several ways to evaluate projects, projects or activities
 - Formative (throughout the project in order to enhance the quality)
 - Summative evaluation (to assess the outputs and impact)
 - External/ internal evaluation (self-evaluation)
 - Short-term
 - Long term (e.g. what is the impact on the career of the Erasmus students)

Key elements of internal / external evaluation

- PDCA/ Deming cycle
 - Plan: Setting the aims and objectives, performance indicators, resources needed, outputs and impact
 - Do: Implementing the project activities
 - Check: Monitoring and gathering data
 - Act: Adjusting the activities if necessary
- Relevance: are the activities relevant for the project, programme (e.g. Erasmus+), the beneficiaries (e.g. students or lecturers) the partners and stakeholders (e.g. your HEI)?
- Effectiveness: have the objectives of the project and the programme been met?
- Efficiency: What is the relation between time and money invested and the outputs and outcomes (impact) of the project or activities? What is the quality of the management, the partners etc.
- Impact: What is the impact in the short and the long term on the beneficiaries and the stakeholders?
- Sustainability: What will happen after the funding of the project ends? Dissemination, valorisation and exploitation of the outcomes and deliverables.

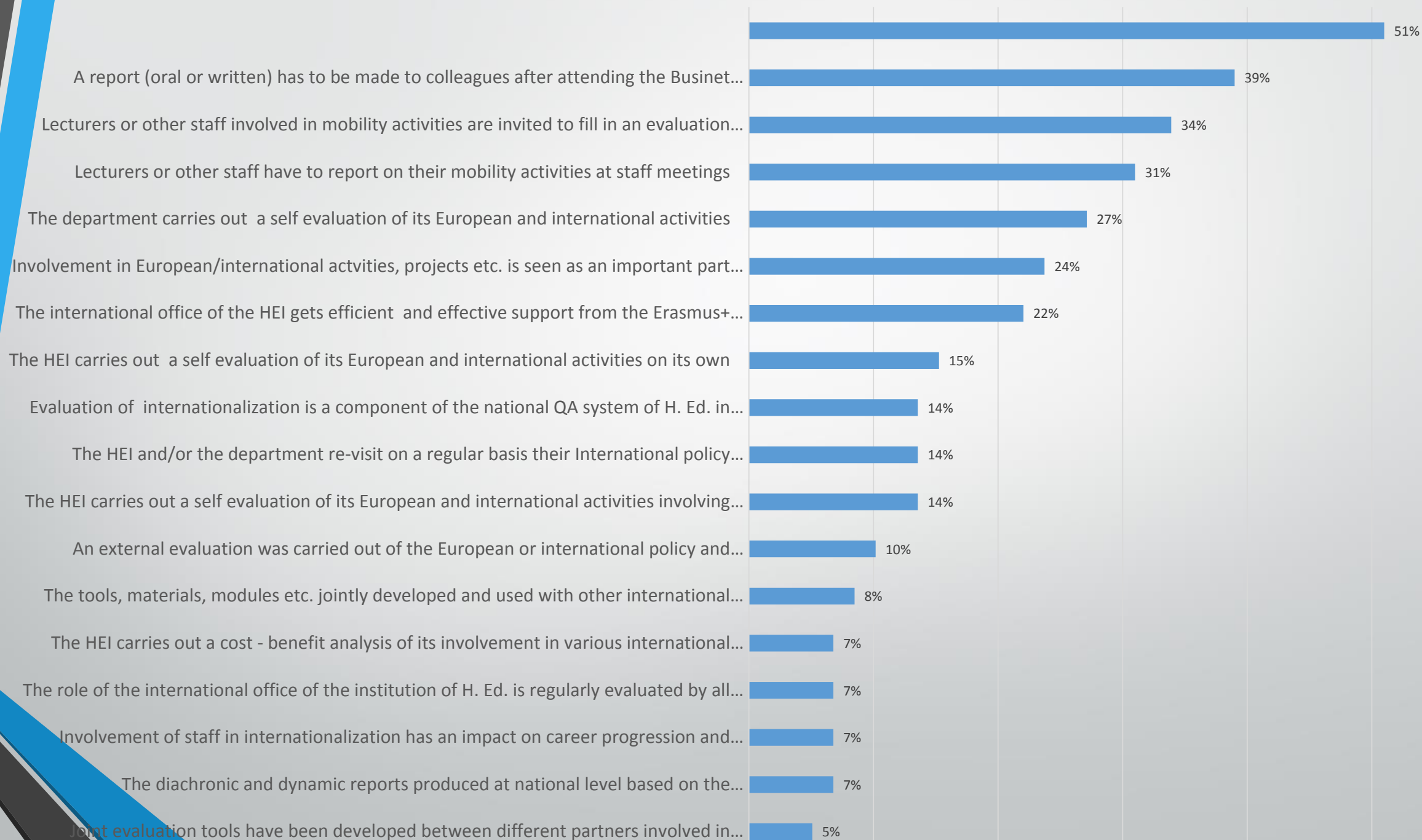
Tools of the evaluation

- Quality plan with clear objectives, resources and performance indicators ;
- Questionnaires to assess the satisfaction of the beneficiaries;
- Interviews (telephone or face-to-face)
- Pre- and post questionnaires to assess the impact e.g. on the competences of the beneficiaries;
- Discussions with focus groups (to interpret the results of the questionnaires);
- Written or oral reports;
- Analysis of questionnaires and reports;
- Analysis of outputs (deliverables) and outcomes (impact);
- Meetings with partners and stakeholders to see whether objectives are being reached and how to adjust the activities if necessary;
- Regular feedback to coordinator, partners and funding organisations.

Benefits of the evaluation

- Helps with planning a programme/project, as it encourages to think about the aims and objectives and how to achieve them, and how to know the objectives have been reached;
- Ongoing feedback helps keep a programme/project on track and can highlight potential difficulties or issues;
- Ongoing feedback allows to identify potential threats or opportunities at an early stage, and provides 'quality assurance';
- Evaluation helps to prove the value of the programme/project to all stakeholders;
- Evaluation can be used for reporting back to funders;
- Evaluation can be used to inform and convince future beneficiaries;
- The evaluation can help with the development of future programmes/projects.

Evaluation tools used by Businet members



Other tools used by Businet members

- Number of partners agreements; Number of staff and students internationalization compared between the different schools of the institution - Better performance, the unit will receive an extra fund.
- blogging, reflection reports
- integrated quality management system
- Evaluation by ministry and national agency (the latter 2x)
- We have made a assessment form in our working group.
- Eu mobility pass
- Statistics tables - annual report for our board (2 x)
