

# 2023 ENQA Members' Forum, 20-21 April 2023, Tbilisi, Georgia

## Breakout session – Working group on QA of research 11:20am-12:30am



**Maya Wikse, Head of group**



**Sophie Guillet, Head of agency cooperation**



## Breakout session – Working group on QA of research 11:20am-12:30am



**Why is QA of research important to you?**

**How much does your agency focus on QA of research today?**



# HIGH COUNCIL FOR THE EVALUATION OF RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION (HCÉRES)

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## ENQA MEMBERS' FORUM

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April 2023





# GETTING TO KNOW THE FRENCH CONTEXT – A FEW WORDS ON HCÉRES

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# A FEW WORDS ON HCÉRES

## A BIT OF HISTORY



HEIs, including universities

**Scientific, Technical and Pedagogical Mission (MSTP)**

Research labs, study programmes and doctoral schools



Research-performing organisations and national research fields



1980s

2006

2013

# A FEW WORDS ON HCÉRES

## LEGAL STATUS

- **Independent public authority**, non-profit organisation, with a public service mission
- Multi-annual research programming law (2020) extended Hcéres' missions:
  - ✓ The evaluation of **higher education institutions** and their clusters, **research units, research-performing organisations, scientific cooperation foundations** and the French National Research Agency (ANR)
  - ✓ The evaluation of activities relating to the **dissemination of scientific, technical and industrial culture** within institutions, research structures, units and programmes
  - ✓ The promotion of **research integrity and its inclusion in the evaluations** that Hcéres conducts or whose procedures it validates



# A FEW WORDS ON HCÉRES

## EVALUATION SCOPE



310 higher education institutions



5,730 programmes (Bachelor, Master, PhD)



2,500 research units



24 research-performing organisations





# EVALUATING RESEARCH IN PRACTICE – A LOOK AT HCÉRES EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

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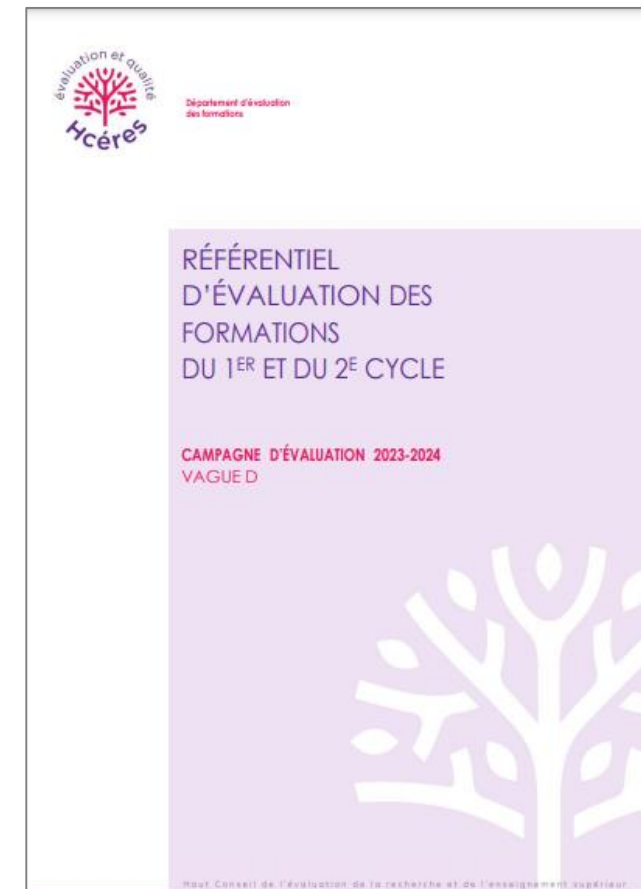
# EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

## 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 2<sup>ND</sup> CYCLE STUDY PROGRAMMES

### DOMAIN 1: Education policy

Standard 3: **The study programme benefits from research links that are coherent with its outcomes.**

