



PREPARING THE
SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

NOTES OF GUIDANCE
FOR FACULTIES AND SERVICE UNITS



Introduction

Format of the Self-Evaluation Report for a Faculty

1. Introduction
2. Faculty Vision, Mission, Objectives
3. SWOT; Strategic Plan
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Research
6. External Societal Contributions
7. Resources
8. Management, Organisation
9. Quality Assurance
10. Annexes

Format of the Self-Evaluation Report for a Service Unit

1. Introduction
2. Mission and Objectives
3. SWOT, Strategic Planning
4. Organisation
5. Functions, Activities and Processes
6. User Perspective
7. Staff Perspective
8. Management of Resources
9. Quality Assurance
10. Annexes



These notes of guidance for the Self-Evaluation Report are given as a tool to be used by faculties and units at their own discretion. They can therefore be adapted as regards the information requested, the terminology and the overall structure.

Introduction

We recall that the purpose of the self-evaluation report is to provide a succinct but comprehensive statement of the activities and processes of the unit under review, with an emphasis on analysis and self-criticism. In the case of a faculty, it should not exceed 25 pages, plus annexes. The SER should help the unit to identify and analyse its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and allow it to suggest remedies where necessary. It should contain objective data as indicated in appropriate Annexes, and also evaluative and critical commentaries.

When the SER is complete a peer review group will read it and spend a number of days on a site visit to the unit. The review group, composed of external experts, will complete a report on their findings that emphasises recommendations for improvement and points the way to future developments. An action plan will then be prepared for implementation of the review report's recommendations.

We emphasise certain crucial aspects of the process. The review is carried out by the unit itself together with a small group of peer colleagues from other universities and organisations. The self-evaluation report will not be published. This should encourage the unit to carry out a critical self-analysis. The review is of the unit as a whole and not of individuals; neither the self-evaluation report nor the peer review group report will identify any individual by name. Follow-up will be prompt.

The coordinating committee that prepares the SER should be representative of all staff in the unit and should include at least two senior members, one of whom will act as Chair and also as liaison person with the peer review group. The committee should include a student. It should be operational and therefore not too large. Duties should be assigned to individual members, and an editor chosen who will collate information and draft the self-evaluation report. A secretary is appointed to organize meetings and record minutes. Throughout the process thorough consultation with all staff in the unit is advised. The SER should be the product of a collective exercise of self-discovery.

During the self-assessment members of the unit will at all times respect the integrity of the process and the sensitivities of colleagues. It must be remembered at all times that the academic institution is a community; all people who are part of it must feel co-responsible for the common good and the cohesion of the academic community.



In the case of a University, reviews will be carried out across a wide spectrum of activities and the units responsible for them: academic, support service, and administrative units, academic programmes, as well as thematic reviews of institution-wide issues such as research, doctoral programmes, assessment procedures.

In this context recall that a few months before the start of the self-evaluation process a small ‘pre-evaluation’ team should be assigned the task of establishing parameters and a design for the exercise. This team should include the director of quality assurance, some senior members of the unit and either the rector or the relevant vice-rector.

In the following pages, by way of indicative example, there is an outline of the possible layout of the SER in the case of a faculty and a service unit. In each of these examples a number of questions are offered for the consideration of the unit’s coordinating committee in the preparation of the SER. They are the result of wide experience across many universities, and are intended to help focus thinking on issues that might be usefully discussed and analysed, as well as the type of information needed to drive the analysis. It is not the intention that they should be slavishly followed, and certainly they should not inhibit the unit in its approach to self-examination. Clearly some of the questions and issues may not be relevant to a particular unit, and of course there may be topics not included that are important to the unit.



Format of the Self-Evaluation Report for a Faculty

1. Introduction
2. Faculty Vision, Mission, Objectives
3. SWOT¹; Strategic Plan
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Research
6. External Societal Contributions
7. Resources
8. Management, Organisation
9. Quality Assurance
10. Annexes

1. Introduction

List the name and grade of the members of the Coordinating Committee.

