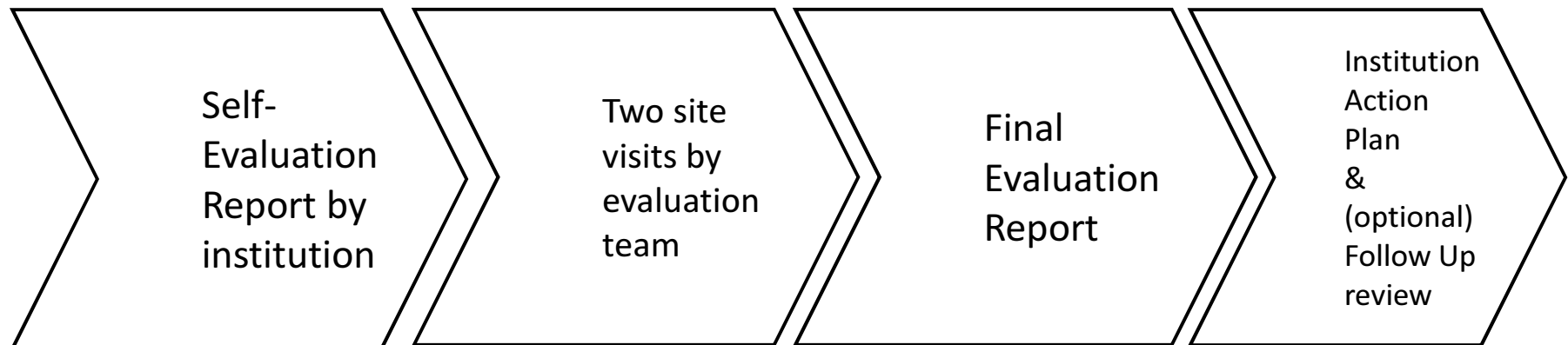# IEP methodology step by step in further detail

Bucharest 21, February 2012

Henrik Toft Jensen, Roskilde University, Denmark

The Main Stages of an Evaluation Process

Self-Evaluation Report by institution → Two site visits by evaluation team → Final Evaluation Report → Institution Action Plan & (optional) Follow Up review

The Evaluation Team

▸ Each of the five IEP team members is from a different country

▸ One member is often from a neighbour country

▸ The chair has served as a rector and other team members are

  ◦ Either rectors or vice-rectors

  ◦ Team coordinator: higher education professional

  ◦ The student member who always contributes valuable insights

▸ A team spirit always develops quickly
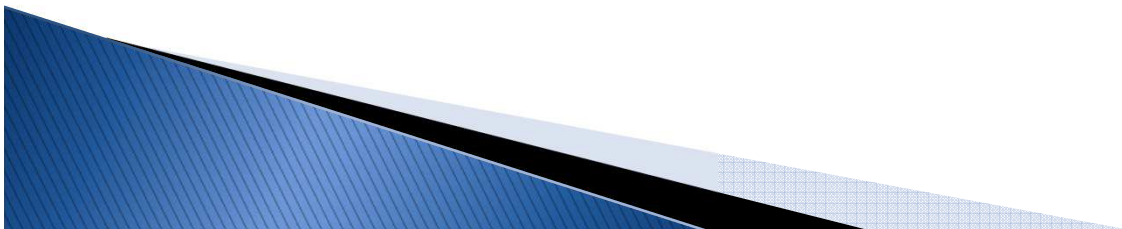
How to Contribute to a Successful Team

➢ Study carefully and make notes *in advance* of visits of impressions of the self-evaluation report and other supplied documents

➢ Participate fully and take notes on key points in *all* interviews and meetings

➢ Follow agreed plans, be aware of the flow of meetings, and respect decisions of the (team) chair

➢ Be punctual and keep interventions short and focused

➢ Contribute as requested, to all tasks and to the evaluation report

➢ Respect the culture of the institution and of the locality

➢ Respect the confidentiality of the whole evaluation process

One effect should be that members of the visited institution
see the team as **coherent, balanced and effective,**
and fully involved in the task of evaluation.