- Criteria 1. The positioning vis-à-vis the research community is clearly specified. The research units, doctoral programmes, other structures or higher education institutions, possibly international, supporting the programme are clearly identified.
- Criteria 2. The study programme includes research-based teaching and learning (projects or internships in laboratories, research centres, seminars, etc.) and courses on research methods, or simply promotes awareness of research in a manner that is adapted to its outcomes.
- Criteria 3. Professors and researchers from the disciplines involved in the study programme participate in the courses.
- Criteria 4. The study programme and the research units to which it is affiliated establish a system for hosting, supporting and training students through research.
- Criteria 5. The study programme includes training in research integrity and ethics.
- Criteria 6. Research-based teaching and learning and courses on research methods in the study programme rely on library services, in terms of acquiring and accessing resources, and contributing to training content



# EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

## RESEARCH UNITS

### DOMAIN 1: Identity, resources and organisation of the unit

- Standard 1. The unit has **resources** appropriate to its activity and research environment.
- Standard 2. The unit has set itself scientific objectives, including the prospective dimension of its policy
- Standard 3. The unit operates in accordance with the regulations on human resources management, safety, the environment and protection of scientific heritage.

### DOMAIN 2: Attractiveness of the research unit

- Standard 1. The unit is **attractive because of its scientific influence** and contributes to the **construction of the European Research Area**.
- Standard 2. The unit is attractive because of the quality of its staff recruitment policy.
- Standard 3. The unit is attractive because of the recognition it has received through its success in **competitive projects**.

### DOMAIN 3: Scientific output

- Standard 1. The unit's scientific output meets **quality criteria**.
- Standard 2. The scientific output is proportionate to the unit's research potential and distributed among its staff.
- Standard 3. The unit's scientific output **respects the principles of research integrity, ethics and open science**.

### DOMAIN 4: Integration of research activities in society

- Standard 1. The unit is distinguished by the quality of its non-academic interactions
- Standard 2. The unit **develops products for the socio-economic world**.
- Standard 3. The unit **shares its knowledge with the general public and takes part in social debates**.

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

## HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

### DOMAIN 1: Strategic and operational management

- Standard 1. The institution defines its institutional positioning at local, national and international level
- ...

### DOMAIN 2: Policy on research, innovation and the inclusion of science in society

- Standard 9. The institution's research policy defines **structural guidelines**
  - Criteria 9. The institution has a responsible policy on research integrity, ethics and open science in its research activities.
- Standard 10. The institution has a **policy resource and support for research**.
  - Criteria 4. The institution puts in place mechanisms to monitor, encourage and support the setting up of local, national, European and/or international research projects.
- Standard 11. In its policy of innovation and inclusion of science in society, the institution defines structuring guidelines
- Standard 12. The institution pursues a policy of resources and support that benefits its activities in terms of innovation and the inclusion of science in society

### DOMAIN 3: Education, student and campus life policy

- Standard 13. The institution has a quality education policy and teaching offer, consistent with its positioning and strategy.
- ....

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS

## A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO RESEARCH ASSESSMENT – HCÉRES' COMMITMENTS



2012

2015

2022



[hceres.com](https://www.hceres.com)

 [@Hceres\\_](https://twitter.com/Hceres_)

 [Hcéres](https://www.youtube.com/Hceres)

