



European Association for
Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Mr. Sander Van Den Eijnden
President
Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)
Parkstraat 83 / Postbus 85498
2514 JG The Hague
The Netherlands

Brussels, 15 September 2022

Subject: Statement on validation of the external review report of NVAO

Dear Mr. Sander Van Den Eijnden,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting on 5 September 2022, the ENQA Agency Review Committee validated the external review report of NVAO. The Committee concluded that the report has been produced in accordance with the Guidelines for ENQA Targeted Reviews and can thus be used to apply for ENQA membership and EQAR registration, as well as for any other purposes. This is in line with article 26, paragraph 2 of ENQA's Rules of Procedure, which states that the review report can be further used only once this statement of validation has been issued. The purpose of the statement is to set out the committee's views on the quality of the final report and consistency of the panel's evaluation on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

The committee made observations on the information provided on ESG 3.1. and ESG 2.1 and asked the panel for minor revisions.

Regarding ESG 3.1, the committee noted that the report would benefit from a further elaboration on how the agency separates between its activities that are within and outside the scope of the ESG, i.e., for the 'Assessment of Quality Agreements in the Netherlands' and the 'Assessment of the quality of Training Schools'. Secondly, the committee noted that the panel's reflection on the institutional autonomy should rather appear under ESG 2.1, and not under ESG 3.1.

Secondly, in relation to ESG 2.1, the committee learned that the panel did not reflect separately on the standards of Part 1 of the ESG. Rather than listing the agency's compliance on these standards in a format of a table, the committee expects the panel to reflect on each of the standards in a separate manner.



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The committee received the final review report that addressed the additional requirements. The final review report can thus be further used to apply for ENQA membership and EQAR registration, as well as for any other purposes, as stipulated above.

This statement will be published on ENQA's website as an annex to the review report.

Thank you for your trust placed in ENQA to conduct this targeted review. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the ENQA Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,

ENQA Agency Review Committee

Annex: Areas for development



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As outlined by the review panel and further discussed by the committee (where relevant), NVAO is recommended to take appropriate action, in so far as it is empowered to do so, on the following issues:

ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

NVAO-NL should rethink their approach to thematic analysis and embrace the opportunity to actively contribute to educational policies in the Netherlands by using their authority and knowledge. Reports targeting a broad public readership could influence the social and even political debate of the HE system in the Netherlands.

ESG 2.3 Implementing processes

NVAO-NL should proactively communicate with HEIs when agreed timelines are in danger of being exceeded.

ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

NVAO-NL should endeavour to minimise any discrepancy between the final outcomes and the panel recommendations. It is important to balance consistency and fairness of outcomes without losing the inherent trust-based nature of reviews by trained peer experts.