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**Abstract**

Self-evaluation is supposed to be a valid, reliable and easy-to-use instrument to commit professionals to external quality assurance. The writing of a self-evaluation report is the first step in most higher education accreditation systems all over the world. Research on accreditation in the Netherlands and Flanders shows that professionals consider the writing of a self-evaluation report to be a very complex and time-consuming activity. Furthermore, there is a serious risk of 'dramaturgical compliance'. The research suggests that writing a self-evaluation report should not be part of a compulsory external quality assurance system. It is not a reliable instrument for control. Self-evaluation can be used for internal quality management, where it can be a powerful instrument for improvement. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)