

External review of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

Annex I: TERMS OF REFERENCE

March 2017

1. Background and Context

The European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) was founded in 1988 in Paris, France, as a European Accrediting Organization and registered under French law. Offices were first in Paris, then in Brussels and since 2007 in Vienna, Austria. The formation of the Organisation was based on a 3-year cross-national peer assessment, which started in 1985 on the initiative of, and financed by, the EU Commission's Advisory Committee on Veterinary Training (ACVT). Consequently, and upon recommendation of the study, ACVT installed a permanent evaluation system for European Veterinary Teaching Establishments and recognised EAEVE as the evaluating agency.

In 1993 the EU Commission withdrew its financial support and ACVT mandated EAEVE to continue managing the evaluation system independently and with its own budget. The EAEVE Member Establishments decided to maintain the system by paying membership and evaluation fees, as they recognised the benefits of such a Europe-wide profession-specific evaluation system.

In 2000, based on the EU-ACVT mandate, a Joint Educational Committee (now European Committee on Veterinary Education, ECOVE) was formed acting as an independent decision making Evaluation/Accreditation-Board managed by EAEVE, in cooperation with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), with the European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training (ESEVT) as its accrediting arm. After each accreditation Visitation, ESEVT reports back to ECOVE for a final decision.

EAEVE is the only transnational non-governmental accrediting organisation for veterinary medicine in Europe with the primary objective to monitor the harmonization of the minimum standards set down in the study programme for veterinarians or veterinary surgeons in the EU Directives.

EAEVE membership is voluntary; EAEVE counts presently 96 member Establishments of which 75 are within the EU. The other members come from outside of the EU where many veterinary teaching Establishments have joined EAEVE; for example, from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, FYROM, Serbia, Switzerland, Norway, Turkey and Israel.

EAEVE has been an affiliate of ENQA since May 2012 and was assessed by an ENQA review panel on 10-12 June 2013. As a result of this review a number of suggestions were made by the ENQA panel which were enthusiastically taken up by EAEVE in both the internal QA workings of the agency as well as in its accreditation processes. Following on from these changes EAEVE has started to produce a self-assessment report in preparation for another external review by ENQA. Even though there exists no formal requirement for EAEVE to undergo a periodic external review, EAEVE considers it vital to demonstrate that its activities comply to international standards such as the ESG, therefore EAEVE is re-applying for ENQA membership and for registration in EQAR.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

This review, will evaluate the way in which and to what extent EAEVE fulfils the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*. Consequently, the review will provide information to the ENQA Board to aid its consideration of whether membership of EAEVE should be granted and to EQAR to support EAEVE application to the register.

The review panel is not expected, however, to make any judgements as regards granting membership.

2.1 Activities of EAEVE within the scope of the ESG

In order for EAEVE to apply for ENQA membership and for registration in EQAR, this review will analyse all activities of EAEVE that are within the scope of the ESG, i.e. reviews, audits, evaluations or accreditation of higher education institutions or programmes that relate to teaching and learning (and their relevant links to research and innovation). This is regardless of whether these activities are carried out within or outside the EHEA, and whether they are obligatory or voluntary.

As a supra-national but subject focused agency, EAEVE main activity focuses within the EHEA as an accreditation agency for veterinary education establishments in Europe and beyond.

EAEVE manages the European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training (ESEVT), a profession-specific accreditation system which evaluates, promotes and further develops the quality and standard of Veterinary Teaching Establishments and their teaching within, but not limited to, the member states of the European Union (EU). The main objective of the ESEVT is to monitor the harmonization of the minimum standards set down in the study programme for veterinarians in the EU Directives that regulate the mutual recognition of qualification of graduates in Health degrees, including veterinarians.

The ESEVT evaluation process is a fully transparent accreditation procedure, in place for more than 32 years. Periodic evaluation is compulsory for EAEVE members, every 7 years. Four types of evaluation are organised by the ESEVT, i.e.:

1. Full Visitation;
2. Re-visitation;
3. Consultative Visitation;
4. Interim Report.

To be accredited by ESEVT, a veterinary establishment must apply for Full Visitation and must demonstrate that the Establishment and the curriculum it provides meet all the Standards set out in the ESEVT Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and are compliant with the EU Directives on the recognition of professional qualifications (for veterinarians and other Health professions) and the ESG 2015.

