



European Association for
Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Mr. Daniele Livon
Director
National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes (ANVUR)
Via Ippolito Nievo, 35
00153 Rome
Italy

Brussels, 7 June 2024

Subject: Statement on validation of the external review report of ANVUR

Dear Mr. Daniele Livon,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting on 31 May 2024, the ENQA Agency Review Committee validated the external review report of ANVUR. The committee concluded that the report has been produced in accordance with the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews and can thus be used to apply for EQAR registration, as well as for any other purposes. This is in line with article 26, paragraph 2 of ENQA's Rules of Procedure, which states that the review report can be further used only once this statement of validation has been issued. The purpose of this statement is to set out the committee's views on the quality of the final report and consistency of the panel's evaluation on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The committee examined the provided review report and asked the panel for minor revisions on the following standards: ESG 3.1, 3.3, 2.5 and ESG 2.6. The panel was also asked to review the provided recommendations and relate them toward the agency's work solely.

On the ESG 3.1, the committee asked the panel to provide further evidence on the stakeholder involvement in the agency's governance and work, and to overall strengthen the analysis part of this chapter to better support the panel's decision on compliance.

Next, on ESG 3.3, the committee asked for further information on what are the agency's procedures in place regarding the appointment and dismissal of the Governing Board, what are the related checks and balances in place to secure the agency's independence, and what is the relation of this body to the national government overall. Moreover, the committee asked the panel to consider splitting the listed recommendation into two parts, to better emphasise all listed elements of the recommendation.

On ESG 2.5, the committee asked the panel to strengthen the analysis part of the chapter to justify/underpin their judgement on compliance. The listed recommendation namely hinted to the



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remaining challenge related to the consistency in decision making by the Governing Board, thus the analysis should further cover this aspect.

Finally, on ESG 2.6, the committee missed the panel's reflection on how the agency is assuming the trust building within the HE system in Italy, and wider in the EHEA, since not all agency reports are published. Thus, the panel was asked to further elaborate on this.

The committee received the final review report that addressed the additional requirements. The final review report can thus be further used to apply for EQAR registration, as well as for any other purposes, as stipulated above.

This statement will be published on ENQA's website as an annex to the review report.

Thank you for your trust placed in ENQA to conduct this review. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the ENQA Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alastair Delaney', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mr. Alastair Delaney
Chair of ENQA Agency Review Committee

Annex: Areas for development

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As outlined by the review panel and further discussed by the committee (where relevant), ANVUR is recommended to take appropriate action, in so far as it is empowered to do so, on the following issues:

ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

Work with the Ministry of University and Research to ensure that the Governing Board and Advisory Board include the expertise and experiences of AFAM institutions.

Build on triennial plans for delivering ANVUR's activities by incorporating the longer-term, more strategic ambitions shared by the agency's leadership so that stakeholders can inform these and more effectively steer the organisation's development.

ESG 3.3 Independence

Work with the Ministry of University and Research to simplify legislation and regulation so that they focus only on the main goals and outcomes that EQA activity needs to achieve. Transfer the evaluation criteria and processes to ANVUR-issued guidelines that can be changed with more agility.

ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

More systematically and critically use the qualitative findings and analysis from EQA procedures to inform the already impressive range of quantitative analysis, publications, and influence on the Italian higher education system so that they can inform improvements.

ESG 3.5 Resources

Work with the relevant ministries to build greater resilience and flexibility into ANVUR's financial planning to lessen the impact of occasional tasks and staff secondments on delivering core business.

Improve the digital platforms and their interoperability and streamline the data collection processes jointly used by ANVUR and the Ministry for Universities and Research.

ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

Be more joined-up, deliberate and consistent in ANVUR's overall approach to Internal Quality Assurance, and document this to maximise consistency and especially for the benefit of the many new staff joining.

ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

Complete work underway in response to the 2019 recommendation that ANVUR extends consideration of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG to all of the agency's external QA activities falling within the scope of the ESG. Pay particular attention to the Ministry's approval of a



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regulatory framework for quality assurance in AFAM institutions and ANVUR's publication of its evaluation methods.

Be more consistent and transparent across different sectors and levels of provision when holistically applying Part 1 of the ESG across initial accreditation and periodic assessment activities.

ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

More explicitly define and consistently publish the purpose and aims of each EQA activity, beyond securing accreditation from the Ministry.

ESG 2.3 Implementing processes

Develop and publish a comprehensive, definitive guide for each EQA activity that simplifies, clarifies, harmonises and brings together the aims, practical guidance on the methodology, the standards/criteria for evaluation, and the decision-making criteria into one place so that they are transparent and easy to use for institutions, experts and the agency.

ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

Document and publish the guiding principles/criteria on how the Governing Board reaches recommendations to the Ministry on accreditation decisions to improve transparency of decision-making and secure consistency of approach in the long term.

ESG 2.6 Reporting

Agree and implement an agency-wide approach to the publication of full reports from all EQA activities, regardless of whether the outcome is positive or negative. Reports should include the conclusion by the Evaluation Expert Commission and the decision of the Governing Board.

Continue to standardise the templates for reports across EQA activities, improve the usefulness of their qualitative content to different audiences, and make them more visible.