Describe briefly the methodology used in the preparation of the SER, including the number of meetings held by the Committee, and the involvement of the rest of the staff, the students and support staff.

Give a brief history of the faculty. Describe the physical plant, and the development of the faculty in recent years.

Discuss the ownership of the faculty. What is the level of autonomy?

2. Faculty Vision, Mission, Objectives

The vision should include the long term desired status and positioning of the faculty.

Describe the mission of the faculty both as an ecclesiastical and an academic institution. Do vision and mission need to evolve? Flowing from the vision and the mission describe the faculty's principal strategic objectives.

What are the constraints on the faculty in its efforts to achieve its goals?

¹ SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.



3. SWOT; Strategic Plan

List the faculty's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Consider the full range of factors relevant to you: teaching and learning; research; management and organisation; community related activities; internationalisation; finance; human resources; external issues etc.

1. What do you consider to be the **STRENGTHS** of the faculty?

On what evidence do you base these judgements? If this evidence is not strong or useful, how should you get the evidence you need on an ongoing basis?

2. What do you consider to be the **WEAKNESSES** of the faculty? What seems not to work so well, and therefore needs improvement, rethinking or development? What is the evidence for these judgements? If you don't have useful evidence how would you get it?

3. What do you consider to be the major favourable conditions affecting the **OPPORTUNITIES** available to the faculty now and in the future - both in terms of factors internal to the faculty but especially in terms of external opportunities (local, regional, national and international)? What is your evidence?

4. What do you consider to be the **THREATS** that confront your faculty and the **BARRIERS** to seizing the opportunities? What is your evidence from external sources?

Does the faculty have a strategic plan based on this SWOT analysis? If yes, describe it, if no, develop an outline of such a plan, indicating the principal priorities of the faculty for the next four years. Please cross-reference with Section 2.

4. Teaching and Learning

Describe the departmental structure of the faculty and the academic programmes taught at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Discuss the faculty's policies and procedures for setting overall aims, learning outcomes and purposes of the degrees and programmes offered, benchmarks for student learning and achievement for each year, guidelines on written assignments, principles on marking and feedback to students, etc. Does the faculty produce a student handbook with this information?

What are the factors that determine the need for new programmes e.g. research advances, intellectual challenge, analysis of employer needs, staff expertise and interests, analysis of programmes elsewhere? How efficient are processes of course development?

Comment on the quality of entering students, with reference to their previous education, country of origin, status as clerical or lay students, motivation, and also on the issues deriving from progression and completion data (Annexes 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9).



Assess the faculty's compliance with the Bologna Process: the three cycle (bachelor-master-doctor) degree structure, use of ECTS, Diploma Supplement. Are the academic courses modularised and creditised with a description of learning outcomes? Is there a movement from a teaching to a student learning environment? Discuss the faculty's approach to these questions.

Assess the faculty's involvement in international exchange programmes. More generally assess the faculty's international involvement in the area of Teaching and Learning. Discuss the faculty's approach to staff refreshment and developments via leaves of absence, sabbaticals. Discuss the faculty's policy on developing foreign language (especially English) competence among staff and students.

Does the faculty investigate and implement alternative strategies to lecturing for all taught programmes, e.g. seminars, group project work, workshops, problem-solving sessions? What is the faculty's policy on student assessment for the three cycles? Is student assessment heavily dependent on the final written examination? Is feedback to students effective and timely?

What is the faculty's policy on providing opportunities for students to develop relevant generic skills such as leadership, presentation, IT etc.?

Are staff available for consultation with students, and have they posted office hours?

Is there a formal questionnaire system for regular assessment by students of the quality of teaching and other matters, with an appropriate feedback mechanism to all faculty staff? Is there a formal annual review of teaching with defined follow-up procedures and appropriate staff development processes?

