Guidelines for Preparing the Peer Review Report

The regional review visit is an essential part of the whole project. The visit will allow the review team to have a chance for the discussion of issues with a wide range of stakeholders thus providing the team with a variety of perspectives on territorial and higher education development policy in the region. After the visit, the OECD review team will prepare a Peer Review Report (PRR). The purpose of this note is to provide briefing on the purpose, structure and other practical information of the PRR for review team members.

Purpose of the Peer Review Report

A Peer Review Report (PRR) aims to provide, from an international perspective, reflections on specific issues and policies concerning the role of higher education in the region reviewed in connection with a regional development issue. The PRR will draw together the review team's observations and analyses of background materials on region-specific policy issues. The PRR should identify the major issues arising from the visit, and advance recommendations to improve policy and practice in the region visited. The report may also highlight examples of innovative approaches with the goal of promoting cross-national (regional) exchange of good practice. The PRR will basically serve as an input into the final OECD report from the overall activity. But, it will also contribute to discussions within a region under review and in other interested regions across different countries.

Structure of the Peer Review Report

There are a number of ways to organise the PRR. The suggestion below is an indicative structure of the PRR which can be used for drafting the PRR.

Section 1. Introduction: Evaluation context and approach
Section 2. The socio-economic condition of the region
Section 3. Contribution of research to regional innovation
Section 4. Contribution of teaching & learning to labour market and skills
Section 5. Contribution to social, cultural and environmental development
Section 6. Capacity building for regional cooperation including recommendations for individual institutions
Section 7. Conclusion: Suggestions for future policy at national, regional and international level
References
Appendices
1. The OECD review team (*prepared by the OECD Secretariat*)
2. Regional co-ordinator, regional steering committee, and authors of the regional self-evaluation report (*prepared by the OECD Secretariat*)
3. Programme of the review visit (*prepared by the OECD Secretariat*)
4. Detailed information on individual institutions: good practices & recommendations (if appropriate)

- *Section 1* will describe the context of the evaluation including purposes of the OECD review, the approach adopted in the evaluation etc. *Section 2* sets out the regional context which involves an overview of socio-economic context as well as an interpretation of the higher education policy context.

- Section 3 to 6 focus on a range of central issues affecting the contribution of HEIs to regional development. More specifically, *Section 3* will focus on the role of the HEIs in regional innovation systems from both a theoretical and practical perspective. *Section 4* will consider primarily how the profiles of the HEIs match regional needs focusing on the examples of collaboration that are possible between a set of autonomous institutions. *Section 5* will investigate HEIs' contribution to social, cultural and environmental development which is also significant determinants of regional development that go well beyond a traditional notion of 'civic responsibilities' of the HEIs. *Section 6* reviews how the individual institutions are managing the regional interface possibly including some high level comments with details about each institution being provided in the appendices. The approach taken to each of these sub-themes based on the aide-memoire (Online a*vailable: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/49/0/34473231.PDF*) is to identify the key features of the issues in the region concerned and to set out strengths and challenges pertaining to each, as interpreted by the review team.

- *The final section* will conclude with the analyses of these themes to set out some suggestions for future policy. In doing so, the evaluators will seek to diagnose what need to be done to meet the challenges and to offer policy suggestion which will be of assistance to the regional authorities and to individual HEIs in the region as they position their higher education system to achieve national/ regional strategic goals in the area of regional development. *Appendices* will contain detailed information on the composition of the review team and the regional project implementation bodies etc.

Division of the Work in Preparing the Peer Review Report

The Review team consists of a multi-national team of 4 experts. It includes (1) two international experts one of whom is designated as the <u>Lead evaluator</u>; (2) one national expert – but not from the region reviewed; and (3) a Team Co-ordinator – usually but not necessarily a member of the OECD Secretariat.

While each review team member will have to contribute to drafting the report, it is envisaged that the Lead Evaluator and the Team Co-ordinator will typically play more important roles than other two members. The balance of work between the Lead Evaluator and the Team Coordinator, however, will vary depend for instance on personalities as well as on practical considerations of availability for a specific period of time.

For that reason it can be difficult to define, but the following is proposed to guide the activities. Actual role and responsibilities may vary depending upon the situation within individual review teams.

<u>Each review team member will be responsible for working with the other review team members to plan the Peer Review Report and contributing to draft sections of the report on agreement with the team.</u>

<u>In addition to the tasks of a team member,</u> the *Lead Evaluator* is also responsible for delivering the team's report to the Project Steering Group. On the basis of the information and analysis in the self-

evaluation he/she will be expected to take the lead in identifying the issues to be covered in the report, in consultation with the regional co-ordinator and the team co-ordinator. The Lead Evaluator will also be responsible for determining the structure of the report, for allocating drafting responsibilities and for signing off the final draft.

