



**SELF-EVALUATION REPORT
OF THE POLISH ACCREDITATION
COMMITTEE**

WARSAW, 2013

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1. Introduction

Article 1 clause 4 of the Statutes of the Polish Accreditation Committee (Polish: Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna - PKA) ([Appendix no. 1](#)) stipulates that in accordance with the operational arrangements for accreditation agencies working within the European Higher Education Area the activities of the Committee are under external review at least every five years.

In 2008, PKA was subjected to external review by a panel of international experts. The strategic goal of the review was obtaining full membership in ENQA and entry in the EQAR register of accreditation agencies. In the final report, the panel of experts stated that "(...) PKA is in substantial compliance with ENQA Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area". The awarded positive rating resulted in making the Committee more credible to Polish HEIs as an external quality assurance agency, which applies procedures and methodology, which are comparable with these adopted by other accreditation agencies, and observes European standards. In response to comments included in the report, during a plenary session held in January 2009, the Polish Accreditation Committee adopted an Action Plan ([Appendix no. 2](#)), which provides for complying with the recommendations of the panel of experts. As a result of the external review held in early 2009, PKA obtained full membership in ENQA and was admitted in the EQAR register.

The second review of the activities of the Polish Accreditation Committee held in 2013 aims at confirming full membership in ENQA by specifying the degree to which PKA meets the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area, as stipulated in part 2 and 3 thereof, and equivalent EQAR standards, which will allow for renewing the EQAR registration.

The self-evaluation report presents the new role that PKA plays in the system of higher education in Poland in accordance with the provisions of the act of 18 March 2011 amending the law on higher education ([Appendix no 3](#)), law on academic degrees and title and degrees and title in the arts and amending certain other acts (OJ No. 84, item 455). Expanded competences of the Polish Accreditation Committee and new legal conditions for its operations have resulted in new challenges for the operations of PKA. The Polish Accreditation Committee has made best efforts in order to assure that the new approach to the accreditation process, which involves two accreditation paths, i.e. institutional and programme evaluation, are understood by all the stakeholders. Activities of PKA in focused on the achievement of the main objective stipulated in the mission statement and strategy of the Committee, which is: "to support Polish public and non-public higher education institutions in the development of educational standards matching the best models adopted in the European and global academic area."

Moreover, Polish Accreditation Committee treats external review as a stimulus for enhancing the efficiency of internal quality assurance system, as external review allows for identifying the weaknesses, which have not been noticed by the Committee and for setting the directions for its development.

1.1. System of Higher Education in Poland

1.1.1. Glossary of terms

- Accreditation Committee for Higher Vocational Education (Polish: Komisja Akredytacyjna Wyższego Szkolnictwa Zawodowego – KAWSZ);
- Accreditation Committee for Polish University Medical Schools (Polish: Komisja Akredytacyjna Akademickich Uczelni Medycznych – KAAUM);
- Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (Polish: Konferencja Rektorów Akademickich Szkół Polskich – KRASP);
- Conference of Rectors of Artistic Schools (Polish: Konferencja Rektorów Uczelni Artystycznych – KRUA);
- Conference of Rectors of Universities of Medicine (Polish: Konferencja Rektorów Uniwersytetów Medycznych KRUM);
- Conference of Rectors of Polish Universities (Polish: Konferencja Rektorów Uniwersytetów Polskich KRUP);
- Conference of Rectors of Public Vocational Schools (Polish: Konferencja Rektorów Publicznych Szkół Zawodowych – KREPSZ);
- Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland (Polish: Konferencja Rektorów Zawodowych Szkół Polskich – KRZaSP);
- General Council of Science and Higher Education (Polish: Rada Główna Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego – RGSW);
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education (Polish: Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego – MNiSW);
- The Supreme Audit Office (Polish: Najwyższa Izba Kontroli – NIK);
- Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (Polish: Parlament Studentów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej – PSRP);
- National Representation of Doctoral Students (Polish: Krajowa Reprezentacja Doktorantów – KRD);
- Central Commission for the Academic Degrees and Titles (CK).

1.1.2. Institutional Structure

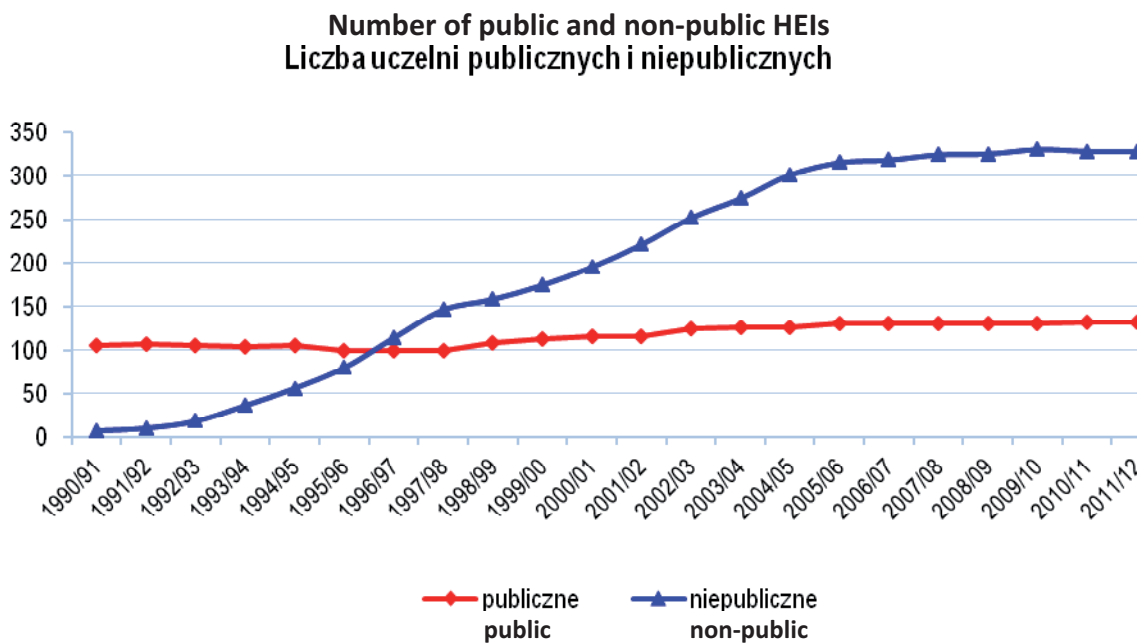
Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education constitutes the legal basis for providing higher education study programmes in Poland.

In Poland tertiary education is provided by public institutions and, since 1990, numerous non-public HEIs. Public schools are founded by the state represented by a relevant state authority or public administration body, whereas non-public schools can be established by private or legal persons other than state and local authority entities.

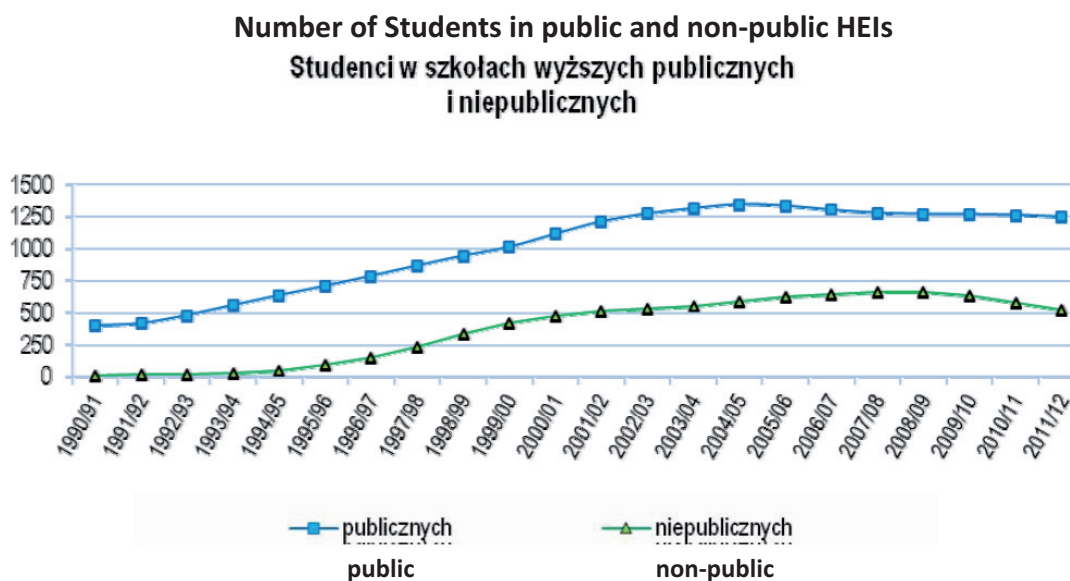
Both academic (university-type) and vocational schools offer higher education (tertiary) programmes in Poland. Pursuant to the act, an academic school is an institution, of which at least one academic unit is authorised to award a doctoral degree. Academic schools can offer first cycle tertiary education programmes leading to the award of *licencjat* (*bachelor's*) or *inżynier* (*engineer*) degree and second cycle or long cycle *studia magisterskie* (*master's degree courses*) leading to the award of the *magister* (*master's*) or an equivalent degree, as well as doctoral programmes. Vocational schools are institutions,

which offer first cycle, second cycle or uniform master's degree programmes, but which are not authorised to award the degree of a *doktor*.

Tertiary education sector in Poland comprises 448 HEIs. There are 130 public and 318 non-public HEIs. Among non-public HEIs, vocational schools predominate. The total number of students in Poland amounts to 1,764,060, and the number of public HEIs' students (1,245,864) is two times higher than in the case of non-public schools. In the academic year 2011/2012, the largest number of students studied economics and administration (21.9%), pedagogy, and social sciences (11.2% at each field of study). These fields of study were also the most popular among Polish students in the previous years.¹



Source: Report of the Central Statistical Office entitled *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2011 r.*



Source: Report of the Central Statistical Office entitled *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2011 r.*

¹ In accordance with a report of the Central Statistical Office entitled *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2011 r.*

1.1.3. Degree structure

A precondition for entering first cycle or long cycle programmes is holding a secondary education graduation certificate (*świadectwo dojrzałości*).

Studies can be provided in the form of full time and part-time programmes.²

Detailed rules for the establishment of HEIs, both public and non-public ones, and the fields of study have been stipulated in the act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education. In accordance with article 4 clause 1 of the act, HEIs are autonomous in all areas of their activity pursuant to the rules laid down in the act. ([Appendix no 4](#))

1.1.4. National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education

In accordance with the law on higher education, HEIs enjoy full autonomy in the scope of the development of study programmes. With the amendment of law in 2011, the list of fields of study and obligatory teaching standards introduced with the regulation of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of 12 July 2007, which comprised general and detailed standards for each field of study, was repealed.

Today, the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 2 November 2011 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for Higher Education and the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study constitute the basis for the development of study programmes. The regulation on NQF stipulates learning outcomes for first- and second-cycle programmes both for general academic and practical profiles. HEIs have been authorised to certify the acquired qualifications in a diploma in accordance with the adopted template. Qualifications to be acquired as part of the first-cycle, second-cycle and long-cycle master's study programmes and as part of doctoral programmes have been stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 1 September 2011 on professional titles awarded to graduates, conditions for their award and indispensable elements of higher education graduation diplomas and post-graduate studies completion certificates and a specimen diploma supplement, and in the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 1 September 2011 on education in doctoral programmes in HEIs and scientific units.

1.1.5. Quality assurance system in higher education in Poland

Provisions of the Act of 27 July 2005, Law on Higher Education and relevant executive acts constitute the basis for the operation of education quality assurance system, which incorporates two parallel and complementing each other dimensions; internal and external quality assurance.

In accordance with the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 12 July 2007 on education standards, HEIs have been obliged to ensure high quality education and to introduce internal quality assurance systems. After the amendment of the act in 2011, the obligation to have internal quality assurance systems in place has been stipulated in the Regulation on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes

² **Full time programmes** – a mode of studies, where at least 50% of the programme is offered in the form of classes that require direct participation of academic teachers and students.

Part time programmes – a mode of studies different than full time programmes, which is described by the Senate of a HEI in accordance with the act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education.

in a specific field and at a specific level of study, which stipulates that *“An academic unit may provide first-cycle programmes or second-cycle programmes, if it has implemented an internal quality assurance system, including actions aimed at the development of the teaching programme in the field of study provided.”* Some of the elements of the system, such as student opinion questionnaires and periodical academic staff evaluations or monitoring the careers of graduates, have been defined as indispensable preconditions in the Law on Higher Education. Moreover, individual elements of the system have been identified in the Polish Accreditation Committee’s institutional evaluation criteria, which stipulate that academic units under evaluation should have efficient internal education quality assurance systems in place. HEIs develop their own quality assurance systems which provide for individual characteristics of a given HEI, its mission statement, education profile, students, staff, tradition and external conditions.

In the Law on Higher Education, the Polish Accreditation Committee was entrusted with external assessment of quality of education. The Committee was appointed as the sole body responsible for higher education, whose opinions and resolutions enjoy legal validity. Observing standards and guidelines for quality assurance of education in European Higher Education Area, and caring for the consistency of national quality assurance system, apart from the quality of education external evaluation procedure, PKA has also introduced the evaluation of the efficiency of internal quality assurance systems at HEIs academic units under review.

Apart from PKA, other peer accreditation committees also operate as part of the system of higher education in Poland. Competencies of each of them are limited to a given group of HEIs (e.g. universities, technical universities, schools of economics, etc.), which when applying for accreditation specify the field of study and persons who are to do that. Subjecting to the evaluation of a peer committee is voluntary and negative assessment, which translates into the refusal to award a quality certificate, has no legal consequences. However, undergoing the assessment by PKA is obligatory and the evaluation brings consequences stipulated by law.

1.2. The Polish Accreditation Committee

1.2.1. Outline of History

The Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA) was established under the name of the State Accreditation Committee on 1 January 2002 pursuant to art. 38, clause 1 of the Law on Higher Education of 12 September 1990 (OJ No. 65, item 385) amended on 20 July 2001. The Polish Accreditation Committee is an independent institution working for the quality of education. In performing its tasks, the Committee is guided by the principles of reliability, impartiality and transparency, and aims at equal participation of men and women in its activities.

Upon its establishment, PKA covered with its scope all public and non-public HEIs, both these founded based on the act of 26 June 1997 on higher vocational institutions and those operating pursuant to the act of 12 September 1990 law on higher education. The Committee assumed all responsibilities of the Accreditation Committee for Higher Vocational Education (*KAWSZ*) and some of the responsibilities of the General Council for Higher Education (*RGSW*) pertaining to giving opinions on applications for the establishment of new HEIs and their academic units, fields of study and occupational majors, yet unlike

KAWSZ and RGSW, PKA was given strong control powers, and evaluations made by the Committee are far more binding for the minister responsible for higher education than it was the case with opinions given by KAWSZ and RGSW.

PKA's activities in historical perspective can be divided into three stages ([Appendix no 5](#)), which result mainly from subsequent amendments of legal regulations governing higher education sector in Poland. Thanks to expanding PKA's competencies so that it meets the requirements of evolving system of higher education and quality assurance in Poland, the subsequent amendments of law have rooted the position of PKA in the system of higher education in Poland. Also the organisational structure of PKA was subject to change with subsequent stages of its development, however, the integrity of its objectives was preserved and expressed in its mission statement.