First Visit: Preliminary Private Meeting of Team

➢ Getting to know one another

➢ Team getting to know the Chair (& vice versa) and her/his style and approach

➢ Discussion of impressions gained from the self-evaluation report and identification of issues and areas to be explored

➢ Allocation of roles and responsibilities according to expertise

➢ Preparation for meetings with Rector and on first day
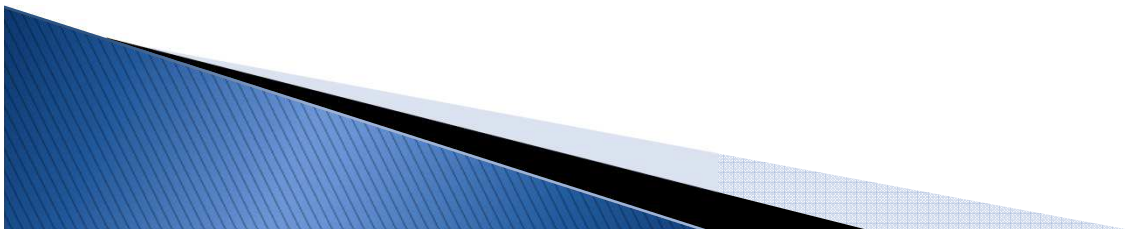
Other Private Meetings of Team

➢ The meetings during both visits:

  ◦ Share impressions and check understanding

  ◦ Clarify issues and develop questions to further test understanding

  ◦ Identify hypothetical recommendations to be tested in meetings

  ◦ Identify any further information and data to be requested

➢ During the Second Visit

  ◦ Focus from the start on options with respect to the outline, content, emphases and discrete recommendations for the Oral and Final reports

  ◦ Ensure sufficient time is available for preparation of the Oral report

 ◦ Agree responsibilities and timelines for the report writing stage
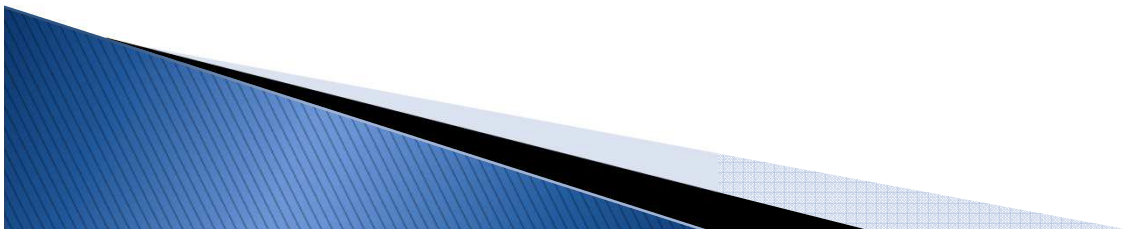
Making the most of Meetings at the Institution

➢ Forward planning for meetings can be very effective

➢ The team chair normally leads, and meetings consist of dialogs, with the chair and team members posing questions in turn

➢ Most understanding is gained if team members with particular expertise lead (and pursue) discussions in relevant areas

➢ What participants are NOT saying may be more important than what they ARE saying

➢ For the team the *key activities* are listening and noting

➢ In all dialog, team members are focused, respectful and *refrain* from offering advice or talking of 'my university'

➢ Formal presentations by institution members are rarely appropriate and offers should normally be declined

Importance of History, Culture and Laws

▸ Every university/college/institution exists in a unique context that should be understood and taken into account

▸ History and culture can confer important strengths and opportunities, but also constraints

▸ National or state laws and regulations differ greatly and are often recent or about to change
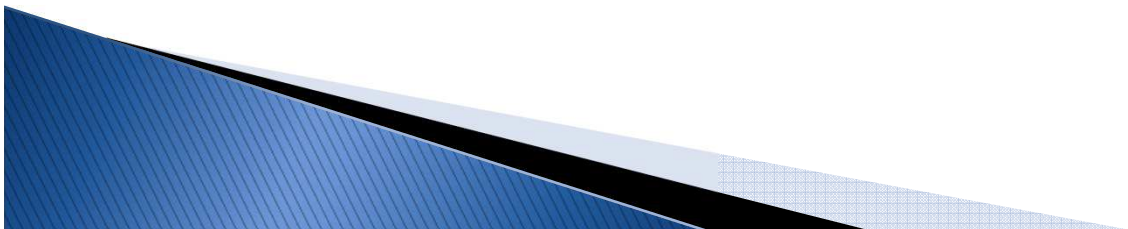
The Unfolding Evaluation Process - 1

