

# Role and Potentials of an External Evaluation in a Grundtvig Project

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Quality in Blended Learning  
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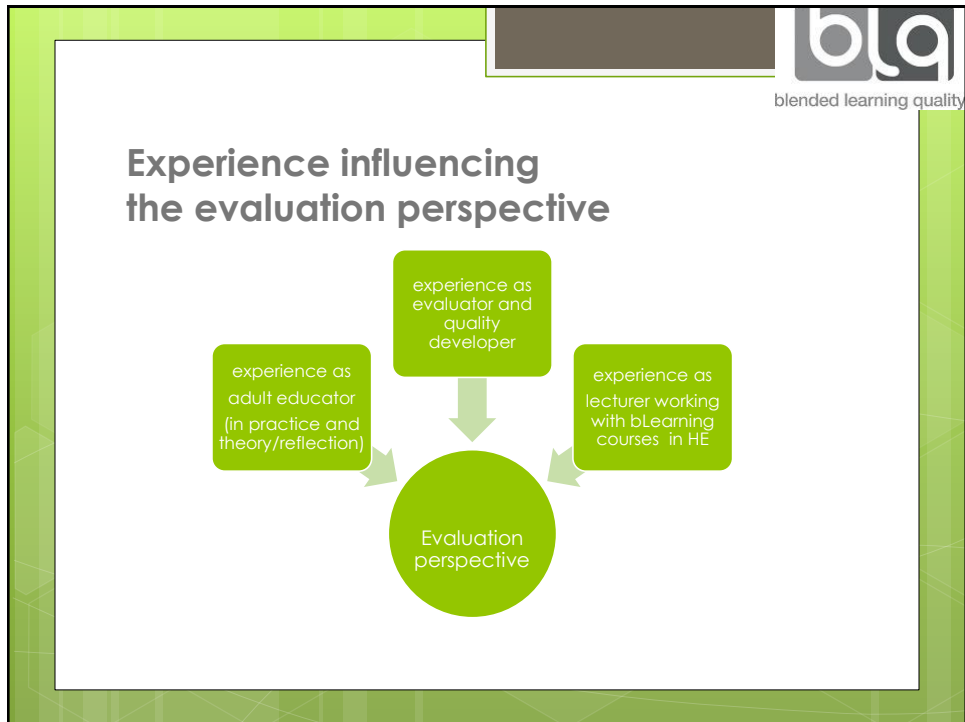
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## Dr. Birgit Aschemann

- psychologist, adult educator, educational researcher
- key topics: program planning and quality assurance in adult education; competence orientation; academic writing

Currently working as

- manager of the R&D department of "Frauenservice Graz"
- lecturer at the University of Graz
- assessor for the Austrian Academy of Continuing Education
- member of an EC working group dealing with adult learning



## What do we consider as "good" in evaluation?

A magnifying glass is positioned over a survey form. The word "Survey" is visible at the top. Below it, there are three options: "Excellent", "Very good", and "Good". The "Excellent" option is checked with a red mark.

## Evaluation Standards

**DeGEval-Standards**, ratified by the Evaluation Society since 2001:

25 Standards, organized in 4 groups:

- **Utility Standards** (clarified purposes, transparency, utilization)
- **Feasibility Standards** (realistic, diplomatic and efficient procedures)
- **Propriety Standards** (complete, fair and respectful procedures)
- **Accuracy Standards** (systematic, valid and reliable data collection and analysis)

## Additional Expectations

- The evaluation should be founded on a shared understanding of "good work".
- An assessment of outcomes should be based (also) on the ratings of the producers and users (external evaluation with internal participation).
- The evaluation should discover and honour positive outcomes.
- The evaluation should indicate possible amendments.

## Evaluation in practice

How can these principles be brought to life under the conditions of long distance cooperation and restricted budget? →

Suggestions for the Grundtvig project QiBL



## Requirements from the QiBL project description:

All events and products (deliverables) will be evaluated.

