

External review of the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assessment (CAQA) by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

Annex I: TERMS OF REFERENCE

March 2012

1. Background and Context

The Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assessment (CAQA) was established in 2006 as an independent body of the National Educational Council. It is the only formally recognised commission responsible for external quality assurance of higher educational institutions in Serbia.

CAQA carries out the accreditation procedure for higher education institutions and study programmes, decides on the application for accreditation and issues a certificate of accreditation which is a prerequisite for licencing higher educational institutions in Serbia.

CAQA has a mandate to develop accreditation and quality assurance standards, help assure quality of institutions and educational programmes and proceed with external quality assurance processes in forms of accreditation and evaluation of all the existing higher education institutions and programmes.

CAQA was granted ENQA Associate status in 2007 and became a Candidate member in 2010. The Commission is undergoing an ENQA coordinated review for the first time.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

This is a type A review, as defined in the *Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area*. It will evaluate the way in which and to what extent CAQA fulfils the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*. Consequently, the review will also provide information to the ENQA Board to aid its consideration of whether CAQA should be reconfirmed Full Member of ENQA. The review panel is not expected, however, to make any judgements as regards granting CAQA Full Membership in ENQA.

3. The Review Process

The process is designed in the light of the *Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area*.

The evaluation procedure consists of the following steps:

- Formulation of the Terms of Reference and protocol for the review;
- Nomination and appointment of the review panel;
- Self-evaluation by CAQA including the preparation of a self-evaluation report;
- A site visit by the review panel to CAQA;

- Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report by the review panel;
- Scrutiny of the final evaluation report by the Review Committee of the ENQA Board;
- Analysis of the scrutiny by the ENQA Board and their decision regarding ENQA membership;
- Follow-up of the panel's and/or ENQA Board's recommendations by the agency.

3.1 Nomination and appointment of the review team members

The review panel consists of five members: Four external reviewers (one or two quality assurance experts, representative(s) of higher education institutions, student member) and a review secretary. Three of the reviewers (including the review secretary) are nominated by the ENQA Board on the basis of proposals submitted to ENQA by the national agencies, and are drawn from senior serving members of Board/Council or staff of ENQA member agencies. The fourth external reviewer is drawn from a nomination provided by the European University Association (EUA). The nomination of the student member is asked from the European Students' Union (ESU). One of the panel members serves as the chair of the review.

Current members of the ENQA Board are not eligible to serve as reviewers.

ENQA will provide CAQA with the list of suggested experts with their respective curricula vitae to establish that there are no known conflicts of interest. The experts will have to sign a non-conflict of interest statement as regards the CAQA review.

3.2 Self-evaluation by CAQA, including the preparation of a self-evaluation report

CAQA is responsible for the execution and organisation of its own self-evaluation process and shall take into account the following guidance:

- Self-evaluation is organised as a project with a clearly defined schedule and includes all relevant internal and external stakeholders;
- The self-evaluation report is broken down by the topics of the evaluation: background description of the current situation of the Agency; analysis and appraisal of the current situation; proposals for improvement and measures already planned; a summary of perceived strengths and weaknesses;
- The report is well-structured, concise and comprehensively prepared. It clearly demonstrates the extent to which CAQA fulfils its tasks of external quality assurance and meets the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the ESG. The report is submitted to the review panel a minimum of four weeks prior to the site visit.

3.3 A Site Visit by the Review Panel

CAQA will draw up a draft proposal of schedule of the site visit to be submitted to the review panel at least three months before the planned dates of the visit. The schedule includes an indicative timetable of the meetings and other exercises to be undertaken by the review panel during the site visit, the duration of which is 2 days. The approved schedule shall be given to CAQA at least two months before the dates of the visit, in order to properly organise the requested interviews.

The review panel will be assisted by CAQA in arriving to Belgrade, Serbia.

Where appropriate, the site visit will close with an oral presentation and discussion of the major issues of the evaluation between the review panel and CAQA.

3.4 Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report

On the basis of the review panel's findings, the review secretary will draft the report in consultation with the review panel. The report will take into account the purpose and scope of the evaluation as defined under article 2. It will also provide a clear rationale for its findings with regards to each ENQA membership criteria. A draft will be submitted for comment to CAQA within two months of the site visit for comment on factual accuracy. If CAQA chooses to provide a statement in reference to the draft report it will be submitted to the chair of the review panel within two weeks after the receipt of the draft report. Thereafter the review panel will take into account the statement by CAQA, finalise the document and submit it to CAQA and ENQA.

The report is to be finalised within three months of the site visit and will not exceed 40 pages in length.

4. Follow-up Process and Publication of the Report

CAQA will consider the expert panel's report and inform ENQA of its plans to implement any recommendations contained in the report. Subsequent to the discussion of the evaluation results and any planned implementation measures with ENQA, the review report and the follow-up plans agreed upon will be published on the CAQA website.

5. Budget

CAQA shall pay the following review related fees:

- Chair: 4,750 EUR
- Review secretary: 4,750 EUR
- Other panel members (2,750 EUR for each of the three panel members): 8,250 EUR
- Administrative overhead for ENQA Secretariat: 5,000 EUR
- Experts Training fund: 1,250 EUR
- Travel and subsistence expenses (approximate): 6,000 EUR

This gives a total indicative cost of 30,000 EUR for a review team of 5 members. In the case that the allowance for travel and subsistence expenses is exceeded, CAQA will cover any additional costs after the completion of the review. However, the ENQA Secretariat will endeavour to keep the travel and subsistence expenses in the limits of the planned budget, and will refund the difference to CAQA if the travel and subsistence expenses go under budget.

6. Indicative Schedule of the Review

The duration of the evaluation is scheduled to take about 9 months, from March 2012 to December 2012:

CAQA begins self-evaluation	October 2011
-----------------------------	--------------

Agreement on terms of reference and protocol for review	March 2012
Appointment of review panel members	March-April 2012
Preparation of site visit schedule and indicative timetable	March 2012
CAQA self-evaluation completed	April 2012
Briefing of review panel members	end May 2012
Review panel site visit	September 2012
Draft of evaluation report to CAQA	October 2012
Statement of CAQA to review panel if necessary	end Oct/beg Nov. 2012
Submission of final report to CAQA and ENQA	November 2012
Consideration of the report by ENQA and response of CAQA	November 2012
Publication of report and implementation plan	December 2012