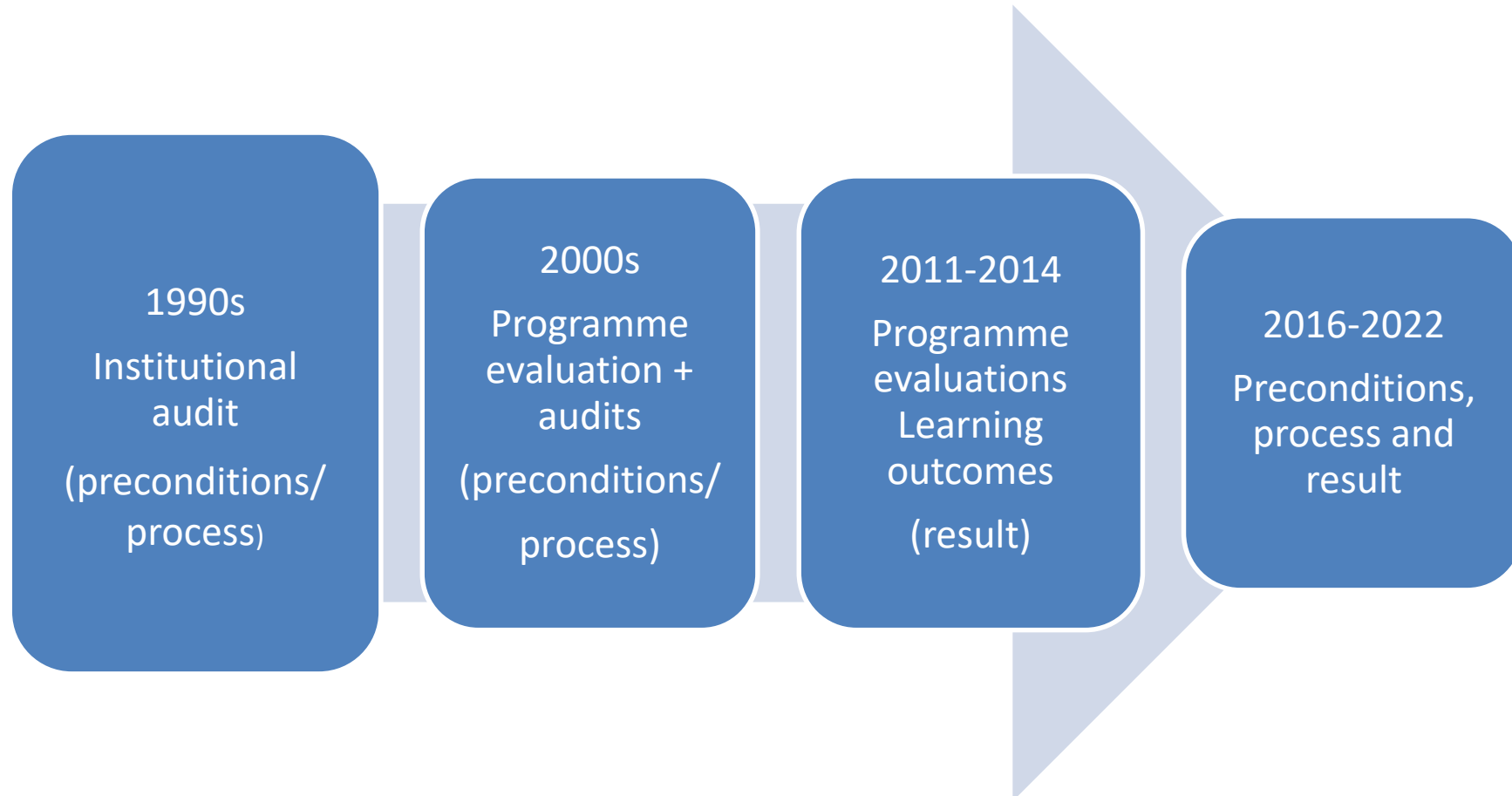


# The Swedish Higher Education Authority

# Developmental Monitoring – Assuring Sweden’s status as a Knowledge Society

- Analysis of the higher education sector, including official statistics and effectiveness studies
- Legal supervision of universities and securing students rights
- Quality assurance of HEI, **including research**
- Government assignments

# Quality assurance systems in Sweden over time





# The national QA system 2016-22 an overview

- **Institutional reviews of HEI's QA system** being the corner stone
- Programme evaluations for specific gov't needs or if special requirements
- Review of applications prior to starting new degree programs
- Thematic evaluations as sector enhancement efforts



