



EUROPEAN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM



# **EQUIS STANDARDS & CRITERIA**

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## Introduction

The present document sets out the full range of the EQUIS quality standards and the criteria against which achievement of these standards will be measured. The standards and the associated criteria are grouped into ten chapters covering the different areas that will be reviewed. The purpose of this document is twofold: on the one hand, to provide a comprehensive description of the standards and criteria and on the other to give guidance to Schools in preparing their Self-Assessment report.

It is important to bear in mind that EQUIS has been designed as an international accreditation system rather than one rooted in any particular national system. As a consequence, it must take into account the great diversity of national cultures and educational systems around the world. With its base in Europe, EQUIS is confronted with astonishing diversity within its own geographical region. It is, therefore, essential to begin any assessment with an understanding of the particularities of the local context. This does not mean that EQUIS will lower its expectations regarding basic standards because of local constraints, but it does mean that the assessment must accept wide differences in the organisation and delivery of management education

From the outset it must also be remembered that the scope of EQUIS accreditation is institutional, the institution being defined as the organisational unit providing business and management education. This unit may in some cases be a free-standing business school; in others the unit is part of a wider institution, usually a university of which it is a faculty, school or department, depending on the organisation of the parent institution. There are cases where the unit may be part of a specialised engineering school or affiliated to an institution such as a Chamber of Commerce. In all cases, the unit must demonstrate as a requirement for eligibility to enter the EQUIS process that it has reasonable autonomy in setting its strategic agenda and in managing its budget and that it has its own dedicated teaching and administrative staff. It should be noted that this organisational unit, whatever its name and status in its particular context, will be referred to as 'the School' in all EQUIS documents.

In the light of this 'institutional' focus, the first chapter Context and Strategy is of particular significance. It serves to describe the School and its position in the regulatory and competitive environment in which it operates. EQUIS does not prefer one type of institution to another, but it does seek to analyse what works well and what works less well in the School's organisational setup. Over the years, EQUIS has proved to be a very useful tool for helping Schools to address problems in their decision-making structure and processes. This first chapter also assesses the School's overall strategic agenda into which all its programmes and activities are expected to fit with a sufficient degree of coherence.

Five chapters look at the quality of the School's resources and of its operations. These relate to Programmes, Students, Faculty, Research and Physical Resources and may be considered central in defining the academic quality of the School. A major originality of the EQUIS approach is the existence of two chapters dealing specifically with Internationalisation and Corporate Connections, reflecting the importance that EQUIS attaches to these dimensions. Indeed, from the beginning, EQUIS has always differentiated itself as an international accreditation system and has worked hard to promote the internationalisation of the Schools it works with. In the same way, it has constantly striven to defend a vision of management education in which a balance is struck between academic quality and managerial relevance. Each of the other chapters

contain criteria relating to these two dimensions, but the purpose of the two separate chapters is to allow a focussed overview of the School's achievements in these areas and to address the policy issues raised.

Executive Education is also covered in a separate chapter because it is a very specific activity requiring a different administrative organisation, different skills in faculty and staff, and different programme design. The successful integration of executive education – that is, the education of working adults in non-degree programmes – is a difficult task for business schools and university faculties of management. This chapter, which has been drafted with the help of leading European executive education directors, is intended to help Schools meet this challenge.

The chapter on Contribution to the Community gives Schools the opportunity to explain to what extent they are able to operate as 'good citizens' in their environment. It also asks whether the School has taken on board the growing concern for ethical and environmental issues expressed in the corporate responsibility movement.

Each chapter begins with the EQUIS standard or standards relating to the area in question. Thereafter, an Introduction sets out the distinguishing features (or 'philosophy') of the EQUIS approach in order to help Schools to better understand the spirit that underlies the questions that are being put. The following section entitled "The Assessment Criteria" lists the criteria, which have been grouped into a variable number of 'key areas'. Within each key area, the School is invited through the bullet points to describe, explain, summarise, analyse, assess and so on. A series of questions is included to guide the School in the construction of its response.

In order to guide Schools in the preparation of supporting documents and statistics, there is a section indicating the material that should be included in the Self-Assessment report itself and a section indicating the material that can be made available in the base room during the Peer Review visit. In most cases, there is a section entitled "Notes" in which helpful definitions or explanations are provided. In some cases, an additional section entitled Key Indicators has been included as a reminder of the points that are of particular importance in making an assessment regarding a particular criterion. Examples of this would be the number of students participating in exchange programmes in assessing the international exposure of students, the existence of an Advisory Board in assessing external input into the governance system, a process for collecting student feedback in assessing the course monitoring and review system.

In addition, a Student Report is required from students of the EQUIS applicant School on issues of key interest in the EQUIS accreditation process. This Report should accompany the Self-Assessment Report and will be the focus of discussion when meeting those students during the Peer Review Visit. The purpose of this is to enable the peer reviewers to understand better the students' perspectives on the School, since they are key stakeholders. The process for this is outlined in Section 3 of this document and in the EQUIS Process Manual.

# Chapter 1: Context, Governance and Strategy

## The EQUIS Standards

### **Mission:**

*The School should have a clearly articulated mission that is understood and shared throughout the institution*

### **Governance:**

*The School should have an effective and integrated organisation for the management of its activities based on appropriate processes, with a significant degree of control over its own destiny.*

### **Strategy:**

*The School should have a defined, credible and coherent strategy, realistically reflecting its market positioning, resources and constraints.*

## Introduction

The purpose of this first chapter is to situate the School's identity, mission and strategic objectives within the national and international context within which it operates. The chapter is crucial for three reasons: first of all, it should provide the Peer Reviewers, who will not all be familiar with the national environment, with a concise, but comprehensive summary of the School's organisation and positioning in its home country context. Secondly, the School must be able to demonstrate that it has a full awareness of its operating environment and a coherent strategy towards the national and international markets for its programmes and services. Thirdly, the School should be able to demonstrate that it acts as a responsible institution in society and that it is built on principles of effective and responsible governance.

The report should provide a description of the national higher educational system with an explanation of the norms, expectations and constraints under which universities and business schools operate. It should include an analysis of the national market for management education and of the interface with the employment market.

The School should define its identity and legitimacy within the national context as set out above. This will require a brief history of the School from its founding and an explanation of how its current mission has evolved from this historical experience.

Since EQUIS assesses whole Schools and examines all their activities, the effectiveness of the governance and decision-making processes is an issue of paramount importance. Experience has shown again and again that ineffective managerial processes are a major handicap in achieving quality in management education. The School must show that it operates with reasonable decision-making autonomy in setting its own strategy for future development, in establishing its portfolio of programmes, and in the management of its resources. The report should provide a full description of the system of governance, both in terms of external control over the School and in terms of internal management processes.

The School should explain its current strategic positioning as regards resources available, programmes offered, ability to generate intellectual output, target markets and populations, and employment markets served. EQUIS will look for evidence that the School takes explicit account of the international dimension of its activities and of the links with the corporate world.

The School should also describe its strategic vision for future development, with a realistic appraisal of the steps to be taken to achieve its objectives. In this section of the Self-Assessment report, mention should also be made of the sub-strategies that derive from the overall strategy in areas such as teaching and learning, programme development, research, internationalisation, corporate links, and HR processes. This is especially important in those areas where the achievements of the School are still limited.

Of course, it is understood that not everything can be undertaken as part of a pre-defined strategic plan and that Schools will seize opportunities as they arise and then integrate them *a posteriori* into their portfolio of activities.

Finally, the School should explain its policies and processes in the area of quality assurance and performance measurement. It is expected that the School's major stakeholders, and in particular its students, should be involved in these processes.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) Environment
- b) Institutional Status
- c) Governance
- d) Mission, Vision and Values
- e) Strategic Positioning
- f) Strategic Direction and Objectives
- g) Strategic Planning
- h) Quality Assurance
- i) Internationalisation
- j) Corporate Connections

### a) The Environment

- Provide general information on the environment in which the School operates, e.g.
  - ❖ The national educational system(s) within which it operates and grants degrees
  - ❖ Programme features pre-determined by the national system and environment
  - ❖ Student selection requirements within the national system
  - ❖ Regulatory frameworks
  - ❖ Degree certification procedures and the status of the degrees granted by the School within the existing hierarchy of existing national degrees
- Does the School have a keen awareness of the environment in which it operates, including the constraints which the national environment imposes on the School's activities, particularly in terms of:

- the degree of freedom to innovate
  - access to resources and support (funding, faculty)
  - access to students
  - pricing of programmes
  - internationalisation
- Describe briefly the history of the School since its creation. It is often helpful to provide a one-page summary table illustrating the evolution and key events in the development of the School, e.g. main events, creation of programmes, student numbers, teaching staff, support staff, facilities and premises, budgetary details etc.
  - Provide a description of the national market and the nature of competition within the national system to include statements on:
    - ❖ Key stakeholders, funding agencies and competitors
    - ❖ The interface of the School with the job market for which it trains graduates
    - ❖ The prevailing quality norms within the national system
  - Describe the School's international markets and competition
  - Describe the societal environmental of the School, both at large and local

## **b) Institutional Status**

- Provide a clear explanation of the School's legal status and affiliation within its national system to include:
  - ❖ Type of institution (public, private, regulated/non-regulated, profit/not-for-profit, business school within a wider university framework)
  - ❖ Parent organisation (e.g. Chambers of Commerce in the case of French Grandes Ecoles)
  - ❖ Legal status and by-laws
  - ❖ Relation to the national or regional educational and accreditation bodies
  - ❖ Sources of funding which derive from the above
    - Do the legal status and by-laws for the School allow it freedom to pursue its mission without undue interference?
    - What constraints do the legal status and by-laws place on the activities of the School?
- Identify, on the basis of the above information, the key factors which underpin the School's recognition and legitimacy within its own national context.

## **c) Governance**

- Describe the formal mechanisms through which the School is externally governed, either by the governance system of the parent university or by a governing body in the case of a free-standing business school with no university affiliation.
  - ❖ To whom is the Dean or Director of the School accountable?
  - ❖ How is the governance function exercised in terms of financial and strategic surveillance?

- ❖ How is external academic surveillance exercised?
- Identify the School's principal stakeholders and assess their impact on major issues such as strategic planning, autonomy and funding.
  - ❖ To what extent are external stakeholders such as companies, national education authorities and government agencies involved in the governance of the School?
  - ❖ Does the School have an Advisory Body providing input that is external both to the School and the University?
- Describe the mechanisms for ensuring student participation in the School's governance
- Describe the School's internal organisational structures and decision-making processes. Evaluate these in terms of their effectiveness in contributing to the overall strategy.
  - ❖ What steps have been taken to review internal decision-making structures and processes and improve their effectiveness?
  - ❖ How do the current organisational structure and job responsibilities for individuals support the achievement of the School's strategic objectives
  - ❖ How does the School apply to itself the principles of ethically and socially responsible governance?
- Describe the interface between the external governance system and the School's internal management system
  - ❖ How are decisions that require negotiation between the two levels taken?
  - ❖ Is the School able to demonstrate operational autonomy within this context?

#### **d) Mission, Vision and Values**

- Define the School's mission and explain how it relates to its identity as described in the previous section.
  - ❖ Does the School have a clear sense of its own identity and is this expressed in the mission? Does the mission of the School clearly define its role in society, its activities and its markets?
  - ❖ Does the School have a mission statement that is published, periodically reviewed and revised as needed?
  - ❖ Is the mission consistent with the parent organisation's mission and resources?
- Describe the School's vision
  - ❖ Is it clear and widely known what the School aspires to be in the future? How challenging and realistic is this vision?
  - ❖ What evidence is there for progress towards meeting the vision? What steps are taken to acquire key resources required by the vision?

- Describe the School's values

- ❖ Does the School have a clear understanding of its core values?
- ❖ Do the School's core values include an explicit commitment to ethically and socially responsible behaviour in the management profession?
- ❖ Are these values broadly accepted and adhered to across the School?

### e) Current Strategic Positioning

- Provide a clear description of the School's current strategic position in its national and international market, *i.e.*
  - ❖ identify the strategic group to which it belongs and identify key competitors
  - ❖ explain the School's resources available, programmes offered, ability to generate intellectual output, target markets and populations, and employment markets served
  - ❖ describe how its strategic position has changed over the past five years in terms of status and operational effectiveness
  - ❖ explain its main strategic actions over the past five years
    - Is the School able to clearly define the strategic position it occupies and its differentiation from other institutions?
    - Who are the main stakeholders it serves? What is their relative importance and how is this reflected in the development of the strategy and the allocation of resources?
    - Has the School identified an appropriate set of measures to accurately pinpoint its competitive position in the market and its success in achieving the mission?
- Provide a brief analysis of the School's strengths and weaknesses in maintaining this strategic positioning

### f) Strategic Direction and Objectives

- Demonstrate how the mission, vision and values have been translated into strategic direction as shown by the School's long term goals
- Explain how medium term strategic objectives have been developed from the broad long term strategic direction and how their achievement may be assessed.
- Describe the relationship between the School's strategic objectives and the availability of resources. Identify the key constraints which limit future performance and the planned actions to eliminate them, decrease their impact or otherwise deal with them

### g) Strategic Planning

- Describe the internal process by which its mission, vision, values and strategic objectives are converted into strategic and operational plans
  - ❖ How are the plans reviewed and updated and by whom?

