
GUIDELINES FOR ENQA AGENCY REVIEWS



OCCASIONAL
PAPERS

24

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Occasional Papers 24



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1 INTRODUCTION

An external review against the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*¹ is a prerequisite for application to become a member of ENQA, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. It is also a requirement for agencies wishing to apply to the European Quality Assurance Register² (EQAR), as set by the Bologna Process Communiqué of London, 2007:

*applications for inclusion on the [European Quality Assurance Register] should be evaluated on the basis of substantial compliance with the ESG, evidenced through an independent review process endorsed by national authorities, where this endorsement is required by those authorities*³.

With the increased number of reviews being coordinated by ENQA, and to ensure that the reviews remain a meaningful process of enhancement and development for the quality assurance (QA) agencies in subsequent review rounds, the ENQA Board established a specific working group in June 2014 to revise ENQA's review methodology and these guidelines. The present guidelines describe the revised review model, the main principles for the ENQA Agency Reviews, and – most of all – they work as a practical handbook for agencies and external reviewers. The ENQA Agency Reviews are designed to meet the expectations of both the ENQA Board, for membership applications, and of EQAR, for the purpose of registration. In addition, the ENQA Agency Reviews may be used for other purposes where an agency needs to formally demonstrate its compliance with the ESG, such as in different national contexts. The ENQA Agency Reviews is thus a process to stimulate trust in quality assurance and quality of higher education internationally and to support and add to the legitimacy of the agency at the national level (where relevant).

The ESG form the basic framework for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and serve as the reference tool for the ENQA Agency Reviews. The model and performance of the ENQA Agency Reviews are, as far as possible, prescribed by the standards in Part 2 of the ESG, i.e. the standards describing how an agency should organise its external quality assurance activities. External reviews may have serious consequences for agencies, not only in terms of granting access to membership of ENQA and inclusion in EQAR, but also in terms of indirect judgments on credibility, quality, and other predications of entire external review systems, or even the higher education system of a country or region. Thus, the ENQA Agency Review process aims at being consistent and trusted, with a constant attention to the quality assurance and improvement of the method itself.

1 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium. Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/>.

2 www.eqar.eu

3 Bologna Process London communiqué (2007). Towards the European Higher Education Area: Responding to challenges in a globalised world. Available at: http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Declarations/London_Communique18May2007.pdf.

ESG 2.2 DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE

STANDARD: External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulation. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.

With the revised model for ENQA Agency Reviews, and the present revised guidelines, ENQA aims to present to QA agencies that are interested in an ESG review a clearer, better-structured, more efficient, and more useful approach to external quality assurance of QA agencies. These guidelines are intended to support all individuals and entities involved in the review process and, most importantly, the agencies under review and the external reviewers.

2 MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENQA AGENCY REVIEW

2.1 PURPOSE AND ORGANISATION OF THE REVIEW

In accordance with the ENQA membership criteria laid down in ENQA's Statutes⁴ and Rules of Procedure⁵, member agencies are required to undergo external reviews against the ESG, as adopted by the European ministers in charge of higher education first in Bergen in 2005 and in their thoroughly revised version in Yerevan in 2015. Quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) should undertake an external review at least once every five years. ENQA membership is open to QA agencies of the EHEA that are able to demonstrate, through an external review, their substantial compliance with the ESG.

Consequently, the principal aim of the ENQA Agency Reviews is to assess an agency's compliance with the ESG in order to enable it to apply for membership in ENQA. At the same time, the ENQA Agency Reviews may be used, and are in fact used also for other purposes, in particular for application of registration to EQAR. Indeed, ENQA Agency Reviews also comply with EQAR's requirements for external reviews.

ENQA may also coordinate ESG compliance reviews of agencies which do not wish to or cannot apply for ENQA membership, such as QA agencies outside the EHEA. The terms of non-EHEA agencies/agencies not wishing to apply for ENQA membership will be negotiated with the agency in question separately, but will comply in terms of content and procedures with these guidelines.

To be eligible for an ENQA Agency Review, the agency should have been operational in quality assurance for at least two years and should have completed at least five review reports.