At the first stage legal and operational bases were formed, which due to the large number of tasks, were urgently needed. The Committee adopted its Statutes on a plenary meeting on 11 January 2002, i.e. only a few days after the award of the appointment by the minister. Next, indispensable internal regulations were adopted. PKA, being a successor of RGSW and KAWSZ was forced to immediately start giving opinions on applications and undertake quality assurance activities.

The second stage was very important for the operations of the Committee due to the changes introduced to the system of higher education, including quality assurance, as introduced by the Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education. The Committee's term of office was extended by one year, and its structure was expanded by joining a section for military sciences and President of Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP) who also became a PKA's Presidium member. At the time when ENQA published its Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Education in European Higher Education Area (2005), PKA commenced the adaptation process, which over the next years was verified by Stocktaking Reports aimed at the review of the implementation of the principles of the Bologna Process in individual countries. The conclusions of the report were positive for PKA.

The third stage of the Committee's operations commenced with the amendment of the Law on Higher Education adopted on 18 March 2011. The first modification was changing its name into the Polish Accreditation Committee. The amended law stipulated in more detail the organisation and role of PKA and emphasized its operational independence. At present, when appointing Committee members, the minister responsible for higher education takes into consideration the requirement that representatives of all areas of education and at least 30% of women sit on the Committee. Also the minimum and maximum numbers of Committee members were increased. Due to the fact that representatives of employers' organisations have been appointed as Committee members, two of them are members of the Presidium of PKA. Moreover, the composition and method of appointing individual sections have changed. From 2012, the sections are formed by the President and correspond to individual study areas.

Two types of evaluation have been introduced; programme and institutional one. PKA has also commenced performing the evaluation of third cycle and postgraduate programmes. The provision naming the assessments: outstanding, positive, conditional and negative, that can be awarded has been introduced to the law. So far, this provision had only been included in PKA's Statutes. Moreover, the law confirmed PKA's right to stipulate in its Statutes detailed criteria for performing the evaluations. The rating awarded to a given unit affects its authorisation to award degrees and titles. Moreover, due to the introduction of National Qualifications Framework, the scope of opinions

presented by PKA has been expanded, as well as the impact the Committee has on education at the stages preceding the achievement of learning outcomes.

1.2.2. Mission statement and strategy of PKA

PKA carries out its mission by performing obligatory evaluations and giving opinions on applications. PKA considers itself a partner in the education quality assurance process in Polish system of higher education. The overriding value guiding the work of the Committee is the objectivity and transparency of education quality evaluations, which form an indispensable element of supporting Polish HEIs in identifying their position in the national higher education system. PKA is a platform for co-operation and dialogue between all stakeholders who want to work on behalf of ensuring high quality of higher education. The Committee undertakes co-operation initiatives in this area, also in the international arena.

The Committee has adopted a strategy ([Appendix no. 6](#)) for the years 2012 – 2015, which stipulates operational goals and tasks allowing for the achievements of strategic goals as presented below:

- 1) accreditation and quality evaluation;
- 2) providing assistance to HEIs in the development of top quality culture;
- 3) improving forms of dialogue on the development of quality assurance system in higher education;
- 4) strengthening the role of PKA as an institution enjoying full autonomy and acting for quality improvement of education and promoting the importance of higher education quality.
- 5) enhancing the level of internationalisation of PKA's activities.

1.2.3. Organisational structure of PKA

The law, statutes, procedures, criteria and guidelines constitute a consistent set of complementary regulations, which enable PKA to efficiently, on time, and in a reliable, objective and transparent manner perform the tasks, which have been defined in the Law on Higher Education.

The mission statement ([Appendix no. 7](#)), which describes the role the Committee plays in the system of higher education, is the main programme document of the Polish Accreditation Committee.

Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education constitutes the basis for the establishment and operations of PKA. The act stipulates the body that appoints the Committee and method of appointing it, the number of its members, duration of the term of office, the Committee's bodies and their basic competencies, organisational structure, tasks, method for adopting resolutions and principles for applicants' appeals against them, as well as administrative and financial support provided to the Committee. In accordance with its competencies, PKA has stipulated the procedures for quality evaluations and giving opinions on requests presented by the minister, as well as assessment criteria, guidelines for performing site visits and preparing self-evaluation reports by HEIs, and templates of opinions and evaluation reports to be drawn by the panel of experts after site visits.

In accordance with article 48 of the Law on Higher Education, members of the Polish Accreditation Committee are appointed by the minister responsible for higher

education from among candidates presented by the senates of HEIs, General Council for Science and Higher Education (RGSW), Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (URAS), Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland (KRZASP), Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP), Poland-wide scientific associations and employers' organisations. Academic teachers holding at least the degree of a doktor and working full time in a HEI as the main place of employment can be appointed Committee members. In accordance with legal regulations, the President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland is also a Committee member. A member of the Committee can be dismissed by the minister responsible for higher education only at the request of the Presidium of the Committee. In accordance with the amended law, the expiry of the mandate of a Committee member can take effect as a result of sending in a resignation or non-participating in the works of the Committee over a period longer than six months, as confirmed by the President of the Committee. The organisational structure of the Committee is presented in ([Appendix no 8](#)).

In the years 2002 – 2005, the Committee could have up to 70 members, in 2005 up to 80, and from 2011 up to 90. Invariably, the vast majority of Committee members have held the title of a professor. At present, this group forms nearly 44.5% of Committee members. Among Committee members are also holders of the degree of a doktor habilitowany (41.1%) and holders of the degree of a doktor (13.3%).

The organisational structure of the Committee includes 8 sections responsible for individual areas of science (hereinafter referred to as 'scientific sections'):

- 1) humanities;
- 2) social science in the scope of economics;
- 3) social science in the scope of social science and law;
- 4) exact science;
- 5) natural, agricultural, forestry and veterinary science;
- 6) technical science;
- 7) medical, healthcare and physical culture science;
- 8) arts.

The sections formulate opinions and proposals in matters included in the scope of operations of the Committee and their reports and opinions form the basis for decisions taken by the Presidium. In their work, section members are supported by a group of almost 1000 experts appointed by the President of the Committee in accordance with the procedures for the appointment of experts.

The Committee works in plenary sessions and through its bodies.

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, the Polish Accreditation Committee has the following bodies:

- individual bodies: the President of the Committee and the Secretary General,
- collective bodies: the Presidium of the Committee.

The minister responsible for higher education appoints and dismisses the President and the Secretary. The Presidium is composed of the President, Secretary, President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP), 2 representatives of employers' organisations, and 8 Chairs of scientific sections. Competences of individual bodies are presented in PKA's Statutes.

Moreover, the Section for Ethics has been appointed, to which Committee members

and experts are accountable for violating the standards of conduct laid down in the Code of Ethics ([Appendix no. 9](#)), and two bodies, which perform opinion-giving and advisory functions, i.e. Section for Appeals giving opinions on applications for the reconsideration of the matter (see chapter 3.7) and the Advisory Board, operate within the Committee. The Advisory Board is composed of former Presidents of the Committee, representatives of the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (KRASP), the Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland (KRZASP) and employers' organisations, as well as representatives and experts of international accreditation agencies who have extensive knowledge and experience in quality assessment and in the management of higher education institutions. The Advisory Board operates based on the adopted regulations ([Appendix no. 10](#)).

Administrative and financial services for the Committee are provided by **the Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee**. From 1 January 2006, the Bureau is an independent state budgetary unit. Organisational structure and detailed scope of activities of the Bureau are laid down in the Regulation no. 1/2011 of the President of the Polish Accreditation Committee of 20 October 2011 ([Appendix no. 11](#)). At present, 23 employees work at the Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee.

The allocated funds are earmarked for the implementation of statutory tasks of PKA and administrative services provided to it. In 2012, the funds provided to the Committee amounted to PLN 9,719,000.00, which was ca 0.068% of the state budget provided for higher education in the budget law. The awarded funding was mainly used for:

- a) conducting the procedures of programme and institutional evaluation,
- b) performing the opinion-giving procedure,
- c) implementing tasks related with international cooperation of the Committee,
- d) making lump sum payments to the President, Deputy President and Secretary General, and paying remuneration to Committee members for attending the sessions of the Committee,
- e) maintaining the fixed assets of the Bureau and the Committee.

HEIs do not participate in financial costs related to quality assessment procedures and giving opinions to the applications by PKA. All costs related with the assessment, such as business travel, accommodation, remuneration costs for experts, are covered by the Committee's Bureau.

1.2.4. Tasks³

Tasks of PKA have been defined in the act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education. They include:

1. programme evaluation, including the evaluation of initial teacher training programmes;
2. institutional evaluation, including the quality evaluation of third-cycle programmes and postgraduate programmes;
3. giving opinions in matters pertaining to:
 - 1) the compliance with the requirements for the provision of programmes as laid down in the legislation;

³ Developed based on a report entitled „Działalność Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej w 2012 r.”, section: „Zadania Komisji w świetle znowelizowanych przepisów ustawy z dnia 27 lipca 2005 r. Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym”.

- 2) the re-granting of suspended authorisations to provide programmes in specific fields of study and at specific levels of study;
- 3) the establishment of higher education institutions;
- 4) the granting of authorisations to academic units of higher education institutions to provide programmes in specific fields of study and at specific levels of study where the field of study concerned covers an academic area and domains of science or fine arts which do not correspond to authorisations to confer post-doctoral degree (*doktor habilitowany*) held by a given unit;
- 5) the establishment of a higher education institution or a branch campus in the territory of the Republic of Poland by a foreign higher education institution;
- 6) the quality of education provided by the unit applying for the authorization to grant the *doktor* and *doktor habilitowany* degrees.

In the case of programme evaluation, learning outcomes (corresponding to National Qualifications Framework in the scope of areas of education and fields of study) and conditions affecting their meeting as stipulated in generally binding regulations are taken into consideration ([Appendix no 12](#)).

Institutional evaluation pertains to basic activities of an academic unit of a HEI and the quality assessment of third-cycle programmes and non-degree postgraduate programmes. During institutional evaluation, the Polish Accreditation Committee focuses on the evaluation of the efficiency of internal education quality assurance systems. The Committee conducts institutional evaluation of academic units, which offer third-cycle studies or meet all the conditions listed below:

- over the five years preceding the institutional evaluation, the unit has not obtained negative assessment as a result of the programme evaluation, and in the case of a conditional assessment, the grounds for it did not include reservations concerning the structure and operation of internal quality assurance system;
- the programme evaluation of majority of study programmes offered by the unit was performed.

Detailed criteria concerning assessments and their award have been stipulated in the Statutes of PKA. When making the evaluations, the Committee applies the following ratings: outstanding, positive, conditional and negative. In accordance with the Statutes, unless there are reasons to conduct the next evaluation at an earlier date, the subsequent assessment is carried on: after 8 years in the case of an outstanding rating awarded previously; after 6 years in the case of a positive rating awarded previously. Where a conditional rating is awarded, a resolution of the Presidium shall identify shortcomings to be eliminated and set the deadline for a follow-up evaluation. At present, all the ratings are given immediately after the completion of the evaluation procedure in accordance with the rating award criteria stipulated in the Statutes.

If the Polish Accreditation Committee formulates negative assessment, the minister responsible for higher education, who in particular takes into account the type and scope of shortcomings reported, may withdraw or suspend, by decision, the authorisation to provide degree programmes in a given field and at a given level of study.

Evaluations made by the Committee, both in the past and today, result in specific consequences for HEIs or their academic units. A public HEI, which offers top quality study programmes, as confirmed by the evaluation by the Polish Accreditation Committee, can obtain additional funds for providing education to students as part

of specific fields of study, macro fields of study or interdisciplinary programmes. At present, in the state budget subsidies are earmarked for the promotion of quality, which are assigned for co-financing of academic units of HEIs to whom outstanding assessment has been awarded. Moreover, in accordance with the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 18 August 2011 on the criteria, conditions and methods of applying for the award of a status of a Leading Country Scientific Centre (O.J. No. 192, item 1142), a precondition for the applying for such a status by an academic unit is providing quality education, as confirmed by the assessment by the Polish Accreditation Committee.

The quality of education provided as part of programmes by an academic unit affects the possibility of obtaining the authorisation to award academic degrees and titles. In accordance with the act of 14 March 2011 Law on Academic Degrees and Title and Degrees and Title in the Arts (OJ No. 65, item 595 as amended) and the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 8 August 2011 on the method of filing applications for the granting of authorisation to award the degree of a doktor and doktor habilitowany. Such an application should be accompanied by an opinion by the Polish Accreditation Committee on the quality of education offered by the unit, if it offers education/providing education and assessment by an agency, which evaluates the quality of education and is registered in European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) or an agency operating in another country, whose decisions are recognised by the Polish Accreditation Committee. This new power emphasises the role PKA plays in academic circles and confirms that no decision affecting the quality of the system of higher education can be taken without the participation of PKA.

Moreover, the minister, when making the decision about increasing the number of full time students at public HEIs, takes into consideration education quality evaluations made by PKA.

The site visit reports constitute a compendium of knowledge on the standing of the HEI in the society, its role and position in the education market, its internal regulations, educational concepts and their implementation, internal quality assurance system applied, academic staff and students of the evaluated field of study, research activity, international cooperation, teaching facilities and student matters. This information is useful to the minister who takes the decision.

The quality assessment made by the Committee helps HEIs identify their strong and weak points and establish a remedial action plan that is of benefit to the schools. During a follow-up evaluation, the Committee surveys how, to what extent and with what result HEI authorities have used the acquired knowledge in day-to-day quality management. The dates for subsequent evaluations are dependent on the degree to which the requirements stipulated in PKA standards are met. In the case of conditional evaluation, a follow-up evaluation is made after one year. In the case of follow-up evaluations made after a conditional assessment, a separate procedure, providing for informing the HEI about the need to demonstrate the corrective measures taken aimed at the removal of shortcomings found in the course of the preceding evaluation procedure.

Moreover, in the case of some positive assessments, the Committee gives recommendations, where it specifies the deadline for their implementation and asks for documenting such implementation.

As a general rule, the ministers have taken the decisions consistent with the positions of the Committee. Only in a few cases, where HEIs presented additional information and explanation after the Committee has completed the opinion giving procedure,

and prior to the minister's taking the decision, as the minister is bound by the rules of administrative proceedings to thoroughly investigate it, such decision differed to that of the Committee. It should be emphasised that in such cases, the minister has consulted the President of the Committee in the due course.

The Polish Accreditation Committee - being an opinion-making body - takes an active part in legislative works of the government, for whom it prepares opinions on draft bills and regulations. A large part of comments presented by the Presidium is taken into consideration during the legislative process. The Committee considers the participation in the development and improvement of legal regulations governing the higher education system as its obligation and pays due diligence and attention to the performance of these tasks.

1.2.5. Procedures

PKA carries out its statutory tasks in accordance with adopted procedures, which have been included in the internal quality management system concerning the quality of PKA's work ([Appendix no. 13](#)). The procedures, assessment criteria and specimen documents are published on PKA's website and announced to external stakeholders.