The Team Co-ordinator will also be responsible, in addition to the tasks of a team member, for progress, and co-ordination of the preparation of the draft. Once the draft PRR is singed off by the Lead Evaluator, the Team Co-ordinator will contact the region of concern to ensure that there are no factual errors or misinterpretations in the report.

With the approval of the region, the final draft of the Peer Review Report is distributed to other participating regions in the project and posted on the relevant OECD website once completed.

Of course, all these activities metioned above are to be done in consultation with the other two members of the review team whenever possible.

Timeline, Length, and Fees

The OECD has indicated to the participating regions that the PRR would be finished within 3 months of the review visit, and obviously the quicker that is done the better.

The OECD is of course more interested in the quality of the report than the length, but as a rough rule of thumb, each report will be about 30-40 pages in length (excluding appendices and references).

The OECD can offer 6000 EUR for the Lead Evaluator; 4000 EUR for the Team Co-ordinator; and 3000 EUR each for the second International Evaluator and the Domestic Evaluator which is in addition to travel, accommodation and other expenses. .

> *More general information regarding the regional review visit (i.e. review process, logistic arrangement, detailed roles and responsibilities of review team members is also available at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/46/34/34806216.pdf*

Attachment: A Possible 7 Day Schedule for the Regional Review Visit

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1. Day 1 (Sunday): Arrival at the region & Informal meeting in the evening

Each team member will arrive individually at the region under review.

➢ *Before travelling to the region, the work will essentially involve the collection of information regarding the region. The detailed reading of the regional self-evaluation report and to identify key substantive issues that should be addressed by the review team are the critical task to perform before getting to the region. The OECD will send each review team member the regional self-evaluation report and other relevant reading materials at least one month before the review visit. The team coordinator will also provide other team members with a short note summarising the results of the 2 day pre-visit including a planned programme of the review visit, the major issues to be addressed for the* region and other practical arrangements.

In the evening, team members will have a first (informal) meeting at the hotel where the coordination of team's work will be made unless otherwise agreed beforehand. Issues such as the division of work, potential assignments of specific domains to the different team members, strategy for the site visits and coordination of the different contributions to the PRR will be discussed in the meeting. The lead evaluator will have a particular say in the design of these strategies as the final goal is the writing of the PRR.

2. Day 2 – 5 (Monday to Thursday): Planned Activities (Field visits, meetings & interviews)

Day 2

Meet with the regional co-ordinator & the Self-evaluation Report author(s): questions and comments and suggestions for the SER;

Meet with Steering Committee

Day 3 -5

Specific schedule depending upon the situation in the region under review. However, the typical stakeholders for the review team to meet during the regional review visit might include:

National level:
- Relevant ministries (agencies) or organisations
- Senior policy makers
- Academics

Regional or local level:
- Municipal and regional authorities
- Individual business and their representative bodies and associations
- Other regional stakeholders such as public research institutes, training organisations, other education bodies (e.g. schools, colleagues etc), social partners and NGOs

Institutional level:
- Higher education institutions: The rectorate, deans, heads of departments, students

3. Day 6 (Friday): Team discussions and working on the report (No planned Activity)

Before leaving the region under review, the review teams convened to summarise and discuss issues & preliminary findings, to exchange ideas on drafting the peer review report, and to agree at least broadly on the direction of the policy recommendations. ***This time can also be used for last-minute or re-arranged meetings, or for follow-up with people seen earlier in the week***.

Possible procedures to be considered for this informal meeting and subsequent task of report writing would be:

1) All team members will spend some time on drafting strengths/challenges (weaknesses), and policy options for the region as a bullet point (very briefly) by several categories or sub-themes upon which team members agreed beforehand. Team members will share responsibility and draft some of these sub-themes depending upon his or her expertise.

2) The lead evaluator will put these individual drafts open to all members' discussion and try to reach agreement regarding the facts and at least a broad direction of policy recommendations.

Following the visit

3) *Each team member will elaborate the bullet point draft and makes it a full text version draft; and then send it to the team coordinator.*

4) *The team coordinator will collect all drafts prepared by other team members including his/her own and edis it.*

5) *Once the team coordinator finishes a draft peer review report, the report will be circulated to other team members including the lead evaluator for their comments.*

6) *The team coordinator will revise the draft in consultation with the lead evaluator reflecting the comments received if necessary.*

7) *The lead evaluator will sign off the final draft.*

8) *Once the draft is signed off by the lead evaluator, the team coordinator will contact the region of concern to ensure that there are no factual errors or misinterpretations in the report.*

4. Day 7 (Saturday): Final Meeting with the Regional Steering Committee & Return

Meet with the regional Steering Committee in the morning (Joint Meeting)

- The OECD review team presents preliminary findings to the Regional Steering Committee followed by responses from & discussion with the Steering Committee members and other regional representativ*es*.

Meet with the regional co-ordinator to review the visit and plan the next steps