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Abstract

The procedures commonly employed for quality assurance in higher education are designed as if the endeavour were a technical process, whereas it may be more useful to view it as a political process. For example, quality assurance requires making choices among competing conceptions of quality, and in so doing privileges some interests over others. Moreover, some stakeholders tend to be given a greater voice than others in the design and implementation of quality assurance. The author concludes that rather than denying the political nature of quality assurance, it would be better to accept Morley's claim that quality assurance is "a socially constructed domain of power", and design procedures for it in a way that is appropriate for a political process. It is suggested that employing the "responsive model" of evaluation could make quality assurance more effective in improving educational quality. In the responsive model, evaluation is deemed to be a collaborative process that starts with the claims, concerns and issues put forth by all stakeholders. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)