

Call for students to join ESU Quality Assurance Student Experts Pool for the membership term 2024/2025

April 15th,
2024

The Steering Committee of the ESU QA Student Experts Pool hereby opens a **call for 90-100 members to join ESU QA Student Experts Pool for the membership term 2024/2025**. All applications must be submitted by **the 19th of May, 2024, 23:59 CEST**, by filling out the following [application form](#) and uploading the necessary [documents](#).

The [ESU's Quality Assurance Student Experts' Pool](#) has been established to promote student engagement in quality assurance and to contribute to the improvement of higher education provision in the European Higher Education Area. It aims to develop ESU as a crucial partner for quality assurance agencies in Europe and to play a leading role in quality assurance policy developments.

For these purposes, members of the pool are trained and can be nominated to participate in quality assurance procedures, e.g. reviews, thus promoting student participation in quality assurance processes across Europe. Through the pool, ESU also undertakes capacity-building and development activities in quality assurance in higher education on the national level, in cooperation with the National Students' Union members of ESU.

During the past years, ESU has organised several pieces of training at the European level. So far, ESU has nominated an increasing number of students to take part in various international external evaluations organised by different quality assurance agencies all over Europe. Furthermore, ESU is cooperating with the Institutional Evaluation Programme of the European University Association (EUA) and is nominating students for external reviews of quality assurance agencies for the purposes of determining membership

in the European Association of Quality Assurance (ENQA) and/or inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

Benefits of being the member of QA Pool:

- learning about European higher education;
- possibility to be involved in quality assurance processes at a programme, institutional, appellate, national, and international level (e.g. evaluations of institutions and quality assurance agencies);
- possibility to participate in quality assurance governing bodies, such as in those of quality assurance agencies;
- receiving regular updates about the newest developments in the field of quality assurance;
- opportunities to attend external quality assurance events;
- possibilities for networking with other people interested in the topic of quality assurance;
- opportunities to participate in specially designed pieces of training for experts;
- opportunities to develop transferable skills, such as communication skills, peer assessment, etc.

Tasks and responsibilities that can be expected from ESU QA Pool member:

- share knowledge and experience in quality assurance;
- discuss topics in quality assurance and/or student involvement;
- identify themselves as members of ESU's QA Student Experts Pool;
- act as multiplier agents in their respective countries;
- promote the ESU's QA Student Experts' Pool;
- disseminate articles and other documents related to quality assurance among student experts in QA at the national and international level;
- inform the Pool about any quality assurance-related events at international level;
- give feedback on reports, ESU policy papers, or similar documents;
- provide feedback about reviews, pieces of training and conferences to the Steering Committee of ESU's QA Student Experts Pool;

- enhance student participation in quality assurance in higher education;
- attend an introductory training organised for ESU's QA Student Experts Pool members;
- contribute towards the preparation of meetings and training sessions and other different activities to benefit the Pool;
- contribute to ESU's solidarity fund to cover administrative costs and support the sustainability of the QA Pool, in case of being remunerated as a consequence of their membership.

Selection:

In the selection process, we aim to ensure an adequate balance of participants by country and region in the European Higher Education Area, study field, level of study and type of higher education, as well as a balance of participants of each gender, according to ESU's Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.

Current members of the pool are invited to apply as well if they wish to continue their membership in the pool.

Criteria for Selection:

- Registered higher education student (at any level) or recently graduated (within 1 year) - only if continuing membership;
- Previous experience in various levels of quality assurance in higher education, especially participation in reviews or review-like activities;
- Demonstration of motivation to join the ESU QA Pool and contribute to promoting student participation in Quality Assurance of higher education;
- Experience in student representation;
- Excellent command of English;
- Experience in higher education policies,
- Students who are not employed by Quality Assurance agencies, by national/regional institutions related to quality assurance, are not part of the management of Higher Education Institutions, do not hold an academic position at HEIs (besides the teaching required within

the PhD programmes), or any other position creating conflict of interest).¹

Looked upon favourably:

- Letter of support from [Member NUSs](#);
- Certificates of participation in different QA-related events and educational activities, letters of recommendation from QA agencies or other institutions involved in QA;
- Membership in national QA Pools;
- Ability to work in languages other than English.

Documentation for submission²:

- Completed [application form](#);
- Recent CV in the [Europass format](#) (maximum 5 pages);
- Proof of enrolment or recent graduation;
- Maximum 3 minutes video via Google drive, Youtube, etc. open access link giving us insights about your motivation to join the ESU QA Pool;
- Description of employment-studies relationship (only for PhD students).