2.2 REVIEWS FOR ENQA MEMBERSHIP COORDINATED BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

As of 1 July 2011, most reviews of agencies wishing to apply for or reconfirm their membership in ENQA are coordinated by ENQA in order to guarantee a higher level of consistency of the reviews. However, ENQA also accepts reviews coordinated by other entities for membership applications. In cases where the review is not conducted by ENQA, the agency should provide the ENQA Secretariat with the identity and contact details of the body coordinating the review before the start of the process. According to the ENQA Rules of Procedure, the draft terms of reference and the review panel should be approved by the ENQA Board, so that compatibility with the requirements of the ENQA Agency Review guidelines can be verified. This is to help ensure that the outcomes of the review process meet the requirements of the ENQA Board in assessing compliance with the ESG.

⁴ The ENQA Statutes are available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ENQA-Statutes-2015-EN.pdf>.

⁵ The ENQA Rules of Procedure are available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/ENQA-Rules-of-Procedure.pdf>.

Certain elements will be required of a review for it to be acceptable to the ENQA Board to demonstrate that the agency is in compliance with the ESG, namely:

- The management of the review process must be completely independent of the agency itself.
- All parts of the review's management and process must be transparent and therefore easily open to examination by the ENQA Board.
- The report produced must be sufficiently detailed to provide satisfactory assurance to the ENQA Board of the robustness of the review.
- The report must provide sufficient, verified information which clearly shows how the agency understands the requirements of the ESG and complies with them.

A reciprocal review process, where two agencies organise the review of each other, is not permissible, because this method is unlikely to meet the requirements of externality and independence and may give rise to conflicts of interest.

N.B. In case of reviews not coordinated by ENQA, the Secretariat will not be in the position of providing personalised support to the agency under review and/or the review panel.

2.3 PRINCIPLES

The review will be based on the following principles:

- The review is an evidence-based process carried out by independent experts.
- The information provided by the agency is assumed to be factually correct unless evidence points to the contrary.
- The review is a process of verification of information provided in the self-assessment report (SAR) and other documentation and the exploration of any matters which are omitted from that documentation.
- The process is transparent, and outputs are published.
- The level of conformity with the ESG required for ENQA membership is that of "substantial compliance", not rigid adherence (see section 6.4.2.1).

2.4 REMIT OF THE REVIEW

The reviews will cover all quality assurance activities of the agency under review, regardless of whether they are carried out in the agency's predominant country/region of operation, in other countries of the EHEA, or outside the EHEA and regardless of whether they are compulsory or voluntary in nature.

The first ESG review of an agency will pay specific attention to the policies, procedures, and criteria in place. Full evidence of concrete results in all areas may not be required at this stage (such as completed reports of thematic analyses). However, the agency must be able to document (as in action plans with timetables) how they are able to achieve results according to all standards by the next review.

The second and subsequent reviews will require clear evidence of results in all areas. In addition, further reviews will need to acknowledge progress from the previous review. This is a mandatory element in both the SAR and the panel report.

It should of course be noted that all reviews – whether first, second, or subsequent – must always have a developmental approach and aim at constant enhancement of the agencies.

N.B. The panel is expected to review the current status of an agency and not planned or foreseen developments which, for example, may affect the legal status of an agency and its operations in a substantive way.

2.5 THE MAIN STEPS OF THE ENQA AGENCY REVIEW PROCESS

ESG 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES

STANDARD: External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include

- a self-assessment or equivalent;
 - an external assessment normally including a site visit;
 - a report resulting from the external assessment;
 - a consistent follow-up.
-

In line with the requirements of the ESG, ENQA Agency Reviews are composed of four main elements: self-assessment, external evaluation, external review report, and follow-up. This section provides a short overview of these steps, while a more detailed description of each one can be found in later sections of these guidelines.

The ENQA Agency Review is initiated by a request from an agency that wants to be granted or to renew ENQA membership. ENQA may also accept requests for reviews against the ESG for purposes other than membership (including reviews of agencies outside the EHEA). The agency should contact the ENQA Secretariat to initiate the review process about 15 months prior to the expected completion of the review process (and about 10 months before the expected date of the site visit). From this moment onwards, each review is assigned to an ENQA Secretariat staff member who will act as the review coordinator. This person serves as the main contact person for the agency and the review panel throughout the process and will support all those involved during the different stages of the process.