A number of conditions are necessary for an evaluation to be truly successful:

▸ Evaluators base opinions/conclusions on multiple sources of evidence

▸ The rector, management, staff and students are open and frank in the provision of information and in discussions

▸ Evaluators seek feedback and test conclusions in discussions

▸ Recommendations are couched in terms that are open and not overly prescriptive

The Unfolding Evaluation Process - 2

The objective is to understand the institution under evaluation:

▸ Its contexts, advantages and constraints

▸ Its actual mission and roles

▸ Its governance, management and finances

▸ The abilities and conditions of its teaching and administrative staff

▸ And not least, the learning and experiences of its students
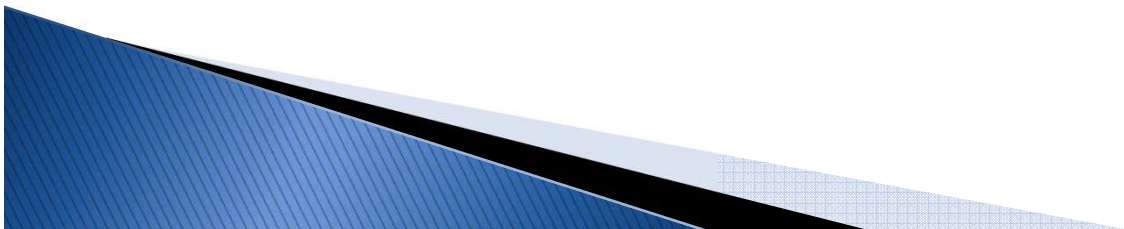
The Unfolding Evaluation Process - 3

This gradual process benefits from:

▸ Studying the SER and attached data

▸ Shared understandings among the team

▸ Meetings with rector and management

▸ Meetings with staff, both academic and administrative

▸ Meetings with students

▸ Meetings with external partners

▸ Lots of reflection and discussion

Look out for:

▶ Variety of institutional autonomy

  ◦ Who recruits and appoints staff?

  ◦ Who selects students? Who decides on selection criteria?

  ◦ Who decides on research projects?

▶ Variety of institutional management

  ➢ Rector's powers vary greatly (full/part-time, political connections)

  ➢ Roles of senate/council, frequency of meetings

  ➢ Senior management team, roles and numbers

▶ Variety of funding models

  ◦ lump sums v. earmarked funding

 ◦ Mix of funding (government, fees, research, enterprises, donations)

Practical Considerations - 1: First of All

1. Attend the preparatory workshops and the IEP Annual seminars for training and networking   +

2. Read *both* sets of Guidelines
   ◦ Guidelines for Participating Institutions
   ◦ Guidelines for Evaluation Teams

3. Study carefully the self-evaluation report etc. and record impressions

4. Keep in touch with team coordinator and IEP secretariat (e-mail)

5. Study carefully any additional data and documentation provided by the institution after the first study visit.
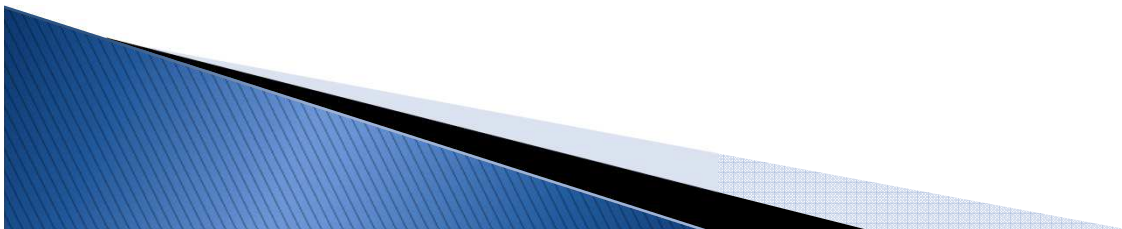
Practical Considerations - 2: The Report

6. Participate fully in the preparation and completion of the written report as agreed in the team. Respond timely.

7. When complete, the report is edited at the IEP secretariat and sent to the institution for factual checking. Finally, the secretariat sends it officially to the institution and publishes it on the IEP website.