- Give a broad description of the strategic plans for the coming years.
  - ❖ Does the overall strategic plan for the School reflect a keen awareness of the strategic context?
  - ❖ Have sub strategies been developed for areas such as:
    - Teaching & Learning
    - Research & Development
    - Human resources
    - Marketing
    - Internationalisation
    - Corporate connections
  - How will the plans for future development change the School's current strategic positioning? Are these plans realistic?
  - What changes will have to occur within the School and within its portfolio of programmes and activities for the strategic objectives to be achieved?
  - Does the School have the financial and teaching resources that will be necessary to achieve the objectives?
  - Are there shorter term operational plans with appropriate metrics to measure progress towards the achievement of the stated objectives?
  - Is the strategic plan clear and communicated effectively to all concerned?
  - How well does the School integrate its strategic planning processes into other improvement activities?
- Explain how the School takes advantage of opportunities as they arise and how or whether the activities that are then developed are eventually incorporated into the strategy.
- Describe the principal strategic risks that the School faces or may face in the future
- List any policy and procedure documents that have been developed to support the implementation of the strategic plans.

## **h) Quality Assurance**

- Provide a brief description of the formal mechanisms for internal quality assurance.
  - ❖ How do the formal quality systems fit the context in which the School operates?
  - ❖ What policies are there for periodic reviews of academic departments, subject areas, research centres, programmes, etc?
- Explain the processes and indicators used to monitor overall performance.
  - ❖ What methods does the School use for tracking progress and completion of individual objectives?
  - ❖ What are the key performance indicators?
- Describe the ways in which students are involved in quality assurance processes
  - ❖ How are students represented in the School's principal decision-making committees, either as voting or as non-voting members?

- ❖ Do students participate in internal strategic reviews or in the preparation of material for external accreditation?
  - ❖ How has student input contributed to the preparation of this application for EQUIS accreditation
- Describe the ways in which other key external and internal stakeholders are involved in quality assurance processes

### **i) Internationalisation**

- Summarise the evidence that the international dimension is reflected in the School's governance, culture and strategy (See also Chapter 7).
  - ❖ To what extent do the Governing and Advisory Boards have international representation?
  - ❖ Does the School have an explicit policy and strategy for international development?
  - ❖ Are adequate resources allocated in support of this strategy?

### **j) Corporate Connections**

- Summarise the evidence that the corporate dimension is reflected in the School's governance, culture and strategy (See also Chapter 9).
  - ❖ Do business leaders from outside the School participate in its governance structures?
  - ❖ Does the School have an explicit policy and strategy for managing its interface with the corporate world?

## **Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report**

- History of the School (1-page summary table)
- Organisation Chart showing reporting lines
- Chart showing the Committee structure
- List of members in the School's Governing Body and/or Advisory Board (indicating name, position, organisation, nationality, year of appointment)

## **Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review**

Documents describing the School's strategic plans and related policies (if possible in English).

## Notes

### 1. Mission

EQUIS defines 'mission' as the role for which the School was created or is currently mandated to fulfil. It derives, for example, from its status as part of a public university or as a private business school founded to serve a corporate market. The mission answers the questions: 'Why does the School exist? What is it for? What does it do?'

The notion of 'mission' is related, therefore, to the stakeholders to whom the School is accountable and to the markets that it is serving. The mission should reflect its situation at different points in time. However certain elements of the mission are embedded in the founding act that gave birth to the institution, or are rooted in its history and culture. A good mission statement will capture this historical legitimacy and give it resonance in today's circumstances.

### 2. Vision

EQUIS defines the term 'vision' as the way the School would like to position itself in the future. The term encompasses the School's ambition as it projects itself into the future. It is a dynamic concept, expressing a willingness to take up challenges. However, it is not expressed as a detailed set of objectives, but rather as one or two simple, but powerful ideas.

### 3. Strategy

It is the role of the strategy to plan out the route towards realising the vision but within the scope of the mission. EQUIS expects that a School will have developed a formal strategy which will include clear and measurable (medium term) objectives, an action plan for achieving them and an estimate of the resources required (with sources) to implement the plan.

## Chapter 2: Programmes

### The EQUIS Standard

*Programmes should be well designed with clear learning outcomes and an appropriate balance between knowledge acquisition and skills acquisition. Delivery methods should be diverse and reflect up-to-date educational practice. The curriculum should emphasise student learning and allow for practical work. There should be rigorous assessment processes for monitoring the quality of students' work. Programmes should be regularly evaluated through feedback from students and other stakeholders. Programmes should be adequately staffed, managed and administered.*

### Introduction

Given the cultural diversity that exists at an international level, the aim of the EQUIS process is not to establish a common norm for the design, content and delivery of programmes. EQUIS will respect national and local diversity in an international context, leaving responsibility for national issues to the appropriate local associations. Nonetheless, the movement towards increased convergence of national systems and greater compatibility between programmes is gathering speed around the world. For all schools, the international positioning of their programmes has become a much more pressing concern than in the past. In Europe in particular, the Bologna inspired reforms that are being introduced across the entire continent are intended to create a convergent degree structure to facilitate the international “readability” of degrees and the mobility of students across academic borders. As an international accreditation system, EQUIS will seek to understand how schools are adapting their programmes to make them internationally compatible.

In order to help schools make sense of the proliferation of degrees, especially those carrying the Master’s label, EQUAL<sup>1</sup> has drawn up a series of guidelines that should be referred to in preparing the Self-Assessment report (see Guidelines and Position Papers document, sections A to F). In the case of the MBA for example, the guidelines are intended to set certain limits regarding the use of the label, excluding its use for pre-experience degrees. Schools whose programmes do not conform to the EQUAL Guidelines should explain why this is the case.

Schools will also find in the appendices to this document EQUIS policy statements and additional assessment criteria relating to franchised, offshore or multi-campus activities, to distance learning provision and to joint programmes.

In writing the Self-Assessment Report, the School should begin by describing its overall strategy and policies as regards teaching and learning and explain how these guiding principles are reflected in all areas of programme design and delivery. It should then give an overview of its total portfolio of programmes, explaining the different markets that are being targeted and the overall strategic coherence of its offering. A key issue

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<sup>1</sup> EQUAL is the international association of quality assessment and accreditation agencies in the field of European management education as well as national or regional associations of universities, business schools or graduates in Business Administration.

here will be the adequacy of financial and teaching resources to support the portfolio. Common pitfalls in this area are overstretch and unnecessary proliferation of degree programmes.

The report should go on to describe the process chain by which individual programmes are planned, delivered, monitored and reviewed. The design, content and delivery of programmes consist of an integrated set of core processes, each of which plays a part in the total value chain. The concern of EQUIS will, therefore, be to measure how much each core process adds value to the total experience and the extent to which a concern for quality is reflected in all aspects of the design, content and delivery of programmes.

The School should be able to provide evidence of the quality of teaching on its programmes, but also of the quality of processes for the management of these programmes. There should be clearly defined roles relating to academic leadership and administrative responsibility for all its programmes. The process for designing programmes should be rigorous and involve feedback from students and employers. Each programme must have clearly stated aims, objectives and learning outcomes. Students should also be given guidance on the way in which the School recognises, develops and assesses intellectual, analytical, personal, and enterprise qualities as well as the subject specific skills being developed on the programme.

The design and content of programmes should embrace a comprehensive range of theory, firmly linked to the practical world of business and management in a local and international context. The School should employ a range of teaching and learning methods to maximise learning and the practical application of learning outcomes.

The assessment regime for grading students' work should support the course design in terms of its objectives and general philosophy, but should also be proven to be rigorous, valid and reliable. The relative weighting in the assessment of coursework should provide a good balance between intellectual development and the development of managerial competence.

The School should have processes in place to ensure the quality of its programmes, encompassing the relevance of course content, the quality of teaching, and the effectiveness of learning.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme design, delivery and assessment processes, the EQUIS process not only takes an overview of the programme portfolio and the management thereof but it also reviews one sample programme in depth as a check on the effectiveness of the overall programme portfolio management. The School should name three of its major programmes from its programme portfolio such that there is a variety of programme types, eg an undergraduate (Bachelor), a pre-experience postgraduate (specialist Master) and a post-experience postgraduate (MBA) programme. One of these will be selected as the sample or selected programme by the EQUIS Committee on the advice of the EQUIS Office. The overall portfolio and the 'selected programme' should therefore be described in the Self Assessment Report and they will then be assessed during the Peer Review Visit.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) The Programme portfolio
- b) Programme design
- c) Programme content
- d) Skills acquisition
- e) Programme delivery
- f) Student assessment
- g) Programme evaluation
- h) Internationalisation
- i) Corporate relevance
- j) Societal relevance

### a) The Programme portfolio

- Describe the School's strategy and policy as regards teaching and learning
- Describe the policies and processes used to develop the portfolio in line with the School's strategic objectives.
- Describe the overall portfolio of programmes that the School currently offers. Explain the School's policy as regards the balance between programme offerings at different levels (undergraduate, Master's, MBA, doctoral, executive education).
  - ❖ What are the strengths and weaknesses of the present portfolio and how are these assessed?
  - ❖ What are the criteria for assessing the overall coherence of the portfolio?
  - ❖ How are decisions regarding the positioning of programmes made?
  - ❖ What constituencies and markets is the School serving?
- Explain how the programme portfolio has changed over the past five years
- Summarise plans for future programme creation, repositioning or development
- Describe the School's system for managing its programmes

### b) Programme design

- Describe the process for designing programmes. Explain how the School ensures that programmes meet the needs of the market and of participants.
  - ❖ How does the development and review cycle ensure that the design, content, delivery methods and materials for programmes are relevant, up-to-date and of high quality?
  - ❖ In what ways are programmes and student profiles differentiated with respect to similar programmes at other schools?
  - ❖ How does the School encourage innovation and creativity in programme design?
  - ❖ Does the School have well-thought out descriptions of the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviours it is seeking to instil in its students for all programmes?
  - ❖ Where the design of programmes is strongly modular, are participants provided clear guidance as to the means by which the integration of individual subjects is achieved?

- ❖ How do programmes provide for interdisciplinary integration?
- Identify the key changes in programme design that have occurred in the last 5 years, together with an identification of key problems in the resourcing or design of current programmes.
  - ❖ What steps does the School take to keep up to date with best practice, major trends and significant innovation in similar programmes around the world?

### c) Programme content

- For each programme:
  - ❖ Describe the nature of the degree or qualification, its level of recognition in the national and international context, together with details of equivalencies as compared to other qualifications.
  - ❖ Provide a summary of the course philosophy, key programme objectives and intended learning outcomes (ILOs)<sup>2</sup>.
  - ❖ Define the core content, options offered and the pedagogy adopted
  - ❖ Describe the course work involved and details of extracurricular or special activities involved in the programme
    - Does each programme have clearly stated objectives and learning outcomes? Are staff and participants fully aware of these and do they explicitly explain to participants what they are expected to know and be able to do at the end of the programme?
    - How are the programme objectives and intended learning outcomes translated into the practical aspects of programme content?
    - Are any programme requirements set by the nature of the employment market? How are these taken into account?
    - Does the design and content of the programme embrace a comprehensive range of relevant business and management theory, which is firmly linked to the practical world of management?
    - Does the School make clear the way in which the School recognises and assesses personal skills and qualities as well as the subject-specific knowledge and skills being developed by each course?<sup>3</sup>
    - Does the programme design and content explicitly include aspects of social responsibility?
    - Does the School make available to its students full information about the programme, both in document form and on-line?

### d) Skills acquisition

- Describe the means by which transferable intellectual skills appropriate to higher education are integrated into the curricula. Schools should explain how the various learning and development outcomes for students are defined in their different programmes.
  - ❖ Do the programmes have general education aims to develop intellectual skills such as the ability:

<sup>2</sup> For a definition of Programme Objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes : see Notes at the end of this Chapter

<sup>3</sup> For a definition on the difference between Programme and Course and/or module: see Notes at the end of this Chapter

- to analyse, synthesize and critically assess complex material
  - to formulate and defend independent judgments
  - to conceptualise
  - to communicate effectively in writing and orally
  - to demonstrate an awareness of the wider context of the programme of study
  - to apply general concepts to practical situations
  - Does the School facilitate the development of a structured personal culture and a related set of values?
  - How are these skills assessed?
- Summarise the key managerial skills (team work, interpersonal skills, presentation skills, project management, leadership skills, etc) which the School promotes in students and the methods used to achieve them. Discuss the role of practical work, internships and projects in developing these skills.
- ❖ What opportunities are provided in the curriculum for students to apply the targeted managerial skills?
  - ❖ Is there an appropriate balance between intellectual development and the development of managerial skills in the delivery and assessment of coursework?
  - ❖ How are these skills assessed?
  - ❖ Does the programme include sufficient individual project work for the development and assessment of an individual's ability to integrate core subjects and to apply managerial skills?
  - ❖ Are students provided with adequate opportunities to carry out practical project work?
  - ❖ What opportunities are provided to allow students to benefit from group work and practical experience?
  - ❖ Do students receive training in research and consultancy skills?