During the initial phase, ENQA and the agency agree on the terms of reference of the review, including the activities to be subjected to the review as well as the overall timeline. Agencies also wishing to apply to EQAR will need to contact EQAR prior to the finalisation of the terms of reference and thus before the formal start of the actual review process.

Self-Assessment

The first main stage of the review process is the production of the self-assessment report (SAR) by the agency under review. In order to be accepted and processed by ENQA, the SAR shall follow a guide of content provided in these guidelines and should cover all indicated elements. The SAR must be analytical in nature, and in the case of a second or subsequent review, the agency is also expected to make explicit reference to the recommendations from

previous reviews, underlining the related developments. It must also highlight changes and developments in relation to the other criteria.

External evaluation

The ENQA Board will commission the composed panel of independent reviewers to carry out the review process. The mandate for the review panel is to evaluate the agency's activities and provide their view on whether an agency is acting in substantial compliance with the ESG. The panel will be able to do so by conducting a thorough assessment of the SAR, a study of additional material (such as information available on the agency's website), and a site visit to the agency. The purpose of the site visit is to verify information provided in the SAR and to gain new knowledge about the agency under review. It is also an opportunity for the agency to engage in an exchange regarding its activities and development.

External review report

Based on the information collected, through documentation and the site visit, the review panel drafts the external review report (ERR) and sends it to the ENQA Secretariat. The ERR is written using the ENQA Agency Review Template. The panel's judgement on compliance is provided for each standard with the following grading: fully compliant, substantially compliant, partially compliant, and non-compliant. Before sending the report to the reviewed agency for factual corrections, the ENQA Secretariat review coordinator checks the report for completeness, consistency, clarity, and language.

After the factual check by the agency, the review panel finalises the report, which is then submitted to ENQA. In addition to the review report, the agency applying for membership/renewal of membership is asked to provide a letter outlining its motivation in applying for membership or its renewal and the ways in which they expect to contribute to the work and objectives of ENQA during membership. The ENQA Board takes the decision on membership based on the evaluation and recommendations given in the final ERR.

Follow-up

All agencies are required to submit a follow-up report at the latest two years after the ENQA Board's decision. The purpose of this follow-up is to engage the agency in a constant process to assess and enhance its own quality and quality work. The report will address all standards on which the panel and/or the ENQA Board has made recommendations and demonstrate how it has decided to address them. In addition, any significant changes or developments in the agency or its area of operation should be described briefly.

Furthermore, the agency may take advantage of an additional progress visit by two reviewers from the original review panel (whenever possible). The visit normally takes place about two years after the ENQA Board's decision. The specific objective of the progress visit is to generate a stronger, enhancement-oriented dialogue that ordinarily might be difficult to truly integrate in the compliance-focused site visit.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW

Immediately after the ENQA Secretariat has accepted the request to coordinate an agency review, ENQA and the agency under review draft and agree on the terms of reference and preliminary timetable for the review. Should the agency wish to apply also for EQAR registration using the same review report, the agency must contact EQAR prior to the finalisation of the terms of reference to agree on the activities to be included in the review process. The terms of reference for the review are to be published on the agency's website. The terms should:

- Clearly identify that the purpose of the review is confirmation on compliance with the ESG, for ENQA membership purposes or (if it is also known at this stage) for any other purposes - most importantly as application for registration to EQAR. If the review will also be used for application to EQAR, the agency should seek EQAR's approval of the terms of reference prior to their finalisation (see chapter 9 for information regarding the timeline).
- Clearly identify the activities of the agency that are going to be the subject of the review. All quality assurance activities of an agency under review that fall under the scope of the ESG should be included in the review whether they are carried out in the agency's own jurisdiction or in other countries/systems and whether the activities are of obligatory or voluntary nature (each of the quality assurance activities that are included in the ENQA Agency Review need to be addressed clearly in the SAR and the ERR.).
- Clearly outline how the review is going to be carried out: the number of reviewers, administrative arrangements, approximate timing, language issues and arrangements for interpretation if necessary, etc.
- Mention any relevant background information/preceding events (e.g. previous membership applications) concerning the review.

The terms of reference and timetable for the review form the basic outline of the review process itself. For the ENQA Agency Reviews they are an annex to a contract between ENQA and the agency. The contract specifies, in addition, the fee payable and procedures for payment. It also contains information concerning appeal procedures.