For any queries, you can reach us at [**qapoolsc@esu-online.org**](mailto:qapoolsc@esu-online.org). Responsible persons for this call are Natalia Greniewska, Gaga Gvenetadze and Mick Scholtka on behalf of the Steering Committee of the ESU QA Pool, and Ana Gvritshvili and Horia Onita on behalf of the ESU Executive Committee.

¹ Regarding this criteria, we are asking all students to declare their employment status and their position at the University (in case of PhD students). Note that we will not accept any applications from those students who have dual roles: as students and full-time teaching staff members at higher education institutions. Please refer to the Annex to this call for further explanation.

² See Annex to this call for further explanation.

Information sessions

For the applicants interested in getting more information regarding the responsibilities of QA Pool members one information session will be held **on the 2nd of May, at 16:00-17:30 CEST**. To join the information session please use the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85138169914>

Meeting ID: 851 3816 9914

A second information session will be held **on the 13th of May, at 16:00-17:30 CEST**. To join the information session please use the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84184678833>

Meeting ID: 841 8467 8833

Both sessions will contain the same information, so it is recommended to attend one of them if needed.

Announcement for selected candidates

For all those student experts that will be selected we are planning an online welcome training session that is mandatory for the admission to the Pool **on the 27th of June, at 16:00-18:00 CEST**. We will be able to provide further details to the selected applicants once the call is closed.

Kind regards,

The Steering Committee of the ESU QA Pool.

Annex to the Call for students to join ESU Quality Assurance Student Experts Pool for the membership term 2024/2025

This Annex provides guidelines for the application to the Call. All late or incomplete applications will be disregarded. Every person applying is responsible for the content of their application and making sure that their levels of education, employment or other engagement is declared as clearly as possible, as it could lead to later misinterpretation and the inability of the student to be admitted to the Pool. In order to avoid this, we hope you will find these guidelines useful.

All the submitted documents (aside from the video) need to be in the PDF format. No hand-written documents or documents in other formats will be accepted (unless agreed upon prior to the application with the Steering Committee).

Remember to align your National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels with the European Qualifications Framework ([EQF](#)), as that is the one we use in order to assess the applications.

Below you can find suggestions on each of the criteria to be assessed.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

When submitting your CV, have in mind the many applications we have to assess and try to be concise and QA-specific. Our Pool members and Pool member applicants are usually all high achieving students, involved in many extracurricular activities, however, when assessing the admittance to the Pool, we focus on your QA interest and background, while we tend not to take as much into consideration your other extracurricular activities.

Do	Don't
Mention your complete study background, employment background/experience.	Enter the volunteering activities or short-cycle courses in the CV under employment or your study background, as it can be confusing.
Mention all your previous QA experience, and sort it according to the level of engagement (IQA, EQA, Agency reviews).	Mention broad experience in your motivation, without listing the QA activities you participated in within your CV.
Mention any other relevant type of QA activities you participated in (national student QA pool, QA-related events).	Try to list every single engagement you did in terms of QA (i.e. participated in 5 meetings of the school QA board).
Mention if you have experience working within your national, or any other Pool of experts.	Mention that you worked for different agencies for which you have conducted a review, because this is a temporary contract and it can be considered a conflict of interest (remember that being a reviewer is not the same as working on a contract for an agency).
Be very specific about your student status and your employment, and try to elaborate on this in your motivation.	Mention just your higher education institution and the study year (i.e. 5th year of bachelor studies), or the broad employment status (i.e. Ministry consultant) as this will cause confusion and it could provide a technical reason for rejecting your application.

Proof of enrolment

Your proof of enrolment needs to be issued officially by your institution, and should not be any kind of letter written by a mentor, administrative officer etc. In cases in which the student has graduated, you need to submit your graduation certificate. In cases in which the student has currently frozen their studies, they need to inform the Steering Committee of the ESU QA Pool of that, and they could provide an alternative proof if the official one cannot be attained.

In case you have graduated, but you expect to continue your studies, please mention this in the motivation of your application.

For all the documents submitted in their original language (other than English, Danish, Georgian, German, Norwegian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, and Swedish), a translation to one of these languages needs to be provided (the translation can be self-made).

For all the documents submitted in a different alphabet, a translation to the Latin alphabet needs to be provided (the translation can be self-made), even in cases of the abovementioned languages.

Motivation

- Video

Your video serves as a complimentary part of your application for demonstrating your motivation, your strengths and for further clarification of your CV and background. No unrelated information should be given through it.

