

# ENQA STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020



## INTRODUCTION

This is the 2nd Strategic Plan for the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). It provides direction for the association's members and affiliates, its Secretariat and external stakeholders on the organisation's mission, vision, values and goals and how ENQA intends to achieve them.

ENQA has grown significantly over the course of the previous Strategic Plan and in 2015 has over 90 members and affiliates representing 40 of the 47 countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The Plan covers the four year period from 2016 - 2020. It will inform successive annual work plans which will set out the objectives, actions and outputs to be achieved each year by the association. Over the course of the next four years, ENQA will monitor, review and report on the implementation of this strategy.

ENQA is committed to promoting and ensuring that its members work in line with the revised *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) as adopted by the ministers with responsibility for higher

education in the EHEA in May 2015 in Yerevan, Armenia. ENQA is equally committed to promoting the enhancement of quality and the development of a quality culture in higher education.

Over the period covered by the Plan, ENQA will continue to develop its presence in Brussels. The association will deepen its links with other sectorial actors such as EUA, EURASHE, ESU, BUSINESS EUROPE, Education International and EQAR in the shared goal of the further development of the quality assurance of higher education in the EHEA.

The development of this Strategic Plan was overseen by the ENQA Board and Secretariat following significant input from the members and affiliates. The draft Plan was endorsed by the Board for recommendation to the General Assembly of the association. The Plan was approved by the General Assembly of ENQA in April 2015.

Over the next four years, ENQA will continue to represent its members and affiliates internationally, support them nationally and provide them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities.

### VISION

A European Higher Education Area where students have access to high quality education and can achieve qualifications that are respected world-wide.

### MISSION

As the largest association of quality assurance agencies committed to agreed European standards, ENQA drives the development of quality assurance by representing agencies internationally, supporting them nationally and providing them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities. ENQA promotes the enhancement of quality and the development of a quality culture in higher education.

### VALUES

ENQA is open to the diversity of higher education systems and quality assurance approaches and adheres to the following values:

#### Transparency

ENQA publishes its policies, procedures and criteria for decisions and reports

#### Independence

ENQA actively promotes the operational independence of quality assurance agencies and supports the autonomy of higher education institutions

#### Collaboration

ENQA works in a consultative manner with its members and affiliates, European partners and fellow associations

#### Integrity

ENQA operates with integrity and in a fair, equitable, impartial, objective and professional manner

# GOALS

## I. REPRESENTATION

### 1. ENQA IS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DIVERSITY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES THROUGHOUT EUROPE

ENQA is representative of the diversity of quality assurance (QA) agencies in the EHEA, whether regional, national or pan-European; comprehensive or discipline-specific; operating at programme and/or institutional level and whether practising accreditation, audit or evaluation methodologies.

ENQA will support the establishment of new agencies operating consistently with the ESG in parts of the EHEA where there are currently no independent QA agencies. ENQA supports affiliates seeking full membership status in their efforts.

#### Indicators of success

- ENQA has members throughout the EHEA (in 2015, ENQA has members from 26 countries in the EHEA)
- Increased number of applicants to and members of ENQA (in 2015, ENQA has 43 full members and 48 affiliates from 40 countries in the 47-member EHEA )
- The diversity of QA agencies in the EHEA is reflected in the governance and activities of ENQA (i.e. composition of the Board, Review Committees, Appeals Committee, review panels, working groups, projects and events)

### 2. ENQA SUPPORTS THE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENT AND TRUSTWORTHY QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES OPERATING IN LINE WITH AGREED STANDARDS THROUGHOUT EUROPE

ENQA will contribute to the EHEA by promoting quality assurance processes based on the common principles outlined in the revised 2015 version of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*.

ENQA will assist QA agencies in working with higher education institutions to help them find the appropriate balance between internal and external quality assurance in their given national contexts.

#### Indicators of success

- Agencies are successful in demonstrating increased level of compliance with the ESG following an external review

- Reviews of ENQA member agencies against the revised ESG highlight features of good practice by established agencies

### 3. ENQA PROVIDES ADVICE AND REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF ITS MEMBERS IN THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

ENQA represents the interests of its members, taking into account their diversity, in the policy-making processes at European and – where appropriate – in their national contexts. ENQA's contribution to policy-making is based on sound experience, know-how and research into the quality assurance of higher education in Europe.

ENQA will continue to function as a European policy forum for developing and proposing standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance and finding common points of convergence between European quality assurance systems.

ENQA will continue to support and represent its members in the political dialogue with actors such as the European Commission, the Bologna Follow-Up Group, EU member states and countries in the wider EHEA. ENQA will promote the concept of the independence of QA agencies from national governments, higher education institutions and any other third parties. ENQA will provide public authorities and political decision-makers with relevant expertise to facilitate informed political decision-making in relation to the quality assurance of higher education in the EHEA.