The following activities of EAEVE have to be addressed in the external review:

- European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training (ESEVT) accreditation visitations

Furthermore, the self-assessment report and external review report should also address how EAEVE ensures compliance with the ESG in reviews that it shares the decision with national quality assurance agencies or other veterinary-focused quality assurance agencies, especially in case the agency is not registered on EQAR.

3. The Review Process

The process is designed in the light of the *Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews* and in line with the requirements of the *EQAR Procedures for Applications*.

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-assessment by EAEVE including the preparation of a self-assessment report;
- A site visit by the review panel to EAEVE;
- Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report by the review panel;
- Scrutiny of the final evaluation report by the ENQA Review Committee;
- 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, including a voluntary follow-up visit.

3.1 Nomination and appointment of the review team members

The review panel consists of four members: one or two quality assurance experts, an academic employed by a higher education institution, student member, and eventually a labour market representative (if requested). One of the members will serve as the chair of the review panel, and another member as a review secretary. Two of the reviewers are nominated by the ENQA Board on the basis of proposals submitted to ENQA by the member national agencies. The third external reviewer is drawn from a nomination provided by the European University Association (EUA) or the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE). The nomination of the student member comes from the European Students' Union (ESU).

In addition to the four members, the panel will be supported by the ENQA Secretariat review coordinator who will monitor the integrity of the process and ensure that ENQA expectations are met throughout the process. The ENQA staff member will not be the Secretary of the review and will not participate in the discussions during the site visit interviews.

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

ENQA will provide EAEVE with the list of suggested experts with their respective curriculum 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 EAEVE review.

3.2 Self-assessment by EAEVE, including the preparation of a self-assessment report

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

- Self-assessment is organised as a project with a clearly defined schedule and includes all relevant internal and external stakeholders;
- The self-assessment report is broken down by the topics of the evaluation and is expected to contain, among others: a brief description of the national HE and QA system; background description of the current situation of the Agency; an analysis and appraisal of the current situation; proposals for improvement and measures already planned; a SWOT analysis; each criterion (ESG part II and III) addressed individually. All agency's QA activities (whether within their national jurisdiction or outside of it, and whether obligatory or voluntary) will be described and their compliance with the ESG analysed.

- The report is well-structured, concise and comprehensively prepared. It clearly demonstrates the extent to which EAEVE fulfils its tasks of external quality assurance and meets the ESG and thus the requirements of ENQA membership.
- The self-assessment report is submitted to the ENQA Secretariat who has 4 weeks to pre-scrutinise it before forwarding the report to the panel of experts. The purpose of the pre-scrutiny is to ensure that the self-assessment report is satisfactory for the consideration of the panel. The Secretariat will not judge the content of information itself but whether the necessary information, as stated in the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews, is present. For the second and subsequent reviews, the agency is expected to enlist the recommendations provided in the previous review and to outline actions taken to meet these recommendations. In case the self-assessment report does not contain the necessary information and fails to respect the requested form and content, the ENQA Secretariat reserves the right to reject the report and ask for a revised version within 4 weeks. In such cases, an additional fee of 1000 € will be charged to the agency.
- The report is submitted to the review panel a minimum of six weeks prior to the site visit.

3.3 A Site Visit by the Review Panel

EAEVE will draw up a draft proposal of the schedule for the site visit to be submitted to the review panel at least two 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 2,5 days. The approved schedule shall be given to EAEVE at least one month before the site visit, in order to properly organise the requested interviews.

The review panel will be assisted by EAEVE in arriving in Vienna (Austria).

The site visit will close with an oral presentation and discussion of the major issues of the evaluation between the review panel and EAEVE.

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 articles 2 and 2.1. It will also provide a clear rationale for its findings with regards to each ESG. A draft will be first submitted to the ENQA review coordinator who will check the report for consistency, clarity and language and it will be then submitted to EAEVE for comment on factual accuracy. If EAEVE 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 EAEVE, finalise the document and submit it to ENQA.

