

Janet Bohrer
Chief Executive
British Accreditation Council (BAC)
14 Devonshire Square, EC2M 4YT London
UK

Bern, 28 February 2020

Subject: Reconfirmation of membership of BAC in ENQA

Dear Janet Bohrer,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting of 20 February 2020, the Board of ENQA agreed to reconfirm the BAC membership of ENQA for five years from that date. The Board concluded that BAC is in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and thus fulfils the membership criteria according to article 6, paragraph 1 of ENQA's rules of procedure.

The Board would like to use this opportunity to provide an articulation regarding standard 2.6 Reporting, where their judgement differs from that of the panel. The Board seconds the critical remark of the panel on publishing full reports. As the report writes, the agency should publish reports that would "clearly and consistently include evidence, analysis and findings in order to demonstrate how the conclusions were reached". Following this, in the opinion of the Board, the standard can be considered only as partially compliant with the ESG.

The Board would like to receive a follow-up report within two years of its decision, i.e. by February 2022.

The Board also encourages BAC to take advantage of the voluntary progress visit – an enhancement-led feature in the review process. The visit would take place in about two years' time from this decision. The ENQA Secretariat will be in touch with you in about a year's time to discuss this possibility. The costs of this visit have already been included as part of the review fee and are non-refundable except for the travel costs of the experts. More information about the progress visit can be found in the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the ENQA Secretariat.

Please accept my congratulations for the re-confirmation of membership of BAC.

Yours sincerely,



Christoph Grolimund
President

Annex: Areas for development

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As outlined by the review panel, BAC is recommended to take appropriate action, so far as it is empowered to do so, on the following issues:

ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

BAC is recommended to strengthen the agency's approach to strategic planning, ensuring that plans are robust, that they explicitly translate into the daily work of the organisation, and that the success of their implementation is routinely considered by the Council.

BAC is recommended to introduce student and international members of the Accreditation Committee who attend every meeting during their term, rather than rotating attendance between a pool of members.

ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

BAC is recommended to develop an approach to thematic reviews which is more analytical in nature with appropriate commentary on the issues identified, more clearly driven by predetermined outcomes, and has an impact on the approach to quality assurance taken by BAC and accredited higher education providers.

ESG 3.5 Resources

BAC is recommended to build capability in the core staff team that better enables it to enhance their understanding of international higher education trends and developments and hence to better reflect on current practice and to inform member institutions and the public about its activities in line with its strategic plan.

ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

BAC is recommended to strengthen the coverage of ESG 1.4 in the inspection process so that the provider's policy on the recognition of qualifications is specifically considered, taking note of most recently available international guidance on the matter.

BAC is recommended to evolve the inspection process and the Accreditation Committee's decision making to more explicitly address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG.

ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts

BAC is recommended to clearly separate the functions of staff and inspectors, including the role of the Chief Inspector.

ESG 2.6 Reporting

BAC is recommended to further strengthen the transparency of how inspections consider the effectiveness of providers' internal quality assurance processes in the published reports by increasing their analytical content and listing the inspectors involved.