What are the formal procedures in place for addressing the academic needs and pastoral care of students? Assess the faculty's activities in monitoring the placement of its graduates in employment and in postgraduate programmes elsewhere.

Conclude with an analysis of how the information given above accords with the earlier SWOT analysis. How should you change in order to improve?

5. Research

Assess the faculty's current research strategy, with special reference to the faculty's core thematic areas of research. Have certain areas been prioritised for future development, for example with respect to new appointments, extra funding? Is there a vibrant research culture in the faculty? Is there communication and collaboration on research within the faculty, with other faculties in your country?

Is there collaboration with faculties abroad? On what? How effective is it? More generally assess the faculty's international involvement in the area of research.



Comment on the level and diversity of funding available for research and the mechanisms operated by the faculty in seeking funding both internally and externally. Comment on the funding obtained to support research in the last five years (Annexe 11).

Comment on the research facilities in the faculty with reference to space, access to journals, IT and library support, etc. Assess the balance between research and teaching in the faculty. Are teaching loads adversely affecting research?

Comment on the overall publication rate in the faculty, on the percentage of under-producing staff, on the percentage of your publications that appear in internationally recognised peer-reviewed journals. Does the publication rate reflect the size of the faculty and the actual research activity? How does the research activity compare with other similar faculties, in your country, abroad (Annexe 10)?

Comment on the number of publications by staff in the last five years under the following headings: Books authored, books edited, articles in refereed journals, articles in other journals, papers presented at conferences, reviews, chapters in books.

Comment on the number of staff that act as referees for journals and academic publishers.

Comment on the publishers and journals with which members of staff are involved as editors, reviewers, etc.

Describe the faculty's policy on doctoral studies. Comment on the number of doctoral students, on the ratio of doctoral students to active researchers, on the number of doctoral degrees completed in each of the last five years, and on the average time for completing the degree over the same period. Comment also on the quality of new doctoral students, entry requirements, motivation and the effectiveness of arrangements for supervision and monitoring.

Conclude with an analysis of the present state of research and doctoral training in the faculty, and the expectations for the future, bearing in mind the SWOT analysis in section 2, information from staff and postgraduate student questionnaires, as well as an examination of the information given above i.e. the quality of the journals where staff have published, international benchmarking, participation in joint research at home and abroad, etc.

6. External Societal Contributions

Comment on the faculty's external societal contributions under the following headings:

Professional and other bodies

Community – participation in external community life and social projects

Lifelong Learning, Continuing Education

Contact with alumni

Consultancy/external advisory arrangements



7. Resources

Referring to the relevant numerical information, discuss the academic staff in terms of the ability of the faculty to fulfill its mission and achieve its objectives both qualitatively and quantitatively. Consider trends over recent years in: staff numbers and ratios of academic staff to students, qualifications and age profile of staff, staff development policy, etc. Assess future needs. Similar discussion for support staff (Annexes 2, 3 and 4).

Assess the financial situation of the faculty, income and expenditure in terms of the range of sources, buoyancy and sustainability, trends over recent years, future developments (Annexe 11).

Discuss the adequacy of the accommodation situation with reference to suitability and adequacy for teaching and learning, research, etc.

Discuss the adequacy of IT and library provision, and policy for future development.

8. Management, Organisation

What level of autonomy has the faculty in terms of academic, financial and personnel matters?

Describe the organisational structure of the faculty, with a chart (Annexe 1) detailing the reporting lines both internal and external (e.g. the local bishop, CEC, the order, university, if relevant). How are decisions made? Where does final responsibility for decisions lie? Assess the effects on the faculty's ability to fulfill its mission and achieve its objectives.

Are dean and heads of department elected or appointed, and do these posts rotate? How are teaching appointments made? How are promotions decided, and by whom? Again assess the effects on the ability of the faculty to fulfill its mission and achieve its objectives.

Are there regular meetings of faculty and departments, with an agreed agenda circulated in advance and brief minutes of key decisions and action items? Are decisions reached by vote/consensus?