8. Each team member receives a paper copy of the report.
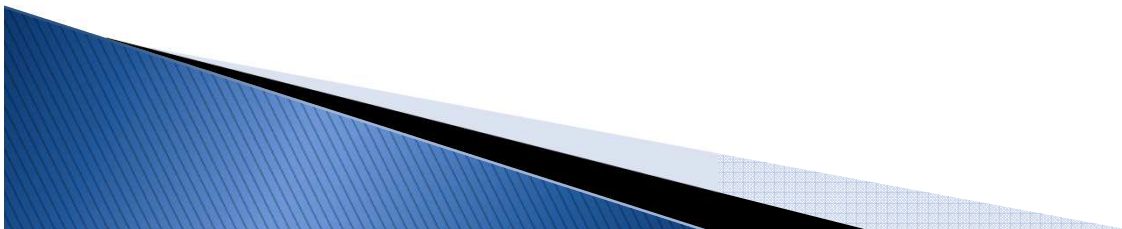
Practical Considerations - 3: Contacts

- *… when I have a question regarding the IEP procedures (incl. financial issues)?*

  The IEP secretariat

- *… when I have a question regarding practical arrangements for the visits?*

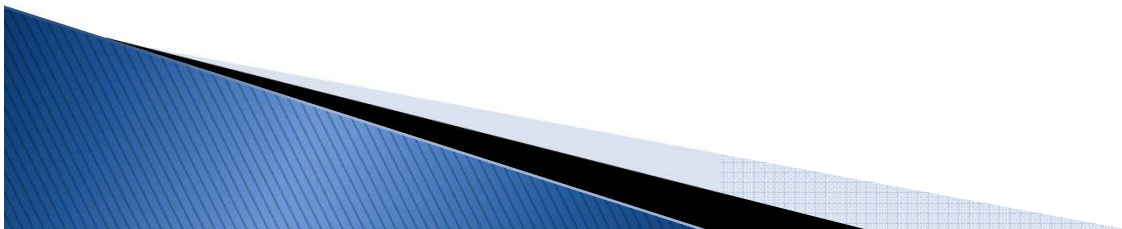 Your team coordinator (or, prior to the first visit, the IEP secretariat)

- *… when I have a question or query regarding the contents of the evaluation?*

  Your team chair, with copy to the whole team if appropriate

- *… when, for a* force majeure *reason, I cannot participate to a visit?*

  The IEP secretariat as well as your team chair and coordinator
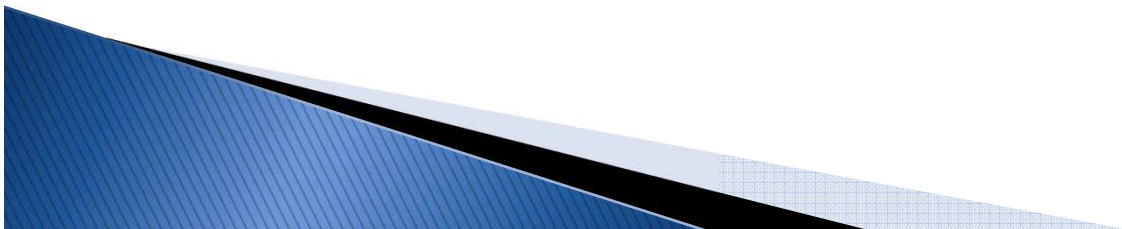
Practical Considerations - 4: NOTE

▸ Further information: www.eua.be/iep
▸ The IEP secretariat:

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Conclusions

- Being a member of a team evaluating a university or college is a great responsibility

- It requires an open mind, experience, expertise, inquisitiveness and team-work

- It is also one of the most satisfying roles I have ever played.

Thank you