EQAR and its Expectations on the Reviews of Agencies

ENQA Training of Agency Reviewers
Madrid, 31 May 2018
Colin Tück
EQAR Vision & Mission

EQAR is the European Higher Education Area's (EHEA) official register of QAAs that comply substantially with the ESG

- **Vision:** coherent quality assurance framework for the EHEA, in which
  - HEIs have freedom to turn to a suitable EQAR-registered agency
  - qualifications are universally recognised

- **Mission:**
  - enhance transparency and information on QA
  - Promote trust and recognition
EHEA Key Commitment

- External QA is performed by agencies that demonstrably comply with the ESG, registered on EQAR
- Applies for some, but not all higher education institutions
Registration and monitoring

- Registration based on external review of agency
- Annual updates on reviews and countries
- Substantive change reports
- Third-party complaints
- Periodic renewal every 5 years

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Aim of reviews

- **Demonstrate compliance** with the ESG
  - Criterion for registration: “substantial compliance”
  - Inform decisions by independent Register Committee
  - Even if it's the 5\(^{th}\) review: things change...

- **Improvement/enhancement** dimension
  - Important function, but not in EQAR's focus

- **Cover all activities** within the scope of the ESG
  - At home, abroad, within and outside the EHEA
  - Part of the obligatory external QA as well as voluntary
  - Clear distinction of other activities (3.1, esp. consultancy)
Key documents for reviewers

General documents:

- Policy on **Use and Interpretation of the ESG for the European Register**
  - To be read in conjunction with the full text of the ESG
  - Previously: “Practices and Interpretations”
  - General indications (e.g. scope)
  - **Interpretations** – for standards where needed
  - **Reports should at least demonstrate** – for all standards

- Procedures for Applications and specific policies

https://www.eqar.eu/kb/official-documents/
Example:

2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance described in Part 1 of the ESG.

Interpretation:

1. This standard relates to the crucial link between internal and external quality assurance of higher education institutions and programmes.

To “address” means that the agency should systematically include all standards of Part 1 of the ESG in their criteria and procedures used to evaluate/accredit/audit institutions or programmes, while they may be addressed differently depending on the type of external quality assurance.

Reports should at least demonstrate:

- How the agency addresses the effectiveness of internal QA processes in its evaluations, audits and accreditations.
- How standards 1.1 – 1.10 (see Annex 4) are addressed in the agency's criteria and processes for institutions/programmes.
Documents for each agency

1) Eligibility confirmation

Confidential Information: Application for Renewal of Inclusion on the Register
Application no. A45 of 05/01/2018

Dear Eva,

We hereby confirm that the application by Unibasq for inclusion on the Register is eligible.

Based on the information and draft forms of reference provided, the external review coordinated by European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA) fulfills the requirements of the EGAAR Procedures for Applications.

We confirm the following activities of Unibasq are within the scope of the ESG:

- Programme ex-ante accreditation and self-assessment in the Basque University System;
- Follow-up of the study programmes of the Basque University System;
- Review of the study programmes modifications;
- Accreditation renewal of study programmes;
- Audits (ASQS audits);
- Documentation.

Please ensure that Unibasq’s self-evaluation report covers all the aforementioned activities.

Furthermore, the self-evaluation report and the external review report should also address how Unibasq ensures that the decisions taken on the basis of reviews carried out by other agencies are in line with the ESG in case the agency is not registered on EGAAR.

We further remind you that the following issues were flagged when Unibasq was admitted to the Register and should be addressed in your self-evaluation report and the external review report:

ESG 2.4 – Peer review experts (ESG 2006: standard 3.4)
- It should receive attention whether Unibasq has ensured that students are regularly involved in all review committees.

ESG 2.6 – Reporting (ESG 2006: standard 2.5)
- It should be addressed whether Unibasq has moved to publish its evaluation reports for all its ESG-relevant activities.

ESG 2.7 – Complaints and appeals (ESG 2006: standard 3.7)
- The new appeals procedure developed by Unibasq should receive attention.

ESG 3.4 & ESG 3.5 – Thematic analysis and Resources (ESG 2006: standard 2.4)
- It should receive attention whether Unibasq has been able to secure sufficient human and financial resources from both government funding as well as other sources, amongst others with regard to its ability to carry out system-wide analyses.

We confirm that the following activities are not within the scope of the ESG:

- Evaluation and accreditation of teaching and research staff;
- Evaluation of individual research merits of academic staff.

While these activities are not relevant to your application, it is Unibasq’s choice – in agreement with the review coordinator – whether those activities should be commented upon by the review panel.

We will forward this letter to ENQA in its capacity of the coordinator of the external review. At the same time we underline that it is Unibasq’s responsibility to ensure that the coordinator and review panel take account of the present confirmation, so as to ensure that all activities monitored are analyzed by the panel.

This confirmation is made according to the relevant provisions of the EGAAR Procedures for Applications. Unibasq has the right to appeal this decision in accordance with the Appeals Procedure; any appeal must reach EGAAR within 10 days from receipt of this decision.

Brussels, 7 February 2018
Documents for each agency

2) Previous reports and decisions
   - Admission
   - Renewal
   - Changes
   - Complaints

Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg
SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIANT WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Evaluationsagentur Baden-Württemberg

Admission valid until 31/08/2019 (listed since 25/05/2010)
Based in* Germany
HE systems where agency conducted reviews**
   - Austria, Germany, Hungary, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Russia, Switzerland

External review reports and EQAR decisions

- 07/11/2016 Substantive Change Report
- 15/06/2016 Substantive Change Report
- 11/06/2015 Renewal of Registration
- 11/06/2015 External Review Report
- 20/05/2010 Admission to the Register

https://www.eqar.eu/register/
### Decision-making

#### Conclusions for each standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review panel</th>
<th>Register Committee decision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full compliance</td>
<td>Compliance (full or substantial)</td>
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<td>Substantial compliance</td>
<td>Partial compliance</td>
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<td>Partial compliance</td>
<td>Non-compliance</td>
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<td>Non-compliance</td>
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<tr>
<th>Overall judgement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substantially compliant</td>
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<tr>
<td>All standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>One or more $\rightarrow$ holistic judgement</td>
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<tr>
<td>One or more</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not substantially compliant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Clarification requests to panel chair if needed
- If conclusion differs from panel, explained in public decision
Register Committee conclusions

Non-Compliance  Partial compliance  Compliance
Clarification requests & conclusions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarification request</th>
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<th>PC -&gt; C</th>
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Conclusion

34. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that MusiQuE demonstrated compliance with the ESG (Parts 2 and 3) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Review panel conclusion</th>
<th>Register Committee conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>substantially complies</td>
<td>Compliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>fully complies</td>
<td>Compliance</td>
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Consequences

- **Positive decision**
  - Inclusion on the Register (or renewal)
  - Valid for 5 years (from report date)
  - Publish reports in Database of External QA Results (DEQAR)

- **Negative decision**
  - Removed from the Register
  - Previous registration not revoked and reports remain in DEQAR
  - Focused review possible within 18 months
Thank you for your attention!

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