### **e) Programme delivery**

- Describe the teaching methods currently used in programme delivery (lectures, case studies, business games, group work, project-based learning, tutorials...).
- ❖ Does the School employ a sufficiently diverse range of teaching and learning methods to maximise learning and practical application of learning outcomes? What is the balance between different methods and how does this support programme aims?
  - ❖ How aware is the School of programme delivery practices in other countries?
  - ❖ To what extent is there an emphasis on learning as well as teaching?
- Explain the School's policy as regards pedagogical innovation and the use of new technologies in the educational process
- ❖ Does the School promote innovation in teaching methods and in the learning process?
  - ❖ To what extent have the information and communication technologies been integrated into the programme delivery systems?
- Identify the main constraints which limit the range or scope of teaching methods and materials employed in the School's programmes.
- Describe processes for the allocation of staff to programmes

- Describe the mechanisms for maintaining quality control on an on-going basis. Explain how the criteria and processes used to monitor programme quality relate to the programme objectives.

## **f) Student assessment**

- Describe the assessment system for monitoring and grading students' work and progression through the programme.
  - ❖ How does the School ensure that participants meet the agreed objectives and learning outcomes for individual awards?
  - ❖ Does the assessment regime support the programme design in terms of its ILOs, objectives and general philosophy?
  - ❖ Does the assessment regime explicitly identify the criteria for assessment and the range and relative weighting of the various assessment methodologies employed?
  - ❖ To what extent does the assessment system distinguish between the attribution of a grade and marking designed to help students to understand their shortcomings and to improve?
  - ❖ What provision is made for re-sitting assessments or examinations? Is this appropriate and does it support the programme's aims and objectives?
  - ❖ How does the School ensure that the assessment regime is applied with sufficient rigour?
  - ❖ How is the degree-awarding function handled by the School? What mechanisms are used to protect the integrity and validity of the process from abuse by individuals? What steps are taken to ensure objectivity in terms of the standards being applied?
  - ❖ Can the School provide evidence that the assessment regime itself is evaluated rigorously, particularly when new or innovative approaches are being applied?
  - ❖ How does the School deal with cases of cheating and plagiarism?
- Demonstrate that the quality of the students' work is appropriate to the level of the programmes.

## **g) Programme evaluation**

- Describe the processes for the evaluation of programmes. Explain how the School ensures that programmes meet the needs of the market and of participants and includes key stakeholder groups in the process.
  - ❖ How does the School evaluate the quality of the teaching input, in addition to evaluation by students?
- Summarise the evidence for satisfaction on the part of key stakeholder groups with regard to programme design, content and delivery.
- Describe the process for the review and revision of programmes.
  - ❖ What mechanisms exist for assuring consistency with programme standards required by external bodies? What have been the most recent actions in this area?
  - ❖ What adjustments to the programme design have been made in the light of feedback from programme teams and key stakeholders?

## **h) Internationalisation**

- Explain how the School's programmes are positioned internationally.
  - ❖ Which programmes are targeted at international students?
  - ❖ How attractive are the School's programmes to international students?
  - ❖ How many courses are delivered in a foreign language?
- Provide a set of statistics indicating international student enrolment in the School's various programmes over the past three years (if appropriate, cross-reference to Chapter 3 "Students")
- In the case of European schools, describe how the programmes are compatible with the Bologna-inspired reforms that are being introduced in most countries
  - ❖ Are the School's programmes for younger students organised into the two-tier Bologna Bachelor and Master levels
  - ❖ Does the School use the ECTS?
  - ❖ What arrangements exist for credit transfer arrangements with other schools?
  - ❖ Does the School issue the Diploma Supplement?
- Describe the international content of the School's programmes
- Describe the current arrangements with other business schools and academic networks for joint delivery of programmes
- Describe the opportunities for student exchange provided within the School's programmes and provide a table with appropriate statistics for the past three years (If appropriate, cross-reference to Chapter 3 "Students").
- Explain how the School ensures the same quality for its off-shore and franchised operations (see EQUIS Process Manual Annex 11: "Policy on Accreditation of Collaborative or Off-campus provision")
  - ❖ What are the quality assurance mechanisms in this area?

## **i) Corporate Relevance**

- Describe how the corporate perspective is built into the definition of learning objectives and into curriculum design
  - ❖ Does the School have formal processes for involving corporate stakeholders in programme design and monitoring?
  - ❖ To what extent is the management community satisfied with the School's programmes and graduates?
- Summarise the extent of corporate practitioner input into the delivery of the School's programmes

## **j) Societal Relevance**

- Summarise the extent to which programmes integrate the main challenges in business and society such as Global Responsibility and Sustainable Development

## Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report

- A list of international academic partners with an indication of the type of cooperation (joint degree, student exchange, research collaboration, faculty exchange)
- A table indicating international student enrolment in the School's various programmes over the past three years (if appropriate, cross-reference to Chapter 3 "Students")
- A table indicating student exchange flows in the School's various programmes (if appropriate, cross-reference to Chapter 3 "Students")

## Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review

### General Programme Portfolio

- Teaching and Learning strategy (Provide any formal documents that may exist)
- Brochures and other general descriptions for each degree programme
- Course catalogue or list of courses in each programme, including brief descriptions of the aims & objectives
- Documents describing the overall assessment regime and grading system
- Evaluation questionnaires
- Code of Ethical Conduct or similar document

### Selected Programme

The term 'Selected programme' refers to the programme chosen for more intensive assessment during the Peer Review (see above – final paragraph of the introduction).

For this programme, the documents listed below should be made available in the Base Room, either in hard copy or electronically. Highlights indicate that the materials should preferably be in English.

- Documents setting out the rationale and structure of the programme including overall objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes
- Details of each course in the programme including Intended Learning Outcomes and syllabi
- Descriptions of the assessment regime and grading system
- Access to online material regarding course organization and delivery.

- Teaching evaluations (summary) by students for each course, such that the highest (H), middle (M) and lowest (L) rated courses can be identified in each programme year and can be also split between core (mandatory) and elective courses.
- Teaching materials and student work: Courses should be selected for sampling based on teaching evaluations according to the table below. Where possible, **at least half the courses should be in English.**

3- or 4-year Undergraduate Programmes	1- or 2-year Graduate Programmes
1 <sup>st</sup> year: 3 core courses with H, M, L teaching evaluations	3 core courses with H, M and L teaching evaluations
2 <sup>nd</sup> year: 2 core courses with H and L and 1 elective course with L teaching evaluations	3 electives with H, M and L teaching evaluations.
Final year: 1 core course with L and 2 electives with H and L teaching evaluations	

For programmes or years without electives, electives should be replaced by more core courses at equivalent H, M & L levels.

Teaching materials should be provided for each of the selected courses to include the course notes, slides or handouts, case studies, text books, journal readings.

Student work should be sampled based on mark or grade schedules or distributions (list of student names with marks or grades) within the selected courses. Note that mark schedules must be provided for each of the selected courses. For each of the same 9 UG or 6 PG courses selected above, the following student work should be provided:

- the assignments/exams set
- a sample of 6 graded/marked student scripts matching those assignments/exams. These 6 scripts should include the highest mark, the lowest mark and 4 from close to the pass mark for the course (ie marginal scripts). If there are no failed papers, the sample should consist of the 2 highest and the 4 lowest marks or grades.

A sample of 12 graded final dissertations or internship reports (as appropriate, eg Masters theses or first degree “stage” reports) should also be provided, with 3 each at H and at L level and 6 at M level.

## Notes

- All degree programmes should be included for assessment in this chapter, including those offered to corporate markets such as the EMBA or in-company MBAs.
- “Certification” programmes, i.e. programmes offered on the continuing education and corporate markets, should not be included since these awards are not recognised university-level degrees and have no official recognition outside the

School itself. These programmes should be described in Chapter 8 on Executive Education.

- Schools are invited to refer to the EPAS programme accreditation criteria, which may be of help in preparing this chapter (available from the EFMD website or from the EQUIS Office).
- Please refer to the document “EQUAL Guidelines on Collaborative Provision” in cases where the School offers its programmes in other locations outside its main campus in collaboration with other schools (see Guidelines & Position Papers, section F).
- In all EQUIS documents, ‘programme’ refers to a structured period of study, usually for a duration of one or more years, leading to a degree qualification as in ‘MBA programme’, ‘undergraduate programme’, Masters programme, etc.
- The term ‘course’ refers to a single unit of study in a particular subject within the programme as in ‘Marketing course’ or Finance course. Each course is usually assessed separately and leads to a grade and a pre-established number of credits.
- The term ‘module’ is sometimes synonymous with ‘course’ and sometimes used to refer to an organised sequence within a course. In this sense, a course may be structured as a series of modules.
- In the case of more loosely organised programmes that may not have a strict course structure, the term ‘module’ may refer to short sequences focusing on a particular topic. For example, an Executive MBA programme may be organised into a series of one to three week modules over a period of two years.
- It is useful to distinguish ‘programme objectives’ and ‘intended learning outcomes’. The programme objectives are general in nature, covering, for example the target market, the profile of students to be recruited, the jobs for which students are to be prepared. The intended learning outcomes or ILOs are more specific and relate to what students are expected to know, what they are expected to be able to do, and how they are expected to behave.

## Chapter 3: Students

### The EQUIS Standards

#### **Student Quality:**

*The School should ensure the quality of its students through appropriate selection processes, through the management of student progression in its programmes, and through the provision of appropriate student services. In particular, it should ensure the quality of the placement of its graduates through a well-resourced career service. It should strive to bring together in its programmes a well-balanced student body representing a diversity of backgrounds and nationalities.*

#### **Personal Development of Students:**

*The School should explicitly and effectively support the personal and professional development of its students beyond the acquisition of knowledge in such areas as managerial skills, values, ethics, leadership, etc. It should actively help students to define their future professional orientation.*

### Introduction

In this chapter, the assessment will address a range of issues regarding the School's management of its student population. Where appropriate, it will also include the management of the participants in its degree programmes for executives, such as the EMBA. The chapter covers the target markets, the School's selection processes, the quality of the students enrolled, the monitoring of students' progression during their studies, the support services for students in need of guidance, the career placement services, and the alumni association.

Where possible, the School should explain how the criteria for student selection, particularly to its programmes at the Master's or postgraduate level, relate to its target market for these programmes.

EQUIS recognises that selection upon admission is not always possible, for example in many public universities in Europe. In these cases, the onus will be upon the School to demonstrate that high standards for progression through the programmes and for graduation at their end will compensate for the absence of selectivity upon entry. The notion of quality in looking at the student body also encompasses students' motivation, commitment and seriousness of purpose as regards their programme of studies.

The School should demonstrate that it is successfully preparing students for potential careers in international management. The extent to which the School is able to attract students from other countries, both as regular students enrolled in its degree programmes and as exchange students, is a major indicator in assessing the degree of internationalisation. It is also expected that home country students should be open to international experience and have exposure to an international learning environment, including opportunities for study abroad.

An important indicator of student quality is their employability upon graduation, as evidenced by time to employment, level of employment, and salary. The School should

show it has the professionally qualified resources to help students in their search for a job, through career counselling and placement services. It should proactively manage the interface with companies in order to bring students and employers together. It should further demonstrate that it maintains a statistical record of employment results for each graduating class.

This chapter will also look at the way in which the School maintains contact with and supports its students after graduation and mobilises alumni in the pursuit of its strategic objectives.

An essential function of all institutions of higher education is to facilitate the intellectual, social and personal development of students in preparation for their future lives as responsible and creative citizens. In addition, management education institutions have the particular responsibility of preparing students to assume managerial roles in which very specific behavioural skills are needed. Furthermore, younger students will require support in defining their career paths. Older students enter postgraduate programmes in order to prepare themselves for an acceleration or a redirection of their careers. Particularly in MBA programmes, objectives relating to personal and professional development will occupy a significant part of the educational experience. The expected outcomes relate as much to behavioural factors as to the acquisition of new knowledge. In the area of executive education, the emphasis is increasingly on management and leadership development in which behavioural objectives are paramount.

EQUIS expects that the development of skills relevant to international management will feature among the explicit objectives of an institution's programmes. Language skills, intercultural sensitivity, the ability to function in a multicultural environment, experience outside the home country are important attributes that the School should promote.

