

Call for expressions of interest for two new ENQA working groups

To respond to the interest in many agencies to work on specific quality assurance topics with their colleagues, the ENQA Board has decided to launch two working groups open for ENQA members and affiliates on the following topics:

- 1) **quality assurance of micro-credentials**
- 2) **role of quality assurance agencies in supporting academic integrity and combatting fraud in higher education**

Background and purpose of the working groups

1) **Micro-credentials** Micro-credentials are currently receiving a lot of attention due to their potential to support skill development and flexible learning paths. Several projects and initiatives are therefore exploring the opportunities and challenges of using small, certified units of learning in European higher education. How do we know what a micro-credential is worth? How can they be recognised for further study or as part of a degree? And most of all, what should be the related quality assurance arrangements?

The working group will look into the state of the art among European QA agencies in addressing micro-credentials, support the ENQA Board in formulating its policy input to the European initiatives in this area, and eventually develop guidance on how to use the ESG for quality assurance of this type of short programmes. The working group will build on the work done within the Microbol project (www.microcredentials.eu) and the European Framework for micro-credentials currently being prepared by the European Commission.

2) **Academic integrity** is a key aspect that underpins trust in high quality education systems. Quality assurance agencies are being called upon to play a role in taking actions against academic misconduct, which can include the use of essay and degree mills, plagiarism, collusion between students and forged qualification certificates.

The working group will analyse the role that agencies play and can play in the different higher education systems to support academic integrity and to combat fraudulent behaviour. The key outcomes will include a report on the state of the art, analysing good practice cases, and eventually providing some practical guidance for agencies to tackle this issue.

Participating agencies will have the opportunity to share their experience, learn from other agencies and contexts, and further explore the contribution that external quality assurance can make in that area of work. In addition, group members will produce concrete outputs that are expected to be a resource for the whole ENQA membership to inform, inspire and support their work. The working groups will also have the opportunity to share and collect feedback on their findings by presenting at ENQA events or webinars, and are encouraged to seek other opportunities for dissemination, such as at EQAF or other relevant events.

Organisation of the membership and work of the groups

The two working groups are open to representatives of ENQA members and affiliates, with maximum one participant per agency for each group. In order to allow the groups to work efficiently, the size

of each group will be limited to 10-12 people. The estimated lifetime of the groups is from May/June 2021 to the end of 2022.

The groups are free to make structural arrangements for their work as they see fit (such as appointing a meeting secretary and/or chair, or rotating note taking, dividing the group to sub-working-groups, etc.).

Concrete activities of each group will be tailored to each topic but might include identifying good practice within the participating agencies, desk research, conducting surveys among ENQA members and affiliates, and writing reports and further guidance. On the first task of each group will be to develop a detailed workplan. The work plan will be submitted to the ENQA Board for comments and approval.

Meetings of the groups will take place primarily online, in particular during the first few months of the working period. If the group wishes to organise physical meetings once circumstances allow, this is possible. In such a case, one of the member agencies or ENQA Secretariat may host the meeting (please see financial arrangements below).

Each group will be supported by an ENQA Secretariat staff member.

Call for expressions of interest

All members and affiliates who are motivated and willing to fully commit to active participation in a working group are invited to put forward expressions of interest.

In order to become a member of a working group, the agency and its representative are expected to have a good grasp of the topic of the working group, and ideally some experience in or knowledge of national initiatives, processes, policies etc. related to the topic of the working group. An agency is welcome to express interest in both working groups, but in case of high interest, priority will be given to ensuring a diverse representation of members across both groups. Agencies are asked to indicate their priority topic in the form for expressions of interest.

The candidates for the working group are asked to describe that experience and expertise briefly in the email when expressing their interest in membership.

The expressions should be submitted by filling in the form [here](#) by **20 April 2021**.

The ENQA Secretariat will evaluate the expressions of interest and decide on the membership of the groups based on experience, expertise, and diversity of members and countries represented. It reserves the right not to include all candidates in order to maintain a reasonable group size.

Financing of the working group

Participation in the working groups is on pro bono basis, i.e. there is no financial compensation for the staff time spent on the activities of the group. However, in case physical meetings take place, they may be hosted by one of the groups' members or by the ENQA Secretariat. The costs of the venue will be covered by the host, and catering by ENQA. In principle travel costs to attend physical meetings are covered by each participating agency. Should additional funds be available during the year (e.g. due to saved travel costs in 2021), and subject to prior agreement, a part of travel costs of the group's members may also be covered by ENQA.