- --- It's a pity one can select only one item in the above questionnaires while multiple options are valid/in use
- We discuss and evaluate among international coordinators
- Again, I could only choose one option for question 9, but in fact also all the students have to fill in an evaluation form, as well as teachers have to report at staff meetings etc.
- Language tests before departure and sometimes after students return.
- MINT (Mapping Internationalisation - developed by EP Nuffic, the Netherlands)
- This list exhaustive evaluation methods that we use
- EQuatic as a tool to evaluate international cooperation (the partnerships).
- The role of lecturers in charge of international cooperation is evaluated by the other colleagues involved in internationalization
- Staff meetings

Other tools used by Businet members

- Personnel of other international offices of partner institutions abroad are invited to evaluate the internationalization efforts and activities (2x)
- We developed a benchmarking tool with different criteria for internationalisation for our schools that was never implemented unfortunately
- Internal self-evaluation on an annual basis (setting targets for future activities)
- EduQua and IACBE
- After each international project the participating students are requested to fill out an evaluation form.
- we discuss this in the international office meetings
- NVAO (Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Authority); part of the accreditation system
- In order to maintain Erasmus partnerships coming under review for non reciprocity (sadly the norm in the UK), I decided to put together a chart summarising all international activities our current partners were supporting. This has led to ending partnerships on 'strategic partnerships' grounds, not solely on Erasmus reciprocity. This has also 'saved' some of our long standing Erasmus partnerships - no student reciprocity but regular contributions to departmental/faculty international events, the majority developed thanks to BUSINET networking.
 - This person complains about the fact that loyal and friendly relationships that are built in trust and mutual respect can be ended at management's whim because they no longer 'tick the box', are not lucrative enough, or don't support 'UK league climbing'. He /she would be curious to know whether this is a situation that other UK colleagues (or colleagues in other countries) are currently experiencing too. He/she fully values the benefits of the network at departmental level as it truly enhances the students' learning experience and this is the most important in his/her opinion.

Questions for further discussion with participants to the workshop

- Which evaluation tools do you find most useful?
- When and where do you use them?
- Do you communicate the results of your evaluations to your stakeholders?
- Do you use the results of your evaluation when informing new students, new staff?

Further reading

- Brandenburg, U. et al. (2014). *Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education institutions*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union
- Hughes J, Nieuwenhuis L (Eds) (2005). *A Project Manager's Guide to Evaluation. Evaluate Europe Handbook Series*. Bremen: ITB Institute Technology and Education
- Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
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Thank you for your
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