In cases where the review is not coordinated by ENQA, there will be a separate agreement on the terms of reference between the agency, ENQA, and the review coordinator.

4 PRODUCTION OF THE SAR

4.1 FORM AND CONTENT OF THE SAR

An essential component of the review process for the agency is the preparation of its self-assessment report (SAR) and the supporting documents. This is the agency's opportunity to reflect on how it measures up to the ESG and to gather the key documentation which supports its claim of compliance. As the SAR normally provides a substantial portion of the evidence which the review panel draws on in forming its conclusions, it is important that the report provides clear information, sufficient reflections, critique, and analysis and that its contents can be corroborated by documentary and/or oral evidence about the ways in which the agency meets the ESG. This allows the review team to prepare lines of enquiry in advance of the site visit.

The contents of SARs may vary depending on each agency's range of activities, its geographical area of operation, its history and background of reviews, and so on. However, agencies must make sure to include a description and assessment of all the quality assurance activities to be evaluated by the panel⁶, covering for each type of activity each of the standards in the ESG parts 2 and 3 individually. For each standard the agency should explain how they interpret and comply with it, including sufficient evidence and analysis on the effectiveness of the agency's approach. The SAR is also expected to contain a brief description of the relevant higher education system in which the agency predominantly operates as well as of the agency's quality assurance activities abroad (where relevant). The SAR should normally be around 40-60 pages in length (excluding annexes).

Where the ENQA Board has previously identified areas for development, and expressed recommendations in the letter confirming ENQA membership, these are expected to be followed up and included in the SAR, with explanation of how the agency has acted on the recommendations. Any progress made in the areas mentioned in the letter, or other areas, should be stated.

ENQA expects that the SAR not only states what has been achieved, but also provides a reflection on the practices which could contribute to enhancing the agency's activities in the future. In other words, the SAR should be both backward and forward looking and should provide an accurate picture of the current situation.

In order to harmonise the contents of the SARs, in terms of level of detail, thoroughness, and evaluative character, agencies are expected to follow the guide of content provided by the ENQA Secretariat (see Annex I). The SAR should address each ESG individually and contain the following elements:

- description of the self-assessment process and the production of the SAR;
- brief description of the higher education system and quality assurance of higher education in the context of the agency;

⁶ ESG (2015): The term "quality assurance" is used in this document to describe all activities within the continuous improvement cycle (i.e. improvement and enhancement activities).

- profile and brief history of the agency;
- external quality assurance activities undertaken by the agency, (including its cross-border quality assurance activities) followed by a description of the processes and methodologies applied for each quality assurance activity;
- internal quality assurance procedures;
- international activities;
- information on and opinions of stakeholders, e.g. recent analysis of feedback on quality and consistency of the services of the agency and/or any cases of complaints (if applicable);
- main findings and recommendations of previous review(s) and actions taken (for second and subsequent reviews only);
- a SWOT analysis; and
- current challenges and areas for further development.

The agency may enclose as annexes to the report the most crucial documentation (within reason, not more than ten annexes) it thinks may help the panel in its analysis of the report. Further documents may be prepared by the agency for the site visit or may be requested by the review panel before or during the site visit. The SAR, annexes, and additional documents for the site visit should be in English and made easily available to the panel.

N.B. The SAR should be self-standing and self-explanatory. The main purpose of the annexes is to provide further background to the issues described but should not be necessary for the basic understanding of the evidence provided.

4.2 SCRUTINY OF THE SAR

The ENQA review coordinator checks the SAR prior to sending it to the review panel to ensure that it conforms to these guidelines and includes all elements listed in the guide of content. Should this not be the case, the agency is asked to revise the report, and a fee is charged to the agency (information on fees associated with ENQA Agency Reviews is on the ENQA website⁷). The agency will be given two weeks to provide the Secretariat with a revised report. The scrutiny of the report by the ENQA review coordinator is of a technical nature and will not include any assessment on the compliance of the agency with the ESG.

When the report is sent to the review panel, should the panel consider that it is lacking relevant, thorough, and evaluative information, the review secretary may ask, on behalf of the review panel, that the agency revise the report. In such a case, the ENQA Secretariat must be informed prior to the request being made.