Are there formal procedures in place for dealing with staff concerns?

Is there a staff/student committee, and are there arrangements for consultation with students, for example, a mentor or advisory system?

9. Quality Assurance

Describe and assess the faculty's policy on assuring the quality of all its activities, especially with reference to the Apostolic Constitution *Sapientia Christiana*, the QA requirements of the Bologna Process, and the *European Standards and Guidelines* published by ENQA.



Annex 1

Organisational Chart of the Faculty



Annex 2

Number of teaching staff

The following chart can be adapted by each institution according to its specific organisation and statute. Please add a note defining possible terms not present in the present chart.

	Full time	Full time	Full time	Part time	Part time
	Ordinary Prof	Extraordinary Prof	Associate Prof	Assistant Prof	Other
2005/06					
2006/07					
2007/08					
2008/09					
2009/10					



Annex 3

Average age of teaching staff

	Full time	Full time	Full time	Part time
	Ordinary Prof	Extraordinary Prof	Associate Prof	Assistant Prof
2005/06				
2006/07				
2007/08				
2008/09				



Annex 4

Average number contact hours per week of teaching staff

	Full time	Full time	Full time	Part time
	Ordinary Prof	Extraordinary Prof	Associate Prof	Assistant Prof
2005/06				
2006/07				
2007/08				
2008/09				



Annex 5

Number of students

	First Cycle	Second Cycle	Third Cycle	Auditors	Total
2005/06					
2006/07					
2007/08					
2008/09					
2009/10					



Annex 6

Number of entering students

	First Cycle	Second Cycle	Third Cycle	Auditors	Total
2005/06					
2006/07					
2007/08					
2008/09					
2009/10					



Annex 7

Number of graduated students

	First Cycle	Second Cycle	Third Cycle	Total
2005/06				
2006/07				
2007/08				
2008/09				
2009/10				



Annex 8

Average number of years to graduation

	First Cycle	Second Cycle	Third Cycle
2005/06			
2006/07			
2007/08			
2008/09			
2009/10			



Annex 9

Overall drop-out (%) of students

	First Cycle	Second Cycle	Third Cycle
2005/06			
2006/07			
2007/08			
2008/09			
2009/10			



Annex 10

Number of Publications/Presentations by staff

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Books (authored)					
Books (edited)					
Articles					
Conference papers					
Reviews					
Chapter in book					

In the case of published articles how many were in refereed journals, how many in refereed journals outside the home country?

List the number of staff that act as referees for journals and publishers.

List the publishers and journals with which staff are involved as editors, reviewers, etc.



Annex 11

General funding

State the income of the faculty for each of the past five years, the sources of the income, and how it was distributed over the principal activities of the faculty.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sources					
Income					



Annex 12

Research funding

Describe research funding obtained over the past five years under the following headings:

Title of project, Amount awarded, Source, Period of funding.



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1. Introduction

List the name, grade and function of the members of the Coordinating Committee.

Describe briefly the methodology used in the preparation of the SER, including the number of meetings held by the Committee, and the involvement of the rest of the staff and the students.

Give a brief description of the unit which should include the main activities of the unit. If appropriate describe how the unit has grown and developed in recent years.

2. Mission and Objectives

Describe the mission and goals of the unit. Do the mission and goals need to evolve?

What are the constraints on the unit in its efforts to achieve its goals?

3. SWOT, Strategic Planning

List the unit's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; consider the full range of factors relevant to you: functions, activities, processes, user perspective, staff perspective, management of resources, quality measures, etc.

² SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.



