THE POWER OF
SELF-EVALUATION AND CROSS-SPARRING
IN DEVELOPING
THE QUALITY OF
HIGHTER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

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QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT MARKETPLACE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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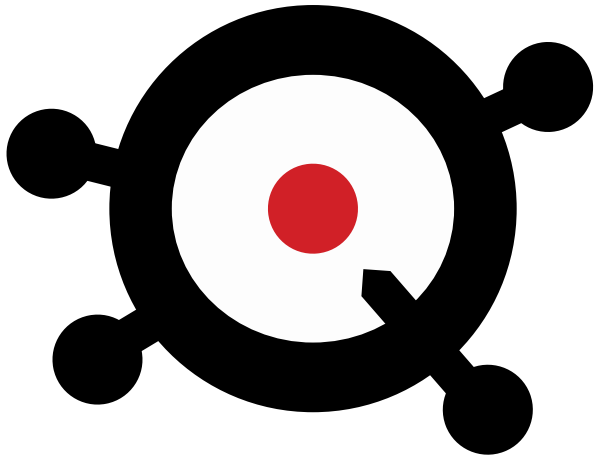

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AN EUROPEAN UNION ERASMUS+ PROJECT 2014-2016

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Agenda

- Background information
- Self-evaluation & cross-sparring
- Active learning
- Conclusions
- Discussion

Background

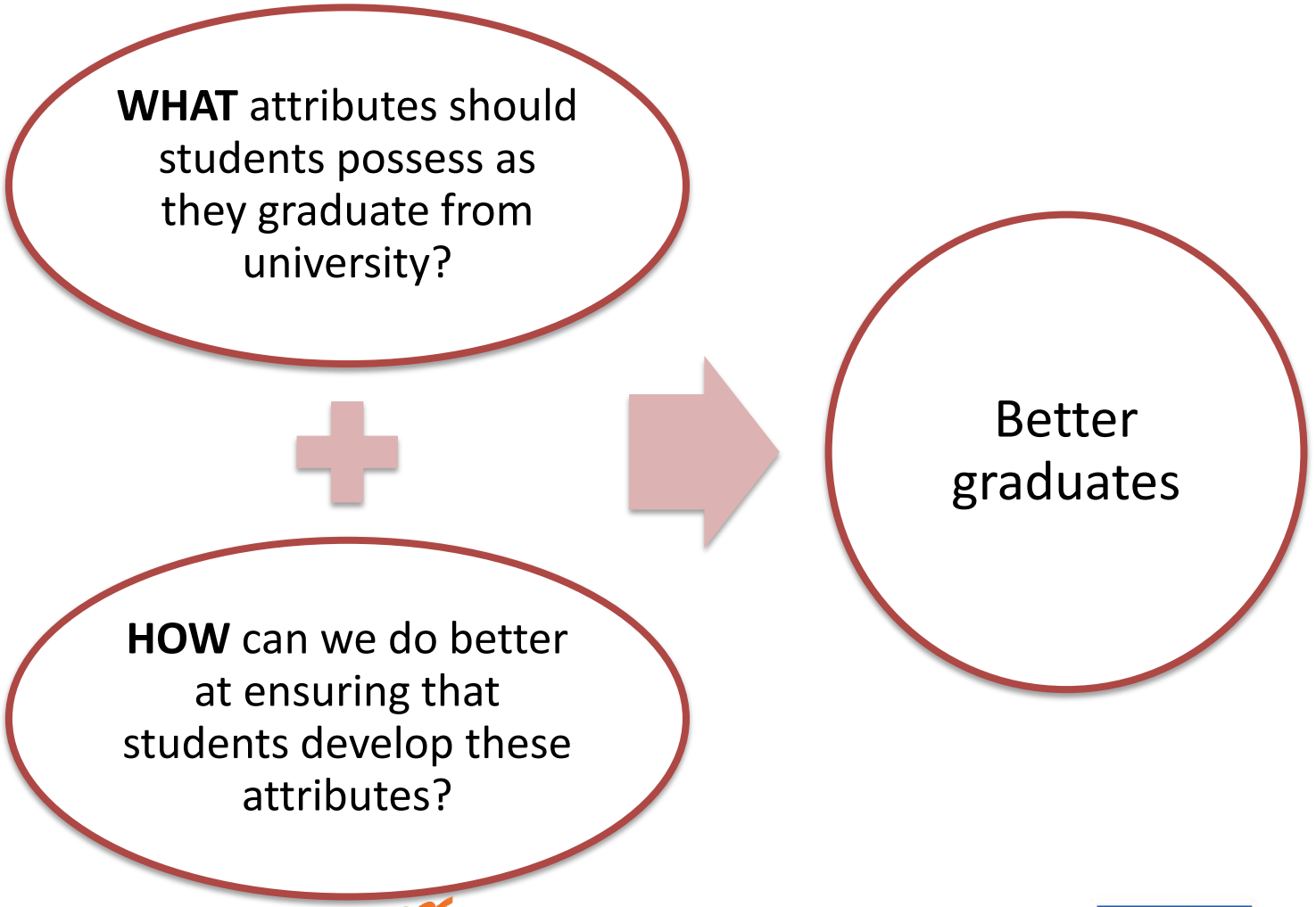
The self-evaluation and cross-sparring are valuable tools for any programme to enhance quality which leads to better learning, increased skills and attractiveness of studies.