The agency publishes the completed SAR on its website and submits it to the ENQA review coordinator after any additional changes have been made at the panel's request.

⁷ Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

5 APPOINTMENT OF THE REVIEW PANEL

A review panel can perform its independent function most successfully when it comprises members who among themselves have a wide range of professional experience in higher education and quality assurance. ENQA Agency Reviews include at least four external reviewers, including:

- one or two quality assurance professionals, of which at least one should be currently employed by a QA agency and both having been engaged in quality assurance within the past five years;
- (an) academic(s) at a higher education institution; and
- (a) student member(s).

When requested by the agency under review or when considered particularly pertinent, other stakeholders (for example, a representative of the labour market) may be included instead of the second quality assurance professional or in addition to the four panel members.

One of these reviewers will be appointed as the panel's chair and one as its secretary.

5.1 NOMINATION OF REVIEWERS

ENQA receives nominations of reviewers from its member agencies, as well as from a number of European stakeholder organisations, namely the European University Association (EUA), the European Students' Union (ESU), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), and Business Europe. In each case the nominating organisation/individual should know the nominee personally. Nominations are submitted to the ENQA Secretariat together with a curriculum vitae⁸ of the nominated person(s). ENQA sends regular requests for nominations to its members and stakeholder organisations, although non-solicited nominations may also be considered.

ENQA needs reviewers with different backgrounds and profiles. The ENQA member-nominated reviewers are usually quality assurance professionals, such as former or current senior QA agency staff, or serving or recent past members of the Boards/Councils of QA agencies. ENQA-nominated reviewers may, however, also be administrative staff of higher education institutions (such as quality assurance officers, for example), academics with sound experience in quality assurance, or representatives of the labour market.

EUA- and EURASHE-nominated experts may be administrative or academic staff members at higher education institutions or other experts able to represent the interests of higher education institutions. ESU-nominated experts are current students in higher education, and Business Europe nominees are representatives of the labour market.

N.B. The reviewers are expected to be fluent in English (both written and oral), as it is the main working language of the review.

⁸ Nominees are requested to use the CV template available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

5.2 TRAINING OF REVIEWERS

According to the needs of the expert pool and at its own discretion, ENQA invites nominated experts to ENQA reviewer training sessions. In order to ensure that the agency reviews are rigorous, fair, transparent, and consistent, such training is obligatory for all potential ENQA reviewers, independent of the organisation that has nominated them (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, or Business Europe). Based on the lessons learned, feedback, and materials from completed reviews, the training sessions provide reviewers with the necessary knowledge and guidance on the use of the ESG, on the ENQA Agency Review process, and on compliance assessment. In addition, the future panel members are briefed on the expectations of the ENQA Board on the reviews and the related reports and discuss the way in which ENQA understands the requirements of the ESG for QA agencies.

Only reviewers who have attended an ENQA reviewer training session are included in the ENQA pool of trained reviewers and may be appointed to panels of ENQA Agency Reviews. Submitting a nomination to ENQA does not guarantee that one will be invited to a training, as this is done on the basis of the needs of the reviewer pool (profile, nationality, language competences, gender, and expertise). While most of the trained reviewers are invited to become members of a review panel within 1-2 years of the training, attendance of a training does not automatically guarantee an invitation to take part in an ENQA Agency Review.

5.3 APPOINTMENT OF REVIEWERS

The selection and appointment of reviewers for an ENQA Agency Review is always carried out by the review coordinator (and not by the agency being reviewed) to avoid conflicts of interest and to preserve the integrity of the process.

When appointing reviewers for an ENQA Agency Review, the key requirement is that the members of the panel should be totally independent of the agency under review and have a sufficient level of knowledge, experience, and expertise to conduct the review to a high standard. Experts are required to notify the ENQA review coordinator in writing of any connection or interest which could result in a conflict, potential conflict, or a perceived conflict related to the review. Furthermore, experts are required to notify the ENQA review coordinator as soon as possible of any changes in, or additions to, the interests already disclosed which occur during the review process. If experts are unsure as to whether an interest should be disclosed, they should discuss the matter with the ENQA review coordinator.

