



Recent European policy developments in quality assurance

8th European Quality Assurance Forum, Gothenburg,
November 21-23, 2013

Achim Hopbach
Managing Director

The revision of the ESG

Working structure and process

- Steering group was set up, composed of representatives from EUA, EURASHE, ESU, ENQA, BusinessEurope, EI, and EQAR. (For discussion and decision)
- Drafting group was set up, composed of QA experts that have participated in the mapESG project, nominated by EUA, EURASHE, ESU, and ENQA. (For drafting)
- 8 Nov. 2013: Discussion of initial draft proposal at BFUG meeting
- Beginning of March: Submission of draft proposal to BFUG
- 10-11 April 2014: BFUG meeting
- ...

Guiding principles for the revision

- Keep the strengths: integrated concept and understanding of QA, broad applicability, broad ownership
- Overcome the weaknesses: vagueness, redundancies, inconsistencies
- Update: ESG as part of the 'Bologna-Infrastructure', taking into account recent developments in QA and HE
- Guarantee adaptability to future developments
- Keep a balance between changing as much as possible and as little as possible

Structure

The overall structure of the ESG with three parts remains the same. No additional chapters for specific types of HEIs or programmes, or for specific modes of provision

In order to avoid existing overlaps between the parts 2 and 3 some standards were moved from the one to the other part because in both chapters subject matters were a mixture of standards referring to external QA processes and standards referring to agencies' policies.

Structure

A clearer distinction between standards and guidelines is made:

The **standards** set out agreed and accepted practice for quality assurance in higher education in the EHEA and should, therefore, be taken account of and adhered to by those concerned, in all types of higher education provision.

Guidelines explain the importance of the standards and provide information to assist higher education institutions, agencies and governments in the implementation of the standards in their individual context.

Current ESG – Part 1	Draft initial proposal – Part 1
1.1 Policy and procedures for QA	1.1 Policy and processes for QA
1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes	1.2 Design and approval of programmes
1.3 Assessment of students	1.3 Student-centred learning
1.4 QA of teaching staff	1.4 Student admission, progression and completion
1.5 Learning resources and student support	1.5 Development of teaching staff
1.6 Information systems	1.6 Learning resources and student support
1.7 Public information	1.7 Information management
	1.8 Public information
	1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes ₇
	1.10 Cyclical external QA

Current ESG – Part 2		Draft initial proposal - Part 2
2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures		2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance
2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes		2.2 Designing processes fit for purpose
2.3 Criteria for decisions		2.3 Processes
2.4 Processes fit for purpose		2.4 Criteria for formal outcomes
2.5 Reporting		2.5 Reporting
2.6 Follow-up procedures		2.6 Complaints and appeals
2.7 Periodic reviews		
2.8 System-wide analyses		

Current ESG – Part 3	Draft initial proposal – Part 3
3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education	3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance
3.2 Official status	3.2 Official status
3.3 Activities	3.3 Independence
3.4 Resources	3.4 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct of the agencies
3.5 Mission statement	3.5 Thematic reflection and analysis
3.6 Independence	3.6 Resources
3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies	
3.8 Accountability procedures	

Feedback so far:

Structure clearer (no redundancies/overlaps)

Terminology clearer

Part 1 better because of more explicit reference to teaching/learning process

Topics of discussion:

Reference to achieved learning outcomes

Coverage of research

European Accreditation Approach for Joint Degrees

Mandate

Based on the Bucharest Communiqué the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) included in its work programme 2013-2017 the task to:

“Develop a policy proposal for a specific European accreditation approach for Joint programmes, which should be applied to all those Joint programmes that are subject to compulsory programme accreditation at national level.”

Working Structure and Process

The BFUG commissioned a small expert group to draft such a policy proposal, and to report back to the BFUG Working Groups on “Structural Reforms” and “Mobility and Internationalisation”:

- Mark Frederiks (Structural Reforms WG, The Netherlands)
- Achim Hopbach (Structural Reforms WG, ENQA)
- Andrejs Rauhvargers (Reporting WG, Latvia)
- Colin Tück (Structural Reforms WG, EQAR)

Discussion in BFUG Working Groups on “Structural Reforms” and “Mobility and Internationalisation” in Sep/Oct, Dec/Jan

Core elements:

- A commonly accepted definition of a Joint programme, emphasizing the 'jointness' as specific feature.
- Criteria based on the application of the QF-EHEA, ECTS, DS and internal quality assurance in accordance with ESG. In addition, criteria regarding the specific nature of Joint programmes, namely joint responsibility, joint development and joint provision of the programme.
- Additional national criteria only if related to the quality of the programme. No formal national criteria.
- The procedural regulations based solely on ESG.

Feedback so far:

This is a good thing, BUT

compulsory programme accreditation through the
backdoor?

The emerging European Quality Assurance Market

Agencies working cross border:

Focus of ENQA: Strategies of Agencies/Impact on Agencies

National legal frameworks:

Survey by EQAR about national legal frameworks:

"Recognising International Quality Assurance Activity"

Thank you for your attention!

Dr. Achim Hopbach

achim.hopbach@aq.ac.at

www.aq.ac.at