The self-evaluation provides information on your progress in continuous development, it also indicates your strengths and your weaknesses.

Too often this information is hidden in the programme itself and seldom is it opened to other universities for benchmarking and critical observations and for learning from others.

Now the information becomes available additionally to raise the reputation of the programmes

Central Questions for Education



Opportunity and toolkit to improve programmes

- Work in programme level
- Improved self-evaluation; focus on learning outcomes
  - No management nor organisation
- Cross-sparring concept defined

Self Evaluation & Assessment

- A superset of QA criteria drawn from a comprehensive range of quality Frameworks*

** Clark et al (2015): Developing a Robust Self Evaluation Framework for Active Learning : The First Stage of an Erasmus + Project (QAEMarketPlace4HEI) Proceedings of the 43rd SEFI conference*

The self evaluation is derived from a broad set of QA-systems

- CDIO Standards and Rubrics
- EUR-ACE Framework Standards
- ABET- United States
- CEAB- Canada
- Engineers Australia
- UK Quality Assurance Agency
- Aston University specific processes for Annual and Periodic Review
- UK Spec Accreditation
- Danish National Standards
- Finnish National Standards
- Metropolia Self Evaluation
- Turku process
- French National Standards
- Irish National Standards
- QUB Educational Enhancement Process
- Iceland National Standards
- Quality Enhancement Handbook
- OWLS Project
- IMechE Accreditation
- Royal Aeronautical Society Accreditation
- EFMD (Management Education)

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Focus of Enhancement in Learning

Area	Number of Criteria
Learning and Teaching	5
Programme Foundation	4
Skills Development	4
Student Focus	4
Evaluation	3
Assessment and Feedback	2
Employment	2
Faculty Development	2
Research	1
Programme Philosophy	1

Self Evaluation Criteria

Description

- The description elaborates on the statement of the criterion to explain its meaning
- *It will be developed to define significant terms and provide background information*