1.2.5.1. Evaluation Procedure

PKA's procedures concerning both the programme and institutional evaluation include all the elements identified in the Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in European Higher Education Area, i.e.:

- self-evaluation;
- site visit carried on by an evaluation panel, whose members, depending on the type of the evaluation, are students, doctoral students, employers' representatives, and international experts;
- decision – resolution of the PKA's Presidium;
- publication of a report and resolution of the Presidium including any recommendations or other formal outcomes;
- follow-up procedure.

Characteristic features of the evaluation procedures conducted by PKA include no-costs (any and all accreditation costs are covered from PKA's budget), obligatory nature (HEIs are obliged to submit to the accreditation procedure), universality (all public and non-public HEIs are subject to the accreditation process), cyclical nature and uniformity of the procedures applied to all evaluated units.

The Committee performs evaluation on its own initiative, upon a HEI's request, and, in the cases stipulated in the law, also upon a request of the minister responsible for higher education.

Higher education institutions provide their self-evaluation reports (in accordance with a template and guidelines as adopted in a resolution of PKA ([see Appendix no. 14](#)) to the Committee within six weeks of the date of the receipt of an evaluation notice. A site visit should be conducted not later than within eight weeks of the date of the receipt of the self-evaluation report. A site visit is performed in accordance with the rules for holding site visits laid down by the Presidium of PKA and published on its website ([Appendix no. 15 and 16](#)). The failure of a higher education institution to provide its self-evaluation report or feedback on the report from an evaluation panel at a later stage does not prevent further action within the evaluation process. The Director of the Committee's Bureau notifies the higher education institution concerned of the date of a site visit and

provides an outline agenda for the visit to the institution not later than two weeks before the starting date of the visit. The chair of an evaluation panel shall be a member of the Committee of the current or previous term of office. An evaluation panel, composed of two to five members in the case of programme evaluation and three to eight members in the case of institutional evaluation, is appointed by the Secretary General in consultation with the Chair of the Section concerned. The Secretary General may increase the number of evaluation panel members in particularly justified cases. Following the analysis of a self-evaluation report and a site visit, an evaluation panel prepares a report within a period of six weeks. Each expert is obliged to present an interim report, and the Chair of the panel formulates a final report on their basis. A report of an evaluation panel is sent to the higher education institution concerned, which may provide its feedback on the report within three weeks of the date of its receipt. Minutes of the Section's meeting including an opinion and a draft resolution on the quality rating, together with its justification, are presented at a meeting of the Presidium by the Chair of the Section or by a person appointed by the Chair not later than within six weeks of the date of the receipt of the feedback from the higher education institution concerned. The Committee presents all the evaluations, along with grounds and conclusions, immediately upon their adoption. A party which is dissatisfied with a resolution adopted by the Presidium may submit a request for reconsideration of the matter within 30 days of the date of the delivery of the resolution.

The Committee publishes on its website evaluations and resolutions concerning quality assessments, along with grounds and site visit reports.

1.2.5.2. Opinion-giving procedure

The Committee presents to the minister responsible for higher education opinions and proposals concerning:

- the establishment of a higher education institution and the authorisation for a higher education institution to provide degree programmes in a given field and at a given level of study;
- the re-granting of suspended authorisations to provide programmes in specific fields of study and at specific levels of study;
- the establishment of a higher education institution or a branch campus by a foreign higher education institution.

An academic unit of a given HEI, which is not authorised to award the degree of a *doktor habilitowany*, may obtain authorisation to offer programmes in a specific field and profile and at a specific level of study in accordance with:

- model description of learning outcomes for a specific field and level of study or
- description of learning outcomes adopted by the senate of the HEI for a field of study different than this for which the standards have been developed.

The minister issues a decision having obtained the opinion of a minister supervising the HEI and of the Polish Accreditation Committee in the scope of the conditions to be met by academic units in order to offer programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study. The opinion of the Committee is also required if an academic unit, which is not authorised to award the degree of a *doktor habilitowany*, wants to establish a field of study, to which education standards apply.

Reviews are prepared by members of the Section or experts appointed by the Secretary in consultation with the Chair of the Section. The Chair of the Section or a member appointed by the Chair, gives account of the matter at a meeting of the Section. Opinions and resolutions are prepared by the Section not later than within four weeks of the date of the receipt of a review or a report on a site visit, if a site visit is indispensable for comprehensive assessment of the application. Matters are considered by the Presidium not later than within four weeks of the date on which the Section concerned prepared an opinion and a draft resolution. Resolutions of the Presidium are forwarded to the Minister and the higher education institutions or applicants concerned not later than within two weeks of the date of their adoption. In the case of higher education institutions supervised by ministers other than the minister responsible for higher education, a resolution is forwarded to the competent minister. In justified cases, the Secretary General may extend the deadlines. It should be remembered, however, that in accordance with the law, the Committee issues opinions on the applications within four months at maximum from receiving them.

A party which is dissatisfied with a resolution adopted by the Presidium may submit a request for reconsideration of the matter.

1.2.5.3. Appeal Procedure

Due to the statutory tasks of the Committee and far-reaching consequences of its decisions, the appeal procedure plays a very important role in the operations of the Polish Accreditation Committee. A HEI dissatisfied with a resolution adopted by the Presidium may request the reconsideration of the matter. Such a request is investigated at a joint session of the Presidium and a given Section and a parallel investigation is taken by the Section for Appeals.

In order to comply with the recommendations of the external review panel, the Polish Accreditation Committee has made efforts to organise the appeal system and appoint a separate body responsible for investigating applications for the reconsideration of matters, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education. Due to the fact that the law did not provide for fully complying with the recommendations, in 2012 PKA introduced significant changes to its internal appeal procedure. At present, the procedure provides for investigating the applications for the reconsideration of matters by two independent sections, i.e. a Section working within specific academic area and the Section for Appeals. The Section is composed of representatives of all PKA sections operating within the areas operating within the Committee. During the appeal procedure, persons responsible for forming opinions on a given application cannot act as reviewers of the appeal. Detailed operational arrangements for the Section are laid down in the rules of procedure adopted by the Section. Having become acquainted with the evaluations, the Section formulates an opinion, which is presented on the joint meeting of the Presidium and sections for specific areas of education. The section adopts a resolution on the opinion within 30 days from the date of receiving the application by a simple majority of votes with at least half of the membership present. Chair of the section immediately submits a resolution and grounds to the President of the Committee. Therefore, the appeal procedure provides for independent giving opinions on applications for reconsideration of matters filed by HEIs and decisions taken by two independent sections: Section working within specific academic area, to which the appeal has been submitted, and the Section for

appeals. Presidium, having heard the opinions of the two Sections in the presence of their representatives makes the final decision on a given matter.

A resolution on a programme or institutional evaluation and on the application submitted to the Committee can be the subject of the appeal.

Reservations may apply to procedural, legal and factual aspects of the evaluation and should only regard the problems and their scope that were the subject to evaluation and constituted the basis for the adopted resolutions. The Presidium decides to modify the assessment only in the case where the presented arguments pertain to each charge and remove any doubts that constituted the basis for the original resolution and at the same time are within the admissible limits allowing for the supplementing of information and documentation.

In the initial period of the operations of the Committee, on several occasions HEIs dissatisfied with the assessment filed complaints against the decisions with the Provincial Administrative Court in Warsaw. However, The Supreme Administrative Court solved the question of the appeals against the resolutions of the Committee by stating that a resolution of PKA does not constitute a public administration act and as such cannot be governed by administrative jurisdiction and cannot be assessed by an Administrative Court. Therefore, resolutions adopted by the Committee are final and can be altered only by PKA. Such appeal system positively affects the quality of education and strengthens the independence of decisions adopted by PKA.

1.2.6. Relations with Stakeholders

PKA defines its stakeholders looking from both the domestic and international perspective. In accordance with the objective described in the strategy, *PKA is a forum for cooperation and dialogue with all stakeholders of the education process, including the academic circles, candidates for studies, employers, and state and public administration bodies. The Committee undertakes co-operation initiatives in this area, also in the international arena, and co-operates actively with other accreditation committees and international organisations bringing them together in the implementation of the Bologna Process and the development of the European Higher Education Area.*

On the national level, PKA looks for dialogue and cooperation with external stakeholders, namely:

Table no. 1. Relations with national stakeholders

The Minister of Science and Higher Education	Day-to-day cooperation related with the performance of statutory tasks by PKA and giving opinions on legal acts by the Committee. Moreover, the management of the Committee holds regular meetings with the Minister, Vice – Ministers and directors of the Departments regarding the matters of importance to proper functioning of the higher education sector, including key solutions concerning the amendments of the law on higher education.
Polish Parliament	Committee members are invited to sessions of the Parliamentary Committee for Science and Higher Education and representatives of PCSHE attended meetings of the Presidium of PKA.
Polish Senate (upper chamber of the Parliament)	E.g. achievements of the Committee were presented on the occasion of the 10th anniversary.

General Council for Science and Higher Education (RGSW)	The management of PKA attends plenary sessions of the Council, during which the position of the Committee on matters of key importance to the system of higher education are presented.
Central Commission for the Academic Degrees and Titles (CK)	Current matters related with the expanded statutory powers of PKA.
Conferences of rectors, such as: KRASP, KRUP, KRZASP, KRESZP	Members of PKA Presidium attend the Conference meetings and other regular meetings and seminars.
Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP)	Day-to-day cooperation, the President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland is also a PKA Presidium member, and student experts are involved in the work of evaluation panels. Moreover, joint educational initiatives are taken together with the Students' Parliament, such as regular meetings as part of the Quality Forum devoted to the current education quality assurance matters.
National Representation of Doctoral Students (KRD)	Day-to-day cooperation in relation with involving doctoral student experts in the work of evaluation panels, co-organising training for experts.
Employers' Organisations	Day-to-day cooperation in relation with the standing representation of employers' organisations in PKA (as members of the Presidium, Sections and evaluation panels).
Peer Committees	Meetings during thematic conferences or cooperation devoted to a given topic, e.g.: with KAAUM devoted to obtaining US Department of Education accreditation for medical universities
Bologna Promoters	PKA members attend meetings of Bologna Promoters.
Higher Education Institutions	Direct contacts of evaluation panels with HEIs, participating in, organising training, seminars, conferences devoted to education quality assurance.

Moreover, in order to meet the expectations of stakeholders and ensure the quality of statutory tasks' implementation, PKA has developed an effective tool for surveying the opinions of external stakeholders, i.e. regular surveys of academic units upon the completed programme or institutional evaluation procedure and surveys on the introduction of new procedures or the so-called quality inbox (for more details go to section 3.8).

The Committee has initiated regular meetings that form a broad discussion forum on matters related with the quality assessment at HEIs labelled as the Quality Forum. Apart from peer accreditation committees' representatives, management of ministries that supervise higher education, representatives of the General Council for Science and Higher Education (RGSW), Students' Parliament (PSRP), promoters of the Bologna Process and employers' organisations attended the meetings. The main goal of the Quality Forum is to provide solutions to the problems of education quality and to develop quality culture of higher education.

PKA implements an active information policy that promotes good practices. It publishes annual reports and periodical reports that sum up the activities of the Committee. On its website, the Committee publishes activity schedules, evaluations, resolutions, site visit reports and analytical studies.

Clearly set goals and tasks in the field of international cooperation, which are mainly related with enhancing the level of internationalisation of the Committee's activities, are presented in the strategy of PKA.

Today, the Committee enjoys international renown and recognition. PKA is a member of major bodies associating accreditation agencies operating in the educational quality assurance area, and undertakes activities related with bilateral cooperation.

Table no. 2. Relations with international stakeholders

Multilateral Cooperation	
CEENQA – member since 2002.	Vice President of PKA is a member of the Board of CEENQA since 2011. PKA attends regular meetings of the group, and intends to join projects, which are to be implemented next year with the use of TEMPUS and ERASMUS FOR ALL funds.
ECA – member since 2005.	Vice President of PKA is a member of the Board of ECA since 2008. PKA has participated in projects implemented by the following consortia: TEAM I, TEAM II, E-TRAIN, CEQUINT. Being a consortium member, PKA has signed an agreement on recognition of accreditation decisions with NVAO (The Netherlands and Flanders) and AAC (today AQ Austria) and a multilateral agreement on recognition of accreditation decisions awarded to joint programmes with FHR and ÖAR (Austria), EVA (Denmark), CTI (France), FIBAA and ZEvA (Germany), NVAO (The Netherlands and Flanders), ANECA and AQU Catalunya (Spain). Representatives of PKA participate in working groups of the ECA.
INQAAHE – member since 2005	Vice President of PKA sits on the Board of INQAAHE and performs the function of its Treasurer since 2013.
ENQA – member since 2009.	PKA attends meetings, seminars and training organised by ENQA.
EQAR – registration since 2009.	PKA is listed in European Quality Assurance Register.
Bilateral Cooperation	
ANECA	PKA signed bilateral agreements on bilateral cooperation including such activities as: exchanging of experts, sharing experience, promoting best practices, common procedures, etc.
SKVC	
ANQA	
FIBAA	

As part of activities aimed at the internationalisation of activities of PKA, its members and experts work on panels evaluating the quality of education provided by HEIs abroad.

The Committee is also actively involved in the putting into practice the recommendations of subsequent conferences of ministers for higher education from countries engaged into Bologna Process.

1.2.7. Statistical data for the operation of PKA in three subsequent terms of office

In the years 2002 – 2011, PKA formulated 4475 ratings, including 103 outstanding, 3704 positive, 511 conditional and 157 negative ones (respectively ca 2,3%, 82,8%, 11,4% and 3,5%).

Table no. 3. Number of evaluation ratings formulated by PKA.

Number of ratings	1st term of office		2nd term of office		3rd term of office	
	number	%	Number	%	number	%
Total	980		1341		2154	
outstanding	20	2%	26	2%	57	2%
positive	744	76%	1087	81%	1873	81%
conditional	178	18%	180	13%	153	6%
negative	38	4%	48	4%	71	11%

In the years 2002-2011, the Committee examined 5253 motions presented by the minister responsible for higher education, issued 2816 positive and 2290 negative opinions.

Table no. 4. Number of opinions issued by PKA

Opinion type	1st term of office		2nd term of office		3rd term of office	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
Positive	1046	50,3%	699	53,5%	1071	51,6%
Negative	1032	49,7%	551	42,2%	707	46,7%
Other	-	-	57	4,3%	90	1,7%
Total	2078	100	1307	100	1868	100

2. European Standards and Guidelines for External Quality Assurance of Higher Education

2.1. Use of internal quality assurance procedures

STANDARD:

External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

The standards for internal quality assurance contained in Part 1 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. It is important that the institutions' own internal policies and procedures are carefully evaluated in the course of external procedures, to determine the extent to which the standards are being met.

