



# The European Accreditation Agency for Public Health Education (EAAPHE)

## **Working Package 3 Report** (draft of January 2008)

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## QUALITY ASSESSMENT EXPERT TEAM IN PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

### *1. Introduction*

The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) has initiated an EU-financed project aiming at developing a European Accreditation System for public health educational programmes. This project includes setting up a quality assessment expert team for carrying out three pilot accreditations as a platform for establishment of a permanent accreditation function for public health education in Europe. The plan was to conduct three pilot accreditations but due to delay of the deliveries from other parts of the project it was decided to limit the pilots to only two sessions. The aim of this WP was to bring together a team made up from experts from the project's partners and also outside experts in the field – from the organizations identified in WP1,2,3 with a view to elaborating the accreditation system (AS).

### *2. Criteria setting of the selection of experts and approaching the experts through the established contacts*

The experts must have a substantial experience within the public health and it is important to ensure a fair gender distribution in the expert panel and a fair share of experts from Southern, Central, Eastern, Western and Northern European countries. Furthermore, we would like a reasonable distribution along three main criteria: 1) discipline, 2) function, and 3) sector.

1) **Discipline.** We needed experts with graduation within:

- Science
- Health sciences
- Humanities
- Social sciences

2) **Function.** We needed experts with different kinds of experience and expertise:

- Top level management/policy making/decision making within public health
- Public health practice (e.g. health educators, evaluators, community physicians)
- Research and education within public health (e.g. staff from schools of public health)

- 3) **Sector.** Preferably, the team of experts should have representatives from the
- Private sector (e.g. insurance companies; consultants; private hospitals; relevant industry)
  - Public sector (e.g. grassroots and consumer organizations, patient associations).

All members of ASPHER and selected relevant international public health organizations (EUPHA, EHMA, WHO) were invited through widespread announcement to nominate experts along these criteria<sup>1</sup>. The announcement was distributed by ASPHER to all the schools of public health with a membership of the organisation (about 75 institutions) and to all individual members of EUPHA (8.000 – 10.000) through the regular newsletter of the Association. For each nominated expert we ask for a few key data in a short questionnaire<sup>2</sup>.

### ***3. Setting up a selection procedure and determining the size of the accreditation team***

There was great interest and support to the project among the stakeholders and 108 applications from nominated candidates were received and registered in a database<sup>3</sup>. The applicants were evaluated and divided into 3 groups: 1) the project pilot accreditations, 2) a main list and 3) not accepted. Only 13 of the applicants were characterized as not being relevant according to the criteria. Based on the applications and other relevant input from our partners a group of 20 proposed experts from the main list were selected<sup>4</sup> in order to establish the expert team for the two pilot accreditations. In this group were 5 females and 15 males from 12 different countries. The other applicants were listed for future permanent accreditation activities after the project is finished. All the applicants received a letter informing them about the selection process<sup>5</sup>.

The 20 experts were contacted to confirm their interest in participation in the accreditation sessions and invited to a training seminar either in Montreux or in Copenhagen<sup>6</sup>. The main

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix1.Letter for nomination of experts

<sup>2</sup> Appendix2. Questionnaire

<sup>3</sup> Appendix3. List of nominated/proposed experts

<sup>4</sup> Appendix4. List of expert team for pilot accreditation

<sup>5</sup> Appendix5. Letter to not accepted experts and <sup>6</sup> Letter to accepted experts

<sup>6</sup> Appendix7. Letter to expert team for pilot accreditation

interest was for a seminar in Copenhagen which took place 17 and 18 December 2006. The partners and 10 of the invited experts participated in the seminar. The seminar was very useful for the further development of the accreditation standards and there were very constructive input from the experts, who showed very motivated for being involved in the project<sup>7</sup>.

The project group met two more times in Paris to follow-up and plan the next steps. The first meeting was specially focusing on the further development of the accreditation standards in order to facilitate the pilot accreditations. At the second meeting the group finalized the specific procedures on which the pilot accreditations should be based.

The reviewers for the two pilot accreditations were selected by the following criteria:

- Experience with PEER
- Experience in development, provision and evaluation of higher education programmes
- Experience in quality assurance of higher educations
- Appropriate academic qualifications
- Knowledge of teaching and learning methods
- Relevant international experience
- Discipline and nationality
- Knowledge of the country-specific system.
- Appropriate academic qualifications
- Recognized in the field of public health.

Based on previous experience from the Aspher peer reviews and international recommendations on accreditation the size of the accreditation teams was defined to consist of three members: a chair, two other experts and one observer.

#### ***4. Actual selecting of the members and formalizing their participation***

On the basis of the discussions at the meetings in Paris and the feed back from the expert panel about their availability, disciplines and geography the specific expert pilot teams for the two site visit and the project accreditation committee were composed.

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix8. Minutes from Copenhagen seminar/conference

The following experts were selected and confirmed their participations in the actual teams:

Site visit team Sheffield	Site visit team Kaunas
Mrs. Melina Grey, British (chair)	Mr. Ulrich Laaser, German (chair)
Mr. Jouhe Van der Zee, Dutch	Mr. Antonin Malina, Czeck
Ms. Sanja Kusec, Croatian	Mrs. Magarida Matos, Portuguese

### **Project accreditation committee**

Mr. Franco Cavallo, Italian (chair)

Mrs. Mari-Odile Ottenwaelther, French

Mr. Horst Noack, Austrian

Mrs. Olesya Hulchiy, Ukrainian.

The committee was responsible for making conclusions based on the pilot accreditation reports.

The selected experts for teams and accreditation committee had all participated in the seminar in Copenhagen in December 2006.

### ***6. Liaising with all team members and elaboration of the work plan for the pilot accreditation***

The two chosen institutions were contacted concerning the time table for the site visits. A work plan for the two site visit was scheduled:

Date 2007	TASK
January Meeting in Paris	* Complete the accreditation standards * Selection of experts * Planning the visit
February Meeting in Paris	Agree on accreditation procedure
April/May	Self-assessment reports from the two institutions
May	Site visits
June 25 and 26	Visit reports by the end of June Partners and accreditation board meeting in Copenhagen
July	Feedback/comments from reviewed schools
November	Final conference in Krakow

## ***7. Conclusions***

It is clear from this WP that there is a widespread and clear interest among schools of public health and professionals within the field to engage with their expertise as peers in an accreditation programme. Through the main stakeholders a large number of well qualified experts could quite easily be recruited for the project and selected on the basis of well defined criteria. The experts were very motivated and ready to take part in training/seminar activities in order to learn about accreditation of higher educations in general and about the specific requirements and procedures involved in this project. According to the international experiences such training activities are crucial for the quality of reviews in an accreditation programme (see also report from WP 7).