Rationale

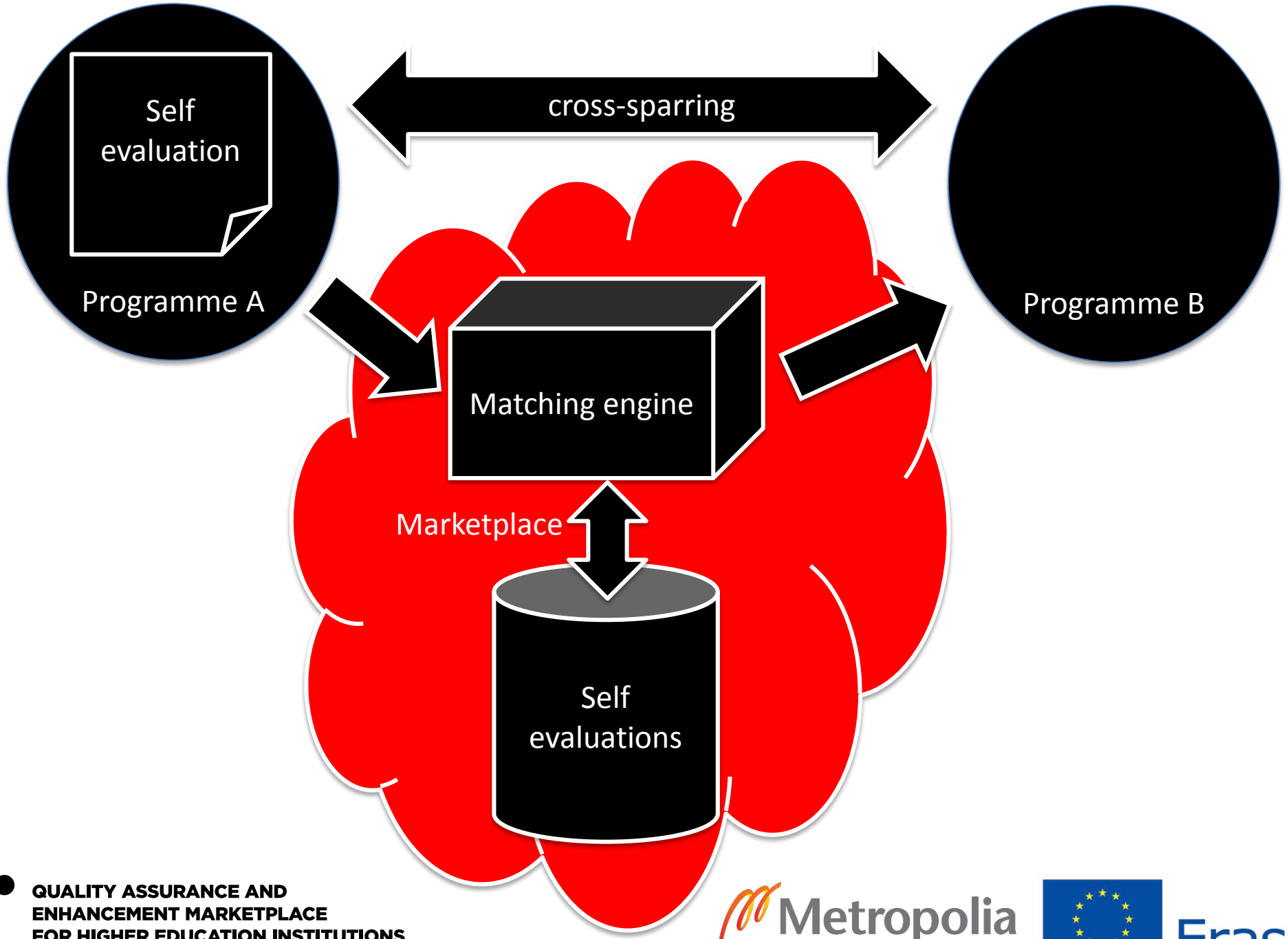
- The rationale highlights reasons for the adoption of the criterion
- Reasons are based on educational research and best practices in engineering and higher education
- *Examples will be provided in order to support the rationale*

Rubric

- The rubric is a scoring guide that seeks to evaluate levels of performance
- The rubric is a six-point maturity rating scale for assessing levels of compliance with the criterion
- The description for each level is based on the description and rationale for the criterion
- *The rubric will highlight the nature of the evidence that indicates compliance at each level*

After Self Evaluation…

- Pairing process based on outcomes of the self evaluation questionnaire
- Cross-sparring visits & peer learning in a supportive community of practice
- Sharing of best/working practice
- Structured implementation



