

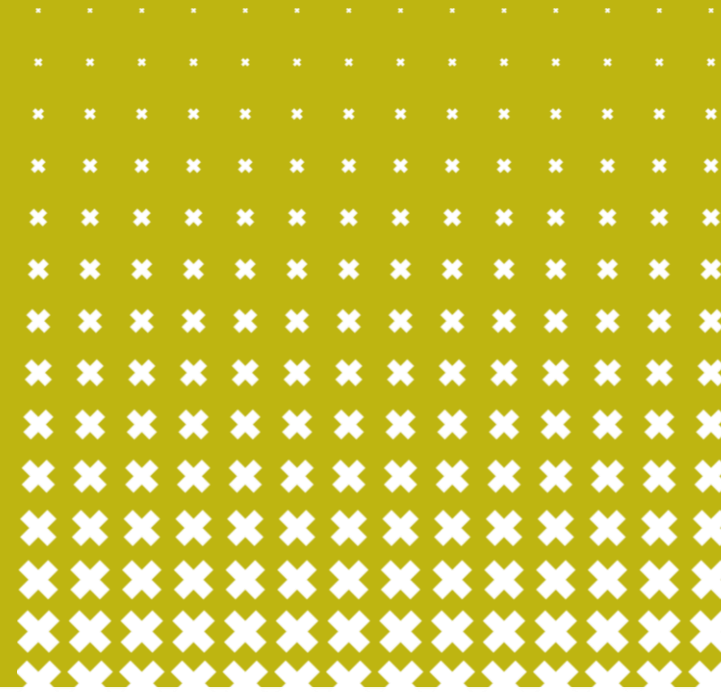


Safeguarding quality of higher education: the Dutch case

joop hartog

Universiteit van Amsterdam

j.hartog@uva.nl



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Quality of education elusive:

Motivates and justifies government intervention
AND defines the problem

- Institutional framework
- Universities
- Evidence based interventions
- Scope for improvement:
 - Research examples
 - Knowledge transfers
 - A new institute!

1. The institutional and legal framework

Law on Higher Education (1992)

Dutch government funds universities and professional schools.

Accreditation required for funding and to allow recognised degrees.

Independent accreditation since the Bologna Agreement 1999

Assessment for accreditation should cover:

- Intended final qualification level
- Content educational program
- Realised final qualification
- Evaluation, testing and examining students
- Quality and quantity of teaching staff
- Student counselling
- Internal quality management

Assessed by committee of experts.

Table 1. Accreditations processed by NVAO, Netherlands, 2014

	Existing programs					New programs			Institutes		
	total	suff	good	excell	adjust	total	Pos	adj	total	pos	adj
University	389	312	37	1	39	24	11	13	5	2	3
Professional	257	209	24	6	15	36	13	23	10	4	6

Source: *NVAO Jaarverslag 2014*. Pos is positive assesment, adj is adjustment required or withdrawn

Useful:

Preparation for assessment as useful cleansing

Generates awareness of weak and strong points

Stimulates improvements

But:

Too bureaucratic

Easy to paint a rosy picture

process can be made much leaner.

Use simple and verifiable indicators:

- structure of curriculum

- reading lists, textbooks, exams

- grading of exams, term papers, theses

- research performance of teachers

Recent adjustments:

The Netherlands:

reduce bureaucratic and documentation burden
of protocol

Flanders:

assessment based only on the institute's
procedures of quality monitoring

Ministry : Inspectorate

Assess and improve quality of higher education

Compliance with law: justification, not effectiveness:

Annual reports to Parliament, not to the Minister

Separate reports on specific topics

Mostly signaling development, trends, bottlenecks

focus on formal aspects

little direct reference to academic literature

Council of Education

Advises on education policies and legislation

Independent stance, annual work plan set by Minister

10 expert members (academics), staff of 10 professionals

Work Plan 2015:

Education and the Knowledge Economy

Core functions of Education

Governance and Organisations

Role of Teachers

2. The universities

Until recently modest formal monitoring

Student evaluations, external surveys, magazine

Most quality assessment by peers:

informal, implicit, intuitive

reputations in corridors and at coffee tables

Teaching quality dependent on internalized
professional standards and pride

Strong impetus from accreditation
formalised rules and policies

eg Uva Handbook for quality management:
Basic Teacher Qualification

Formalisation in quantitative performance
measurement?

Or invest in internalising quality awareness
and quality pride?

3. Evidence based interventions

Quis custodiet ipsos custodies?

New drugs: Dutch Council for Assessment of Drugs (300)

Raw animal food products: Food Authority (2471)

Wageningen University

Product safety: producer liability

No rules for government interventions.

the Dijsselbloem Experience

Secondary education

1990's, three major reforms:

- Tracking, lower stage secondary education
- Teaching methods, upper stage
- Reform lower vocational education.

Widespread dissatisfaction

2007-2008: “*Commissie Dijsselbloem*”

Very critical report:

Scientific foundation insufficient:

Evidence not sufficiently employed

Few pilots and experiments

Results from pilots ignored

Experiments violated research principles.

Complexity called for much more time

Too many reforms simultaneously.

Clear recommendations

Widely acclaimed

Detailed protocol for evidence based interventions

Education Council 2014:

- negligible effects of the Dijsselbloem recommendations
- continuing lack of trust between policy makers and school practice
- protocol for evidence based interventions ignored

4. Scope for improvement?

Examples of relevant research:

Leuven, Lindahl, Oosterbeek and Webbink (2007)

70% of pupils disadvantaged: subsidy per teacher
10% of salary two years

No positive effects on achievement (language,
arithmetic, information) after 3 years

Additional funding for computers and software (90
euro per pupil): negative

Leuven, Oosterbeek and Van der Klaauw (2010)

First year students, completing all exams within one year:

1500 guilders (681 euro); 1/3; nothing.

High ability students better in high bonus group,
low ability students worse

Effects later more pronounced

Transferring academic knowledge to the field

Van Welie (2013): feasibility of a mediating institution

asking school leaders to formulate significant questions, search the literature for answers.

articles in peer-reviewed, top ranking journals amenable to school practices

answers to questions summarized, max 5 pages.

school leaders expressed clear appreciation for information

Actual examples:

- Wageningen Agricultural University serves farmers
website: reports and research outcomes
window to submit research questions
- TIER, Top Institute for Evidence Based Education
Research at the University of Amsterdam:
Best Evidence Encyclopedia at its website

Center for Assessment of Education

- Compulsory consultation on policy interventions
- mandated to apply Dijsselbloem protocol
- set own research agenda
- advise government and parliament on request
- counter for interaction research - practice

Same proportion as drugs and food
authorities:

at least 150 professionals

on par with CPB

salaries 0.03 % government
expenditures education



POURQUOI ATTENDRE?