

Quality assurance of HE in an open society

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Open Society and Quality Assurance

“Utopian engineering: belief in an absolute and unchanging ideal. ... there are rational methods to determine (a) what the ideal is, and (b) what the best means of its realization are.”



Open society based on rationalism: clear thought and experience, not emotions and passion.

The 'openness' of Quality Assurance

- Excellence, fitness for purpose, etc. etc.
- Labour market preparation, SDGs, social mobility, excellence education, civic engagement.

Quality?



- Accountability
- Enhancement
- Transparency
- Positioning
- Resource allocation
-

Purpose of quality assurance?



- Performance incentives
- Accreditation
- Meta-regulation
- Risk-based regulation
- Trust
- ...

Best method of quality assurance?



... and its enemies


- Bureaucratisation
- Professionalisation
- Disregard of changing political priorities

• Technocratic utopia

• Ideological utopia

- Unidimensional rankings
- 'World class' universities
- Academic romanticism

Reason, evidence and trust

- **Complexity of evidence-based policies**
 - Inconclusive evidence about the impact
 - Effects not constant
 - The mechanism of effects ambiguous
- **Trust**  **Quality assurance**
 - Trust as a necessary ingredient for quality
 - QA as a necessary ingredient for trust

“If you can't say it simply and clearly, keep quiet, and keep working on it till you can.”

- Karl Popper -



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