If higher education institutions are to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their own internal quality assurance processes, and if those processes properly assure quality and standards, then external processes might be less intensive than otherwise.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- the putting into place of internal quality assurance systems by HEIs is a precondition for offering study programmes stipulated by law (Regulation of 5 October 2011 on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study);
- a precondition for obtaining outstanding or positive rating as part of programme and institutional evaluation is outstanding or positive operation of internal quality assurance system (see Annex to the Statutes of PKA dated 10 November 2011);
- the commencement of institutional evaluation of a given unit is subject to efficient operation of its internal quality assurance system, as confirmed by previous programme evaluations;
- individual standards of Part 1 of European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area are reflected in programme and institutional evaluation criteria adopted by PKA;
- the award of an outstanding or positive rating as part of institutional evaluation, which focuses on the assessment of an internal quality assurance system, results in the abandonment of conducting the programme evaluation at a given unit over the validity period of the institutional evaluation;

Analysis:

The introduction of a new formula for programme and institutional evaluation as a result of the amendment of law has aimed at a larger focus on the assessment of the efficiency of internal education quality assurance systems applied by HEIs. The previous formula for programme accreditation involved the assessment of the system, but only to a limited extent. Such an approach resulted mainly from the fact that quality assurance was a relatively new phenomenon in the operations of higher education institutions. Legal regulations binding in Poland until October 2011 limited the autonomy of HEIs in the shaping of study programmes, due to the requirement to observe the central list of fields

of study and education standards. To a certain extent, it also limited the dynamics of the introduction of such systems by HEIs. The abandonment of the central list of education standards and the issuance of diplomas marked by HEIs (not state) made the responsibility of HEIs for the quality of education a reality, and as a result greatly affected the criteria of external evaluation conducted by PKA. Executive regulations resulting from the amended law published in September 2011 introduced more strict legal requirements than those binding since 2007. The former requirements called for the introduction of internal quality assurance systems by HEIs, but did not specify their structure or scope.

Changes relating to higher education institutions also involved modifications of the external evaluation of education quality. Both the former education quality evaluation and new formula for programme evaluation provide for the assessment of the efficacy of an internal education quality assurance system from the perspective of its operation in a given field of study. This means that the evaluation pertains to all stages and aspects of the teaching process, provides for the verification of learning outcomes and continuing improvement of the programme offer (see programme evaluation criteria annexed to the Statutes). However, the institutional evaluation procedure focuses mainly on the assessment of mechanisms, methods and efficacy of the operation of an internal quality assurance system.

If, as part of institutional evaluation, a HEI proves that its internal quality assurance system operates in a comprehensive and efficient manner (i.e. depending on the degree of meeting the criterion, it obtains positive or outstanding rating), PKA refrains programme evaluation of all the fields of study offered by a given unit over the period indicated in the criterion (six years in the case of positive rating, and eight years in the case of outstanding rating), provided that no circumstances appear, which would call for conducting such an evaluation earlier.

The evaluation of the operation of internal quality assurance system with accordance to the observance of detailed criteria, which are made public (published on PKA website) and which reflect Part 1 of ESG. They clearly indicate the requirements to be met by a system, which include its structure, decision-making process, the procedures, and the evaluation of its efficiency. The analysis of meeting individual standards of Part 1 of ESG is presented in table 5.

Table no. 5.

ENQA Standards	PKA Programme evaluation	PKA Institutional evaluation
1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance	-	Criterion 1.1; 1.3; 2.2
1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards	Criterion 8.1	Criterion 2.2.d
1.3 Assessment of students	Criterion 2.3, 7	Criterion 2.2.e.
1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff	Criterion 4.2, 4.3	Criterion 2.2.f.
1.5 Learning resources and student support	-	Criterion 2.2.h.
1.6 Information systems	Criterion 8.1	Criterion 2.2.i.
1.7 Public information	Criteria 2.1 2.3	Criterion 2.2.j.

In order to ensure the reliability and comparability of evaluations made by PKA, the Committee has appointed a group of experts specialising in the assessment internal of quality assurance systems (see: section 2.4). These experts take part in every institutional evaluation and focus on making analysis of the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation of internal quality assurance systems.

Related documents:

- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study – [Appendix no. 17](#);
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 29 September 2011 on the conditions for programme and institutional evaluations – [Appendix no. 18](#);
- Statutes of PKA (page 32) – [Appendix no. 1](#);
- Procedure for the appointment of experts – [Appendix no 19](#).

Recommendations	Actions taken
PKA should set a timeframe for the adoption of a strict approach to internal quality assurance	PKA did not develop a strict schedule or timeframe for the adoption of a more strict approach to internal quality assurance, but took actions of evolutionary character. This approach resulted from legislative works aiming at the amendment of law, and the subsequent introduction of new law concerning quality assurance systems.
Criteria for quality assessments should be revised so that all reflect progress made by institutions towards the establishment of internal quality assurance systems, and ultimately the effectiveness of such systems.	This problem is no longer valid, as the evaluation criteria have changed completely. Moreover, dedicated institutional evaluation criterion has been added, which directly refers to the effectiveness of the systems.

2.2. Development of external quality assurance processes

STANDARD:

The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions), and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

GUIDELINES:

In order to ensure clarity of purpose and transparency of procedures, external quality assurance methods should be designed and developed through a process involving key stakeholders, including higher education institutions. The procedures that are finally agreed should be published and should contain explicit statements of the aims and objectives of the processes as well as a description of the procedures to be used.

As external quality assurance makes demands on the institutions involved, a preliminary impact assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the procedures to be adopted are appropriate and do not interfere more than necessary with the normal work of higher education institutions.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- general objectives of quality assurance processes have been determined in general the binding legal regulations: act of 27 of July 2005, Law on Higher Education and in executive acts;
- the objectives of procedures and criteria developed on the basis of the binding instruments were consulted with internal and external stakeholders;
- detailed evaluation criteria are annexed to the Statutes of PKA and published on its website;
- rules for performing site visits and relevant programme and institutional evaluation procedures and templates, such as guidelines on their contents are published on PKA website;
- PKA modifies relevant templates based on information collected from internal and external stakeholders.

Analysis:

The external quality assurance system in Poland is based on two pillars; the generally binding law and internal regulations adopted by the Polish Accreditation Committee. The generally binding legal regulations include the act of 27 of July 2005 The Law on Higher Education and two executive acts that are of key importance for the sector; Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study and the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 29 September 2011 on the conditions for programme and institutional evaluations. These legal regulations are published in publicly accessible official journals of law.

The detailed regulations on the programme and institutional evaluations made by the Polish Accreditation Committee (including the requirements for the award of individual assessment) and on giving opinions on applications have been regulated in the Statutes of PKA and resolutions of the PKA Presidium, which stipulate templates for self-evaluation and site visit reports and specimen reviews of applications, which feature among others the list of issues, which should be subject to analysis. Such documents are available on PKA website.

The criteria suggested by PKA were the subject of consultations with representatives of internal and external stakeholders. Such consultations included:

- consultations with the members of the Polish Accreditation Committee (including employers' representatives);
- consultations with the management of the Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- consultations with external experts of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- participation of the President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP) in the works of the Presidium of PKA;
- meetings with the management of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and with Bologna experts;
- consultations with the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (KRASP);
- consultations with the Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland (KRZASP);
- consultations with the Conference of Rectors of Polish Universities (KRUP);
- consultations with the Conference of Rectors of Artistic Schools (KRUA);

- consultations with the Conference of Rectors of Universities of Medicine (KAAUM) in the scope of the education of physicians;
- attending Poland-wide meetings of deans and conferences organised by HEIs by the management of PKA;
- consultation with members of PKA International Advisory Board devoted to the discussion on the projected criteria;
- surveys for units under evaluation.

PKA has also taken actions aimed at the propagation of new accreditation rules among the stakeholders. It participated in Poland-wide conference organised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in January 2011 and the Quality Forum dedicated to internal quality assurance systems held in December 2012.

One of the important aspects taken into consideration when designing legal solutions concerning the relationship between the programme and institutional evaluation was the analysis of the strain to HEIs (especially those offering several fields of study) caused by PKA's site visits. It was assumed that institutional evaluation should place emphasis on the operation of internal education quality assurance systems and justify, in the case of the award of outstanding or positive assessment, suspends of performing the programme evaluation of all fields of study offered by a given unit over a period stipulated in the resolution.

Due to the fact that executive acts to the amended law, which the Committee was obliged to take into consideration when developing internal regulations, were adopted quite late, and due to the lack of *vacatio legis* and transitory provisions, the consultation process was very intensive one. Because of the reasons outside the control of Committee, it was not possible to conduct pilot site visits, and therefore PKA made the decision to select for first reviews a relatively small number of units, whose programmes were highly assessed before. After the first cycle of accreditations, PKA conducted a survey on the new procedure for institutional evaluation and held a meeting during which its results were discussed with rectors of HEIs. The results of the survey proved the activity of PKA in this scope was positively assessed. At the same time, the Committee introduced required changes to template documents (Resolution of PKA no. 461/2012 and 462/2012 of 25 October 2012).

Related documents:

- Statutes of PKA including the evaluation criteria – [Appendix no. 1](#);
- Law on Higher Education – [Appendix no. 3](#);
- Template for programme and institutional self-evaluation report – [Appendix no. 14](#);
- Template for programme evaluation report – [Appendix no. 15](#);
- Template for institutional evaluation report – [Appendix no. 16](#);
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study – [Appendix no. 17](#);
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 29 September 2011 on the conditions for programme and institutional evaluations – [Appendix no. 18](#);
- Template of a review of an application – [Appendix no. 20](#);
- Results of a survey on new evaluation procedures applied by PKA – [Appendix no. 21](#);
- Guidelines for drawing self-evaluation reports – [Appendix no. 14](#);

- Rules for performing site visit as a part of programme evaluation – [Appendix no. 15](#);
- Rules for performing site visit as a part of institutional evaluation – [Appendix no. 16](#).

Recommendations	Actions taken
PKA should hold consultations with higher education institutions and the peer accreditation committees on the primary and secondary aims and objectives of its operations.	PKA has hold intensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders concerning the objectives of the applied procedures as part of the works on the draft regulations and works of parliamentary committees. It also attended seminars and meetings, during which representatives of various academic organisations discussed the proposed solutions. The peer accreditation committees have either suspended or greatly limited their activity.

2.3. Criteria for decisions

STANDARD:

Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

GUIDELINES:

Formal decisions made by quality assurance agencies have a significant impact on the institutions and programmes that are judged. In the interests of equity and reliability, decisions should be based on published criteria and interpreted in a consistent manner. Conclusions should be based on recorded evidence and agencies should have in place ways of moderating conclusions, if necessary.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- in accordance with the statutory powers, the Polish Accreditation Committee has determined uniform criteria, rules for performing site visits, and templates of reports, which are published on its website;
- in accordance with the rule of transparency, PKA has developed and made public all the procedures related to its performance of statutory tasks, and specimen documents indispensable for their implementation;
- a decision-making process involving several stages ensures consistent and uniform application of the criteria by all sections of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- in the decision-making process, PKA takes into consideration the responses of the HEIs to site visit reports and in justified cases modifies its opinion as presented in the evaluation report;
- a system of intensive training for members and experts of PKA allows for ensuring consistent interpretation of the criteria by all PKA panels;
- resolutions of PKA are formulated based on well substantiated evidence.

Analysis:

When performing its statutory tasks, the Polish Accreditation Committee applies standards and criteria adopted by its plenary session, which constitute Annex no. 1 to its Statutes. The criteria, rules for holding site visits, templates of reports and detailed procedures concerning the implementation of the Committee's tasks have been published on its website at www.pka.edu.pl, and have been presented to all the stakeholders (see section 2.2). All the PKA evaluation panels, members and experts preparing the reviews of the applications are obliged to follow them.

All the standards and criteria form a consistent set of rules, which corresponds to ENQA recommendations on external education quality assurance in higher education. With these standards and criteria, the Polish Accreditation Committee verifies the higher quality areas, which ENQA considers as the most significant for the development of education quality culture in the European Higher Education Area. The system of criteria involves eight standards, which in total incorporate 19 programme evaluation criteria and eight standards involving 23 institutional evaluation criteria. ESG standards and the provisions of the act of 27 of July 2005, the Law on Higher Education along with executive acts to it, and objectives stipulated in the mission statement of PKA served as a starting point for the development of these criteria.

The Statutes of PKA define the decision-making process, which involves several stages and prevents from inconsistency applying of the criteria or latitude in interpreting them. The decision-making process involves four stages:

- 1. the evaluation panel or a reviewer propose of assessment**, which takes into consideration the contents of the self-evaluation report, the site visit, the assessment report, response of the HEI to the site visit report, and in the case of the application – evaluation of documents submitted by the HEI and a site visit report, if a visit has been performed. A template for site visit report presents a list of expectations concerning the scope of opinions formulated by the members of the evaluation panel and a table, in which experts determine the degree of meeting of individual standards. A summary evaluation is reached by way of consensus of all the experts of the evaluation panel. Panel members are obliged to evaluate the fulfilment of partial standards and criteria according to the adopted scale, which includes the following grades: outstandingly, fully, significantly, partially, insufficiently. After each site visit, experts agree their position on each standard, and the response of the HEI to the site visit report may result in amending the evaluation of a given standard. In such cases, the chair of an evaluation panel contacts all the experts and agrees the final standing. If the evaluations of individual experts differ, the chair of the evaluation panel makes the final decision;
- 2. the evaluation proposed by the evaluation panel is analysed at a meeting of a Committee's section for the study area.** The section, having discussed each partial standard and criterion, makes a decision on the proposed evaluation by voting, which is later presented to the PKA Presidium. The chair of the evaluation panel presents details of the site visit report and response of HEI's authorities to comments presented in the report. Such a response usually includes information of key importance for presenting a given standing. The evaluation is agreed by voting and treated as the proposal of the Section for study area. It is later presented by the Chair of the Section at a meeting of the PKA Presidium as a recommended evaluation;

3. **the decision taken by the PKA Presidium** is preceded by a discussion on the recommendation of the Chair of the Section for study area, which includes detailed description of the conditions of meeting each individual standard/criterion. The Presidium of the Polish Accreditation Committee makes autonomous decisions by way of voting (there are situations where the result of voting is different from the proposal of the Section) on each proposed evaluation, starting from outstanding to negative one (each case is voted on individually). The resolutions are adopted in open voting with ordinary majority of votes cast;
4. **the appeal procedure** provides for giving independent opinions on the reconsideration of the matter and accuracy of the previously made decision by two sections. These sections are: the Section for the study area, to which the appeal has been filed, and the Appeals Section. The Presidium, having heard the opinions of the two sections and in the presence of the representatives of them, discuss the case and makes the final decision.

Several practical solutions applied are conducive for the consistent application of the criteria, these include:

- a member or a former member of PKA is the chair of each evaluation panel. The chair is also responsible for formulating the final version of the site visit report. Moreover, in order to ensure the consistency with the applied standards and criteria, prior to being sent to the HEI under evaluation, the site visit report is reviewed by the Secretary General, and judgements made there are analysed and compared with the evidence. The cohesion of the document is analysed (also the compliance with the recommendations presented by PKA during previous evaluations is analysed) and the consistency of the scope of the evaluation with the requirements included in the templates posted online is verified;
- all PKA members and experts undergo initial and periodical training, during which they become acquainted with the amended legal regulations, procedures, standards and evaluation criteria;
- regular meetings of groups of experts are held to ensure that they improve qualifications;
- a large majority of experts has worked for PKA for many years. Many of the experts are former members of PKA.

The fact that the President and Secretary General attend the meetings of Conferences or Rectors (KRASP, KRZASP), General Council for Science and Higher Education (RGSW) and other sector events is conducive for propagating and in interpreting the criteria applied by PKA.

