



11th European Quality Assurance Forum

17–19 November 2016

Quality in context – embedding improvement

Call for contributions

Deadline 25 July 2016

INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to announce that ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE will organise the 11th European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) **from 17 to 19 November 2016 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, hosted by the Slovenia Student Union and the University of Ljubljana.**

Through a mix of plenary and parallel sessions, the 2016 EQAF, entitled '**Quality in context – embedding improvement**', will combine presentations of current developments in quality assurance (QA) with discussions on research, policy and practice that will take place in paper sessions and workshops.

Across Europe there are significant similarities in the ways in which the quality of higher education is assured and enhanced. Nonetheless there is wide-spread agreement that approaches to quality and QA need to be tailored to specific disciplinary, institutional and national contexts and cultures so to allow them to be embedded into daily work and be effective. The 2016 Forum will explore these different contexts and consider how QA policies and practices are adapted to respect diversity and remain fit for purpose.

PARTICIPANTS

EQAF provides a platform for discussion, professional development and exchange of experiences among the main stakeholders in QA. Specifically, the Forum is of interest to rectors and vice-rectors responsible for QA, QA officers in higher education institutions, students, QA agency staff and researchers working on higher education or the QA field.

CALL FOR PAPERS AND WORKSHOPS

We invite contributions from QA practitioners in higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies, students, and researchers in the field. EQAF is an excellent opportunity to present current practice or research and test new ideas, and to elicit feedback from colleagues and stakeholders. All contributions are expected to seek to stimulate a discussion with the participants, thus enhancing peer-learning.

The deadline to submit all contributions is **25 July 2016. Proposals received after this date will not be considered.**

Two types of contributions are being sought: paper and workshop proposals. The Steering Committee expect to accept a maximum of 24 papers and six workshops for EQAF 2016

We will especially welcome paper and workshop proposals that reflect on how approaches to QA are adapted to take into account specific contexts. We also welcome proposals that present different perspectives (e.g. a case study developed jointly by a university and a QA agency) and strongly encourage cooperation with students when preparing proposals.



The papers and workshops will be presented and discussed during parallel sessions, which, it is estimated, will be attended by 20–40 participants.

Please note that participants will be free to select which workshop or paper session to attend based on the **abstracts**, which will be included on the EQAF website and in the programme booklet. Thus, we encourage all contributors to pay special attention to their abstracts, which must be concise, correspond to the content of their contribution and appeal to the participants. The organisers reserve the right to amend abstracts in order to ensure that they accurately reflect the content of the paper or workshop session.

Giving **explicit titles of a reasonable length** to papers and workshops may also contribute to capturing the attention of a wider audience.

1. Paper sessions

This type of contribution will focus on one of the following:

- a) Research – an analysis of concepts or data related to quality assurance with discussion of the implications for policy or practice
- b) Policy – a case study of a particular policy approach with consideration of implications for practice or transferability to other contexts
- c) Practice – a case study of quality assurance practices at institutional, national or European level, analysing the success factors, challenges encountered and possible failures.

The papers are expected to share and discuss experiences in a self-reflective and critical way or to test ideas for new quality assurance initiatives and receive feedback from participants.

The papers will be presented during **45-minute-long parallel sessions**. The presentation of the paper, which should last no more than 20 minutes, will be followed by a discussion. The author(s) should identify the lessons to be learnt from the session and also have the option to provide questions for discussion with the audience at the conclusion of the paper.

Formal requirements

A paper proposal should:

- Identify the author(s), and, in the case of co-authored papers, indicate who will be responsible for presenting the paper at the Forum
- Include the authors' short bios (up to 150 words) to be used for introducing them at the presentation
- Be a fully written paper of no more than 3000 words (excluding references)
- Be accompanied by an abstract of no more than 150 words
- Identify whether the paper is research, policy or practice based
- Provide two or three discussion questions for the session

Evaluation criteria

The papers will be assessed by members of the EQAF Steering Committee on the basis of the following criteria:

- The paper has a clear focus that will be of interest to the participants.
- The argument, development, and structure are logical, coherent and understandable.



- The paper provides a substantial basis for discussion and has the potential to sustain a lively discussion.
- Papers presenting case examples are critical and self-reflective and identify clearly the success and obstacles in implementation.
- No proposal for commercial purposes will be accepted.