A further expectation is that the School will educate its students to act ethically in their professional lives. Values such as integrity, respect for others, socially responsible action, service to society should be an integral part of the personal development agenda.

In sum, business and management education institutions play a key role in developing personal awareness and the appropriate attitudes, values, skills and behaviours to equip students in their professional lives as managers. Schools should be able to demonstrate a concern for the type of managers they are trying to educate, backed by suitable processes for helping students to manage meaningful change, direct their energies and personal skills, and define their own future.

As a consequence, the educational experience organised by the School should go much beyond classroom instruction and provide students with structured and monitored opportunities to develop the personal and professional qualities that have been defined as learning outcomes.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) Target profiles and criteria for selection
- b) Course preparation and progression
- c) Support and Counselling Services
- d) Personal and Professional Development
- e) Ethics and Values
- f) Career placement and support
- g) Alumni Relations
- h) Internationalisation
- i) Corporate links

### a) Target profiles and criteria for selection

- Describe the target markets and profiles for incoming students in the School's various programmes.
- Describe the target profile for graduating students in terms of knowledge, values, managerial skills, professional competences, and entry level into corporate employment.
- Provide a description of the selection processes and show how these relate to the objectives set for the School's different programmes.
  - ❖ What steps does the School take to ensure that individuals are selected on the basis of their expected contribution to programmes and of their capacity for personal development?
  - ❖ Can the School produce evidence that the procedures and standards applied for admission for each programme are rigorous, fair and appropriate?
  - ❖ What standardised tools does the School use in evaluating the readiness of candidates to successfully complete the programme of study for which they are applying (e.g. aptitude tests, language tests, etc.)? How do these contribute to the quality of the student selection process?
  - ❖ How do intake profiles relate to the target profile in the School's different programmes?
- Describe the results of the selection for the different programmes, including the number of applications, the number of students to whom a place was offered, and the number of students effectively enrolled for each of the past three to five years.
  - ❖ How selective is the admission process for the School's different programmes?
  - ❖ Is there an adequate pool of candidates to ensure sufficient numbers of students of the right quality? Do the selection and enrolment ratios support this conclusion?
  - ❖ How does the School evaluate the effectiveness of its selection criteria and processes? Is information for all programmes analysed in sufficient detail to improve the targeting and effectiveness of programmes?
- In cases where selection upon entry is not possible, explain how the School ensures the quality of its graduating students.
- Describe the current student population in terms of origin, previous study, age, and gender. For post-experience programmes such as the MBA, indicate the number of

years of professional experience before admission. This information should be presented in a table with statistics for the past three to five years.

- ❖ What trends emerge from the above statistics?
- ❖ What future changes would the School like to see in the student mix?
- ❖ What actions are planned to address issues in recruitment?
- Describe the mechanisms in place to ensure that socially disadvantaged students have access to the School's programmes.
  - ❖ Are scholarships available to help needy students?

## **b) Course preparation and progression**

- Describe the processes used to prepare students in advance of their entry into their course of study.
  - ❖ How does the School ensure that all students are adequately prepared and informed about course requirements before enrolment?
  - ❖ What steps are taken to identify barriers to learning or progression as early as possible?
  - ❖ To what extent is assistance provided to students who experience difficulties or problems? How is the effectiveness of this support evaluated?
  - ❖ What actions are carried out by the School before the formal start of programmes to convey their sense of mission and core values to students?
- Describe the School's policy on credit transfer and exemptions.
  - ❖ Are the processes used to manage credits or exemptions explicit, valid and reliable?
- Provide a summary for each of the main programmes of progression, completion, failure and drop-out rates. This should be accompanied by an explanation of these trends and the action taken to respond to them.
  - ❖ How is student progression through their course of study monitored?
  - ❖ Are drop-out and success rates acceptable? Are there any fluctuations or trends in time and across programmes?
  - ❖ How does the School evaluate the match between its selection processes and the subsequent progression/performance of individuals? Is information for all programmes analysed in sufficient detail to improve the targeting and effectiveness of programmes?

## **c) Support and counselling services**

- Describe the processes used to provide learning support for students throughout their courses.
  - ❖ Does the School provide adequate support to develop learning skills in course participants who have been absent from formal education for an extended period of time?
  - ❖ How is student counselling organised? Does it work well? What evidence is there that problems are diagnosed at an early stage and remedied where possible?
  - ❖ Is special tutoring available to support disadvantaged students?

#### **d) Personal and professional development**

- Identify the processes by which the School helps students to develop both personally and professionally
  - ❖ What are the key personal skills that the School aims to develop in individuals?
  - ❖ Does the School encourage students to define their own personal and professional plans as they proceed through their course of study?
- Explain the role of any special techniques and tools in diagnosing the personal qualities of individual students.
  - ❖ Does the School have faculty members who are specialised in personal development?

#### **e) Ethics and values**

- Describe the means by which issues relating to business ethics and corporate social responsibility are integrated into personal development processes.

#### **f) Career placement and support**

- Provide clear statistics on the employment of graduates, such as
  - ❖ distribution of employment by market sector and function
  - ❖ distribution of salaries offered to graduates
  - ❖ geographical distribution
  - ❖ percentage of employment on graduation and 6 months after graduation
  - ❖ list of major employers over the past 5 years
  - ❖ How do these employment trends meet the stated programme objectives?
- Describe the arrangements for career development support on campus and for the alumni.
  - ❖ What services are provided to help students identify job opportunities and prepare themselves for interviews?
  - ❖ Can students obtain counselling in defining their career objectives?

#### **g) Alumni Relations**

- Describe the way in which the School maintains and utilises contacts with its former students.
  - ❖ Is there an Alumni association?
  - ❖ How is it used to support the School's strategy, programmes and students in their career development? How effective is it?
  - ❖ How does the School support the Alumni?
  - ❖ To what extent do the Alumni contribute to the funding of the School?

#### **h) Internationalisation**

- Provide evidence for the international nature of the student body, e.g
  - ❖ International marketing of the programmes
  - ❖ Admissions procedures

- ❖ International mix in programmes
- ❖ International placements
- Describe the School's policy as regards language and intercultural skills
  - ❖ Do language skills and international experience figure among the admissions criteria?
  - ❖ How does the School define the extent of language skills it considers should form an integral part of its programmes? What support is provided to achieve the agreed standards in language fluency? How successful are these?
  - ❖ How does the School help its students to acquire intercultural skills?
- Assess the readiness of the School's graduates to manage in an international context, supported by the evidence gained from the student body and from employment destinations.
- Describe the School's policy regarding international student exchange. Provide a table with information about outward and inward flows of exchange students.
  - ❖ Are there opportunities for internships abroad?
- Describe the service provided to incoming international students.
  - ❖ Does the School have an International Student Affairs office?

### **i) Corporate links**

- Describe the interface between the School and corporate world for employment and career support, e.g. corporate representation and support on campus, career days, forums, links to international companies.
- Describe corporate involvement in the admissions process and evaluate its contribution to programme success.

## **Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report**

- A Table providing for each programme the statistical information about the selection and admissions process (applications, offers, acceptances, enrolment, full-time equivalent in the case of part-time students).
- A list of major employers over the past 5 years
- A Table describing the outward and inward flows of international exchange students, with a breakdown by programme, by country of destination or by country of origin, by partner School, by length of stay.
- A Student Report is required from students of the EQUIS applicant School on issues of key interest in the EQUIS accreditation process. A sufficiently large and representative group of students (rather than a group of student representatives) ideally coming from a selection of the School's main programmes, and if possible, including some exchange students, should focus on the questions provided in the EQUIS template (see Annex 6 of the EQUIS Process Manual Annexes). This Report should accompany the Self-Assessment Report and will be the focus of discussion when meeting those students during the Peer Review Visit.

## **Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review**

- Documents relating to the selection process: information packs, application forms, interview reports, test material, process documents, etc.
- Documents for incoming international students
- Alumni Directory
- A Table showing the profile of each student cohort within the School's degree programmes (previous study, age, gender, percentage of international students, etc.). Indicate also the average number of years of professional experience for MBAs.
- A Table for each programme detailing the job placement record of students graduating in the previous academic year

## Chapter 4: Faculty

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School should recruit, develop and manage its faculty in accordance with its strategic objectives and have sufficient core faculty to cover the major disciplines and constitute a viable body of distinctive expertise (i.e. a minimum of 25).*

### Introduction

A key requirement for EQUIS accreditation is the existence of a permanent core faculty, defined as academic staff for whom the School is the principal employer and whose main allegiance is to the School. This definition excludes members of other schools employed on a part-time basis. EQUIS has set the minimum size of the core faculty at 25 members, because it is unlikely that all the multiple disciplines within the realm of business and management education can be covered adequately with less. These faculty members are the core group that ensures the continuity of the School, embodies its tradition and values, and builds up its distinctive expertise through research and programme innovation.

However, EQUIS recognises that most schools will deploy a second circle of teaching resources, beyond this essential core faculty. This group is comprised of contributors from other educational institutions and of practitioners from the professions or from business. The existence of a carefully selected and well-managed pool of external resources is a valuable asset in providing essential back-up to the core faculty and in enhancing the professional relevance of the courses offered.

The size, qualification, and composition of the faculty are expected to be sufficient to allow adequate servicing of the School's programmes and to be in accordance with the current position of the School. The appropriate size of the faculty in any given School will depend on the range of programmes offered and the number of students and participants enrolled. A small focused business school offering only postgraduate and executive education programmes will not require as large a faculty as a full service university Faculty offering first degree, postgraduate and executive programmes.

Again the profile of the faculty will depend on the mix of activities. A school with a primary focus on executive education will require a quite different faculty skills profile from a school that mainly offers full-time degree programmes. Many schools are currently in a process of strategic change, for example seeking to expand their activities into more market-oriented sectors through executive education or to strengthen their international positioning. Success in these endeavours will depend to a large extent on the Schools' ability to adjust the size and composition of the faculty in line with the strategic objectives.

Effective faculty management is a crucial function within management education institutions. There should be processes in place for the recruitment, deployment, evaluation and development of the faculty. Workloads should allow a reasonable balance between teaching, research, new programme development, and internal

managerial responsibilities. The pressure of teaching or management should not crowd out research and development.

The School should be able to demonstrate that it has an HR strategy, including a faculty development plan, linked to its strategic agenda and supported by an adequate budget.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) Faculty size, qualification and composition
- b) Faculty management
- c) Faculty development
- d) Internationalisation
- e) Corporate links

### a) Faculty size, qualification, and composition

- Provide a full description of the current core faculty as defined above, including the following information.
  - ❖ The number of faculty members holding a doctoral degree
  - ❖ The number of faculty members currently working towards a doctoral degree
  - ❖ The distribution of the faculty by subject specialisms
  - ❖ The organisation of the faculty (departments, chairs, professorial ranks)
  - ❖ The age distribution of the faculty
  - ❖ The gender mix of the faculty
  - ❖ The distribution of the faculty by nationality
  - ❖ The flows of new appointments and departures over the past five years
- How does the School justify the current size, composition and qualification of the faculty?
- What is the profile of the faculty in terms of expertise, academic qualification, business experience, etc?
- Are the size and the composition of the faculty in accordance with the strategic objectives of the School?
- Does the teaching faculty in terms of numbers and qualification ensure adequate coverage of the principal management disciplines?
- Does the teaching faculty have an inter-disciplinary approach and is it able to integrate a broad range of themes that transcend disciplinary boundaries?
- What are the principal strengths and weaknesses of the current faculty?
- What are the key areas of shortfall in faculty expertise and what actions are being taken to address these problems?
- How has the faculty evolved over the past five years?
- What is the student/staff ratio? <sup>4</sup> How has this evolved over the last five years?

*Much of this information can be presented in the supporting documents listed in the next section.*

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<sup>4</sup> For an explanation on student/staff ratio: see Notes at the end of this Chapter

- When appropriate, explain the impact of the national environment as regards the organisation of the faculty (civil servant status, promotion procedures, tenure, career tracks, remuneration, etc.).
- Provide a full description of the non-core teaching resources available.
  - ❖ How are these additional resources recruited and integrated into the School?
  - ❖ How does the School coordinate the contributions of non-core faculty within programmes?
  - ❖ How does the School evaluate the relative effectiveness of non-core faculty contributions?
- Describe the School's current deployment of teaching resources, including both core faculty and non-core faculty, within its different programmes.
  - ❖ What proportion of the total teaching provision is entrusted to non-core teaching staff? Is this balance considered to be optimal?
  - ❖ What is the ratio of core faculty to the number of students enrolled?
  - ❖ Does the workload for the faculty as a whole allow participants sufficient access to staff for tutoring and counselling?