Related documents:

- Statutes of PKA including appendices – [Appendix no. 1](#);
- Template of programme self-evaluation report – [Appendix no. 14](#);
- Rules for performing site visits as part of programme evaluation – [Appendix no. 15](#);
- Rules for performing site visits as part of institutional evaluation – [Appendix no. 16](#);
- Guidelines for drawing opinions on the application for the award of authorisation to provide a field of study – [Appendix no. 20](#);

- Guidelines for drawing opinions on the application for giving an opinion on the quality of education –[Appendix no. 21](#).

Recommendation	Actions taken
<p>Suggestion: PKA should consider how it may refine its decision-making procedures in order to provide an explicit basis for giving an outstanding rating to programmes in fields of study which are not listed in the national legislation.</p>	<p>PKA has complied with this recommendation immediately after the ENQA review report. After the amendment of the act of 27 of July 2005, Law on Higher Education and the introduction of the new evaluation system, which involves institutional and programme evaluation, the conditions, standards and criteria for the award of assessments have been made transparent.</p>

2.4. Processes fit for purpose

STANDARD:

All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance agencies within the EHEA undertake different external processes for different purposes and in different ways. It is of the first importance that agencies should operate procedures which are fit for their own defined and published purposes. Experience has shown, however, that there are some widely-used elements of external review processes which not only help to ensure their validity, reliability and usefulness, but also provide a basis for the European dimension to quality assurance.

Amongst these elements the following are particularly noteworthy:

- *insistence that the experts undertaking the external quality assurance activity have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their task;*
- *the exercise of care in the selection of experts;*
- *the provision of appropriate briefing or training for experts;*
- *the use of international experts;*
- *participation of students;*
- *ensuring that the review procedures used are sufficient to provide adequate evidence to support the findings and conclusions reached;*
- *the use of the self-evaluation/site visit/draft report/published report/follow-up model of review;*
- *recognition of the importance of institutional improvement and enhancement policies as a fundamental element in the assurance of quality.*

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- PKA has developed the procedure and selection criteria for individual groups of experts;
- internal structure of PKA provides for the division into sections operating within individual areas of study.
- the lists of experts are modified by the President of PKA based on the applications by authorised stakeholders;
- composition of individual evaluation panels proposed by the chairs of panels must be approved by the Secretary General;

- each site visit procedure is preceded by an initial meeting of experts;
- PKA has developed a model for the division of tasks between the members of evaluation panels;
- PKA organises regular training and meetings of quality experts, meetings of employers' representatives, evaluation meetings for students and training for representatives of doctoral students and academic teachers;
- national and international experts participate in the works of PKA;
- representatives of students participate in each programme and institutional evaluation, and the President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (RSRP) participates in the works of the PKA Presidium;
- representatives of doctoral students participate in site visits related with institutional evaluation;
- representatives of employers participate in site visits related with institutional evaluation;
- PKA has appointed an individual group of experts on internal quality assurance systems who participate in institutional evaluations;
- PKA has developed a template for self-evaluation report and site visit report, whose internal structure indicates a list of topics reflecting the criteria adopted by the Committee. The specimen documents concerning the follow-up evaluation, programme and institutional evaluation include references to previous analyses;
- PKA has published on its website a template for self-evaluation, programme and institutional evaluation, and follow-up evaluation reports;
- PKA has developed a good practice, as part of which each report of the evaluation panel is analysed by the Secretary General prior to sending it to the HEI under evaluation;
- PKA publishes site visit reports and resolutions on its website;
- PKA makes analytical summaries of its operations and posts them on its website. These summaries are also published and distributed among all HEIs and organisations operating in the higher education sector and Polish Parliament;
- PKA makes current analyses of key processes and audits the adopted procedures.

Analysis:

Having in mind the importance of the competencies of experts participating in the education quality evaluation processes for the achievement of planned results, the Polish Accreditation Committee has developed a procedure and criteria for the selection of experts in individual groups:

1. academic teachers;
2. experts on internal quality assurance systems;
3. students;
4. doctoral students;
5. representatives of employers;
6. experts on legal aspects of the operation of higher education institutions.

Candidates for experts in specific groups are presented by PKA sections working within academic areas or Secretary General or external stakeholders, and their candidatures are evaluated based on a specially designed qualifying procedure and are subject to approval by the President of PKA. The lists of experts are systematically modified and supplemented. The composition of each evaluation panel proposed by Chairs of Sections working within academic areas are subject to approval by the Secretary General.

PKA also organises regular training for individual groups of experts. In the years 2012/2013 they included:

- two internal trainings for all members of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- two trainings for experts who are representatives of academic teachers;
- two trainings for experts on internal quality assurance systems;
- three trainings for experts on legal aspects of the operations of higher education institutions (including one on interpersonal communication);
- two trainings for student experts;
- two trainings for doctoral student experts;
- two trainings for representatives of employers.

Moreover, successful passing of an examination is a precondition for being entered on the list of formal and legal experts.

Last but not least, meetings of quality experts on quality assurance systems are held each month, during which opinions on practices applied by higher education institutions are exchanged and changes in the evaluation models are discussed. In the first half of 2013, six such meetings were held.

It is good to mention one of the good practices applied by PKA on the eve of a site visit panel members discuss the materials submitted by the HEI. In accordance with working standards adopted by the Committee, site visits are provided by representatives of individual groups of experts, to whom individual tasks are assigned in the template for site visit report in accordance with their competencies. The following persons take part in programme evaluations:

- academic teacher experts;
- student experts;
- expert on formal and legal aspects of the operations of higher education institutions,

and the following persons take part in institutional evaluations:

- academic teacher experts;
- experts on internal quality assurance systems;
- expert – employers' representative;
- expert – students' representative;
- expert – doctoral students' representative;
- expert on formal and legal aspects of the operations of higher education institutions.

PKA seeks the participation of foreign experts in institutional and programme evaluation procedures as often as it is possible, although the level of internationalisation of the education offered by Polish higher education institutions is not very high, programmes offered in English are rare, and HEIs are unwilling to translate the documentation relating to providing education into foreign languages. Therefore PKA is forced to use the services of a small group of international experts who speak Polish. At the same time, the Committee considers this a weak point of its operations.

The quality evaluation process includes the procedure for self-evaluation, site visit, formulating of the report which is sent to the HEI under evaluation, assessment of the field of study or the unit which is made public along with a report, and a follow-up procedure. It should be emphasised that the criteria adopted by the Polish Accreditation Committee have been designed to account for different weights attributed to individual factors under evaluation. This is why following the amendment of the Law on Higher

Education in 2011 and the introduction of a new institutional evaluation procedure a decision has been made to appoint a new group of experts on internal education quality assurance who have a decisive say in the procedure.

In order to ensure adequate quality of site visit reports sent to HEI authorities, PKA has implemented a procedure for internal control of this type of documents; each report drawn by a chair of an evaluation panel must be approved by the Secretary General. The consistency of the document is analysed (also the compliance with the recommendations presented by PKA during previous evaluations is analysed) and the consistency of the scope of the evaluation with the requirements included in the templates posted online is verified.

Specimen documents used by PKA as part of programme and institutional evaluations complement one another. Each criterion under evaluation is first assessed by the authors of a self-evaluation report, and next by members of the evaluation panel in the site visit report. Moreover in the latter document, the evaluation of each criterion is briefly summed up and justification for the evaluation is given. In this way, the Committee provides clear information about the areas, which had the largest impact on the evaluation and at the same time allows the institution to introduce improvements or correct the applied procedures.

In order to provide to stakeholders access to the results of the Committee's work, PKA publishes on its website the results of assessments, resolutions of PKA Presidium, reports of evaluation panels, and analytical reports for a given calendar year and a term of office.

Moreover, the processes and procedures aimed at identifying the areas that need correction or improvement are consistently monitored. These aspects are presented in more detail in section 3.8.

Suggestions	Actions taken
The roles and responsibilities for accreditations (opinions and decisions) and quality assurance / quality enhancement played by PKA should be distinguished more clearly.	At present, the regulations in force clearly distinguish between the objectives of ex ante and ex post procedures.
PKA should pursue its initial thoughts about a framework for systematic collection, analysis and use of evidence to verify whether its processes are fit for the purpose of quality improvement.	PKA publishes annual reports on its operations and analyses questionnaires on quarterly basis. The scope of analyses has not reached the extent desired by PKA, however the Committee makes efforts aimed at providing reliable data, which will allow for making more extensive analyses in the future (e.g. it stages various surveys, organises meetings of individual groups of experts aimed at experience sharing, it has introduced relevant mechanisms for the collection of information for internal quality assurance system, it has modernised the database providing information on the evaluations and applications). PKA has also provided the framework for analytical activities in its strategy.

<p>PKA should consider increasing the involvement of international experts to enhance general fitness for purpose and, more specifically, to support the development of internal quality assurance in Polish higher education.</p>	<p>PKA seeks the participation of foreign experts in institutional and programme evaluation procedures as often as it is possible, although the level of internationalisation of the education offered by Polish higher education institutions is not very high, programmes offered in English are very rare, and HEIs are unwilling to translate the documentation relating to providing education into foreign languages. Therefore PKA is forced to use the services of a small group of international experts who speak Polish. However, PKA has decided that participation of an international expert is indispensable for each institutional evaluation. At the same time, the Committee considers this a weak point of its operations.</p>
<p>PKA should commence cooperation with peer accreditation committees.</p>	<p>PKA has commenced cooperation with the Accreditation Committee for Universities of Medicine (KAAUM).</p>
<p>PKA may consider ways of increasing its 'public profile', thus providing a wider and more general audience with information about the quality and standards of Polish higher education.</p>	<p>PKA organises and participates in a number of conferences and training workshops (e.g. Quality Forum on the development of internal quality assurance systems) and meetings of sector stakeholders. PKA authorities are active in general and academic press. PKA makes assessments of its information policy, e.g. it monitors the number of visitors to its website: in 2012 www.pka.edu.pl was accessed on average 270 times a day and in 2013 at the time of secondary education final examinations (e.g. from 6–16 May 2013) average number of visits per day nearly reached 800. Thanks to the expansion of PKA website quality related information is available to all.</p>

Related documents:

- Statutes of PKA (paragraph 19) – [Appendix no. 1](#);
- Template of self-evaluation report – [Appendix no. 14](#);
- Rules for performing site visits as part of programme evaluation – [Appendix no. 15](#);
- Rules for performing site visits as part of institutional evaluation – [Appendix no. 16](#);
- Procedure for the appointment of experts – [Appendix no 19](#);
- Procedure for the programme evaluation – [Appendix no 23](#);
- Procedure for the institutional evaluation – [Appendix no 24](#);
- Website of PKA: www.pka.edu.pl;
- Publications of PKA (available on website).

2.5. Reporting

STANDARD:

Reports should be published and should be written in a style which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

GUIDELINES:

In order to ensure maximum benefit from external quality assurance processes, it is important that reports should meet the identified needs of the intended readership. Reports are sometimes intended for different readership groups and this will require careful attention to structure, content, style and tone.

In general, reports should be structured to cover description, analysis (including relevant evidence), conclusions, commendations, and recommendations. There should be sufficient preliminary explanation to enable a lay reader to understand the purposes of the review, its form, and the criteria used in making decisions. Key findings, conclusions and recommendations should be easily locatable by readers.

Reports should be published in a readily accessible form and there should be opportunities for readers and users of the reports (both within the relevant institution and outside it) to comment on their usefulness.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- the site visit reports are published upon the completion of the evaluation procedure;
- the site visit reports includes:
 - introduction, which stipulates the goal of the site visit and premises for performing it,
 - analyses of individual detailed criteria explicitly expressed in the report,
 - evaluations and recommendations for each point,
 - descriptive explanation of the elements of evaluation for each of the criteria,
 - summary of individual detailed criteria,
 - summary of the report,
 - transparent final table which features all the evaluation criteria,
- the report has a coherent structure and is standardised for all types of evaluation,
- templates of site visit reports are widely available;
- PKA requests feedback from the higher education institutions under evaluation concerning the whole evaluation process, which takes form of surveys. One of the aspects of the survey is assessing the usefulness of site visit reports.

Analysis:

Acting in compliance with the recommendations of the previous external review, PKA has modified templates of site visit reports in order to ensure their publication. The reports are composed of two parts; first - opened for public access and second containing personal data. The latter is not published. The latter is addressed only to the HEI and contains sensitive information, which is covered by the protection of personal data. This means that PKA has introduced the rule of publishing the site visit reports. This rule has been confirmed in art. 53a (1) of the Law on Higher Education.

When designing the structure of the documents, the PKA Presidium adopted the rule that should reflect the adopted criteria. In order to facilitate the searching for key opinions presented by experts, a synthetic report is placed at the end of each section of the report along with the evaluation of the degree of reaching a given criterion.

Each site visit report features an introduction, which presents the reasons for performing the quality evaluation and general description of the site visit, detailed analysis of its contents, including major evidence, conclusions, statement of strong and weak points of the unit or the field of study under evaluation, and the recommendations of the evaluation panel.

The contents of the report are well structured. In order to ensure the transparency of the evaluations, each section of the report has a title and features a commentary describing the expectations towards the evaluation panel. In each section, there is a summary of meeting, the detailed criteria and the evaluation of the degree of meeting a given criterion. Moreover, the final table constitutes the summary of the evaluations and opinions included in the report, which in graphical form presents the degree of meeting of individual criteria (see Appendix number 15 and 16). There is a section in the report, where can be presented HEI explanations to the contents of the report by the evaluation panel, opinions on the evaluation panel, and the table illustrating the changes in evaluations of individual criteria introduced based on them.

The Polish Accreditation Committee requests feedback on the evaluation procedure from each higher education institution under evaluation. The feedback takes form of a survey questionnaire to be filled out online. The request for feedback is presented along with the site visit report, and a HEI can fill out the questionnaire at any time, also after the completion of the evaluation procedure. The questionnaire also includes a question on the usefulness of the site visit report for the identification of problems and for improving quality in the areas under evaluation.

PKA also takes measures aimed at investigating the needs of HEIs with reference to the site visit report. For this purpose, after the first year of performing institutional evaluations a meeting was held with representatives of HEIs which underwent or are to undergo evaluation. The conclusions of the discussions were used to introduce changes in the structure and descriptions of individual sections of the report.

Related documents:

- Law on Higher Education (art. 53a. 1) – [Appendix no. 3](#);
- Templates of self-evaluation reports – [Appendix no. 15 and 16](#);
- Template of a survey questionnaire – [Appendix no. 25](#).

Recommendation	Action taken
PKA should explore ways to publish more detailed and specific information on individual programmes, while respecting the national legislation.	The recommendation has been fully implemented. PKA publishes full versions of site visit reports on its website, except for sections featuring sensitive data (personal data).

2.6. Follow-up procedures

STANDARD:

Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance is not principally about individual external scrutiny events: It should be about continuously trying to do a better job. External quality assurance does not end with the publication of the report and should include a structured follow-up procedure to ensure that recommendations are dealt with appropriately and any required action plans drawn up and implemented. This may involve further meetings with institutional or programme representatives. The objective is to ensure that areas identified for improvement are dealt with speedily and that further enhancement is encouraged.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- when conducting programme of institutional evaluation, PKA consistently applies follow-up procedures in order to improve the quality of education;
- the site visit reports or resolutions of the PKA Presidium include recommendations for programmes or academic units, which call for the introduction of corrective measures or improvements ;
- having undergone the evaluation procedure, academic units are obliged to submit reports on corrective measures taken or improvements made within deadlines stipulated in the resolutions of the PKA Presidium;
- in annual reports on its operations, PKA analyses the impact of follow-up procedures on the quality of education both in individual cases and in the case of groups of units which underwent the evaluation.

