

**ENQA MEMBERS FORUM
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WHAT COMES AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF REPORTS? - AN ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO FOLLOW-UP (ESG 2.3) AND COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS (ESG 2.7)

Main findings

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INTRODUCTION

Why this topic?

- Need for **consistency** on the interpretation and assessment of the requirements (ESG 2.3)
- Significant number of QA agencies being judged as **partially compliant** (ESG 2.7)

What do we aim?

- Identify **common approaches** deployed by agencies
- Flag possible **areas of improvement** in relation to the requirements of the ESG
- Share existing **good practices**

How did we do it?

- Analysis of the external review reports of **22 quality assurance agencies** from 13 countries in the EHEA having undergone a **full review** between 2020 and 2022
- **Qualitative** approach

AGENCIES INVOLVED

- AAQ, Switzerland
- ACCUEE, Spain
- ACPUA, Spain
- ACQUIN, Germany
- AEQES, Belgium
- AI, Denmark
- ANQA, Armenia
- AQAS, Germany
- ASHE, Croatia
- AVAP, Spain
- ECAQA, Kazakhstan
- ECCE, Germany (European)
- FIBAA, Germany
- FINEEC, Finland
- GAC Germany
- HAHE, Greece
- Hcéres, France
- IAAR, Kazakhstan
- IQAA, Kazakhstan
- NEAA, Bulgaria
- UKÄ, Sweden
- ZEvA, Germany

FOLLOW-UP (2.3 Implementing processes)

Main findings

Diversity

Purposes

- **Combination of enhancement and accountability aspects**
- **Link with the purpose of the initial EQA activity**

Impact

- **Information purposes**
- **Formal consequences (revocation of status)**

Approaches

- **Follow-up reports**
- **Visit**
- **Seminars, conferences and final meetings (individual or group)**

Actors

- **External experts**
- **Agency staff**
- **Agency main decision-making body**
- **Specific body dealing with follow-up**

Timeline

- **Frequently linked to the type of decision**

FOLLOW-UP (2.3 Implementing processes)

Good practices & areas of improvement

- Only **three commendations** related to follow-up:
 - Organisation of conferences as peer-learning opportunities
 - Establishment of a separate body dealing with follow-up
- **Half of the agencies** in the sample received **at least one recommendation** concerning follow-up:
 - Definition of follow-up procedures where none are implemented
 - Implementation of a consistent follow-up across all external QA activities
 - Better information about the existing follow-up procedures
 - Other topics:
 - Involvement of experts
 - Purpose/Usefulness of the follow-up procedure

FOLLOW-UP (2.3 Implementing processes)

Lessons learnt

- 1 **Variety of approaches** in the design and implementation of follow-up procedures
- 2 **Panels check the consistency and integration** of follow-up procedures into the external QA activities of the agency
- 3 **Enhancement aspect as added-value** to institutions
- 4 **Consistency issues** during assessment by panels

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Main findings

Complaints

- Variety of approaches:
 - Specific bodies (including those dealing with appeals)
 - Internal management by agency
 - Mixed model
- Recommendations
- Existence of informal mechanisms / communication channels with stakeholders

Appeals

- Internal body dealing with appeals (sometimes also complaints):
 - Permanent nature – majority
 - Diverse composition: academia, students, agency staff, labour market representatives, other QA agencies.
 - Advisory role
- Impact of the legal framework

2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Good practices & areas of improvement

- Only **one commendation** (related to legal framework). However, panels have also highlighted in their analysis:
 - Student involvement
 - Links between complaints procedure and internal quality assurance system
 - Advantages of additional informal steps: permanent contact, service attitude or solution-oriented culture
- More than **60% of analysed agencies** have received at least **one recommendation**:
 - Only regarding complaints: 6 agencies
 - Only concerning appeals: 7 agencies
 - Related to both complaints and appeals: 6 agencies

2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Areas of improvement

Complaints

- Establishment and/or formalisation of the complaints procedure (issue with informality)
- Communication about the process
- Other cases:
 - Development of a specific body dealing with complaints

Appeals

- Internal steps to question the formal outcomes
- Establishment of a permanent committee
- Appointment procedures and composition of the body dealing with appeals
- Power and responsibilities of the appeals body
- Scope of the appeals procedures
- Definition and communication of the appeals procedure

2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Lessons learnt

- 1 **Issues** experienced with complaints **are different** to those experienced with appeals
- 2 **Confusion** around the **terms used to define complaints and appeals**
- 3 Existence of **informal means**
- 4 Impact of **legal framework**
- 5 **Possible consistency issues** during assessment by panels

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION





What comes after the agency reports are published?

AN ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO FOLLOW-UP (ESG 2.3)
AND COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS (ESG 2.7)

**Discover
it now!**