Programme evaluations



Institutional reviews of the HEIs' quality assurance processes



Appraisal of applications for degree-awarding powers



Thematic evaluations

# Ongoing – revising the framework 2023

Through dialogue and interaction we aim to develop:

- A transparent framework with fewer overlaps
- Flexible and accurate reviews
- Complementary and resource-efficient quality assurance
- Knowledge-based approach

**In parallell: Institutional reviews of quality assurance of research**

# Dialogue-based approach in several steps

- Extended assignment from the government in 2017.
- Overarching principles for the review, referral (April 2018).
- Relevant themes of review (February 2019).
- **Parallel process at HEI – national framework (May 2019).**
- Guidance and assessment criteria (June 2019).
- **Pilot testing – Sept. 2019 – October 2020.**
- Adjustments in method, revised guidance – June 2021.
- **Included in regular institutional reviews – October 2021.**
- **Adjustments in method and revised guidance as part of the overall revision of the national QA system – September 2023**

# General observations about the method

- Overlap between assessment areas and assessment criteria.
- Some assessment criteria covered too much content.
- Some assessment criteria were too detailed.
- Challenging for panellists assessing both QA of education and research – extensive and difference in approach (control/enhancement)

# Assessment area: Governance, organisation and implementation

1. **principles for quality work**, responsibilities and roles, working models for ensuring and enhancing quality in research and its use in the strategic work at all levels, involvement of both management and employees.
2. **regular follow up and use of relevant information for quality enhancement**, strategic decisions and setting priorities.
3. **peer reviews from a national and international perspective** and actions taken on the recommendations that these reviews produce.

# Assessment area: Preconditions

The HEI works systematically to:

1. promote **good research practice** and to prevent and deal with misconduct in research
2. create good conditions for the **development and renewal of research**/research environments
3. ensure that a close **connection** exists between **research and education** in its operations

# Assessment area: Preconditions

4. follow up its efforts to strengthen the quality and relevance of research **through collaboration and mutual learning**; the HEI works systematically to facilitate dissemination and utilisation of its research results
5. **ensure long-term competence provision for the development and renewal of research**; the HEI works systematically to create good conditions for professional development and provides well-functioning career support for researchers at all stages of their careers, regardless of their form of employment.

# Assessment area: Preconditions

6. **ensure appropriate support** for the research; the HEI has appropriate processes for prioritisation and long-term renewal of research infrastructures
7. **promote gender equality** with regard to research conditions and implementation.




# Important international guidelines in developing method

- **The European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers**





# Working group on QA of research

Co-chairs:  (Hcéres) and  (UKÄ)

**Topic:** Taking stock of the assessment of research-based learning, HEIs' research policy and quality assurance processes of research

## What do the ESG say ?

“ Standard 1.1. “quality assurance policies are most effective when they reflect the relationship between research and learning & teaching”.



## Rationale :

- HE and research are part of the missions common to all HEIs
- The synergies between research and higher education are key to training enlightened students who are able to face the challenges of the 21st century
- Recognised benefits of research-based learning may include: developing cross-disciplinary and scientific skills, acquiring critical thinking skills to counter the rise of fake news, acquiring up-to-date knowledge, understanding the changing needs of society...
- Little knowledge of how EQA for research can help to ensure and improve research quality.