## **b) Faculty management**

- Describe the management processes governing the operation of the faculty.
  - ❖ How is responsibility for the management of the faculty allocated within the School? Is there a Dean of the Faculty with overall responsibility?
  - ❖ Does the planning process integrate all the requirements needed to meet the strategic objectives, the balance in core activities and the international perspective of the School? How are conflicts between strategic demands resolved? Is there a faculty resourcing plan which addresses all these issues?
  - ❖ Does the School provide a consistent framework of policy and practice for all staff (full-time, part-time, servicing staff) which addresses the issues of School culture, workloads and the integration of staff into the total teaching and learning environment? Does this consistently reflect the strategic plan?
  - ❖ Is there an adequate balance within core faculty members' workload between:
    - direct teaching and tutoring
    - programme administration
    - innovation, course development and the production of teaching materials
    - research and publications
    - service to the profession and the wider community
  - ❖ How are workloads managed?
- Describe the current policy and practice regarding the recruitment and induction of faculty members.
  - ❖ Is there a policy for the recruitment and selection process? What are the key factors that attract high quality staff to the School? Can the School recruit faculty of a quality which is consistent with the strategy and programme requirements?
- Explain the processes in place for evaluating individual faculty members.
- Describe the processes for retention and promotion of faculty members.

- What are the formal processes for obtaining feedback from faculty members on critical issues?

### **c) Faculty development**

- Describe current policy for the development of faculty and explain how this supports the strategic plan for the School.
  - ❖ How are priorities for staff development decided? What formal processes for faculty development exist? How is their effectiveness reviewed?
  - ❖ What have been the major components of faculty development plans in recent years? What staff time has been laid aside specifically for the purposes of individual development and general support of the faculty? What impact has the development plan had on programme quality and general innovation?
  - ❖ What opportunities exist for sabbatical periods and for periods as a visiting professor in other countries?
  - ❖ What opportunities do academic staff have to interact with the management community? How do these benefit individuals and programmes?
  - ❖ Do faculty members participate in academic and professional organizations?
  - ❖ How does the School ensure that staff are aware of the latest developments in their field and are fully aware of modern business practice?
- Summarise the strategic plan for the future development of the faculty. Identify the key priorities for the future and the budgets involved.

### **d) Internationalisation**

- Describe the international dimension of the faculty.
  - ❖ What is the nationality mix of the faculty?
  - ❖ How many external visiting professors are involved in the School's activities?
  - ❖ What percentage of the home country faculty have had significant international exposure?
  - ❖ What are the foreign language skills of the home country faculty?
  - ❖ Is the current level of internationalisation of the faculty in line with the School's aspirations in terms of strategic positioning?

### **e) Corporate Links**

- Describe the nature of the links between the faculty and the corporate world (through consulting, executive education, Board membership, etc.).
  - ❖ Is the exposure of the faculty to the world of management sufficient to ensure the professional relevance of the School's programmes?
  - ❖ To what extent are practising managers part of the teaching staff or involved in programme delivery?
  - ❖ What percentage of the core faculty participates actively in executive education programmes?
  - ❖ What is the School's policy with respect to consulting by individual faculty?
  - ❖ To what extent do faculty members engage in consulting activities?

## Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report

- A summary list of the core faculty indicating: name, academic rank, highest degree, where degree obtained, nationality, subject area, date of appointment, percentage of full time engagement in the case of contracts that are less than full time (i.e. 75%, 50%, etc)
- A table showing faculty staffing levels over the past five years, including the number of new appointments and the number of departures for each year, with a breakdown by category or rank.
- Distribution of the core faculty by academic department when appropriate.
- A table setting out for the current year the key statistics for the faculty (gender distribution, age distribution, nationality mix, number of Ph.Ds, etc.).

## Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review

- HR strategy document
- Copies of the Faculty Handbook or other documents setting out the missions, rights and responsibilities of the teaching staff.
- CVs in English for all the core faculty members including publications over the past five years (recommended format: 2 pages of CV + publications list)

## Notes

- The term “core faculty” is used in preference to “full-time” or “permanent” faculty. Members that can be considered legitimately as core faculty are not necessarily full-time. In some countries it is common practice to allow teaching staff one day a week for related activities. In reality, they hold a four-day a week contract. Some faculty members on a three day contract may be considered as part of the core faculty if the School or Institution is their only employer or their principal employer..

Similarly, the term “permanent” is misleading, because some part-time contributors from other schools may have an open-ended contract but cannot be considered part of the core faculty as defined by EQUIS.

- The term “academic staff” is used to designate core faculty members who are employed to conduct research and/or to teach within the School.
- The term “non-core faculty” is used to designate any person employed on an occasional basis to teach or to conduct research. These persons may have an annual contract with the School, but the School is not their principal employer. They include, for example, practitioners from business and the professions, academics from other institutions, and visiting professors.
- There will always be grey areas in the description of an institution’s faculty resources, for instance between the notions of core and non-core faculty when it is

hard to locate a part-time academic in one category or the other. In these cases, it is incumbent upon the School to explain clearly on what basis it has allocated a person to one group or another.

- In describing the size of the faculty, the “full-time equivalent” (FTE) is the total of faculty contract days divided by 5, assuming that 5 is 100% employment. For example, 5 faculty members with 3-day contracts would be the equivalent of 3 faculty members with 100% contracts. In this case, the headcount is 5 but the FTE is 3.

The FTE is a useful indicator when a large percentage of the faculty have less than full-time contracts.

- The percentage of full-time employment refers to the number of contract days in the case of faculty members who are employed on a part-time basis. A four-day contract is thus the equivalent of 80%.
- The Student/Staff ratio is calculated by dividing the number of full-time equivalent students by the number of full-time equivalent core faculty. Calculating the full-time equivalent for students is obviously a question of reasonable estimation. For instance, the total number of part-time students on a two-year executive MBA programme can be divided by two in order to approximate the full-time equivalent. The resulting ratio has, of course, to be interpreted in the light of other variables such as the contribution of a well-structured non-core faculty. However, the ratio is useful as one indicator to measure faculty sufficiency.

## Chapter 5: Research and Development

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School should regularly produce original contributions to knowledge that are effectively disseminated. These should demonstrably make an impact on one or more constituencies that are strategically important for the successful development of the School: academic peers, management professionals, students, etc.*

### Introduction

Research excellence contributes to the brand recognition of the School, to its capacity to attract high quality faculty and good students, to the quality of its programmes, to its capacity to attract funding, and to its ability to provide usable knowledge and new management methodologies to its corporate clients. In sum, the research effort allows the School to better fulfil its public service mission and to better serve its chosen markets.

EQUIS defines “research” as a broad spectrum of intellectual endeavour ranging from scholarly publication aimed primarily at the academic community, through professionally relevant publications and activities aimed at organisations and business practitioners, to educationally relevant productions aimed at learners and teachers in universities, schools and companies. Therefore, within the EQUIS criteria, the term is not restricted to the purely academic conception of research. EQUIS considers that the broader view of research and development encompasses a diverse range of activities, all of which enlarge managerial knowledge and understanding and improve the quality of a business school.

For this purpose, EQUIS classifies research activity into **three categories**, with the understanding that the boundaries between them will never be absolute.

#### 1. Academic Research

In approaching the assessment of research, EQUIS takes into account the particular circumstances of the business and management discipline within the world of higher education. On the one hand, university-based business schools must conform to the principle that one of the missions within all schools of higher education with university status is to produce and organise new knowledge, to develop new theory, and to design new methodologies within the discipline. In fact, these schools are often evaluated within their own national systems on their research performance from this academic perspective in the same way as any other discipline within the university. Of course, the criteria and the standards may vary considerably from one country to another. In addition, university based systems of faculty promotion and tenure reinforce research rooted in scientific methodologies and targeted principally at the academic community.

Business schools that are not part of a university, but that wish to be internationally recognised as high quality higher education schools, cannot disregard this academic

dimension. Recognition by the international academic community and even by the relevant press depends partly on a certain perception of academic research excellence. In the group of the very best business schools of the world there are none that do not excel in academic research.

*Scholarly research quality will be assessed by its impact on the international academic community.* This impact may be measured by how often a publication is cited by other academic researchers or whether an article has been published in a widely read and reputed journal: often those labelled as “top international refereed academic journals”.

## 2. Practice-oriented Research

On the other hand, business and management education schools have, by their very nature, a professional and practice-oriented mission, as is the case for schools of medicine or schools of law for which research will always be judged by its relevance not only to new knowledge and theory, but also to clinical and legal practice. Therefore, original contributions to knowledge should not be confined to traditional academic research as described above. They should also include new knowledge contributing to the effective advancement of management practice. Research of this type is usually supported by methodologies based on in-depth and close observation of complex business situations, often by means of case studies, surveys or even the rigorous rationalisation of significant accumulated managerial or consulting experience.

*The quality of practice-oriented research will be measured by its impact on practitioners.* This impact may be estimated by looking at indicators of funding provided by corporations for specific research projects or research centres or academic chairs. It can be also gauged by assessing the number of participants in open or tailored executive courses, or specialised degree programmes, covering the topic where a practice-oriented research strength is claimed. It can also be estimated by the number of articles published in top practice-oriented professional journals and by references from client organisations on the impact made.

## 3. Pedagogic Development and Innovation

The provision of innovative pedagogical methodologies, educational tools and learning materials in support of more effective learning in business schools and companies should also be considered an important dimension of a school's intellectual activities.

*Achievements in this area will be assessed by their impact within the School on its teaching mission and outside the School by their impact on other educational practitioners.* In part this impact may be judged by the number of individuals or schools that make use of the pedagogic materials or techniques developed by the School. For example, the quality of textbooks, cases, business simulators, etc. could be evaluated by the number of copies sold in a certain time period.

Table 1 at the end of this chapter sets out accordingly **a typology of research and development activity**, categorising the objectives of the intellectual activity, the audience for whom its relevance must be measured, and the dissemination vehicles (articles, books, case studies and so on). Whereas most accredited schools will have

some production in all three areas, the main focus or the particular mix will depend very much on the type of school, the profile of its faculty, the funding available, the markets that it is serving and the strategic choices that have been made. A university business school will probably place greater emphasis on academic research, while an independent business school serving a corporate market will most likely seek professional relevance in its research effort. Whatever the mix, EQUIS will be looking for evidence of productive intellectual activity with measurable outcomes. The key measures of quality, in all three types of R&D will be **the relevance and impact** of the production for the different audiences, constituencies or stakeholders that the School is serving, as well as its contribution to **teaching quality**.

The expectation within EQUIS is not that all schools should conform to or aspire to the “academic” model often associated in people’s minds with the research-driven US university business schools. The expectation is, however, that all schools that are accredited will be able to demonstrate that they are productive in some areas of the intellectual activity spectrum as described above, that there are processes in place for the management and monitoring of the research agenda, and that they allocate time and resources to support faculty members. Whatever the chosen emphasis by different schools, involvement in some form of intellectual activity is seen as essential for each faculty member in order to keep abreast of current developments in his or her discipline. The purely vocational or the exclusively practice oriented school with a sole emphasis on teaching will not qualify under the above definition.

It is further expected that schools will have an explicit, publicly stated strategy and policy regarding research in this broad sense of an extended spectrum of activities and production. At one extreme, this may only be a commitment to the principle that research is an individual concern and that it cannot be managed centrally. Nonetheless, even in these cases, recruitment policy, time allocation, evaluation and reward processes provide a context in which research can prosper. In most schools, the research effort itself requires some planned guidance in the form of targeted specialisations, centrally managed research centres, an encouragement to pursue collaborative research, and so on. This is particularly true of the many schools around the world that are currently striving to upgrade their research potential, often from a situation in which research was not seen as a value and only given low priority. However, a word of caution is in order: the pursuit of accreditation should not lead schools to set unrealistic objectives as regards their research profile. Their resource base in terms of faculty and funding may not be sufficient to support the aspirations.

Ideally EQUIS is once more seeking a balance between the academic and the managerial dimensions, taking into account that the centre of gravity will vary according to the nature of the School. However, in all cases, the School must demonstrate a commitment to creating knowledge as a foundation of quality in education. The School must be able to demonstrate that there is a structured link between research excellence and quality of learning, both in the talent of individual faculty members and in the impact of its programmes. The intellectual production of the faculty will ensure that the knowledge and skills taught on programmes are broad-based, relevant, up-to-date and forward- looking.

Furthermore, EQUIS considers that there is a continuum between relevant research and the innovative development of the School’s range of activities. It should, therefore, be able to demonstrate a broad commitment to innovation and creative

development in all aspects of its operation: research, programme design, learning methods, service to stakeholders, interface with the corporate world, international relations, internal management.

The assessment of the School at the time of the Peer Review will embrace both research and development.