2. Workshops

Workshops will focus on providing participants with a structured background on a specific topic or provide hands-on practical advice on how to implement or use a specific QA tool. The workshop will be led by the facilitator(s) in a **90-minute parallel session**. Workshops should not be dedicated to one or several paper-like presentations: the focus should be on **participant activity** rather than presentation from the workshop facilitator(s).

Formal requirements

A workshop proposal should:

- Identify the facilitator(s)
- Identify the organisation of the facilitator(s)
- Identify the target audience for the workshop
- Explain the main objectives / intended learning outcomes
- Explain the activity to be carried out during the workshop
- Specify any practical requirements (audio-visual requirements, room layout)
- Be no more than two A4 pages
- Be accompanied by an abstract of no more than 150 words

Evaluation criteria

The workshop proposals will be assessed by members of the EQAF Steering Committee on the basis of the following criteria:

- The level and type of participant activity: workshops should aim to sustain a lively debate with and the engagement of the audience in a hands-on activity.
- The topic and objectives of the workshop and their relevance to QA.
- Description of how the workshop will be run (activities proposed, how realistic it is to carry them out in the given timeframe, methodology to ensure participation from the audience...).
- No proposal for commercial purposes will be accepted.

Any supplementary documentation may be annexed. For instance, a workshop proposal on comparing different kinds of teaching evaluation questionnaires could include the questionnaires that will be discussed during the workshop.

We strongly encourage the workshop facilitators to prepare and handle the timing of their activities carefully. They should also be prepared to adapt to the number of participants in the audience (e.g. adapt the number of sub-groups in case attendance is below or beyond expectations).



PROCEDURE

All proposals should be submitted using the forms attached to this call, in Word format, by **25 July 2016** to QAForum@eua.be. Please do *not* send a hard copy or a PDF file.

All contributions will be reviewed separately by two members of the EQAF Steering Committee. When allocated contribution for review, attention is paid to avoid potential conflict of interest. Please see FAQ 11 for further details of the review process. The authors will be informed in September if their contribution has been selected for presentation at EQAF. Selected proposals may receive comments on how the proposal should be amended before presentation. Please note that due to limited resources no comments can be provided to unsuccessful proposals.

Unless the author indicates otherwise, all selected papers will be posted on the EQAF website after the event and the page will be assigned an ISSN number.

IMPORTANT: If you have submitted a paper or workshop proposal, please do not register for the event online until the results of the selection process have been announced. Each selected paper and workshop at EQAF 2016 will benefit from one reduced fee, which will be applied through a special registration process.

All correspondence with authors will be by e-mail.

In order to assist contributors, frequently asked questions are included as an annex to this call for contributions.

CALENDAR

25 July 2016: Full proposals must be submitted in Word format using the forms attached to this call to QAForum@eua.be. Proposals received after this date will not be considered. Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.

September 2016: Notification of acceptance or rejection will be sent by e-mail to all authors. Accepted proposals will be accompanied by comments.

October 2016: Abstracts of accepted proposals will be published on the Forum website. Information regarding the day and time of sessions at the Forum will be provided closer to the event.

17-19 November 2016: the 11th European Quality Assurance Forum takes place in Ljubljana, Slovenia hosted by the Slovenia Student Union and the University of Ljubljana.

End November 2016: Full text of presented papers and PowerPoint presentations from workshops will be posted on the EQAF website and allocated an ISSN number.

EQAF STEERING COMMITTEE

ENQA:	Caty Duykaerts and Maria Kelo
ESU:	Beate Tremel and Blazhe Todorovski
EUA:	Tina Harrison and Tia Loukkola
EURASHE:	Juan Carlos Hernandez Buades (chair) and Marieke Janssen
Academic advisor:	Oliver Vettori



Annex 1: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

This informal annex aims at providing indicative answers to frequently asked questions related to the EQAF call for contributions.

1. Are abstracts enough in themselves for a paper to be taken into account in the selection procedure?

Answer: Abstracts alone are not enough. The formal requirements for either a paper or a workshop proposal are listed under the sections "Paper sessions" and "Workshops" of the call for contributions. If you wish to submit a paper proposal, it must be a fully written paper of no more than 3000 words (references excluded), accompanied by an abstract of up to 150 words.