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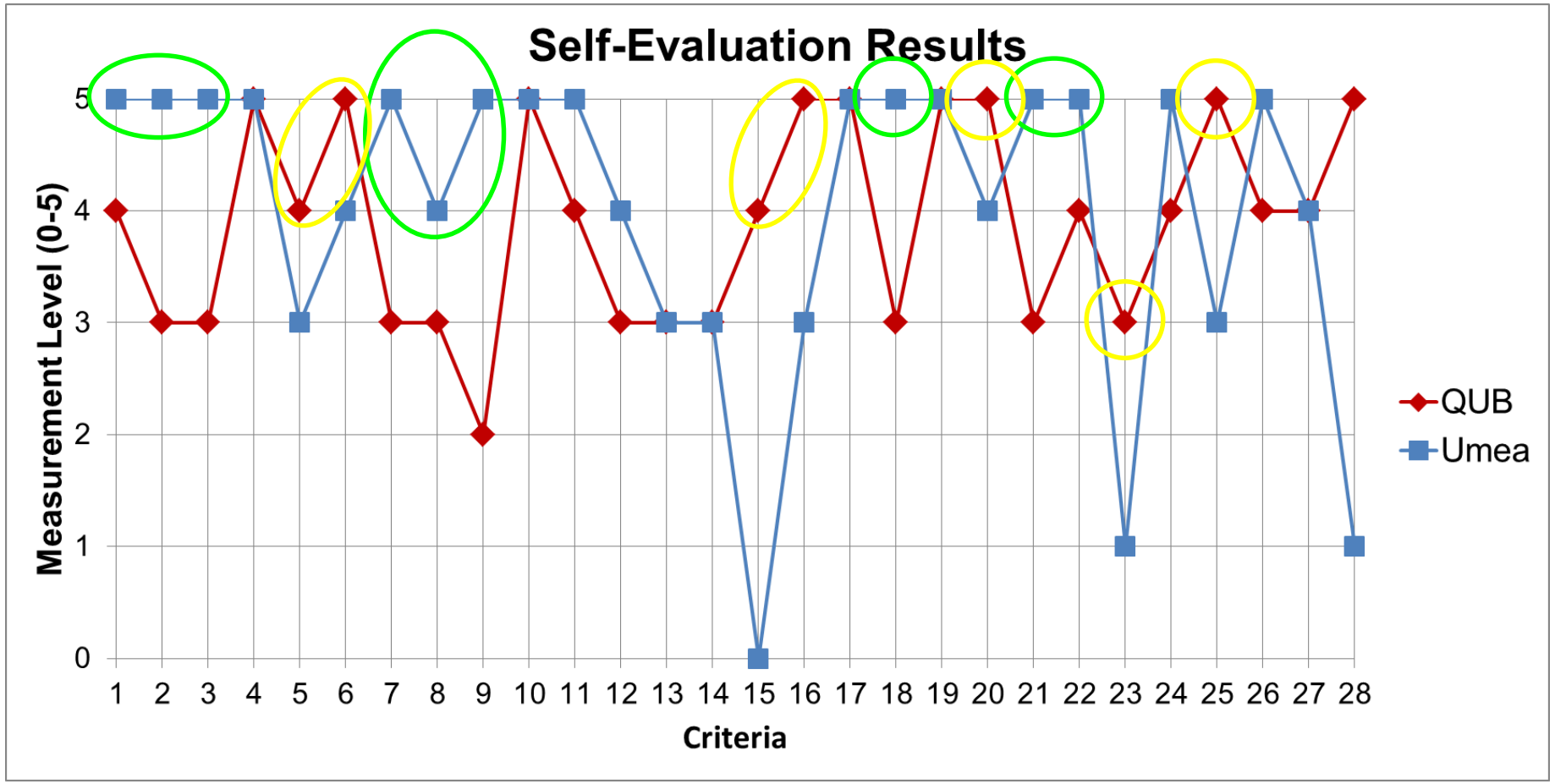
Identifying Pairs with Priority Criteria