1. What do you consider to be the **STRENGTHS** of the unit?
On what evidence do you base these judgements? If this evidence is not strong or useful, how should you get the evidence you need on an ongoing basis?
2. What do you consider to be the **WEAKNESSES** of the unit? What seems not to work so well, and therefore needs improvement, rethinking or development?
What is the evidence for these judgements? If you don't have useful evidence how would you get it?
3. What do you consider to be the major favourable conditions affecting the **OPPORTUNITIES** available to the unit now and in the future - both in terms of factors internal to the unit but especially in terms of external opportunities (local, regional, national and international)? What is your evidence?
4. What do you consider to be the **THREATS** that confront your unit and the **BARRIERS** to seizing the opportunities? What is your evidence from external sources?

Does your unit regularly collect data on benchmarking, the performance of the internal processes/operations, supplier performance, user-related performance, and is this data used in planning and in day-to-day operations?

Does the unit have a strategic plan based on the SWOT analysis? If yes, describe it, if no, develop an outline of such a plan, indicating the principal priorities of the unit for the next four years. Please cross-reference with Section 2.

4. Organisation

Describe and analyse the management structure in your unit. How are tasks delegated and responsibilities assigned? What are the reporting structures?

Describe and analyse the formal decision making procedures in the unit. For example are there regular meetings of full-time staff with agendas circulated in advance and with brief minutes of key decisions and action items? Who attends? Are staff consulted on upcoming appointments, and if so which staff are consulted?

Describe and analyse the budgetary arrangements in the unit. Is information from Administration timely and accurate?

How is communication assured among staff members in the unit? How are staff members kept informed of changes in procedures, and of decisions taken in other parts of the University or Institution that may affect their work?

Could most staff members list your unit's goals relevant to their activity, and are they familiar with the plans to achieve them in their areas?

Are there formal procedures in place for dealing with staff concerns and differences?



How is communication assured externally, with other Service Units and users?

5. Functions, Activities, Processes

This section examines how the unit manages the delivery of its services.

It also examines the procedures for the control and improvement of the management of these services, and for the documentation to confirm that it is effective.

- a) Provide factual information on what you do and how you do it. Are the facilities and services appropriate and sufficient to fulfill the services unit's objectives?
- b) Is there a comprehensive system for ensuring that user and supplier requirements are taken into account? Is there a plan for new products and services ensuring that all new developments are identified? Will the outcome of this plan be validated at key phases during development?
- c) Does the unit have a system to ensure that all activities operate and are controlled, to the prescribed standards or requirements?
- d) Is there a process of continuous improvement based on identifying opportunities and needs through the analysis of operation and user data, and of external benchmarks?
- e) Does your unit ensure that the audit and other findings, such as records, are always used to improve the systems through the implementation of root-cause cures (rather than 'quick-fixes'), so preventing the recurrence of the problem?
- f) Are the support activities provided by other units (e.g. Finance, IT, Personnel) satisfactory?
- g) Are routine actions taken to make suppliers aware of the unit's current and future quality requirements? Is there a system for ensuring that these requirements are met, and are the suppliers regularly informed and made aware of their performance?
- h) Are the results of most service processes measured and known?
- i) Are they showing an improving trend?

6. User Perspective

This section examines the way the support services unit identifies its various user groups and segments them. It is looking for the measures and results that indicate the levels of user satisfaction. It asks for both the actual perceptions of the user, which may be obtained through surveys etc., and also for measures and results that will tend to predict trends or influence user satisfaction such as complaint levels, late delivery of service etc. This section also examines whether the unit is only looking at its own levels and trends, or whether it compares these with external benchmarks of the performance of comparable organisations.



- a) Does your unit have an accurate and realistic overview of the total complaint level (verbal and written) as received by all areas and functions within the unit?
- b) Does your unit evaluate its management of the user relationship through measures that predict or influence user satisfaction, such as response accuracy, timeliness, returns, lost users, etc., and does it regularly measure and know the results?
- c) Are there well-defined standards and service levels addressing key user requirements, and does your unit routinely measure and know its performance in meeting these standards?
- d) Are the predictors of user satisfaction in a), b) and c) above showing an improving trend?
- e) Are the user satisfaction results (i.e. the actual perceptions of the user) regularly measured and known?
- f) Are these user satisfaction results showing an improving trend?
- g) Can you show that your results of user satisfaction are comparable with/better than those of comparable organisation in your country and abroad?
- h) Does your unit have a method for routinely setting targets/goals for improvement in the performance of its predictors and perception measures of user satisfaction, and has it established the relevance of its measures?
- i) How well does the unit communicate with its users?
- j) What arrangements exist for promoting the unit's facilities and services? Are these arrangements effective?