Analysis:

PKA formulates recommendations and suggestions for changes to be introduced by the HEIs both as part of the review of applications for the establishment of new fields of study and the evaluation of the existing fields of study or academic units. In the past, PKA awarded positive education quality assessment for a shorter period of time if weaknesses were found, which called for taking corrective measures, but did not greatly affect the evaluation as such or if the criteria were met only on the rudimentary level, which ensured the quality of education, but some solutions needed to be improved. In such cases, HEIs were obliged to submit within the stipulated deadlines reports on corrective measures taken, which constituted the basis for extending their accreditation period for the full six years.

After the amendment of the act of 27 July 2005, Law on Higher Education, when awarding positive assessment for the full period of six years, PKA may pose an obligation on HEIs to take specific corrective measures and submit reports on their implementation within the deadlines stipulated by the Committee. Positive assessment with recommendations are awarded only in special cases, where only small shortcomings are found, which do not greatly affect the quality of education offered and which call for actions taken over a longer period of time. This is a signal for HEIs that they should

intensify efforts in order to remove the oversights found. If corrective measures taken by HEI do not meet the expectations of the Committee, the Presidium makes a decision on subjecting the unit or their field of study to an accelerated quality evaluation.

Conditional evaluations are included in follow-up procedures. In such cases the Presidium formulates recommendations to be implemented within one year. Next, the procedures provide for submitting a report on corrective measures taken, including other changes introduced within 12 months, a follow-up site visit and the evaluation of the compliance with the recommendations. The guidelines for follow-up evaluations and a template of a report on corrective measures taken and a site visit (and a follow-up site visit) report are posted on the Committee’s website. When conducting the follow-up evaluation, the Committee assesses the degree and the effectiveness of the compliance with PKA recommendations by HEI authorities in their day-to-day quality management.

Moreover, as part of the monitoring of follow-up activities, all the evaluation panels are obliged to make detailed evaluation of the compliance with the recommendations presented during the previous visit. Both the institutional and programme (reaccreditation) evaluation site visit reports feature a section where the evaluation panel present comments on the effectiveness of the measures taken by HEI and the unit in the scope of education quality improvement, with taking into consideration the recommendations made in the previous site visit reports.

The importance of the opinions of PKA on the establishment of new fields of study by non- autonomous units (i.e. units which do not meet the requirements of the act of 27th of July 2005 Law on Higher Education) should also be emphasised. Negative opinions on the application for the establishment of a new field of study does not prevent the HEI from the possibility to make corrections and file the documents again, and detailed justification included in the resolution of the Presidium of PKA precisely indicates elements that need to be improved. With subsequent applications, the Committee notices better adjustment to quality standards set by PKA and closer observance of legal regulations, which contributes to improving the quality of education.

Related documents:

- Template of report on corrective measures adopted by the HEI which has received a conditional quality evaluation - [Appendix no. 14](#);
- Templates of a follow-up site-visit reports - [Appendix no. 15 and 16](#);
- Template of a review of an application – [Appendix no. 20](#);
- The follow-up evaluation procedure – [Appendix no. 25 and 26](#);
- Report on the Committee’s operations (available on website).

Recommendations	Actions taken
Suggestion: PKA may wish to consider introducing a follow-up procedure for programmes with a positive rating. This might be particularly useful for programmes offered by institutions where internal quality assurance systems are at an early stage of development.	PKA has implemented a relevant procedure.

2.7. Periodic reviews

STANDARD:

External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance is not a static but a dynamic process. It should be continuous and not “once in a lifetime”. It does not end with the first review or with the completion of the formal follow-up procedure. It has to be periodically renewed. Subsequent external reviews should take into account progress that has been made since the previous event. The process to be used in all external reviews should be clearly defined by the external quality assurance agency and its demands on institutions should not be greater than are necessary for the achievement of its objectives.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- both the programme and institutional evaluations are held on a regular basis;
- the timeframes for which the assessments ratings are awarded are stipulated in the evaluation criteria, which are made public;
- PKA informs the stakeholders about the evaluation procedures to be held in a given academic year by publishing relevant information on its website;
- PKA evaluation panels take into consideration the results of previous evaluations;
- the requirements presented by PKA are closely related with the objectives of accreditation procedures.

Analysis:

In accordance with the Statutes of the Polish Accreditation Committee (par. 21 and 22), education quality evaluations are made at least once in eight years (in the case of outstanding assessment) or once in six years (in the case of positive assessment). A conditional rating results in performing the next site visit within the deadline presented by the Presidium of PKA, which allows for the introduction of corrective measures. These criteria are made public (the Statutes of the Polish Accreditation Committee is published on its website). Also the resolutions of the Presidium of PKA on the quality evaluations are published, and each one of them features the timeframe for the reaccreditation. A list of fields of study and units to be evaluated in a given academic year is posted on the Committee’s website.

The programme and institutional evaluations provided by the Polish Accreditation Committee take into consideration the changes introduced as a result of the previous evaluations. Sections of the reports devoted to this issue are included in the procedures on the programme and institutional evaluations made after six and eight years and the follow-up evaluations related with the awarded conditional evaluation in the previous procedure.

It should be emphasised that the detailed analyses of the compliance with the recommendations formulated by the Polish Accreditation Committee during previous quality evaluations are made during institutional evaluation. This aspect is subject to investigation within a wider context of the operation of an internal quality assurance system and the methods of using information collected by the unit to further improve

the quality of education. The evaluation of the operation of an internal quality assurance system is one of the key factor affecting the possibility of being awarded a positive rating both as part of institutional and programme evaluation.

PKA has stipulated in detail the objectives of accreditation procedures and developed templates of documents featuring indispensable documentation and questions, answers to which will be sought by an evaluation panel. These documents are posted on the Committee’s website.

Recommendations
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Related documents:

- Statutes of PKA – [Appendix no. 1](#);
- Resolutions on the quality of education are published online at: www.bip.pka.edu.pl;
- Website of PKA: www.pka.edu.pl.

2.8. System-wide analyses

STANDARD:

Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments, etc.

GUIDELINES:

All external quality assurance agencies collect a wealth of information about individual programmes and/ or institutions and this provides material for structured analyses across whole higher education systems. Such analyses can provide very useful information about developments, trends, emerging good practice and areas of persistent difficulty or weakness and can become useful tools for policy development and quality enhancement. Agencies should consider including a research and development function within their activities, to help them extract maximum benefit from their work.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- each year, PKA publishes system-wide analysis;
- PKA publications are published for each year and for each term of office and illustrate major events and trends, as well as good practices and weaknesses;
- PKA authorities publish articles in magazines with Poland-wide scope and propagate information during the meetings of relevant Parliamentary committees and organisations operating in higher education sector.

Analysis:

PKA makes system-wide summaries taking form of publications featuring reports on the operations of PKA in a given calendar year or a term of office. A report for a given year usually has ca. 200 pages and includes:

1. statistical data allowing for observing trends, e.g.:
 - the distribution of assessments in individual fields of study;
 - the distribution of assessments in a given group of HEIs (universities, technical universities, schools of economics, universities of pedagogy, schools of natural sciences, schools of agricultural sciences, schools of arts, universities of medicine, military schools, public administration schools, universities of physical education, schools of theology, state higher vocational schools and non-public HEIs);
 - the distribution of assessments divided into public and non-public sector;
 - the number of applications submitted to PKA (and opinions formulated by PKA after their analyses), including the distribution of applications between individual PKA sections working within academic areas;
2. content related analysis of the operations of individual sections working within academic areas, which include:
 - general observations of PKA panels of experts with reference to specific fields of study formulated based on the analyses of reports covering the whole reporting period;
 - implications of the most frequent reasons for the reservations expressed by PKA;
 - assessment of changes and development trends;
 - assessment of the impact of PKA operations on the development of quality culture.

Publications for a given year feature data on the previous calendar year. Analyses with a wider scope (including these allowing for the observance of trends) are published at the end of a term of office of PKA and cover three (in the past) or four (at present) years of PKA's operations.

This area of activity of PKA also includes articles published in Poland-wide magazines (e.g. *Forum Akademickie*) and speeches given by the authorities of the Polish Accreditation Committee during the sessions of Parliamentary committees for education.

Suggestions	Actions taken
PKA might wish to consider the value and practicality of publishing reports on internal quality assurance in individual fields of study and publications promoting best practice in internal quality assurance at institutional level.	PKA publishes reports on performed programme and institutional evaluations, which among other, feature information and recommendations on good practices.

Related documents:

- Publications of PKA (available on website);
- Website of PKA: www.pka.edu.pl.

3. European Standards and Guidelines for External Quality Assurance Agencies

3.1. Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

STANDARD:

The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

The standards for external quality assurance contained in Part 2 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. The standards reflect best practices and experiences gained through the development of external quality assurance in Europe since the early 1990s. It is therefore important that these standards are integrated into the processes applied by external quality assurance agencies towards the higher education institutions.

The standards for external quality assurance should together with the standards for external quality assurance agencies constitute the basis for professional and credible external quality assurance of higher education institutions.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- ESG 2.1. – the assessment of the operation of internal quality assurance mechanisms is an element of programme and institutional evaluation, and is taken into consideration when giving opinions on applications;
- ESG 2.2. – the objectives of external quality assurance process have been developed in cooperation with internal and external stakeholders prior to starting the evaluations. Detailed procedures and information on the operations of PKA have been published on its website;
- ESG 2.3. – the criteria applied by PKA are published on its website. Decisions of the PKA Presidium are taken based on reports of evaluation panels. The Committee has in place mechanisms for modifying applications, which are applied in relevant situations;
- ESG 2.4. - PKA has developed procedures which facilitate the achievement of objectives, such as these pertaining to training and selection of experts; cooperation with international experts; participation with many external stakeholders; templates of documents; methods of formulating evaluations to ensure that the conclusions of evaluation panels can form the basis for making corrections or improvements;
- ESG 2.5. - PKA publishes on its website evaluations, resolutions and reports on programme and institutional evaluations. Specimen documents have transparent structure corresponding to the criteria adopted by PKA, and each section of the report is divided into an analytical part and a brief summary;
- ESG 2.6. - PKA has developed a follow-up evaluation procedure, which provides for assessing the irregularities observed before;
- ESG 2.7. - PKA holds evaluations within the timeframes stipulated in widely accessible documents;
- ESG 2.8. - PKA publishes analyses for a given calendar year and analyses for a given term of office. The publications are accessible in print and published on the Committee's website.

Analysis:

Detailed information on the use of mechanisms described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines has been presented in the previous section.

Recommendations
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3.2. Official Status

STANDARD:

Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- PKA is the only in Poland institution responsible for external accreditation and quality assurance established on the basis of legal regulations. The Status of PKA is identified in the Law on Higher Education;
- Law on Higher Education explicitly stipulates that PKA acts independently;
- The Supreme Audit Office (NIK) stages regular audits of the activity of the Committee and verifies the consistency of its operations with legal regulations.

The Polish Accreditation Committee is an institution established on the strength of legal regulations, and its status is stipulated in art. 48a of Law on Higher Education. PKA commenced operations on 1 January 2002 pursuant to the act of 12 September 1990 on higher education. Its role and tasks have been expanded in the act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education as amended on 18 March 2011. From the beginning of its operations, on the basis of Law on Higher Education⁴, the Committee conducts evaluations of all fields of study offered in Poland. From 01.10.2011, PKA also conducts institutional evaluations. The Committee also gives opinions on draft legislation concerning higher education. PKA is the only sole body in Poland operating in the scope of quality assurance in higher education based on the law and whose resolutions have specific effects for all HEIs operating in Poland. Opinion of PKA on re-granting the suspended authorisation is taken into consideration by the Minister, and the negative assessment of education quality by PKA may result in suspending or withdrawing the authorisation to provide degree programmes (pursuant to art. 11(b)(1)(3) of Law on Higher Education. In the case of being awarded an outstanding rating, a higher education institution unit obtains, among others, additional funds from the state budget (pursuant to art. 94(b)(1) of Law on Higher Education).

The amended Law on Higher Education clearly states that from the onset of its operations, the Committee has acts independently. Pursuant to art. 48a of the Law on Higher Education: the Committee is an independent institution acting on behalf of the improvement of education quality. Art. 53 (1) of the law confirms the independence of the Committee in formulating its criteria and procedures for external quality assurance.

⁴ A few HEIs established on the strength of other acts operate in Poland and are not covered by the jurisdiction of PKA. These are mainly HEIs established by churches and religious organisations.

The legal framework also regulates the relations of PKA with other higher education stakeholders. Decisions of PKA are communicated directly to the Minister of Science and Higher Education and other ministers responsible for the supervision over individual types of HEIs; i.e. the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Health, the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of the Interior, and the Minister of Infrastructure. Members of PKA are appointed by the Minister of Science and Higher Education from among candidates presented by, among others, HEIs, Poland-wide employers' organisations, the General Council for Science and Higher Education (RGSW), Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland 90, conferences of rectors, etc.

Moreover, art. 7 (1) of the act of 14 March 2011 Law on Academic Degrees and Title and Degrees and Title in the Arts (OJ No. 65, item 595 as amended) provides for cooperation between the Polish Accreditation Committee and the Central Committee for Academic Degrees and Academic Title (CK) in the scope of giving opinions on the applications to grant authorisation to academic units of HEIs to confer academic degrees.

According to the rulings of the Supreme Administrative Court, PKA is not a public administration institution and its operations are not subject to the Polish Code of Administrative Procedure. This is why decisions taken by PKA cannot be appealed against to an administrative court. The activity of the Committee and the consistency of its operations with legal regulations generally binding in Poland are subject to regular audits conducted by the Supreme Audit Office.

Related documents:

- Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education – [Appendix no. 3](#);
- Act of 14 March 2003 Law on Academic Degrees and Title and Degrees and Title in the Arts – [Appendix no. 27](#).

Recommendations
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3.3. Activities

STANDARD:

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

GUIDELINES:

These may involve evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the agency.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- quality evaluation is a statutory task of the Committee (art. 48a of Law on Higher Education);
- PKA has declared that quality evaluations is the main tool for implementing its mission;
- in the years 2002 – 2012, on average, PKA made 450 education quality evaluations per year.

Analysis:

In accordance with Law on Higher Education, programme and institutional evaluation of education quality is the main task of the Committee. This task was reflected in the mission statement of PKA adopted by a plenary session, in accordance with which *“The Polish Accreditation Committee carries out its mission by conducting obligatory programme and institutional evaluations of quality of education and by giving opinions on applications for the authorisation to provide degree programmes submitted by higher education institutions”*.

Performing its tasks, PKA each year designates HEIs, units and fields of study, which will undergo programme and institutional evaluation in a given academic year and publishes relevant lists on its website. In the years 2002 – 2012, the Committee made 4,950 evaluations, i.e. on average 450 per year. Over the first six months of 2013, PKA made 186 evaluations, including 129 programme and 57 institutional ones.