The video serves to assess your understanding of the English language as well, so don't feel shy and show us how well you would function in the external panels we nominate you for.

The points you ideally have to clarify further on in your motivation are:

- Your student status and study level, as well as your plans for the future (in relation to your studies);

- Your employment status and whether it is related to your studies;
- Your QA experiences and how joining ESU's QA Pool would compliment that;
- Your personal interests and availability during the membership term;
- Your membership in other QA-related bodies;
- Your strengths and participation in student representation (even in ESU), etc.

Video is a preferred motivation format, and the Steering Committee shall allow the written format in exceptional cases (if it's not possible for you to record a video due to accessibility reasons). The video can be amateurly-made, simply with your cell-phone, your laptop camera etc., just make sure that your face is visible, that the video is not dark, and that your voice can be heard well.

Additional documents

The letters of support are generally considered good, as it means that the student was either involved in a student movement on a national/international level, which could be a useful skill in the development of the Pool. The support letters are not obligatory though, and we expect that the majority of applicants will not provide them, which poses no barrier to their application.

If you happen to speak any other languages, this would be beneficial, however, make sure to mention only those languages in which you are comfortable conversing or understanding the language to a higher level. In cases in which multiple languages are similar and you can understand them (i.e. Croatian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Bosnian), you can mention the language you know best and mention the other languages in the brackets.

Information for PhD students

As mentioned in the Call, PhDs need to demonstrate that their student status is undisputable. The Steering Committee is aware of the specificity of the PhD studies, and the many differences in their organisation throughout EHEA, and we depend on the clarifications from the students themselves in order to assess their candidacies.

As many PhD students are employed at their respective higher education institutions and they teach, it is important to understand the distinction between a few specific roles:

- I. Teaching assistant: a person "in training" who can have a teaching responsibility, but is not a full-time employee at the University, but their employment is related to the PhD studies. If this person would quit the PhD, their contract would be terminated.
- II. Assistant professor: A permanent teaching position unrelated to the PhD studies. A PhD student could parallelly be an assistant professor and a PhD student, but their interruption of the PhD studies would not affect their employment.
- III. Lecturer: A person who works, either full-time, or part-time, as a teacher in higher education institutions, and this employment makes them a staff member at their institution. Aside from being a lecturer, a person can attend PhD studies. If this person would quit the PhD, their contract as a lecturer would not be affected.
- IV. Researcher: A person who works, either full-time, or part-time, as a researcher in any educational institution (primary, secondary or tertiary level education) or elsewhere, and this employment makes them a staff member at their institution. Aside from being a researcher, a person can attend PhD studies. If this person would quit the PhD, their contract as a researcher would not be affected.
- V. Associate Researcher: A person who works as a researcher in any educational institution (primary, secondary or tertiary level education) or elsewhere, and this employment makes them a staff member at their institution. Aside from being a researcher, a person can attend PhD studies. If this person would quit the PhD, their contract as a researcher would be terminated.
- VI. Full time PhD student: a PhD student under no contractual agreement with the higher education institution, or under an agreement that does not involve a PhD student being a member of the teaching staff or participating in teaching activities.

Be aware that the categories I-VI might not exist under these terms in your country, but in order to standardise and appropriately categorise PhD students, these terms will be applied throughout your engagement in ESU's QA Pool. Choose that category you most closely fit into. If you do not find yourself fitting any of the categories, reach to the Steering Committee directly and consult prior to submitting your application.

Please note that all of these categories of students can be admitted to the ESU QA Pool, but only those pertaining to the category I., V. or VI. will be able to apply and be considered for the Calls as student experts (unless specific conditions apply). The same applies to those students (regardless of their study levels) employed by Quality Assurance agencies, by national/regional institutions related to quality assurance, are part of the management of Higher Education Institutions, or any other position creating conflict of interest.

We encourage the PhD students to provide the Steering Committee of the ESU QA Pool with the inserts from their employment contract (if possible), if they are employed with any of the higher education stakeholders. The inserts should contain the description of their responsibilities as PhD students pertaining to their employment (i.e. hold classes, organise lectures, independently conduct research), but they must never contain any confidential information. If the contract is considered fully confidential, please provide us with the description of the work-study related connections.

If uncertain of how to define your PhD course in terms of employment and studies, reach out directly to the Steering Committee, up to 5 work-days before the deadline for applications, so that the Steering Committee would have enough time to research and get back to you regarding this.