

HRK

Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and in German Higher Education

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EHEA framework for Quality Assurance in Ministerial Communiqués

Berlin 2003: Realising the European Higher Education Area

- „Quality of higher education has proven to be the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area“
- „...consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework.“

Bergen 2005 and Yerevan 2015: European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG), revised version adopted (proposed by the E-4 Group with BusinessEurope, Education International, EQAR))

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

- apply to all HE, regardless of the mode of study or place of delivery; the term “programme” is used for all offers of HE
- apply to T&L, including the learning environment and relevant links to research and innovation

Four principles for QA in the EHEA

- Universities have primary responsibility;
- QA responds to the diversity of the HE systems, universities, programmes and students;
- QA supports the development of a quality culture;
- QA takes into account the needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

- **Standards for internal quality assurance:** policy for QA; design & approval of programmes; student-centred learning, teaching & assessment; teaching staff; learning resources & student support; information management; public information; ongoing monitoring and review of programmes; cyclical EQA.
- **Standards for external quality assurance:** consideration of IQA within the university; methodologies fit for purpose; implementing processes; peer-review experts; criteria for outcomes; reporting; complaints & appeals

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

- **Standards for external quality assurance agencies:** activities, policy and processes for QA; official status; independence (of organisation, of operation, of formal outcomes); thematic analysis; resources; IQA and professional conduct; cyclical external review of agencies

www.enqa.eu

http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

Consequences of the ESG

1. generic framework => individual procedures per country
2. strengthening of institutional responsibility and autonomy
3. transparency of the national QA systems
4. easier recognition of awards and periods of study
5. strong roles of academics and students in QA
6. respect between different stakeholder groups
7. independence of QA processes from government intervention

EQAR – European Quality Assurance Register

1. EQAR is the EHEA's official register of quality assurance agencies that substantially comply with the ESG.
2. To be listed in EQAR, agencies have to undergo an evaluation to check their compliance with the ESG.
3. EQAR is a tool for trust and transparency: against accreditation mills and degree mills.
4. Being a register, EQAR has no mandate in higher education politics.

The “European Flavour”

- **Role of E-4 Group & other stakeholders**

ENQA: European Association of QA Agencies

ESU: European Students' Union

EUA: European University Association

EURASHE: European Association of Institutions in HE

- **Different approaches in national QA systems (programme or institutional accreditation, evaluations, audits)**
- **Different levels** of institutional autonomy in creating internal QA systems
- **Different phases** of implementation of QA systems on institutional and/or national levels

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So far for EHEA –
any comments or questions?



“State of the art” – IQA in Germany

- additive QA-procedures are replaced by a comprehensive system of quality development as core element of university management
- changing framework conditions: autonomy and accountability strengthen meaning of QA
- sustainable quality enhancement and transparent demonstration of quality as precondition for success in competition

Regulatory basis for EQA in Germany

- “Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)”
- treaty and common regulatory framework of the “Länder” that is implemented consistently in all of the German federal states and linked to their HE legislation. It contains
 - academic and formal criteria (in accordance with the ESG and HQR))
 - rules and procedures (in accordance with the ESG)
 - connections to the administrative law.
- there is no accreditation by professional bodies (if there are requirements for state recognition, e.g. in social work, nursing, teacher education, they are integrated into the “academic” accreditation)

Regulatory basis for EQA, ctd.

- There are 3 types of accreditation:
 1. programme accreditation,
 2. system accreditation, i.e., the accreditation of the quality management system,
 3. “alternative procedures”, i.e. innovative forms of EQA not covered by 1 or 2

- Private universities have to undergo an additional institutional accreditation and a procedure of state approval.

Roles of different stakeholders

- **Academics** have the majority of votes in peer expert groups and in all decision making bodies, when it comes to academic / content related criteria of quality of T&L.
- **Students** have votes in peer experts groups and in all decision making bodies.
- **Labour market** representatives / representatives of professional practice (employers + trade unions) have votes in peer expert groups and decision making bodies.

HQR in Accreditation

Definition of programme objectives and learning outcomes must refer to HQR and cover all categories – the EQF/DQR is irrelevant in this context

**Thank you for your attention –
any comments or questions?**

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