Table 2 provides a suggested list of types of production that fall within the research and development spectrum and is intended to serve as a basis for reporting research activity.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- 1) Research activities
- 2) Development and Innovation
- 3) International features of R&D
- 4) Links between R&D and the corporate world

### 1) Research activities

- Describe the School's overall research strategy and policy. Explain how the research agenda contributes to the strategic objectives of the School.
  - ❖ What are the principal types of research carried out by the School?
  - ❖ How are priorities established within the strategy?
  - ❖ What is the current research potential of the core faculty?
  - ❖ How has this potential evolved over the last five years?
  - ❖ What methods have been used to attract key research staff to the School in recent years?
  - ❖ What are the plans for future development of the research capacity?
- Explain how research and development is interpreted within the national context. Describe any nationally organised research assessment schemes (e.g. the RAE in the UK).
- Describe how research is organised within the School.
  - ❖ Is there a Dean or Director of Research?
  - ❖ Is there a Research or Scientific Committee?
  - ❖ Are there self-standing Research Centres or Institutes within the School?
  - ❖ To what extent is the research agenda managed?
- Describe how research activity is integrated into the workload of individual faculty members
  - ❖ What priority level is accorded to research?
  - ❖ Is research a value within the culture of the School?
  - ❖ How much time is allowed for research within faculty members' workload?
  - ❖ What is the link between the faculty developmental budget and research policy?
- Explain how research is funded (internal budgetary allocations, government funding, research grants, company sponsorship).

- Describe the processes for monitoring and evaluating research.
  - ❖ Is research a requirement for promotion and retention?
  - ❖ What is the reward system for excellence in research?
  - ❖ Is the School able to assess its total intellectual property, in terms of research and expertise?
- Summarise the research carried out by the core faculty over the past five years (Please use the attached Table 2 or a similar reporting format to provide this data). The data in this Table should be critically analysed in the Self-Assessment Report.
  - ❖ What strengths and weaknesses emerge from this data?
  - ❖ What have been the significant trends during this five-year period? In what areas has progress been made? In what areas has output declined?
  - ❖ What proportion of the faculty can be considered active in the area of research and intellectual activity?
- Describe the research activities of the non-core faculty to the extent that they contribute to the quality of the School's programmes and to its ability to serve its chosen markets. Clearly specify which of this output is produced by academics that work primarily for another academic institution.
- Describe how the outcomes of research contribute to the quality of learning and programme innovation.
- Describe the ways in which research has contributed to the accumulation of distinctive expertise within the School.
- If applicable, describe how the doctoral programmes contribute to the School's research profile.

## **2) Development and Innovation**

- Describe the School's overall policy for promoting innovation and the mechanisms for determining priorities in this area.
- Explain how the School interprets innovation within the national context.
- Summarise the key achievements in the area of innovation, including the development of new courses, educational materials, and new learning and delivery methods that may or may not be based upon information and communication technologies.
- Describe any current and proposed activities designed to develop new tools for management or to increase the impact of the School in its corporate market.
- Describe how the school engages in knowledge development with business and other stakeholders through collaborative enquiry and other methods

## **3) International features of R&D**

- Summarise the contribution of the research agenda to the international dimension of the School.
- Describe how the school manages its R&D agenda in a way that contributes to global thought leadership

- Give details of faculty involvement in joint research with schools or colleagues in other countries.
- Describe the contribution of international academic visitors to enhance R&D in the School.
- Identify in Table 2 the data relating to international publications or research activity of the core faculty.

#### **4) Links between R&D and the corporate world**

- Describe how the School's overall R&D production can be considered relevant to its corporate markets.
- Describe R&D activities that are sponsored by companies.
- Describe R&D initiatives run in collaboration with companies.
- List consultancy missions that involve a R&D dimension.
- Describe any research projects relating to the area of corporate responsibility.

### **Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report**

- Provide pertinent numeric data on output using the format in Table 2. Explain on the basis of what criteria research production numbers are placed into a particular category. For instance, how are "internationally refereed journals" defined by the School for the purposes of Table 2.
- It should be noted that Table 2 is intended as a guide to help schools in reporting the data that EQUIS is looking for. Schools may use their own reporting format provided that it covers the same information.
- A table listing the School's choice of the best 10 articles published over the past five years.
- A table listing funds received from research grants, commissioned research or company sponsorship over the past five years
- Membership of the Research Committee

### **Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review**

- Materials published during the past year as reported in Table 2 (Articles, Books, Theses, Reports, Case Studies, Educational materials, etc). These can be made available in hard copy or electronically
- Any written statements regarding research strategy, policy and processes

## Notes

Data on research and publication should only be reported for the core faculty, defined as those members of the teaching staff for whom the School is the principal employer. The publications of part-time staff from other schools, adjunct teaching staff, visiting professors, or business practitioners should not be included in Table 2.

It must be underlined, however, that non-core teaching resources can contribute substantially to innovation and development. Their contributions should be described separately.

### Key indicators in this chapter are:

- A coherent strategy and policy in the field of research, aligned with the overall strategy of the School.
- Effective processes for implementing the research effort.
- The volume of intellectual production within the School as a whole.
- The quality of the production as measured by its impact: academic recognition, faculty qualification, programme quality, relevance to the School's markets and stakeholders, contribution to management practice, etc.
- The percentage of research active faculty.
- Distinctive expertise in some areas.
- Adequate funding to support the research effort.
- Evidence of a culture of innovation within the School.

**Table 1**  
**Research/Publication/Production**

	Objectives	Target Audience	Target Production	Target Outlets	Characteristics Key Words
<b>Academic Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance theory</li> <li>• Create new knowledge</li> <li>• Devise new methodologies</li> <li>• Sustain a doctoral programme</li> <li>• Underpin up-to-date and innovative teaching programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Academics</li> <li>• Graduate Students</li> <li>• International Market (necessarily in English)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles</li> <li>• Conference Presentations</li> <li>• Papers</li> <li>• Research Monographs</li> <li>• Scholarly Theses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarly Journals</li> <li>• Conferences</li> <li>• University Presses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline-based</li> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Scholarly</li> <li>• Pure</li> <li>• Refereed</li> <li>• Rigorous</li> </ul>
<b>Practice-Oriented Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform practitioners,</li> <li>• Educate students</li> <li>• Targeted research for specific companies or organisations</li> <li>• Improve Management Practice</li> <li>• Understanding of the environment</li> <li>• Updating of course content</li> <li>• Faculty Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Executive Education Participants</li> <li>• Companies/organisations</li> <li>• Practitioners</li> <li>• National &amp; International Markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books</li> <li>• Studies</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text books</li> <li>• Specialised publications</li> <li>• Practitioner Journals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance</li> <li>• Useful knowledge</li> <li>• Applied</li> <li>• Practice-oriented</li> <li>• Field Work</li> </ul>
<b>Pedagogical Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create new course materials</li> <li>• Create new programmes</li> <li>• Define new learning methodologies</li> <li>• Create new learning tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Directors</li> <li>• Other teachers</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Executive Education Directors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Studies</li> <li>• Software</li> <li>• Innovative Programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Clearing Houses</li> <li>• Commercial Software Outlets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transferable</li> <li>• Innovative</li> <li>• Tailor-made</li> </ul>

**Table 2: RESEARCH OUTPUT OF THE CORE FACULTY in the last five years**

	Total Number of items in the category for the five-year period	Total Number of contributing faculty members from within the School.***	Number. of items jointly produced by two or more faculty members from within the School	Number of items jointly produced in collaboration with other institutions	Research Activity Ratio: Number of items/ Total Number of faculty members in the School
<b>Types of Publication</b>					
Scholarly articles in int'l refereed journals					
Scholarly articles in national journals					
Papers in int'l academic conferences					
Books (e.g. research monographs)					
Chapters in books					
Textbooks					
Chapters in textbooks					
Articles in professional journals					
Papers in professional conferences					
Studies and Reports commissioned by companies and gov't agencies					
Studies and Reports produced as part of an int'l network					
Published Case Studies					
Published Teaching Materials					
Doctoral theses completed					
Doctoral theses supervised					
Other (please describe)					
<b>TOTALS</b>					

\*\*\* Only include authors who were faculty members at the time of production

Note: It should be noted that Table 2 is intended as a guide to help schools in reporting the data that EQUIS is looking for. Schools may use their own reporting format provided that it covers the same information.

## Chapter 6: Executive Education

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School's programme offering in the field of Executive Education, if it exists, should be appropriately integrated into its overall strategy and into its central management systems. Whatever its organisational or legal structure, Executive Education should be seen as central to the strengthening of the School's connections with companies and organisations within the markets that it is serving. It should contribute to the development of the faculty in maintaining relevance in their teaching and research. It should contribute to the improvement of business practice by putting the School's distinctive expertise at the disposal of practising managers.*

### Introduction

In this chapter EQUIS is primarily concerned with the delivery of short courses and programmes to working professionals in companies and organisations. Some of the longer programmes may lead to the award of a certificate, but this is essentially a non-degree activity within business schools. Some schools choose to include part-time Executive MBAs in their executive education division since these programmes are also aimed at people in work, but they should be presented in Chapter 2 in which degree programmes are described.

It is understood that some schools applying for EQUIS accreditation may not be active in the field of executive education or may only have a marginal presence in this market. A portfolio of executive education programmes is not a formal requirement for EQUIS accreditation. However, to the extent that a school does have a significant offering in this area or considers it to be strategic, its executive education operations will be an integral part of the assessment, based on the criteria set out in this chapter.

The chapter covers the principal areas of the EQUIS framework from the specific perspective of executive education: strategic positioning, the programme portfolio, marketing, services to participants, programme quality, faculty and physical facilities. The criteria take into account the fact that the education of working adults is very different from that of full-time students. The faculty require an additional set of skills geared to the expectations of a very demanding audience. Programmes, particularly customised programmes, have to be designed to integrate both the organisational development objectives of the company and the personal development needs of the individual participants. This process requires an ability to understand the company's organisation and strategy and to propose appropriate education solutions to the expressed learning objectives. A strong customer orientation is essential.

Schools active in executive education should explain how this activity is integrated into their overall strategy and into their management systems. From the EQUIS perspective, executive education should be more than just an add-on or a commercial operation. It should be seen as a central, mainstream activity broadening the qualification of the faculty and involving the School meaningfully in the development of management practice in companies. Executive education should support the relevance of the

School's teaching in all its programmes and serve as a platform for its research agenda. It can, therefore, be a major dimension of the interface between the School, the corporate world and society at large.

It is particularly important to describe how the executive education provision is organised, resourced and managed within the School: as a centre, business unit, division or subsidiary.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) Positioning within the School
- b) Product Portfolio
- c) Marketing and Sales
- d) Participant Management
- e) Programme Quality and Impact
- f) Faculty
- g) Research and Development
- h) Internationalisation

### a) Positioning within the School

- Explain how executive education fits into the School's overall strategy.
  - ❖ Can the School show that its executive education contributes to its strategic objectives beyond mere income generation?
  - ❖ How is executive education integrated into the mainstream of the School's activities and management systems?
- Describe the positioning of the executive education provision within the School's organisation chart (Department responsibility or dedicated Centre, Division, Business Unit, Subsidiary, etc).
- Indicate the teaching and administrative staff allocated specifically to the running of this activity
- Describe the physical facilities available for executive education programme delivery
  - ❖ Does the School offer a well-designed learning environment with sufficient dedicated facilities to support high quality executive education?

### b) Product Portfolio

- Describe the portfolio of programmes and services offered in the area of executive education
  - ❖ type of programmes- open/customised,
  - ❖ residential/non-residential/distance learning
  - ❖ duration: short/long/modular
  - ❖ content (functional, general management, issue-based, skills workshops, action oriented, ...)

- In the case of open programmes, how is the range of offerings determined? What process does the School follow to introduce new programmes and remove existing programmes?
- How often is the programme catalogue renewed?

### **c) Marketing and Sales**

- Evaluate the School's positioning in the national and international market for executive education
  - ❖ Who are its main competitors?
  - ❖ How strong is its brand image in the area of executive education?
- Describe the composition of the School's customer base for executive education
  - ❖ nature of companies (market sector, size, ...)
  - ❖ level of managers ( senior executives/ middle managers/ specialists, technical staff and lower-level managers)
  - ❖ local/national/international
    - How extensive is the School's experience in dealing with senior executives?
    - Is the existing provision clearly focused on an understanding of market needs? How are needs identified?
    - What are the criteria for accepting or refusing a contract with a company?
- Describe the School's approach to customer relationship management
  - ❖ Does the School have a strong customer service orientation in all aspects of its work?
  - ❖ How well qualified are the business development and sales staff?
- Describe the School's marketing and sales policy for its executive education activities
  - ❖ To what extent are faculty members involved in the sales of the School's programmes?
  - ❖ How rapidly can the School respond to a request for a customised programme?
  - ❖ Does the Executive Education organisation have a pricing policy that is consistent with its market positioning and strategic intent?
- Explain how the School distinguishes between customers as organisations and customers as individual participants in its programmes?
  - ❖ Is the School able to articulate the role of organisational development in its programmes?

