

Workshop 3

Quality indicators for staff weeks

Facilitator: Beate Tremel, Bologna Service Point | OeAD-GmbH

Rapporteur: Silva Viilup, Archimedes Foundation

In the beginning of the workshop Stefanie Ritter from Freie Universität Berlin gave an overview of their practises of organising staff training weeks. The activities taking place on Monday and Friday are organised by the International Relations Office, other units (University Library, Career Services, etc.) offer thematic trainings from Tuesday to Thursday. Half of the participants come from Programme Countries and half from Partner Countries. Liis Raudsepp from Tallinn University highlighted questions which need to be answered when organising a staff training week - what is the underlying theme for the training, what do we want to achieve with the staff week (exchange practices, introduce our institution, etc.), who is our target group, how long should the training be to suit the content, should there be a participation fee. Following discussions focused on what do we want to achieve with staff training weeks and how can we measure that we have achieved our aims.

It was clearly defined what our expectations are towards staff training weeks. The improvement of skills, know-how and knowledge of participants was highlighted as the most important outcome of staff training weeks. Training weeks are seen as mutual learning experiences for everyone involved where the exchange of ideas takes place in all directions – from organisers to participants, from participants to organisers and participants among themselves. This way the staff weeks bring added value also for the organisers. Staff training weeks are also seen as a possibility for networking and creating future partnerships, as well internationalisation at home for staff members of the organising institution who can take part in some of the organised activities.

Different quality indicators of staff weeks were defined which are important before, during or after the staff week. Having a specific topic for a staff week is seen as an important starting point, so that everyone knows what the focus will be (for example, dissemination activities for mobility projects). The necessity of having clearly defined learning outcomes was strongly stressed. Homework given to the participants before or during the staff week was also seen as a quality indicator.

After the staff week the number of new partnership agreements was seen as an indicator of how well the networking worked. Coming back from staff weeks with new project ideas (for example, for blended mobility) can also be seen as an indicator that the staff week has served its purpose. Additionally, giving a presentation to colleagues at the home institution after the staff week could be used as an indicator that new skills and knowledge have indeed been acquired.

As a final point it was emphasised that it is hard to see the immediate effect of staff weeks. As it takes time for effects to occur then there is a need to evaluate the long-term effect, for example 1 to 2 years after the mobility.