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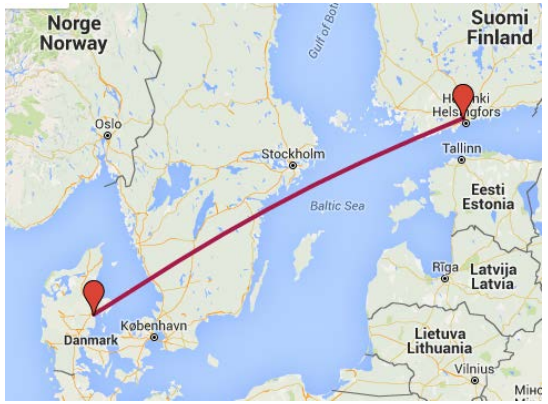


- Agendas
  - Introduction of University
  - Visit to teaching facilities and labs
  - Several short discussions with staff and students
  - Discussion of the learn-and-inspire criteria
- Actual meeting
  - 2 whole days (5 hours flying both ways)

Step 1

- **We create groups of four people**

Step 2

- **In your group:**

  Decide who takes which criterion of the following

  - **1. Learning outcomes (2)**
  - **2. Faculty development (8)**
  - **3. Programme evaluation to promote continuous improvement (10)**
  - **4. Effective communication with students (26)**

Step 3

- Each member of the group studies his/her criterion
  - → to become an expert of that criterion!
- To Do
  - Try to understand the ideology behind it and make notes
  - Identify examples from your program that answer these challenges
  - Estimate the level of your program in the scale (use the template)
  - Write some rationale for your judgement

Step 4

- The group members studies the criterion led by the expert
- Evaluate your program/faculty
  - 1) level on the criterion,
  - 2) give some rationale and
  - 3) how to improve→ Fill the template
- When asked move to next criterion and teaching continues…
- This is repeated until all four critera are communicated to and evaluated by the entire group

Cross-Sparring

- Now each participant has a four-criteria self-evaluation of his/her programme
- We pair each participant with an other participant so that
  - You can share what you do well
  - You can learn from others how to improve

Cross-Sparring

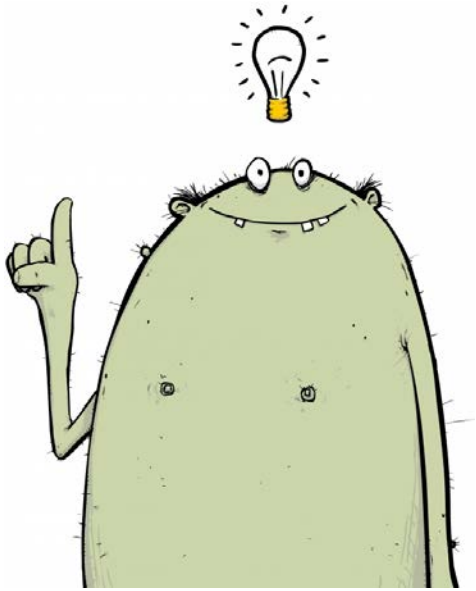
- **Explain to your sparring partner what you think you do well with respect to one or several of the criteria**
- **Listen to your sparring partner and get inspired on how to improve one or several of the criteria**

Reflection

- Based on what you have learned from your home group discussion
  - Reflect on how to improve your program
  - Write it down

Summary

- **Reflective self evaluation is a powerful tool**
- **Learning from others and sharing good practice can improve your performance**



Conclusions 1/2

- **Outcomes of self evaluation**
  - **Structured discussions, leading to joint understanding of issues and their status**
- **Results of cross sparring**
  - **Identifying working practices from partners to be modified in own use**
  - **Clear view of immediate development needs**
  - **Additional (innovative) ideas of future directions**

Conclusions 2/2

- **Effective and beneficial way to support the journey towards excellence**
- **Building evidence of continuing development for audits - if audits are needed**

Benefits

- Tools for continuous improvement
- International benchmarking - critical friends
- Compatible with formal quality audits
- Not overly demanding in terms of time or paperwork

Next Steps Of Study

- How the results are affecting to our development?
- How the development is affecting the attractiveness of the programmes?
- How well the method works in diverse disciplines?

Finally

- Questions?
- Remarks?
- Suggestions?

Thank you
for your attention and participation

More details (eg public deliverables)
www.cross-sparring.eu

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