### **d) Participant Management**

- Describe the School's processes for selecting and managing the participants in its programmes
  - ❖ What steps does the School take to ensure a close fit between participants and the aims of individual programmes?
  - ❖ Is the School selective regarding the participants it admits to its open and customised programmes? Does it cooperate with its corporate customers in the selection and nomination process?

- ❖ How do staff deal with the sometimes conflicting demands made by companies and the individuals involved in programmes?
- Describe the support processes for participants before, during and after training
  - ❖ Does the School provide a comprehensive and integrated package of support for its customers?
  - ❖ How do staff deal with customer complaints and service issues?
- Describe the processes for the longer term personal development of executive education participants
  - ❖ What provision is there for coaching, lifelong learning and networking?
  - ❖ How does the School personalise the learning process for individuals?
  - ❖ Is the adult learning process clearly understood?

### **e) Programme quality and Impact**

- Describe the design process for open programmes
- Describe the design process for customised programmes
  - ❖ Does the School have faculty and staff skilled in the task of negotiating customised programmes?
  - ❖ How are customer requirements diagnosed prior to designing customised programmes (needs analysis)?
  - ❖ How do staff proceed from the needs analysis to the programme design stage? Is the faculty involved in this process?
- Describe the School's key areas of expertise in the area of executive education.
- Describe the delivery methods used in the School's executive education programmes
  - ❖ What is the role and impact of technology in the provision of executive education? Does the School provide adequate computer facilities?
  - ❖ Does the School make use of electronic networking facilities and distance learning techniques in the delivery of its programmes?
  - ❖ What level of innovation in delivery is actually taking place?
- Describe the School's approach to the management of quality in its executive education activities and the associated processes for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing programmes
  - ❖ What processes are in place for the regular evaluation of programmes and the longer term review of programmes?
  - ❖ Does the School have a keen eye for detail when it comes to the total image presented to customers? Do they pay attention to all the accessories and important details that can affect a programme's image (e.g. supporting materials, pens, wallets etc)?
- Explain how the School measures the impact of its programmes on:
  - ❖ Individual participants
  - ❖ The participants' companies

## f) Faculty

- Describe the faculty resources available for deployment in executive education programmes (core faculty, adjunct faculty, part-time faculty, visiting faculty, etc)
  - ❖ What proportion of the core faculty is significantly involved in executive education?
  - ❖ Does the faculty as a whole have a clear understanding of the strategic role of executive education within the School's range of activities?
- Evaluate the sufficiency of the current faculty resources, both in number and profile to meet the requirements of executive education provision
  - ❖ What proportion of the faculty has relevant professional and commercial experience? What limits to growth are set by the current composition of the faculty and its range of expertise?
- Describe the School's process for managing faculty deployment in executive education
  - ❖ How is executive education integrated into faculty workloads? Is this activity considered on-load or off-load?
  - ❖ Is extra remuneration offered as an incentive to engage in executive education?
  - ❖ Where the School relies on the support of a high proportion of external practitioners, how is teamwork and a shared culture promoted in this 'virtual' faculty?
- Explain the processes for evaluating the contribution of individual staff members involved in executive education

## g) Research and Development

- Describe the School's approach towards research, development and innovation relating to executive education?
  - ❖ How is the School's research capability transferred into its executive education offerings?
  - ❖ How do the School's executive education activities support its research agenda and improve the relevance of its research production?
  - ❖ How rapidly is the School able to transform basic knowledge into applied knowledge for the benefit of its customers?
  - ❖ How open are staff to the application of new ideas and frameworks to their work? How is this reflected in its programmes?
  - ❖ What are the key areas of innovation?

## h) Internationalisation

- Describe the international outreach of the School's executive education activity
  - ❖ Does the School market its programmes beyond its borders?
  - ❖ How many international clients does it have?
  - ❖ Do language skills and international experience figure among the criteria for acceptance onto international programmes?
  - ❖ What percentage of the core faculty is competent to work with an international audience?

## **Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report**

- Budgetary information with the breakdown of revenues by open and customised programmes
- Statistical data concerning the number and type of programmes offered, the number of participants, the number of training days, etc. This information is intended to facilitate the Peer Review team's understanding of the nature and scope of the executive education provision. This information should be presented in the form of a table.
- A list of the School's key clients in the field of executive education in the past three years

## **Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review**

- Documents on Executive Education strategy, policy and processes
- Brochures describing the various programmes on offer
- The Catalogue of public, open courses offered
- Examples of customised programme syllabi
- Course material delivered to participants, both electronically and in hard copy.

## **Notes**

- EQUIS has chosen to use the term "executive education" to describe this segment of a business school's programme portfolio, but it is understood that many other terms may be used: management development, executive development, continuing education and so on.

## Chapter 7: Contribution to the Community

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School should have a clear understanding of its role as a “good citizen” within the local, national and international communities in which it operates. There should be evidence that the School’s contribution to society is supported by a range of activities outside of normal academic activity. Furthermore, the School should proactively promote ethical behaviour and corporate responsibility as fundamental values underpinning its educational objectives and its own internal and external operations*

### Introduction

The purpose of this section is to assess the School’s role as a “good citizen” in the different local, national and international communities in which it operates. The School should act as a catalyst for the development of the local or national business communities, as a forum for debate, and as a source of dissemination of new ideas and trends. It should also explain its international outreach in this area. This supposes that the faculty will be encouraged to involve themselves in a range of activities that fall outside of normal academic activity.

An important dimension within this chapter is the attention paid to the issue of corporate responsibility, as a matter of both policy and practice. The concern for corporate responsibility will be evidenced not only in the School’s approach to the education of future managers, but also in its own behaviour within its environment. Evidence of this commitment to ethical and socially responsible business practice will be requested in all of the other chapters, but should be summarised in this section of the report.

### The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) Community Outreach
- b) Extra-curricular student activities
- c) Services to the management education profession
- d) Corporate responsibility

#### a) Community Outreach

- Describe the role of the School in the local, national and international community.
- Describe how the School manages and coordinates community relations.
- Summarise the School’s overall contribution to the local and national environment, its role in developing the community and in acting as a catalyst for initiatives such as:

- ❖ contribution to the business community, e.g. the development of small enterprises
- ❖ role in providing an active forum for debate and the dissemination of knowledge
- Describe the School's policy towards staff involvement in community activities (such as acting as local councillors, sitting on primary or secondary school boards, etc.)
- Describe the School's policy towards faculty involvement in the service of the community.

## **b) Extra-curricular Student Activities**

- Describe the engagement of students in non-profit and/or humanitarian activities.
  - ❖ How are these activities supported by the School?
  - ❖ How do these activities contribute to the personal development of the students?
  - ❖ How does the School decide on the scope and level of resourcing afforded to activities that enrich the community and the individual students' experience?
- Describe the role of the faculty in supporting extra-curricular activities

## **c) Services to the Management Education Profession**

- Describe the School's policy towards faculty participation in academic and professional organisations.
  - ❖ What is the contribution of the faculty to the profession? Do they sit on key boards or committees for management education?
  - ❖ What is the proportion of time devoted to consultancy or the provision of expertise to other associations?
  - ❖ What special initiatives in management education at a national and international level has the School instigated and promoted recently?

## **d) Corporate Responsibility**

- Describe the School's policy in this area.
  - ❖ Does the School have a code of Ethics or an Ethics Committee?
- List the initiatives that have been taken in implementing this policy.
  - ❖ Does the School partner actively with companies and organisations in promoting ethical behaviour and corporate responsibility?
  - ❖ How are issues relating to ethical behaviour and corporate responsibility integrated into the School's degree programmes, executive education activities and research?
  - ❖ How does the School show practical concern for the environment in its operations?
- Describe the School's policy and actions in favour of disadvantaged communities

## Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report

- Examples of community outreach activities

## Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review

- Policy statements regarding ethics and corporate responsibility.
- Course syllabi or programme descriptions that refer to ethics and corporate responsibility in the educational curricula.
- Documents describing special projects in these areas.
- Information about student-led projects in these areas.

## Notes

- The terms 'corporate responsibility', 'corporate social responsibility', 'global responsibility' are commonly used to designate the responsible behaviour of organisations and companies collectively and their managers individually in areas such as:
  - ❖ Ethical behaviour as reflected in the integrity and personal honesty of all managers
  - ❖ Concern for the impact of their activities on society and the natural environment
  - ❖ Contribution to long-term sustainable development
  - ❖ Corporate governance

## Chapter 8: Resources and Administration

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School should be able to demonstrate financial viability and institutional continuity, with physical resources and facilities to provide a high quality learning environment and with sufficient high quality administrative staff and processes to support the School's range of activities.*

### Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to evaluate the adequacy of the School's physical and financial resources together with the associated management systems and staff.

The physical facilities should provide an adequate learning environment for the students and participants in the School's various programmes. The EQUIS assessment of adequacy will take into account the fact that the requirements for undergraduate students are very different from those for an MBA cohort or for executive education participants. The basic principle is that the physical facilities in terms of auditoriums, classrooms, breakout rooms, social space, etc. should be sufficient to support the particular pedagogical approach in each programme. It is usually the case that MBA programmes and executive education activities will require dedicated facilities.

The School should be adequately equipped with documentation services providing access to books, periodicals and electronic databases backed up by the appropriate information systems. It is expected that the School will have installed a computer based Intranet platform for internal and external communication and will provide a help service for students and faculty.

Appropriate office space and research facilities should be provided for the faculty in support of their various roles within the School.

In the context of this Chapter, EQUIS will also review the sufficiency of the School's financial resources and the supporting budgetary and financial management systems. An essential criterion here is the financial viability of the School and the adequacy of its resources in line with its strategic ambitions.

The School should also demonstrate that its management accounting and reporting processes contribute to operational effectiveness by providing transparent information about revenues, costs and contribution of each programme or activity.

A final area that falls within the scope of this Chapter is the overall sufficiency and quality of the School's administrative services and staff. This will include its ability to market its activities.

## The Assessment Criteria

The key areas are:

- a) Physical Facilities and the Learning Environment
- b) Financial Resources
- c) Financial Management Systems
- d) Information and Documentation Facilities
- e) Computing Facilities
- f) Marketing and Public Relations
- g) Administrative Services and Staff

### a) Physical Facilities and the Learning Environment

- Provide a summary of premises, including the identification of any premises shared with other parts of the host Institution (if appropriate).
- Describe the educational facilities: auditoriums, classrooms, breakout rooms, individual work stations, social areas for students.
  - ❖ Are these facilities adequately equipped with educational support material: computer access, projectors, microphone systems, etc?
  - ❖ How are these facilities shared between the different programmes?
- Evaluate the overall adequacy of the above facilities to meet the demands of the School's portfolio of activities.
  - ❖ What shortfalls in physical resources are foreseen in response to the School's future strategy? What steps are being taken to address these?
- How is the potential contribution of facilities to the personal experience and development of students evaluated?

### b) Financial Resources

- Describe the current financial resources of the School with a breakdown by source of funding. Indicate the degree of stability or vulnerability of these funding sources. Public university faculties should explain fully the budgetary allocation system by which the national educational authority financing is channelled through the Central University to fund their activities (notably programme costs and the salaries of teaching staff).
  - ❖ What degree of financial autonomy does the School enjoy?
  - ❖ What are the regulations and constraints that limit the School's financial autonomy?
  - ❖ How much liberty does the School have to generate additional sources of funding?
  - ❖ What evidence is there that the financial provision made for the support and development of programmes is adequate? How does this compare with the provision made in the last five years?
  - ❖ Is the overall level of funding sufficient to fully support the activities of the School in terms of its mission and core processes?
  - ❖ What are the main areas of financial risk for the School? Is the level of risk acceptable?

- Explain the budget for the current year with an analysis of the major headings.
  - ❖ How is the School's budget integrated into the budgeting system of the wider university or parent institution (e.g. the Chambers of Commerce in the case of certain French Schools)
- Summarise the financial performance of the School over the past 5 years.
- Describe the projected financial needs of the School and the plans to meet these targets

### **c) Financial Management Systems**

- Describe the School's internal financial control and reporting systems.
  - ❖ What information is the system designed to provide to the School's managers?
  - ❖ How much budgetary autonomy is devolved to programme directors or department heads?
  - ❖ Does the School use the data collected to monitor key performance indicators?
  - ❖ To what extent is financial information reported to the School's stakeholders?
- Describe the processes for the management of physical resources within the School.

### **d) Information and Documentation Facilities**

- Describe the documentation services provided on site (documentation centre, library, databases, research facilities, etc).
- Identify any special relationships with external libraries (including that of the parent institution/university) and research Institutions.
  - ❖ Are the library and research facilities adequate and are participants provided with adequate access outside normal working hours?
  - ❖ What special provision demanded by the international dimension of the School's activities is provided by the library and research facilities? What are the requirements for the future?
  - ❖ How does the School evaluate the support provided to individuals by these facilities? What evidence is there that student feedback has been used to develop facilities for the benefit of individuals?
- Describe the contribution of the documentation services to the internationalisation of the School (books and periodicals in other languages, international databases, etc).

