

ENQA MEMBERS' FORUM 2019
Tallinn, 25-26 April 2019

Biographies of the Speakers



Douglas Blackstock

Douglas Blackstock has been QAA's Chief Executive since October 2015. His work includes leading QAA's contribution to the current changes to the policy, regulatory and quality landscape in England and across the UK, and the Agency's role in developing the Teaching Excellence Framework alongside other sector partners. Douglas joined QAA in 2002 as Director of Administration, and has subsequently held the roles of Director of Resources and Chief Operating Officer and was QAA's Company Secretary from 2002 to 2016. He led QAA's work on student engagement for a number of years, and was a member of the NUS & UUK-led Student Charter Group and the subsequent Framework for Partnership Group. He is active in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and chaired the ENQA Staff Development Group. He is a graduate in Public Administration from what is now Glasgow Caledonian University.



Vanessa Debiais-Sainton

Vanessa Debiais-Sainton is Head of the Unit in charge of Higher Education policies and programme at the European Commission's Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. The unit is the lead service for European policies on reform and modernisation of higher education, the new European Universities initiative, automatic mutual recognition of higher education qualifications, the creation of the EU student card, and the higher education strand of Erasmus+. In previous posts in the European Commission, Vanessa has worked in DG Research and Innovation. Before moving to the European Commission in 2006, Vanessa spent eight years working for several petroleum and chemical companies.



Heli Mattisen

Heli Mattisen (PhD) is the Director of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA). She has participated in all stages of educational reforms in Estonia - developing strategic plans, building up legislative frameworks and putting the plans into practice. She was responsible for the development of the new external quality assurance system in higher education and vocational education and training in Estonia. Heli also has vast international experience. She has supported the elaboration of the state regulation for quality assurance agencies, as well as the methodology for external assessments in Moldova, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Tajikistan. She has been involved in external reviews as expert in different countries, e.g. Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan. Prior to launching EKKA, Heli worked for 20 years at Tallinn University (as professor, head of department, dean, vice rector), where she gained practical experience in change management by establishing a new university as a result of a merging process of different institutions. She was also in charge of Bologna reform and coordinated the implementation of learning outcome based curricula and quality management system at the university level. Parallel to her every-day job, Heli has been involved in different strategic initiatives in the area of education: she was in charge of the Estonian Teacher Education Strategy and belonged to the steering group of the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020, as well as to the drafting group of the new Estonian Higher Education Act.



Anke Rigbers

Dr. Anke Rigbers is Chief Executive Officer of evalag (Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg) since 2007; since 2018 she is also Chairwoman of the University Council of the Heilbronn University of Applied Sciences and a member of various advisory boards at higher education institutions, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and a journal. She studied Socio-Economics at the Universities of Stuttgart-Hohenheim and Wageningen/Netherlands (1982-1989). Between 1989-2003 she worked at the Universities of Karlsruhe, Mannheim and Humboldt University Berlin and received her doctorate on the methodology of time use research at the University of Karlsruhe. From 2003-2007 she was group leader at the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts Baden-Württemberg. She has been the CEO of evalag since 2007; since 2018 Chairwoman of the University Council of the University of Applied Sciences Heilbronn and member of various advisory boards at HEI, the BMBF and a journal.



**Antonio Serrano
Gonzalez**

Professor Antonio Serrano Gonzalez is the Director of ACPUA (the Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education, Spain) since 2011. He is a member of the Spanish National Accreditation and Follow-Up Regulation Conference (CURSA) and a member of the Board of Directors of the Spanish Quality Assurance Agencies Network (REACU). Law Professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) since 1991, he served as a research scholar at the Max-Planck-Institut for European Legal History (Frankfurt/Main). He has been Director of the UAB Ph. D. Program in Law and Associate Dean at the UAB School of Law. He has been visiting senior fellow at the Robbins Collection (UC Berkeley). Antonio has served as the Executive Coordinator of the Board of Directors of the Spanish Agencies (REACU) from January 2014 until April 2015. He has been involved in external reviews (institutional evaluation and reviews of QA Agencies) in Germany and Kazakhstan.



Bert van der Zwaan

Bert van der Zwaan is emeritus professor of biogeology at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Trained as a paleontologist, his main research interest involved the impact of climate change on the extinction of marine faunas. Early in his career, he initiated many interdisciplinary research programs and later was director of the Darwin Center for Biogeology. Through this work he became interested in the (regional) impact of universities on innovation. He has been lead-PI and CEO of Climate KIC, one of the first Knowledge and Innovation Communities of the EU, dealing with adaptation to climate change. He became dean of the Faculty of Geosciences in 2006, and was Rector Magnificus (Vice Chancellor) of Utrecht University from 2010-2018. He recently stepped down as president of the European League of Research Universities (LERU). Bert has held numerous positions inside and outside of academia, and (co-)authored many research papers, including more recently on Higher Education. He is the author of the book, "Higher Education in 2040" (2017).