The evaluation is formative in the following way:

- Evaluation results are distributed to the steering committee.
- The steering group discusses the findings and reacts if necessary (the coordinator is responsible for change management).


## A shared understanding of “good work”

Transparency in evaluation also means to declare the evaluation criteria and to develop a common understanding of what is “good work”.



## Product evaluation along shared quality criteria

1. For each product (deliverable) the project partners receive an “Evaluation Letter” suggesting specific quality criteria (taken from the project description, from relevant literature and from good practice).
2. Project partners are invited to give their comments (additions or critique) within three weeks time.
3. These comments are considered carefully and a questionnaire is drafted according to the results.
4. Projects partners are asked to rate each product or outcome by a this online questionnaire.




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## Recurring procedure for each QiBL-product \*

- 1
  - Evaluation letter: suggested criteria
  - Comments/feedback from partners
- 2
  - Construction of an online questionnaire (derived from suggested criteria and partner feedbacks)
- 3
  - Online survey is performed
  - Partners assess the product according to the shared criteria

\* Exception: courses in Helsinki



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## Evaluation letters and surveys will cover the following products:

- ✓ Research work
- ✓ Catalogue of criteria
- Guidelines for eLearning platform (summer 2014)
- Tutorial support (autumn 2014)
- Materials: Handbook, instructions (summer 2015)

## Example

Two evaluation letters were already sent to the partners:

- **Evaluation Letter no. 1 – Summary of Research Work**
- **Evaluation Letter no. 2 - Catalogue of criteria**

→ a brief insight to EL no. 2 - contents & answers

## EL no. 2 - Catalogue of crit.

**Suggested quality criteria for WP 2:  
Meta criteria!**



(A) Quality criteria for WP 2 derived from the official project description

(B) Additional criteria for WP 2 derived from literature and good practice

## EL no. 2 - Catalogue of crit.

Quality criteria for WP 2 derived from the official project description (excerpt):

- **Formal criteria:** the product has to be ready in time, consists of a main pdf document (portfolio with defined contents), it fits the general CD for documents in the project and is ready to be uploaded at the website.
- **Content-related criteria:** The listed quality criteria refer at least to the following quality fields: the creation of a bLearning course, the environment (institution, learner) and the evaluation and validation process (outcome). The catalogue also contains criteria for quality in teaching processes. These criteria are based on the current scientific and pedagogical literature as well as practical experience in European Projects.

## EL no. 2 - Catalogue of crit.

Additional criteria for WP 2 (from literature + good practice):

- **The main principles of adult learning are taken into account in the criteria catalogue.**
- **The criteria catalogue refers to the important quality domains of adult education** (these domains are listed)
- **The criteria catalogue covers the specific challenges of blended learning** (e.g. the tutorial system)
- **The criteria catalogue meets the requirements of a set of quality indicators in general** (=listed).



## EL no. 2: Feedback (examples)

### Spain:

- Criteria should be defined not only for the teaching processes, but also for the tutorial systems and tutorial processes.
- The development of professional competence of the learners should be included (employability is of major importance).

### Finland:

- Criteria concerning prior knowledge and motivation of the learners could be taken into account.



## EL no. 2: Feedback (examples)

Feedback also included 2 fundamental suggestions (leading in different directions):

- (Helsinki:) Evaluation should focus more on the process, not on outcomes (like for example action research) → that could be a good possibility for an internal evaluation of the training course in Helsinki)
- (Vienna:) Criteria should be clearly measurable → we will realize that only approximately by rating the outcomes



## Announcement


An online questionnaire to rate the products 1 and 2 will be performed in March/April 2014.

***All QiBL partners: please participate reliably!***



## Summary (QiBL-evaluation)

- We move towards a shared understanding of "good work" by the feedbacks to the "Evaluation Letters".
- We assess the project outcomes mainly in the form of ratings by the project partners themselves.
- We use the meta-perspective of the evaluation (e.g. meta-criteria, quality domains) to crosscheck whether any important issues were forgotten.

  
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## Thank you for listening

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