

How to satisfy accreditation requirements without losing vision

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Who do you most want to satisfy?

Government authorities?

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- Grants legality – the right to exist, to run at a certain level or the right to offer a degree
- Having accreditation gives public credibility, and encourages students to enroll.

Who do you most want to satisfy?

Government authorities?

Peer-level institutions?

- Accreditation by a network of peers affirms the equivalence of your quality at places just like you.
- Having this gives regional and often international credibility, and allows for credit transfer or advanced-level study

Who do you most want to satisfy?

Government authorities?

Peer-level institutions?

Community validation?

- The affirmation of your quality by those that you are trying to serve.
- Having this gives reputation and viability as people want to send students to study with you.

Who do you most want to satisfy?

Government authorities?

Peer-level institutions?

Community validation?

God?

- Hearing God's: "Well-done, good and faithful servants!"

Who do you most want to satisfy?

If your primary need is demonstrating your own quality to God and to those that you serve – then the requirements of others should not be a threat.

Although bureaucracies can be maddening!

What governments and other networks want:

- Whether your teachers are competent
- Whether your admissions processes are just and fair
- Whether your programme is as rigorous as other programmes being offered at the same level
- Whether you are financially stable
- Whether you have the resources or administrative structures to offer what you promise to students

What governments and other networks want:

These are valid issues. But if you can demonstrate your quality to yourself – you probably can demonstrate it to the government or others as well.

Two important questions

(1) What is your purpose?

(2) Can you demonstrate (and document) the quality of your programme as you fulfil your purpose?

Different purposes shape programmes in very different ways

- Preparing pastors for a particular denomination
- Preparing church planters for an upper-class (or slum-area?) urban centre
- Preparing cross-cultural missions to work in North Africa
- Preparing workers who will use sports to reach youth
- Preparing students to do graduate studies in the UK

Different purposes shape programmes in very different ways

For each of these

- Are the students capable of becoming what you intend?
- Do you have teachers with knowledge and experience to help your students prepare for these various purposes?
- Do you have a coherent curricular plan to lay foundations, fill in the gaps, and give the tools and skills for your students to be successful?
- Do have the facilities and equipment to do what you intend?
- Do you have the administrative team and governance structures to give this programme stability?

What we want ...

... Is usually more than what any government might want.

Consider the need for character – holiness, formation of family
Or for developing relationships – in order to give share wisdom
as we counsel or preach, or to build up the body of Christ.

These are not government-level goals – but they are crucial to
the success of our graduates.

What we want ...

So define your own purpose – and then document your quality.

- Your constituency will be really happy.
- Most networks like ACTEA will be satisfied,
- And note that you've probably now done most of what the Commission on Higher Education wants.