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MAB, BUDAPEST, 11 JULY 2024

EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE : FIT FOR THE CHANGING WORLD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ENQA IN BRIEF



Who we are

Membership association of QA agencies:
60 members - 32 countries
42 affiliates – 27 countries



What we do

Represent interests
Provide services to members and stakeholders
Drive development of external QA



How we do it

Policy input	Projects
Events	Publications
Working groups	Agency reviews

- A key goal of the ...(ESG)... is to contribute to the **common understanding of quality assurance for learning and teaching**
- The ESG are not standards for quality, **nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented...**
- The EHEA is characterised by its diversity of political systems, higher education systems, socio-cultural and educational traditions, languages, aspirations and expectations. This makes a **single monolithic approach to quality and quality assurance in higher education inappropriate.**

SOME THOUGHTS ON QUALITY

- **learning approach** – student centred, stretching, new concepts
- **learning environment** – teaching or study spaces, library, IT support
- **engagement** – desire to learn, inspiration from teachers & support staff
- **assessment** – recognising learning in a fair and transparent way
- **experience** – during application, admission, induction, time on campus, the social and well being aspects, growing as an individual
- **relevant** – programmes for life, work and society
- **inclusive**– being able to contribute to the academic community
- Any measurement of quality will always be a proxy - holistic view needed

QUALITY IS NOT BY ACCIDENT

Quality takes:

- Time
- Design
- Reflection
- Co-creation
- And is best advanced when institutions, students, and stakeholders collaborate in developing expectations and sharing of effective practice
- ESG has two pillars - assurance and enhancement. Assurance is necessary for trust and enhancement makes us better!

HOT TOPICS... BUT NO TIME TODAY

- Digital developments to support IQA – learner analytics and student record systems - real time data for quality improvement. In some countries data is now informing EQA practice
- Artificial intelligence in learning, teaching and assessment – supporting students and staff readiness
- **A lot of activity** on micro-credentials
- ENQA and UNESCO shared concerns on transparency of QA of transnational education – Tirana communique calls for robust QA.
- Academic Integrity – essay mills, diploma mills, accreditation mills
- Cross Border choice of QA agency – can be very positive if done well.

SYSTEM LEVEL CHANGE : EU POLICY

- (QA of) European University Alliances
- ‘European degree’ (label) for joint degrees
- EU QA & recognition framework
- Faster movement on automatic recognition
- Focus on institutional level approval of self-accrediting institutions

EHEA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE 2024

ENQA's message to Ministers

- Ensure that national legislative frameworks allow quality assurance agencies to operate in compliance with the ESG
- Enable international collaboration by reducing national-level barriers in quality assurance and higher education while enhancing transparency
- Maintain the relevance and added value of external quality assurance by allowing quality assurance agencies to implement flexible and enhancement-oriented approaches
- [ENQA President speech for the 2024 EHEA Ministerial Conference](#) • [ENQA](#)

FUTURE OF ESG – QA FIT PROJECT



- Assess fitness for purpose in changing higher education environment
- Extensive consultation across full range of stakeholders
 - Consultation - surveys and focus groups with HEIs, ministries, QA agencies and students.
 - Further consultation with experts representing ENIC-NARICs, employers, teachers.
 - input from independent QA experts.
- Recommendations for future development of the ESG
- EHEA Ministers in Tirana, May 2024 supported evolution of ESG – mandate for revision by 2026, with Ministerial approval in 2027
- Steering committee & drafting group being formed by E4 & partners

ESG 2027



- Evolution not revolution – all stakeholders agree that the purposes and principles remain valid and valued
- Update to reflect current developments
- Stronger reference to cross-cutting issues and holistic approaches
- Complementarity with other tools/frameworks
- Support for internationalisation

ISSUES FOR THE ESG REVISION

- What needs to be regulated and at what level?
- How can the ESG maintain its use as a guidance framework and criteria for compliance
- How to balance enhancement with accountability?
- Can the ESG be future-proofed?

All without moving the finishing line too far for developing systems!

Or, losing focus on learning, teaching & assessment!



Key issues for QA agencies:

- Flexibility to address changes
- Room for innovation in EQA methodologies
- Added value of EQA in mature systems



THANK
YOU

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