ENQA will work with relevant European actors to clarify the place that external quality assurance processes play in the assurance and enhancement of quality in higher education. ENQA will stress that the publication of reports arising from programme and institutional quality reviews plays an important role in promoting the accountability of higher education institutions in the EHEA.

#### Indicators of success

- Analysis demonstrates that ENQA guidelines and policy papers are referenced in relevant policy documents relating to the quality assurance of European higher education
- Surveys indicate that members are satisfied with the contribution of ENQA in policy-making processes

## II. SERVICES

ENQA will anticipate, analyse and respond to the needs of the members and offer them support and developmental opportunities through the provision of services. ENQA's services take account of the members' diversity.

### 4. ENQA IS A FRUITFUL NETWORK FOR AGENCIES THROUGHOUT EUROPE

ENQA works with its member agencies, European representative partners and fellow associations in the wider international community in a spirit of collaboration to enhance the quality assurance of higher education.

ENQA will continue to organise events on relevant and topical issues and offer opportunities for its members to network and to exchange good practice and information. ENQA involves interested members in its projects and facilitates elaboration of joint initiatives between members.

#### Indicators of success

- A growing number of members host, participate in and contribute to ENQA events and working groups
- Surveys indicate increased member satisfaction with the services provided (events, newsletters, working groups, and networking opportunities)

### 5. ENQA IS THE PREFERRED PARTNER FOR REVIEWS AGAINST AGREED EUROPEAN STANDARDS

ENQA will continue to organise external reviews of QA agencies in a professional manner with appropriately trained and experienced reviewers, consistent with the agreed and revised ESG.

Through the reviews it organises, ENQA will support the development of independent and trustworthy QA agencies and provide mature agencies with tailor-made reviews that improve and enhance their processes, activities and procedures beyond threshold standards.

#### Indicators of success

- The vast majority of European QA agencies continue to choose ENQA as review coordinator for the quality and reliability of the reviews
- Analysis of and feedback on ENQA review reports indicate that they are considered consistent, readable and useful
- Feedback from QA agencies indicates that second and subsequent ENQA-coordinated reviews bring genuine added value

### 6. ENQA IS A KEY SOURCE OF RELIABLE INFORMATION, EXPERTISE AND KNOW-HOW ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

The members of ENQA reflect the diversity of the EHEA and represent a significant diversity of missions and approaches. ENQA member agencies bring together the knowledge on quality assurance in Europe. ENQA will make this knowledge accessible in a useful and structured way.

ENQA will promote and engage in projects that support the further development of the knowledge base of quality assurance in the EHEA and will support its dissemination among stakeholders, policy makers and other interested parties.

ENQA will further develop its Members' Forum to make it a useful means for direct exchanges between member agencies.

#### Indicators of success:

- Surveys indicate that members are satisfied with the information provided by ENQA and the support received in exchanging knowledge and expertise on quality assurance
- Data analytics and feedback from stakeholders indicate that the ENQA website is widely consulted
- ENQA continues to be invited to contribute its expertise and know-how at important international events and expert groups on quality assurance in higher education
- ENQA continues to be a sought-after partner in important quality assurance projects funded from European and international sources

### 7. ENQA IS A REFERENCE POINT FOR EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

ENQA cooperates with strategic partners and networks beyond the EHEA to contribute to the global development of quality assurance of higher education both to learn from and to actively contribute to developments outside Europe. ENQA represents European quality assurance principles and values internationally.

#### Indicators of success:

- Feedback indicates that ENQA provides a useful framework for collaboration with QA agencies outside of Europe and with different stakeholders
- ENQA continues to be invited to contribute to quality assurance capacity-building activities outside of Europe
- Feedback indicates that ENQA is a primary source of information on European quality assurance for international partners

### III. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

#### 8. ENQA CONTRIBUTES TO THE ENHANCEMENT AND INNOVATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance needs to be dynamic and constantly adapting to the development of the environment and constantly innovating itself. Because of the diversity of its membership and affiliate base, ENQA has the opportunity to provide a space in which innovation of quality assurance can be developed with full respect to existing quality assurance systems.

ENQA will develop and encourage research projects that make use of the analysis of ENQA review reports, which produce a vast amount of information, in order to detect trends, detect innovative good practice and to set future areas of priority. ENQA will also lead and be partner in other projects and studies that develop the further potential of quality assurance in higher education.

ENQA will support the constant development of its member agencies, in particular through its staff development and mentoring schemes for QA agency staff.

ENQA will act on requests for support in quality assurance capacity-building both within the EHEA as well as beyond it.

##### Indicators of success:

- A strong research base is developed within the ENQA Secretariat and through the support of external researchers
- Surveys indicate that ENQA staff development activities are used and appreciated by the members
- Feedback indicates that ENQA's support is sought after and appreciated for capacity-building activities in the EHEA and beyond