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"*Quality Management Systems in Higher Education: the case of ORT Uruguay University*"

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Are we serious
about quality in our schools?

Do we set standards of teaching, learning and logistics?

Do we define indicators of success?

Do we systematically gather and evaluate performance data?

Do we use the results for correction and improvement?

What is quality in education about?

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•efficient logistics (on-time lessons, well resourced labs?)

•standardised tests results?

•student behavioural transformation?

•job placement?

•all of the above?

•none of the above?

Quality in education

• Quality in education is underdeveloped as a discipline for the same reason that marketing is (history of monopolies, lack of competition and little accountability).

This is also one of the factors explaining the slow pace of innovation technological and otherwise in educational systems.

Educational systems and change

- Centralised and hierarchical structures
- Industrial approach to teaching with a focus on process (e.g. syllabus coverage) rather than results
- Autonomous agents (teachers) working in isolation as opposed to networked communities of practice
- Create the ground for "pseudo changes", peripheral changes (as opposed to *core* changes) and uncritical adoption of new technologies or methods.

What are quality management systems QMS?

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• Systems of mechanisms for regularly and consistently collect performance data, communicate results and implement corrections and improvements

- QMS are not only for measuring, they should be tied into communication and improvement processes because quality, improvement and accountability are interrelated concepts.

Why are quality management systems important in educational institutions?

•Professional obligation of diligence: assess process and progress.

-Legal requirements for evidence of fulfilment of regulations.

- Competitive needs to ensure the satisfaction of stakeholders (especially students and graduates) and produce "tangible" evidence of value for external audiences.

    - Reputation is key to marketing, hard to build and quick to damage, disgruntlement travels longer than satisfaction.

- Provide feedback to the community, the search for quality is at the end of the day a cultural quest for communal values and aims ("positive deviance").

Approaches to quality assessment

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• Inputs and resources (teacher qualifications, labs, libraries, teacher student ratios)

-Process (class cancellations, GPAs…)

-Outcomes (graduation, retention, job placement…)

-User satisfaction (students and graduates)

Measurement

- What to measure?

- How to measure

    - Quantitative

    - Qualitative

- How to interpret measurements

    - Reicheld

Ethical issues in quality measurements

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- Should results of teacher evaluations be public?

- Should students rate teachers at all? Might this distort teacher-student relations or teachers attitudes?

- Should student evaluations be anonymous?

What and how we measure?

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• Student satisfaction	• On-line compulsory surveys at the end of each semester with direct and indirect questions (would you recommend ORT?) and quantitative and qualitative replies
• Student retention	• Student tracking from one semester to the next
• Graduate rates	• Student tracking from year of entry to programme during double the length of programme
• Graduate satisfaction	• On-line compulsory surveys when graduates request their diplomas with direct and indirect questions (would you recommend ORT?) and quantitative and qualitative replies
• Job placement	• Yearly surveys of graduates

Variables

· Student satisfaction	· Reicheld
· Student retention	· % of students who do not enroll for at least two years in the programme
· Graduate rates	· % of students who do not graduate in length of programme + x years
· Graduate satisfaction	· Reicheld
· Job placement	· Placement rates

Actions based on results

• Student satisfaction	• Department discussion of student comments • Teacher training, resource review (labs, libraries, space), syllabus review • Public replies to qualitative comments
• Student retention	• Call to students who do not re-enroll
• Graduate rates	
• Graduate satisfaction	• Personal interviews with graduates who show low satisfaction
• Job placement	

Thank you for your attention

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You are a high quality audience!