2. I would like to present the QA system in place in my institution. Should I choose to submit a paper or a workshop?

Answer: Workshops are based on interactivity with the audience (e.g., on the use of specific QA tools in different national and institutional contexts), and should not consist of one or a series of paper-like presentations. If you wish to collect feedback from other institutional contexts on, for example, a tool that you would like to implement within your institution, a workshop might be a good solution. Please be aware that a workshop lasts twice as long as a paper session and you will have to propose activities and sustain a lively discussion with your audience for 90 minutes.

If you wish to present a paper, please bear in mind that, if selected, your paper presentation should provide a substantial basis for sustaining a lively discussion among the audience. The paper should therefore be self-reflective and provide a basis for broadening perspectives beyond your own institutional approach.

3. May I co-author a paper with someone from outside my institution?

Answer: Proposals submitted jointly by two or several authors are most welcome. You are free to co-author it either with someone from your institution or someone from another institution/organisation. As an example, a joint paper presenting a reform from both points of view of a QA agency and of an institution, or on a QA procedure from the perspective of an institution and its students, would be highly welcome and of interest to the audience of the Forum.

4. Can authors selected under the call for contributions be funded to participate in EQAF?

Answer: The EQAF organisers do not fund participation. Should a proposal of contribution be accepted, the presenter's institution often covers the Forum fee as well as travel to the event. However, one reduced fee will be granted to each selected paper and workshop at EQAF 2016. This will be applied through a special registration process after the selection of papers and workshops is finalised.

5. I am based in an institution that is located outside Europe. May I still submit a proposal under the call for contributions?



Answer: Yes. Your proposal will be reviewed on the same basis and following the same criteria as other proposals (see call for contributions for the list of evaluation criteria for each category of proposal). Please also consider the answer to question 4 related to funding for attending EQAF.

6. I am a student. May I also participate in this call for contributions?

Answer: You are most welcome to submit a proposal. We strongly encourage student participation in EQAF.

7. I do not work in the higher education area but would like to submit a contribution on quality assurance as a transversal topic. Would that be possible?

Answer: It all depends on how your proposal will address quality assurance. EQAF specifically focuses on quality assurance in higher education and all proposals selected under the call for contributions should be related, in one way or another, to this specific field. It might therefore not be the right platform if you intend to discuss a generic quality assurance management tool.

8. Will all proposals selected under this call for contributions be published automatically?

Answer: After the Forum, the full text of all papers presented at the Forum and PowerPoint presentations from workshops will be published on the Forum website, unless the authors indicate otherwise. The webpage on which they are published will be assigned an ISSN number.

9. What must I do after my proposal is selected?

Answer: In September, you will be notified by email about whether your proposal has been accepted. This email will indicate how you should then proceed.

10. Are papers that have been already published elsewhere eligible under this call for contributions?

Answer: Yes. Please however indicate on your submission form where and when it was published. Your proposal should still fulfil the evaluation criteria as stated in the call for contributions, and be of relevance for the EQAF participants.

11. What is the evaluation procedure?

Answer: The evaluation procedure works as follows: each proposal is reviewed separately by two different members of the EQAF Steering Committee from different backgrounds, taking into account potential conflicts of interest and imperatives of impartiality. In practice this means that submissions from QA agencies are not reviewed by the ENQA representatives on the Steering Committee, contributions from universities are not reviewed by the EUA representatives on the Steering Committee and so forth. Reviewers are also asked to declare any conflict of interest when they receive their contributions to be reviewed and an alternative reviewer will be found if necessary. Each reviewer will give a score according to a standard scale for grading, and provide comments as necessary. The EQAF Steering Committee then meets to discuss and decide on the final selection



based on scores given to contributions, the maximum number of proposals to be selected for each type of contribution, and the need to ensure a balanced programme.

12. Besides the evaluation criteria as announced in the call for contributions, are there other criteria that I should be aware of?

Answer: All proposals that fulfil the formal requirements as stated in the call for contributions will be reviewed according to the evaluation criteria. In addition, as is usual practice in academia, the reviewers will not evaluate any proposal that presents serious distortions to the basic principles for original contributions, i.e. papers with examples of plagiarism or copyright issues.

13. Will the organisers collect feedback from participants about my session?

Answer: The organisers do not collect feedback from participants about individual paper/workshop sessions. However, the presenters/facilitators are free to collect feedback from the participants of their session themselves.

This document tries to offer general answers to most frequently asked questions in order to clarify generic requests.

Should you have any further questions related to the call for contributions, please contact QAForum@eua.be.