As part of its powers, PKA evaluates both new fields of study, and as part of complementary activities, regularly performs reaccreditation of the programmes whose evaluation validity period has expired (one year in the case of conditional rating, six years in the case of positive rating, and eight years in case of outstanding rating).

Recommendations
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Related documents:

- Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education (art. 48a) – [Appendix no. 3](#);
- Mission Statement of PKA – [Appendix no. 7](#);
- Publications of PKA (available on website).

3.4. Resources

STANDARD:

Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- PKA has a membership ranging from 70 to 90 members;
- PKA is supported by almost 1000 experts. PKA experts are appointed on the basis of a decision of the President of PKA based on the needs identified by authorised stakeholders;
- PKA members and experts undergo intensive internal training in order to ensure effective implementation of external quality assurance processes;
- PKA owns sufficient financial resources allowing for the implementation of statutory tasks, including annual work schedules developed by the Presidium. Planning and monitoring of expenditures are conducted in accordance with the rules stipulated in the public finance law.

- PKA Bureau employees, who provide administrative services to PKA, are hired on a basis of employment contracts;
- the infrastructure is adequate for the implementation of current tasks of PKA.

At present, 87 Committee members perform the tasks of PKA, including 11 employers' representatives, and the President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland. A vast majority of them are academic teachers holding the degree of a doktor habilitowany and the title of a profesor. A numerous group of experts (nearly 1000) participate in the works of PKA, including international experts, experts responsible for assessing the operation of quality assurance systems applied by HEIs, doctoral student experts, student experts, legal experts responsible for assessing the legal aspects of operation of HEI. In order to ensure that Committee members and experts display relevant knowledge and in order to promote good practices and experiences, PKA organises regular training (1-2 per year) for members of each group of experts.

PKA members, including the President and Secretary General, are not officially employed at the Committee. However, they may be fully or partially exempted from the obligation to teach classes at their HEIs.

Administrative and financial services for the Committee are provided by the Bureau of PKA, a state-owned independent budgetary unit. The Director of the Bureau, appointed and dismissed by the President of PKA, is responsible for HR policy and organising the work of the Bureau, which has 23 employees with broad competences. The employees of the Bureau work as secretaries of sections working within academic areas, experts responsible for analysing the legal culture of HEIs, and some of them are experts responsible for assessing internal quality assurance systems. They are also responsible for international activities of the Committee, accountancy and providing legal and organisational support to PKA. However, due to low remuneration rates and the freeze on wages in the public sector, they do not obtain sufficient compensation for their qualifications. As a result, a rotation of staff has been observed.

In order to perform its statutory tasks, the Committee rents office space of 900m². It is sufficient, with adequate organisation, to provide enough space for the work of the Presidium, sections working within academic areas and PKA Bureau. For bigger meetings, rooms are rented and paid for with internal funds of PKA Bureau. For the needs of internal processes and procedures, PKA has developed dedicated IT tools and a system of databases. PKA also has access to POL-on – a Poland-wide database on Polish higher education.

In accordance with art. 53 of the Law on Higher Education, the operations of PKA are fully funded by the state budget. HEIs do not bear any financial costs of state accreditation. At present, annual budget of PKA amounts to PLN 9,719,000.00, which constitutes ca 0.068% of all expenditures on higher education.

Based on the experiences of more than 10 years of the Committee's operations, it can be stated that human and financial resources have allowed for efficient organisations of works related with the objectives and tasks of PKA. In particular, all the operational objectives have been met, including these related with planned visits and giving opinions on the applications, and PKA budget has been balanced. Despite the financial crisis and restrictive measures introduced in the state budget, it was possible to prevent the reduction of expenditures on the operations of PKA.

Growing activity of PKA in the international arena (plans related with hiring a bigger number of foreign experts, organisation of international conferences and seminars), the

need to enhance analytical and training activities, and to promote new solutions for the development of internal education quality assurance systems at HEIs result in the needs to increase the budget and look for sources of funding some of PKA's activities (e.g. the Committee's research and development projects) outside the public sector.

Recommendation	Actions taken
<p>PKA should be provided with additional funding to enable it to retain the very best staff. extend its analytical activities and undertake more extensive activities to promote quality assurance among Polish higher education institutions, and within a broader European ('Bologna') perspective.</p>	<p>HR and financial resources of Bureau are insufficient.</p>
<p>It is recommended that PKA should hold discussions with the Minister of Science and Higher Education to ensure that its development priorities are taken into account in the budget for higher education in the coming year(s).</p>	<p>The management of PKA holds regular meetings with the Minister of Science and Higher Education and discuss the priorities that should be developed in a given calendar year.</p>

3.5. Mission Statement

STANDARD:

Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

GUIDELINES:

These statements should describe the goals and objectives of agencies' quality assurance processes, the division of labour with relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, and the cultural and historical context of their work. The statements should make clear that the external quality assurance process is a major activity of the agency and that there exists a systematic approach to achieving its goals and objectives. There should also be documentation to demonstrate how the statements are translated into a clear policy and management plan.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- the mission statement of PKA has been published on the Committee's website;
- the mission statement of PKA indicates the objectives of external quality assurance process;
- the mission statement of PKA highlights the intention of the Committee to cooperate with stakeholders;
- PKA declares in its mission statement that its tasks in the field of quality assurance form its main area of activity;
- the mission statement of PKA has been reflected in its strategy;
- the method of implementing the mission statement of PKA is documented in the reports on its activity.

Analysis:

With reference to the amendment of the tasks of the Committee, PKA revised its mission statement in October 2012. The document adopted by the plenary session of PKA has been published on its website.

The mission statement indicates that the main objective of the operations of the Polish Accreditation Committee is supporting Polish HEIs in the process of improving the quality of education by performing obligatory programme and institutional evaluations and giving opinions on applications for the authorisation to provide degree programmes. PKA considers cooperation and dialogue with stakeholders its duty and emphasises the social context of its operations.

PKA carries out its mission by performing obligatory evaluations and giving opinions on applications. It considers itself a partner in the process of education quality assurance in Polish system of higher education. The overriding principle observed by the Committee in its works is the objectivity and transparency of education quality evaluations issued, which form an indispensable element of supporting Polish HEIs in identifying their position in the domestic system of higher education. PKA is a platform for cooperation and dialogue of all the stakeholders interested in acting on behalf of ensuring top quality higher education. The Committee takes initiative related to such cooperation, also on the international arena.

Declarations included in the mission statement of PKA have been expanded in its strategy, which defines five basic goals of the Committee, three of which are related directly to ESG standard 3.5, i.e.:

- 1) accreditation and quality evaluation as part of PKA's statutory tasks;
- 2) providing assistance to HEIs in the development of top quality education culture by expanding analytical works relating to the tasks of PKA and the dissemination of good practices;
- 3) improving forms of dialogue with stakeholders;
- 4) strengthening the role of PKA as an institution enjoying full autonomy and acting on behalf of education quality improvement, and
- 5) enhancing the degree of internationalisation of PKA's activities.

The mission statement and the strategy are posted on the Committee's website. Each year, PKA publishes reports on the implementation of its tasks. These reports are available in print and online.

Recommendations	Actions taken
If legally allowable, the mission statement should be revised to make specific reference to PKA as the national accreditation body and to accreditation as an outcome of PKA's external quality assessment. It will be essential for PKA to retain its dual roles of: providing public reassurance about minimum standards in Polish higher education, and contributing to the improvement (enhancement) of higher education by working with and through Poland's HE sector.	The legal regulations provide for clear division of tasks fulfilling by the Polish Accreditation Committee. The mission statement reflects the statutory tasks of PKA.

Related documents:

- Strategy of PKA – [Appendix no. 6](#);
- Mission Statement of PKA – [Appendix no. 7](#).

3.6. Independence

STANDARD:

Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

An agency will need to demonstrate its independence through measures, such as:

- *Its operational independence from higher education institutions and governments is guaranteed in official documentation (e.g. instruments of governance or legislative acts).*
- *The definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence.*
- *While relevant stakeholders in higher education, particularly students/learners, are consulted in the course of quality assurance processes, the final outcomes of the quality assurance processes remain the responsibility of the agency.*

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- operational independence and organisational autonomy of the PKA have been guaranteed in the act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education;
- candidates for Committee members are presented by various stakeholders of the Committee. PKA member can be dismissed only on the request of the PKA Presidium;
- organisation and the methods of PKA operations, detailed powers of its individual bodies, detailed criteria and methods of conducting the evaluations and the method of appointing the reviewers are stipulated in the Statutes adopted by the plenary session of the Committee;
- external experts are appointed by autonomous decisions of the President of PKA, which are not affected by state authorities, HEIs or other stakeholders;
- administrative and financial services for the Committee are provided by the Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee, a state-owned independent budgetary unit. The Director of the Bureau is appointed by the President of PKA;
- PKA adopts independent resolutions and no external institution can affect the decision making process.

Analysis:

The review panel assessing the operation of the PKA decided that PKA fully complied with standard 3.6 and emphasised that although Law on Higher Education does not refer explicitly to the independence of PKA, it guarantees full autonomy of PKA in terms of organisational arrangements and operational procedures. Having the above in mind, during the works on the amendment of the act in 2010 the Polish Accreditation Committee

solicited the introduction in the law of the provision specifying in detail its operational independence.

Independence of the Committee on the strength of the binding law was ensured in art. 48a of the Law on Higher Education stipulating that: the Committee is an independent institution acting on behalf of the improvement of education quality. At the same time, pursuant to art. 53 the Committee has retained the right to develop its evaluation criteria independently.

PKA also retains personal independence. Members of the PKA are appointed by the minister responsible for higher education from among candidates presented by the General Council for Science and Higher Education (RGSW), the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (KRASP), the Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland (KRZaSP), Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP), Poland-wide scientific associations, and employers' organisations. A Committee member may be dismissed only on the request of the PKA Presidium. President of PKA autonomously appoints experts of PKA (domestic, foreign, legal, student, doctoral student, employer representative, and quality experts) and the Secretary appoints evaluation panels. No external institution is authorised to affect the composition of PKA evaluation panels or the list of experts.

The Committee is free to decide about its organisational solutions. On the strength of powers granted in the Law on Higher Education, the organisational structure, modes of action, specific competences of the Committee's bodies, evaluation criteria and procedures, and the method of appointing reviewers are regulated in the Statutes adopted at a plenary session of PKA. Moreover, all the rules concerning the structure and tasks performed by the Bureau, including employment and remuneration policy lie within the powers of PKA, and the precise remit of the Bureau and its organisational structure are specified in its organisational regulations provided by the President of the Committee (art. 53 of Law on Higher Education).

PKA on its own selects fields of study and HEIs (units) to be evaluated in a given academic year. In justified cases, the Minister of Science and Higher Education can request that PKA performs an evaluation outside the adopted schedule.

The resolutions of the Committee are final and no external institution is authorized to alter them or affect their contents at any stage of their drafting. The HEIs' units under evaluation may present additional information/documentation in response to a site visit report and as part of the appeal process. Moreover, minister responsible for higher education, having become acquainted with a resolution of PKA is obliged to take a relevant administrative decision, which takes into consideration its contents. In the case of a negative rating, minister responsible for higher education is obliged to withdraw or suspend the authorisation to provide education in the evaluated field of study and at the level of education. The experience shows that the subsequent ministers for higher education have made decisions in this scope that were consistent with the resolutions of the Presidium of PKA.

The decision making process (the Section and the Presidium), which is divided into stages, as provided for in the Statutes of the Polish Accreditation Committee excludes the possibility of an interference by a third party or their influence on the contents of a resolution. The Polish Accreditation Committee makes all the decisions in an independent manner. As the review panel noted in 2008, *the two-stage internal voting procedure adopted by PKA to arrive at decisions ensures that even if there was any interference from a third party at some stage, it is highly unlikely that it could effectively influence a final decision taken by PKA.*

Moreover, the Law on Higher Education grants powers to PKA to independently decide about the scope and form of cooperation with other accreditation institutions operating in Poland and abroad.

Related documents:

- Statutes of PKA – [Appendix no. 1](#);
- Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education – [Appendix no. 3](#).

Recommendations
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3.7. External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

STANDARD:

The processes, criteria and procedures used by the agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:

- *a self-evaluation or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process;*
- *an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site-visits as decided by the agency;*
- *publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;*
- *a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.*

GUIDELINES:

Agencies may develop and use other processes and procedures for particular purposes. Agencies should pay careful attention to their declared principles at all times, and ensure both that their requirements and processes are managed professionally and that their conclusions and decisions are reached in a consistent manner, even though the decisions are formed by groups of different people.

Agencies that make formal quality assurance decisions or conclusions which have formal consequences should have an appeals procedure. The nature and form of the appeals procedure should be determined in the light of the constitution of each agency.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- tasks of PKA, adopted criteria and procedures concerning its activity are published on the Committee’s website;
- in its operations, PKA uses the procedure for self-evaluation of HEIs. Site visits are carried out by groups of 2 – 8 independent experts, including representatives of academic teachers, students, and experts on legal aspects of HEIs’ operations. The institutional evaluation procedure provides for the participation of experts on internal quality assurance systems, representatives of doctoral students and employers.
- resolutions of PKA Presidium, site visit reports featuring assessments and recommendations are published on PKA’s website;
- PKA applies follow-up procedures in order to verify if a given HEI has complied with the recommendations;

- the Presidium of PKA adopts decision on the evaluations based on clearly defined and publicly available criteria;
- PKA has developed an appeal procedure.

Analysis:

Both as part of the former and current system of external evaluation, PKA has defined all the criteria, procedures and specimen documents, and published them on its website prior to the commencement of accreditation procedures. In accordance with the above-mentioned documents, the evaluations are made based on the documentation provided by a HEI (self-evaluation report) and external evaluation made by a group of 2-8 experts of the Polish Accreditation Committee.

The evaluation panels responsible for programme evaluations are composed of representatives of academic teachers, students, and experts on legal aspects of the operation of HEIs. The evaluation panels responsible for institutional evaluations are supplemented by experts on internal quality assurance systems, representatives of doctoral students and employers organisations as well as international experts.

The results of evaluations made by PKA are published on the Committee’s website. Such data includes evaluations and reports of evaluation panels, which include brief summaries and recommendations. Electronic versions of the resolutions of PKA are included in the Public Information Bulletin.

In order to ensure the consistency of applied criteria, the Presidium of PKA adopts resolutions based on documentation presented by evaluation panels operating within individual sections working within academic areas. The Presidium members are not obliged to comply with the suggestions of the sections working within academic areas and based on the presented documentation and discussion can vote on a decision different than the suggested evaluation, if they decide that judgements and opinions of the evaluation panels are not justified by the presented documents.

Each HEI can appeal against a resolution adopted by the Presidium of PKA. PKA submitted to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education a proposal to establish an appeal body composed of key stakeholders in the higher education sector, however it was not included in the process of amending the law on higher education in 2011. This is why the President of PKA has decided to establish an appeal body within the Committee.

The Section for Appeals composed of nine members starts the proceedings upon the reception of a request for the reconsideration of the matter, which is next submitted to two members (including one lawyer) who assess its validity. The opinion of the section is presented on a joint meeting of the Presidium and sections working within academic areas.