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

When preparing the report, the review panel should also bear in mind the *EQAR Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG*, so as to ensure that the report will contain sufficient information for the Register Committee for application to EQAR.

EAEVE is also requested to provide a letter addressed to the ENQA Board outlining its motivation applying for membership and the ways in which EAEVE expects to contribute to the work and objectives of ENQA during its membership. This letter will be discussed along with the final evaluation report.

4. Follow-up Process and Publication of the Report

EAEVE will consider the expert panel’s report and will publish it on its website once the ENQA Board has made its decision. The report will also be published on the ENQA website, regardless of the review outcome and decision by the ENQA Board. EAEVE commits to preparing a follow-up plan in which it addresses the recommendations of the review panel and to submitting a follow-up report to the ENQA Board. The follow-up report will be published on the ENQA website, in addition to the full review report and the Board’s decision.

The follow-up report will be complemented by a small-scale visit to the agency performed by two members of the original panel (whenever possible). This visit will be used to discuss issues, based on the ESG, considered as of particular importance or challenge by EAEVE. Its purpose is entirely developmental and has no impact on the judgement of membership and/or compliance of the agency with the ESG. Should the agency not wish to take advantage of this opportunity, it may opt out by informing the ENQA Review Coordinator about this.

5. Use of the report

ENQA shall retain ownership of the report. The intellectual property of all works created by the expert panel in connection with the review contract, including specifically any written reports, shall be vested in ENQA.

The review report is used by the Board of ENQA for the purpose of reaching a conclusion on whether EAEVE has met the ESG and can be thus admitted as a member of ENQA. The report will also be used for registration on EQAR, and is designed so as to serve these two purposes. However, the review report is to be considered final only after being approved by the ENQA Board. Once submitted to EAEVE and ENQA and until it is approved by the Board the report may not be used or relied upon by EAEVE, the panel and any third party and may not be disclosed without the prior written consent of ENQA. EAEVE may use the report at its discretion only after the Board has approved of the report. The approval of the report is independent of the decision on membership.

The Chair of the panel shall remain available to respond to questions of clarification or further information from the EQAR Register Committee provided that the ENQA Secretariat is copied in all such requests.

6. Budget

EAEVE shall pay the following review related fees:

Fee of the Chair	4,500 EUR
Fee of the Secretary	4,500 EUR
Fee of the 2 other panel members	4,000 EUR (2,000 EUR each)
Fee of 2 panel members for follow-up visit	1,000 EUR (500 EUR each)
Administrative overhead for ENQA Secretariat	7,000 EUR
Experts Training fund	1,400 EUR
Approximate travel and subsistence expenses	6,000 EUR
Travel and subsistence expenses follow-up visit	1,600 EUR

This gives a total indicative cost of 30,000.00 EUR VAT excl. for a review team of 4 members. In the case that the allowance for travel and subsistence expenses is exceeded, EAEVE 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 EAEVE if the travel and subsistence expenses go under budget. The review fee will be paid by EAEVE in two instalments – first one at the signature of the contract and the second before the site visit.

The fee of the follow-up visit is included in the overall cost of the review and will not be reimbursed in case the agency does not wish to benefit from it.

In the event of a second site visit required by the Board and aiming at completing the assessment of compliance, and should the agency accept a second visit, an additional fee of 500 EUR per expert, as well as travel and subsistence costs are recoverable from the agency.

7. Indicative Schedule of the Review

Agreement on terms of reference	February 2017
Appointment of review panel members	July/August 2017
Self-assessment completed	Early September 2017
Pre-screening of SAR by ENQA coordinator	September 2017
Preparation of site visit schedule and indicative timetable	October 2017
Briefing of review panel members	November 2017
Review panel site visit	End of November/Early December 2017
Draft of evaluation report and submitting it to ENQA coordinator for pre-screening	February 2018
Draft of evaluation report to EAEVE	March 2018
Statement of EAEVE to review panel if necessary	March 2018
Submission of final report to ENQA	April 2018
Consideration of the report by ENQA Board and response of EAEVE	May/June 2018 (depending on the date of Board's meeting)
Publication of the report	July 2018