# Working group on QA of research

**Duration : 18 months (end in December 2024/ January 2025)**

**Expected outputs:**

- Stocktaking exercise/benchmark of assessment procedures of HEIs' research policy and quality assurance processes for research as well as of research-based learning at the member agencies (including reflections on the challenges agencies meet in developing or performing QA of research)
- Synthesis report including case examples and recommendations

**Activities :**

- Survey sent to all EHEA agencies
- Interviews with some of the surveyed agencies, which would be selected for their specific characteristics
- Regular online meetings co-organised by Hcéres and UKÄ
- Two face-to-face meetings
- Final dissemination event

# enqa. Working group on QA of research

Possible focus on input to ESG revisions – results of the QA-FIT survey shows that:

- Research is covered to a large or some extent by a significant number of agencies (**91%**) **when evaluating HEIs' internal quality assurance systems.**
- **39% of agencies reported that their activities include specifically evaluating research** at higher education institutions
- The agencies covering research mainly address **quality management and responsible conduct of research, including research ethics**



# Mentimeter questions

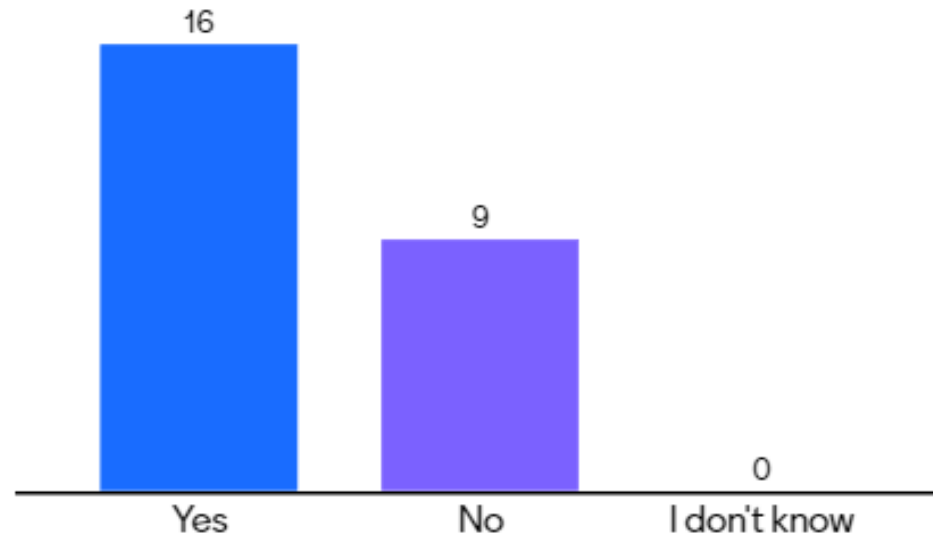


<https://www.menti.com/al98kbqnjrkb>

**Voting code: 17 49 82 73**

# Mentimeter questions - results

Does your national legal framework mandate your agency to engage in QA of research?