7. Staff Perspective

This section examines how the unit develops and involves the whole staff in achieving improvements with the unit. It addresses how the staff's goals and targets are aligned to those of the unit (e.g. through performance appraisal), and whether the people processes such as performance appraisal and training are well respected by the employees. It explores whether the people are increasingly empowered to act and become involved in the continuous improvement of the unit. It expects that people involvement in improvement activities will be primarily through the development of a team approach to problem solving.

- a) Are the people plans (e.g. hiring, training, development) directly derived from the needs of the strategic plan and goals (rather than just activities or free-standing plans based on *ad hoc* needs)?
- b) Does your unit have a process (which is respected by the staff) for regular employee appraisals and which includes training and career development needs?
- c) Does your unit have a process that involves all employees (both as individuals and groups) in generating improvements?
- d) Can your unit demonstrate that it is ensuring that its employees become increasingly empowered to act and take responsibility for decisions and changes, and does it actively ensure



that this increased empowerment is without significant increased risk?

- e) Is effort towards quality improvement recognised and rewarded equally to other considerations (e.g. length of service, qualifications)?
- f) Have effective two-way communications been achieved with the employees, and would the employees agree that they are well informed and that their opinions are valued?

This section also examines the satisfaction levels and trends of the employees in the unit. It asks for the measures and results that will tend to predict or influence staff satisfaction.

- a) Are regular measurements conducted of factors which predict trends or influence staff satisfaction and morale such as absenteeism, sickness, staff turnover, early leavers, levels of training, internal promotions, accident levels, recognition levels, grievances?
- b) Are regular surveys conducted (through questionnaires, focus groups etc.) of the perceptions of the staff on various aspects of the unit such as working environment, communications, career prospects, their managers, pay, appraisal, recognition, training, morale and overall employee satisfaction?
- c) Are the results of the predictors of employee satisfaction and actual employee perceptions made known to the employees and acted upon by the management?

8. Management of Resources

This section examines how the unit's key resources such as finance, IT, materials and new technologies are aligned with its quality aims, targets and values. The purpose of this section is to examine to what extent the key resources of the unit are systematically aligned and utilised to ensure that the quality values and targets are actually achieved. It should also ensure that these key resources are being managed in a professional manner.

- a) Does your unit have an approach that ensures that the allocation and use of its financial resources reflects and supports its mission statement and its quality aims and values?
- b) Does your unit ensure that all relevant information including data on process performance, suppliers (including supplier performance) and users (including user satisfaction) is reliable and freely and quickly available and easily usable by any involved personnel (including users/suppliers where appropriate)? This will include the removal of obsolete data and documents.
- c) Does your unit have an approach that continually improves its control and effective use of material resources and suppliers? This includes the reduction of scrap, wastage, obsolescence, inventories and the use of its fixed assets (e.g. space and equipment) and would also involve joint projects with suppliers to improve and identify new opportunities.
- d) Is there a routine method for ensuring that alternative and new technologies are identified and implemented?



9. Quality Assurance

Describe and assess the unit's policy and practice on assuring the quality of all its activities.



Annex 1

Chart of the Unit's Management and Organisational Structure



Annex 2

Summary Details of Staff with areas of responsibility

Name	Grade	Years at Grade	Years at Univ.	Responsibilities



Annex 3

Physical Facilities

Include a list of rooms, offices etc. used by members of the unit, with occupancy. Discuss adequacy of provision.