Suggestions	Actions taken
PKA should consider how it can establish an appeals body which more obviously ensures objectivity and transparency in considering appeals against decisions of the PKA Presidium.	In order to ensure possibly the broadest transparency of the Committee’s operations, the President of PKA has decided to appoint a special team responsible for the investigation of appeals. Requests for the reconsideration of the matter are sent to reviewers who did not participate in giving the opinions of the first instance. The Chair of the Section for Appeals presents the stance of the section during a meeting of PKA Presidium.

Related documents:

- Website of PKA: www.pka.edu.pl;
- Website: www.bip.pka.edu.pl;
- Decision No. 14/2012 of the President of the Polish Accreditation Committee of 9 July 2012 on the appointment of the Section for Appeals – [Appendix no. 28](#).

3.8. Accountability procedures

STANDARD:

Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

- 1) A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
- 2) Documentation which demonstrates that:
 - the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance;
 - the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;
 - the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
 - the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.
- 3) A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years.

Evidence proving that the standard has been met:

- quality policy and quality objectives are related to the mission statement and strategy of the Committee and form the basis for the implementation of activities in the field of quality management by the Polish Accreditation Committee. The vision, mission and strategy adopted at the plenary sessions of the Polish Accreditation Committee are communicated to its internal and external stakeholders;
- PKA has implemented a comprehensive internal quality management system concerning its work;
- a mechanism to prevent conflicts of interest has been implemented at PKA. It covers the procedures for selection, monitoring and evaluation of work of Committee members and experts;
- PKA has a formal mechanism in place, which allows for reflection, collecting, analysing and using information from external and internal stakeholders in order to improve its processes. Tools for collecting and processing information with the use of a dedicated software integrated with quality assurance system have been developed;
- both the results of PKA's work and the results of analyses related with the monitoring of the quality of its works are presented to external and internal stakeholders during regular meetings, published in annual reports and on its website. Moreover,

representatives of external stakeholders have been appointed to the Presidium of PKA, evaluation panels and the Advisory Body;

- the mechanism for reacting to internal and external improvement measures have been provided for in the Statutes of PKA (Section for Ethics), and in the internal quality assurance system and is used on ongoing basis in the works of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- the frequency of obligatory reviews of the operations of the Polish Accreditation Committee has been stipulated in the Statutes, which include a provision on obligatory evaluations of the agency's operations every five years;
- PKA does not subcontract any elements of the evaluation and accreditation processes;
- the processes, procedures, guidelines and criteria identified by the Committee form the basis for external quality assurance and decision-making processes. In accordance with the suggestion of panel, which conducted the review of PKA's operations in 2008, the Committee ensured the objectivity of the appeal process and appointed the Section for appeals;
- professionalism, impartiality and transparency are the overriding principles for the operations of the Polish Accreditation Committee, which has appointed the Section for Ethics for that purpose.

Analysis:

PKA has introduced a comprehensive internal quality management system, which involves all the processes and procedures in the scope of its powers and responsibilities. The identification of key processes allowing for the implementation of tasks entrusted to the Polish Accreditation Committee in relation with the requirements formulated in the act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education, executive regulations and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area form the basis for the development of the internal quality management system. The model of the quality assurance system in the Polish Accreditation Committee operates in the PDCA cycle related to the planning, implementation, supervision and permanent improvement of the identified processes.

- **Plan** – establishment of a policy, identification of purposes, processes, responsibility, procedures and tools necessary for the implementation of PKA's tasks in accordance with the requirements laid down in the national legislation and with the expectations of stakeholders and the policy of the organisation,
- **Do** – implementation and application of policies, supervisory measures, processes and procedures, methods of objective achievement and appropriate tools.
- **Check** – monitoring and measuring of processes and their outcomes in relation to the policy, objectives and the requirements they face,
- **Act** – undertaking actions aimed at the continuing improvement of the quality assurance system.

The ultimate goal of the quality management system is to raise the effectiveness of activities undertaken in relation to the implementation of the mission statement and strategy of the Polish Accreditation Committee, their continuous improvement, as well as to ensure that the statutory tasks are implemented in a way that guarantees the repetitiveness of quality characteristics. Moreover, the objectives of the system include ensuring professionalism and objectivism in the scope of projects implemented, providing resources guaranteeing high standards in project implementation and

improving communication channels and cooperation with Committee stakeholders. In relation with the implementation of the system requirements, processes, which are the most important for the work of the Polish Accreditation Committee have been identified, i.e. objectives, procedures and the scope of responsibilities at individual stages of implementation have been described for each process. These processes are monitored and supervised in accordance with the requirements stipulated in generally binding and internal regulations of the Polish Accreditation Committee, with taking into consideration indispensable facilities and qualifications of human resources.

Quality management planning in the Polish Accreditation Committee is an uninterrupted process, implemented especially by way of:

- identification of the vision, mission statement, strategy and quality policy,
- identification of quality objectives,
- identification of processes and their interrelations,
- identification of resources,
- identification of responsibilities and procedures, including those relating to quality improvement,
- development of a task implementation schedule.

The vision, mission statement, strategy are adopted at plenary sessions of the Polish Accreditation Committee and communicated to the Committee's internal and external stakeholders, during meetings and via the website. The quality policy and quality objectives are connected with the mission statement and strategy of the Committee and constitute the basis for the implementation of the quality management tasks of the Polish Accreditation Committee.

Professionalism, impartiality and transparency are the overriding principles for the operations of the Polish Accreditation Committee. Having the above in mind, a multi-stage mechanism, which does not cause the conflict of interests between the members and experts of PKA, and which allows for the observance of the above rules in day-to-day work of the Committee, has been purposefully implemented. The initial stage is implemented in accordance with the procedure for the selection of experts, which allows for the appointment of professionals meeting the criteria of PKA in terms of qualifications, competences and predispositions for working as Committee experts. They are appointed by a decision of the President of the PKA and obliged to take on a commitment not to take actions, which could collide with the implementation of entrusted tasks. Moreover, in accordance with the provisions of the Statutes, in performance of their tasks, experts are obliged to abide by the Code of Ethics, which stipulates the rules for ethical conduct of PKA members and experts and the scope of liability for their infringements. For the infringement of rules of conduct stipulated in the Code of Ethics, Committee members and experts are accountable to the Section for Ethics appointed from among Committee members on the first plenary session of a given term of office. Detailed organisation and mode of work of the Section for Ethics are stipulated in the regulations adopted by the Section. The Secretary General is responsible for on-going monitoring of the implementation of the mechanism. In accordance with the procedures, the Secretary is also responsible for the appointment of members of evaluation panels. The scope of internal management system also covers the activity of the Bureau of PKA (periodical assessment of employers etc.)

The Polish Accreditation Committee monitors and measures the efficiency of all the processes in relation to the implemented policy, objectives and quantity (as stipulated in

schedules and indicators) and quality requirements (as stipulated in general and internal regulations).

Such measurements include:

a) a mechanism for external feedback, which involves:

- questionnaires to be filled in by HEIs after the completion of the evaluation procedure (introduced in 2011) or provided regularly in relation with the introduction of statutory amendments, which necessitate the modification of a procedure of the Polish Accreditation Committee (e.g. a questionnaire after the introduction of a new system). In order to ensure that the collected information meets in the possibly the highest degree the needs of the Committee, PKA has developed a dedicated survey system based on open source software and allowing for making opinions surveys in an open cycle and with an open database of survey participants;
- quality inbox as a tool for communication with external and internal stakeholders, which is available on the website dedicated to internal quality management system of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- regular external reviews of the operations of PKA performed by domestic (the Supreme Audit Office) and international institutions (ENQA),

as well as:

- opinions formulated by the Advisory Board, stakeholder representatives being members of the Presidium and evaluation panels,
- opinions formulated at the meetings with Conferences of Rectors and the Minister of Science and Higher Education,

b) a mechanism for internal feedback, which involves:

- opinion surveys addressed to PKA members and experts (at present at the pilot stage) working in selected evaluation panels,
- opinions on quality related problems formulated by members, experts and employees of the Bureau during regular meetings with the management of PKA and its Bureau,
- internal audits staged with the observance of the audit plan,
- reviews of the management system,
- regular self-evaluations of the operations of PKA.

Being aware of the importance of modern methods of communication and having in mind the need to support the improvement processes by dialogue with stakeholders, the PKA has launched a website at www.pka.edu.pl and an accessible to the public quality management system information panel at www.pka.jakosc.edu.pl, where current analyses are published. The Quality Management System Plenipotentiary is responsible for analysing questionnaires and comments presented by stakeholders and presenting them to the President of PKA in the form of studies and proposals for corrective measures.

Recommendation	Actions taken
PKA should establish mechanisms for more organised internal feedback and reflection, and a mechanism to gather and analyse external feedback, thus strengthening its accountability to its stakeholders.	As part of internal quality management system, PKA has introduced a formal mechanism for collecting opinions from internal and external stakeholders, which allows for consistent monitoring, analysing and improving its works. Moreover, the Committee stages ongoing surveys and makes analyses on quarterly and annual basis.
The frequency of mandatory external reviews should be defined in PKA's official document.	In accordance with the decision of a plenary session of the Polish Accreditation Committee, the provision on external review of PKA's operations every five years has been introduced to its Statutes.

Related documents:

- Statutes of PKA – [Appendix no. 3](#);
- Code of Ethics of PKA – [Appendix no. 9](#);
- Template of survey questionnaire – [Appendix no. 25](#);
- Resolution of the President of the Polish Accreditation Committee on the implementation of the internal quality management system – [Appendix no. 31](#);
- Regulations of the Section for Ethics – [Appendix no. 29](#);
- Decision of the President of PKA on the appointment of the Advisory Board – [Appendix no. 30](#);
- Regulations of the Advisory Board – [Appendix no. 31](#);
- Examples of resolutions of PKA – [Appendix no. 26](#);
- Regular reports of the Polish Accreditation Committee on its operations (available on website).

4. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

1. Committee's legal and actual independence from the Minister and HEIs.
2. Autonomy in adoption of the evaluation criteria and procedures.
3. Harmonization of the Polish accreditation system with the EHEA's main directions, including:
 - a. strong emphasis on learning outcomes as the basis for quality evaluation in the PKA's criteria and procedures,
 - b. labour market and HEIs' stakeholders orientation, including engagement of employers' representatives in the processes of external and internal quality assurance,
 - c. promoting the modern trends concerning internal quality assurance systems,
 - d. emphasising the role of the internationalisation in higher education.
4. Organizational agility fostering continuity of PKA's activities during the period of the important legal changes in the Polish higher education system.
5. Vast and in-depth knowledge on functioning of the higher education system and institutions.
6. Objectivity, transparency and independence of evaluation's decision-making process.
7. PKA representatives' activity in the international quality assurance and accreditation networks, including engagement in the European initiatives supporting mutual recognition of accreditation decisions.
8. Efficient prevention of creation of new programmes and eliminating the existing ones offering low quality of education.
9. Regular organization of the Quality Forum as the platform fostering quality assurance knowledge exchange among the Polish higher education system stakeholders.
10. Engagement in building positive relations with the stakeholders by participation in numerous external conferences, workshops, seminars, plenary meetings, working sessions, etc.
11. Accountability oriented, advanced recruitment, training and feedback programme for the students and doctoral students experts.

WEAKNESSES

1. Wavering level of PKA members' commitment to the achievement of its strategic goals due to the time limited terms of office.
2. Unsatisfying number of assessments with participation of international experts.
3. Insufficient human and financial resources of Bureau of PKA hindering administrative services of the Committee.
4. Appealing system requiring further development.
5. Limited possibilities of application for EU fund and participation in some international projects due to the current legal status.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Development of a functional platform for cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education facilitating exploitation of the PKA's experience and knowledge for modernisation of the Polish higher education system.
2. Rising awareness of the importance of internal quality assurance systems and the role of PKA among students, doctoral students and employers.
3. Growing society demand for reliable information on the quality of education, in particular among prospective students and their parents.
4. Continuously increasing number of professionally trained experts able to conduct domestic and foreign quality assessment procedures according to the modern standards.
5. Increasing number of HEIs taking advantage of the PKA knowledge and experience in development of their internal quality assurance systems.
6. Strong determination of the PKA's authorities in internationalization of its evaluation procedures.

THREATS

1. Lack of approval for the activities of PKA in some academic circles/organizations.
2. Legal and financial limitations hindering performance of the PKA strategic tasks/ aims.
3. Uncertainty in the PKA level of financial resources due the economic crisis and possible decrease in the state funds for higher education.
4. Obligations of PKA members and experts related to their professional activities limit their ability to develop skills in the area of quality assurance.
5. Potential „brain drain” from PKA to HEIs developing their internal quality assurance systems.
6. Efforts to hinder the role of PKA by other accreditation agencies competing in the unfair manner.
7. Activities violating of establishing other, legally recognized accreditation agencies in Poland.
8. Very small number of HEIs interested in evaluation procedures conducted in English and the same time limited number of international experts able to participate in assessment procedure conducted in Polish.

List of appendices

- Appendix no. 1 – Statutes of PKA;
- Appendix no. 2 – Action Plan approved in 2009;
- Appendix no. 3 – Act of 27 July 2005 Law on Higher Education (excerpt);
- Appendix no. 4 – Degree structure;
- Appendix no. 5 – Table showing tasks of PKA in individual terms of office;
- Appendix no. 6 – Strategy of PKA for years 2012 - 2015;
- Appendix no. 7 – Mission Statement of PKA;
- Appendix no. 8 – Organisational structure of PKA and its Bureau;
- Appendix no. 9 – Code of Ethics;
- Appendix no. 10 – Rules of the procedure of the Advisory Board;
- Appendix no. 11 – Organisational Regulation of the Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- Appendix no. 12 – Characteristics of programme and institutional evaluation;
- Appendix no. 13 – Internal Quality Management System of PKA;
- Appendix no. 14 – Guidelines for drawing self-evaluation reports;
- Appendix no. 15 – Rules for performing site visits as part of programme evaluation;
- Appendix no. 16 – Rules for performing site visits as part of institutional evaluation;
- Appendix no. 17 – Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions for the provision of degree programmes in a specific field and at a specific level of study;
- Appendix no. 18 – Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 29 September 2011 on the conditions for programme and institutional evaluations;
- Appendix no. 19 – Criteria and method of appointing experts of the Polish Accreditation Committee;
- Appendix no. 20 – Guidelines for the preparation of reviews of applications submitted by HEIs for the award of authorisation to provide degree programmes in a specific field and level of studies;
- Appendix no. 21 – Guidelines for drawing opinions of the Polish Accreditation Committee on the quality of education in an academic unit of a higher education institution applying for granting the authorisation to confer the degree of a doktor and doktor habilitowany;
- Appendix no. 22 – Analysis of the results of a survey administered to academic units where institutional evaluation has been performed for the first time;
- Appendix no. 23 – Procedures for programme evaluation;
- Appendix no. 24 – Procedures for institutional evaluation;
- Appendix no. 25 – Template of the survey administered to HEI after completion each procedure;
- Appendix no. 26 – Examples of resolutions of PKA;
- Appendix no. 27 – Law on Academic Degrees and Title and Degrees and Title in the Arts;
- Appendix no. 28 – Appointment of the Section for Appeals;
- Appendix no. 29 – Regulations of the Section for Ethics;
- Appendix no. 30 – Appointment of the Advisory Board;