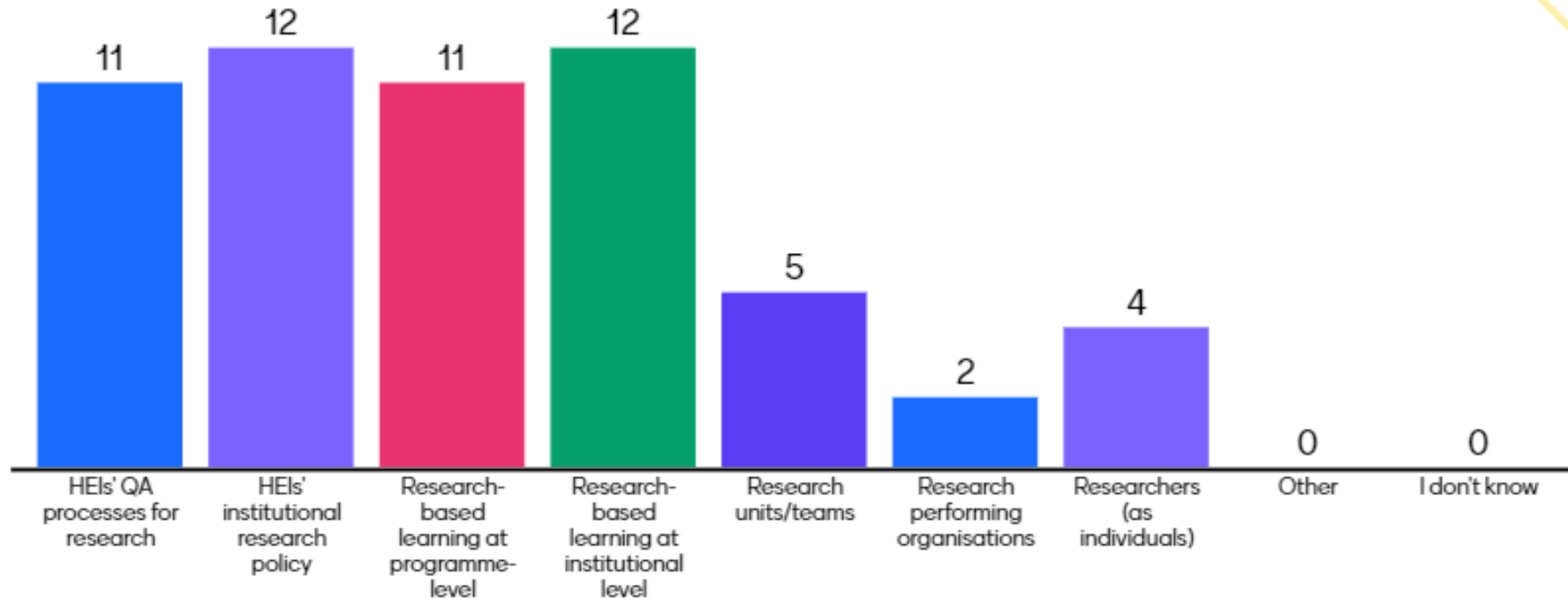


Mentimeter

# Mentimeter questions - results

If you are mandated to evaluate research, what is your scope?

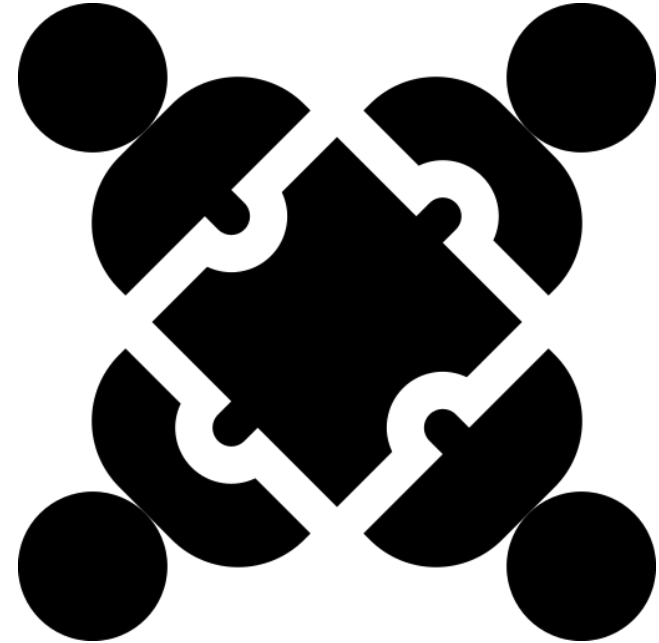
Mentimeter



# Working group session – speak with your peers!

**Gather in groups of 5 persons and discuss the following questions:**

- 1) Does your country have the legal framework to evaluate QA of research?
- 2) If so, what is the scope of your evaluations of research?
- 3) What are the most important issues to investigate for the proposed WG?
- 4) Should the revision of ESG include a focus of QA of research?





## NEXT STEP?

There will be a **call for expressions of interest** sent to all ENQA members and affiliates - end of the month.

Agencies will need to respond by **filling in a short form** with details of the person who would participate in the working group and some brief information about the agency's current activities in this area.

⇒ **10-15 agencies will be selected** by taking into account existing expertise/experience in the topic, geographic balance, and representation of different types of agencies.