### **e) Computing Facilities**

- Describe the facilities available: hardware, software, intranet, learning platforms, open-access computer rooms, help services, etc.
  - ❖ Are the computing facilities adequate and are participants provided with adequate access outside normal working hours?
  - ❖ What is the contribution of computing facilities and associated software to individual programme objectives? What specific knowledge, skills and qualities are developed through the use of information technology and how do these match programme objectives?

- ❖ What learning platforms are available and how are they used by faculty members in programme delivery?

## **f) Marketing and Public Relations**

- Describe the organisation for the marketing and promotion of the School's activities
- Explain the nature of the Marketing and PR strategy and operations
  - ❖ How are Marketing and PR operations staffed and financed?
  - ❖ How are the Marketing and PR resources allocated to different aspects of the School's activities?
  - ❖ What communication channels are used?
  - ❖ How is the effectiveness of Marketing and PR evaluated? With what result?

## **g) Administrative Services and Staff**

- Describe the organisation of the support services (finance and accounting, human resource management, buildings and grounds, documentation centre, computer service, etc.).
  - ❖ Does the School have an HR strategy and accompanying policies for all staff?
  - ❖ Does the School have sufficient administrative staff to provide adequate service to participants and customers?
  - ❖ How is the effectiveness of general support and administration facilities evaluated? What improvements to the quality of support have been achieved or are proposed in the near future?

## **Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report**

- Marketing strategy/plan
- The budget for the current year and forecast budgets for coming years where available
- The School's financial accounts for the last 5 years broken down by main activity area (income statements and balance sheets)

## **Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review**

- Information distributed to students explaining the documentation facilities and services available (in the language of the country and in English).
- HR strategy and policies (e.g. Staff Handbook, New Employees' Induction Pack)

## Notes

- Confidentiality regarding financial information.

The Peer Reviewers are informed that all information to which they have access in the documents provided by the School is confidential and must not be revealed to anyone external to the assessment process. The School is free, however, to withhold information that it considers strategic. In this case, it is expected that a verbal response to key questions will be provided.

## Chapter 9: Internationalisation

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School should have a clearly articulated strategy and policies for internationalisation. It should demonstrate its commitment to educating and preparing students and participants for management in an international environment. This should be underpinned by active collaboration with international partner institutions in fields such as student exchanges, joint programmes, research activity and corporate connections. The School should be able to attract students and faculty from other countries. It should carry out research of international relevance and scope.*

### Introduction

Alongside corporate connections, the international dimension of a School is one of the overarching dimensions in the EQUIS framework. This chapter requires the School to synthesise the international aspects that are presented in each part of the framework. It is important to explain the School's strategy and policies as regards internationalisation, as well as the processes and resources available for the implementation of the strategy.

EQUIS has been designed as an international accreditation system, recognising schools and university faculties that are more than just good standard national institutions. It is expected that they will have qualities that make them credible in a wider international market. This supposes that they can attract students and faculty from other countries, deliver programmes up to internationally accepted standards, effectively prepare their graduates for international management and maintain academic and corporate links outside their home country. In all cases, it is expected that schools can demonstrate a sufficient degree of internationalisation as measured through a broad series of indicators that are listed at the end of this section.

In assessing this crucial area, it is important to make a certain number of distinctions. EQUIS recognises that internationalisation can take many forms and that the degree of internationalisation will vary considerably across a broad spectrum of activities. It is not expected that all schools will resemble those few institutions that act independently of any particular national culture and that have a student and faculty mix in which no one nationality dominates. Most schools have their roots in the mainstream of their national system of higher education. The challenge for them is to introduce a culture of internationalisation into their own national culture, without repudiating the latter.

A second point is that schools pursue very different strategic objectives in the area of internationalisation. In some cases, the aim is to position the School's programmes in the international market rather than the national market. In most cases, this has only been a feasible objective in the case of the MBA and other postgraduate programmes. In the emerging post-Bologna market in Europe, there is now also room for pre-experience Master's programmes aimed at the international mobility market. Programmes of this type have to be specifically designed for an international group of students and require a very different marketing effort. In the case of schools in non-

English-speaking countries, this often means that the programmes have to be offered in English. In all cases, a different faculty profile will be required and the administrative staff must be able to adapt to the intercultural challenge.

For many, even most schools, the main objective in its Bachelor's and pre-experience Master's programmes is to ensure that the knowledge and skills imparted by their programmes are in line with the realities of management in an internationally inter-dependent world. Programme content must be designed from this perspective. Giving home students international exposure is usually achieved by study abroad opportunities and by internationalising the classroom through the influx of visiting exchange students. However, the programmes are positioned to recruit students primarily on the national market, in which the degree of internationalisation can be a competitive advantage. The threshold requirement for EQUIS accreditation is that the School must offer programmes that provide an internationally oriented education with sufficient outreach beyond its own borders.

Some schools pursue quite different strategic objectives by setting up "offshore" operations. These may be in the form of wholly owned satellite campuses on which the School offers its degree programmes, joint ventures with an international partner to offer its degrees, or franchising of the degrees to an independent provider. The objective may in some cases be primarily commercial, but these operations can also play a strategic role in internationalising the School by opening up new markets in strategic regions and by giving faculty the opportunity to teach and to manage projects in distant places. However, schools should be aware that there are risks in this type of international development. On the one hand, it is very hard to maintain quality standards at a distance and the School may jeopardise its image in the long run. Furthermore, these activities can distract the School and its faculty from developing its core operations in its home base.

It is expected that the School's academic staff will have an overall profile that qualifies it to operate adequately in the international arena. This is not measured only by the nationality mix of the faculty, but also by the international experience of the faculty members, by their intercultural and linguistic skills, and by their demonstrated ability to teach international audiences. The faculty's ability to engage in meaningful research with an international impact will also be significant.

Furthermore, the School should be able to maintain links with the corporate world beyond the frontiers of its home environment. These can take many forms, including student recruitment channels, research partnerships, internship destinations, executive education provision, sources of funding, etc.

## The Assessment Criteria

- Describe the School's international strategy and policies.
- Summarise the evidence that the international dimension is reflected in the School's mission, governance, strategy and current operations.
  - ❖ How does the School integrate the international dimension within the normal structures and processes governing the activities of the School?

- ❖ What are the key processes used to manage the School's international policy and relationships?
- ❖ What are the resources specifically allocated to the management of the School's international activities? Does the School have an adequately staffed international office?
- ❖ How is the School positioned on the international market? How competitive are its programmes outside its home market?
- Describe the current level of internationalisation as reflected in the profile of the faculty and the student body.
  - ❖ To what extent has the School internationalised the classroom on its home campus as measured by the intercultural mix of students and the international perspective in its programmes?
- Summarise the School's international activities outside its home country (exchange students abroad, faculty mobility, joint programmes, offshore operations, etc).
- Describe the School's network of international academic relations
  - ❖ Which of these can be considered high quality strategic partnerships?
  - ❖ How are international alliances and partnerships established? What are the criteria for the selection of organisations targeted for special relationships?
- Describe the School's links to the international corporate world
  - ❖ Does the School in engage in executive education with clients outside its home country?
  - ❖ To what extent are its graduates recruited by international companies to work outside the School's home country?
- List key relationships with international organisations
  - ❖ How does the School use membership of international organisations to support its own quality improvement processes? What commitment is given by Deans and Directors to involvement with international associations?
- Provide a short summary describing the international dimension in the School's research and development activity. As appropriate, cross-reference to Chapter 5 on Research.
- Evaluate the key changes in the international operation of the School that have occurred in the past 5 years.

### **Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report**

- List of international academic partners showing the nature of relationship (e.g. student exchanges, research collaboration, joint programmes).
- The chapter on Internationalisation should include cross-references to statistical tables included in other chapters, notably as regards students, faculty and research

## Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review

- International strategy and policy documents
- Documents relating to off-shore provision

### Notes

In preparing this chapter, Schools will find it helpful to refer to the document entitled “EFMD Quality Services: Guidelines for Defining the International Dimension of Higher Education Institutions in Management and Business Administration”

### Key Indicators

#### a) Internationalisation of the student body

Evidence of this can include:

- The recruitment of students from other countries.
- The existence of exchange programmes to provide a two-way flow of students.
- A concern for intercultural exchange in the classroom.
- The provision of internships or project work across borders.
- The international placement of graduates.
- The language ability of graduates.

#### b) Internationalisation of the faculty

Evidence of this can include:

- The recruitment of non-nationals to the faculty.
- The international experience of faculty.
- The ability of faculty to teach in English.
- The foreign language skills of faculty.
- The involvement of visiting professors.
- The opportunities for faculty to serve as visiting professors abroad.
- The involvement of faculty in international networks.
- Participation in international conferences.
- Research and publication of an international nature.

#### c) Internationalisation of programmes

Evidence of this can include:

- Teaching which focuses on the European and global business environments.
- Courses taught in English in non English speaking countries.
- An international perspective in all the main functional areas.
- Courses jointly designed and taught with partner Schools abroad.
- Internships and study abroad as an integral part of programmes.
- International case studies and learning materials.

## Chapter 10: Corporate Connections<sup>5</sup>

### The EQUIS Standard

*The School should have a clearly articulated strategy and policy with regard to its corporate connections. It should demonstrate that it develops students and participants with a practical understanding of business and management through interaction with the corporate world. Faculty should be involved with current management practice through research and consultancy undertaken in collaboration with corporate partners and through executive education. Corporate input should be a key feature of the School's activities.*

### Introduction

A cornerstone of the EQUIS approach is that business and management education must satisfy two sets of objectives: on the one hand it must provide an intellectually rigorous education corresponding to the criteria of academic excellence and on the other it must provide practical skills for a managerial career. Schools have, therefore, a responsibility to ensure the professional relevance of their programmes. This can only be achieved if there is an interface between the School and the organisations, companies and professions in which its graduates will subsequently work.

As in the case of internationalisation, the interface with the world of business and management is not treated solely as a separate chapter, but is seen as an overarching concern that impacts upon all dimensions of the School's activities. In each of the chapters in this document, items relating to these links are included in the assessment criteria. The purpose of this chapter is to bring together all these diverse strands into a coherent assessment of the School's overall achievement in this area.

It is expected that a School will have an explicit strategy and policies for managing its relations with the corporate world and will have processes in place to implement the strategy. These concerns will be reflected in the School's overall strategic priorities, in its system of governance, in its definition of programme outcomes, in its internship and career placement services, in its faculty profile, in its research agenda, and of course in its executive education provision.

It should be underlined that, whereas involvement in executive education is not a requirement for accreditation, the existence of strong institutional links with the corporate world is essential.

EQUIS will take into account that the extent and intensity of the corporate interface will vary considerably between schools. Public university faculties of management do not necessarily define their mission as being to serve a corporate constituency. On the other hand, a non-university School delivering postgraduate and executive education will probably see the corporate sector as its main target market. Nonetheless, in all

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<sup>5</sup> Corporate connections refers to any organisation that needs to be managed, eg. government and public sector organisations, NGOs, not-for-profit charities, private sector companies including multinationals, SMEs, professional firms, etc.

cases, a structured and effective relationship with the professional world is seen as a necessary service to students individually and to society collectively. An adequate balance between academic quality and managerial relevance is one of the fundamental principles of EQUIS.

## The Assessment Criteria

- Describe the School's strategy and policies regarding the interface with the corporate world
  - ❖ Do the overall strategic objectives make explicit reference to this dimension?
- Describe the key processes used to manage the School's relationships with the corporate world.
  - ❖ To what extent does the School have a customer orientation?
  - ❖ Does the School have a 'corporate relations' office or department?
- Summarise the nature and extent of the School's interface with the corporate world as reflected in the various chapters of the EQUIS criteria framework
- Summarise the flow of funding from corporate sources in the investment and operational budgets
- Describe the key relationships with corporate partners.
  - ❖ To what extent does the School enter into partnership with targeted companies and organisations?
- Describe the international features of the School's relations with the corporate world.
- Evaluate the key changes in the corporate involvement in the affairs of the School that have occurred in the past 5 years.

## Supporting Information and Documents to be provided in the Self-Assessment Report

- List of the School's principal corporate partners indicating the nature of their relationships
- Provide details of corporate funding when applicable

## Information and Documents to be provided in the Base Room during the Peer Review

Strategy and policy documents relating to the School's corporate connections

## **Further Information and Contacts**

If you have any questions concerning the EQUIS Standards and Criteria, or would like to receive more information about the EQUIS accreditation system in general, please consult the EFMD website where all documentation is available to download:

<http://www.efmd.org/EQUIS>

Alternatively you can contact the EFMD Quality Services Office:

[equis@efmd.org](mailto:equis@efmd.org)