For ENQA Agency Reviews, at least one of the reviewers is an ENQA nominee (most often the quality assurance professional[s]). At least one of the reviewers is appointed from the nominees of either EUA or EURASHE (representing higher education institutions), and the student member is always selected from among the ESU-nominated reviewers. If requested, the labour market representative may come from among the Business Europe nominees or from ENQA. An additional panel member may be added at the request of the agency under review. In this case an additional fee to cover the reviewer's fee and travel expenses is applied.

In addition, when appointing a panel, the following selection criteria are applied:

- All panel members must have been trained by ENQA (see section 5.2).
- At least two panel members come from outside the national system of the agency under review (if relevant); international member(s) of the panel can provide very valuable insights for the review and may help to establish its credibility.
- The review chair and the review secretary may not come from the same country, and the review chair should not come from the country of the agency under review (in the case of nationally or sub-nationally based agencies).
- At least one member of the panel has good knowledge and understanding of the higher education and quality assurance system in which the agency (predominantly) operates.
- At least one panel member has fluent knowledge of the main working language of the agency and/or the language of the country in which the agency (predominantly) operates.
- Gender balance is taken into consideration to the greatest extent possible. A panel never has only male or only female members.
- No current nor former members (this restriction applies only to those whose employment has been terminated within the last five years) of staff of the agency under review can take part in the review panel.
- Current members of the ENQA Board are not eligible to serve as reviewers in ENQA Agency Reviews.
- The review chair will have previous experience taking part in an ENQA Agency Review.
- The review secretary will normally have previous experience taking part in an ENQA Agency Review.
- Whenever possible, at least one panel member will not have previously participated in an ENQA Agency Review.

The agency under review is given the opportunity to comment on the selected panel members and signal any possible conflicts of interest or biases.

According to the ENQA Rules of Procedure, the review panels must be approved by the ENQA Board, whether the review is coordinated by ENQA or another entity. The Board should be provided with the CVs of all panel members as well as a brief explanation about how the panel meets the requirements for ENQA Agency Reviews in terms of composition, profiles, experience, and skills as described above.

After the panel has been established, the ENQA review coordinator introduces the panel members to each other and facilitates contact between the review chair and review secretary and the agency's contact person for the review process.

Information on the roles and duties of the different panel members can be found in chapter 7.

6 THE SITE VISIT

6.1 OBJECTIVES

The site visit has a number of key objectives:

- to enable the review panel to share, face-to-face, the impressions gained from the SAR;
- to explore the agency's compliance with the ESG during meetings and interviews with the key individuals at the agency under review;
- to explore the agency's compliance with the ESG through additional documentation;
- to engage in a dialogue with the agency on its operations and ESG compliance;
- to formulate the panel's preliminary findings regarding compliance with the ESG and communicate these to the agency; and
- to produce material for the draft report as a solid basis for further development after the site visit.

To enable the site visit to reach these objectives, it is essential that the visit is well prepared and that the process and the panel's time are managed efficiently and effectively. It is imperative that the panel conduct their interviews and internal meetings in a room that ensures confidentiality (i.e. it must be separate and sufficiently soundproofed), and it is expected that the panel may enjoy its breaks, including all meals, privately. It is the responsibility of the agency to ensure that this is made possible.

The length of the visit should be determined at the beginning of the review process when the terms of reference are completed and agreed. In most cases, it is likely that a visit duration of at least 2.5 days is necessary for a review panel to reflect on and fully validate the information contained in the SAR, as well as to clarify any points at issue. The planning schedule for the site visits that can be found in Annex II may be helpful in setting up the programme. However, it should be noted that the time required will depend on the country and agency in question and may thus vary between reviews.

In some cases, and with the consent of both the agency under review and the chair of the review panel, an external observer may attend the site visit. The conditions regarding the participation of observers are specified in the Protocol for external observers on ENQA-coordinated reviews (available on the ENQA website⁹).

N.B. The review panel should receive the SAR prepared by the agency, and checked by the ENQA Secretariat, as soon as possible after their appointment. It is important to leave at least six weeks available to the panel between the date of receipt of the final, approved SAR and the date of the site visit (see chapter 7 for timeline).

⁹ Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

6.2 BEFORE THE SITE VISIT

6.2.1 PREPARATION AND REVIEW OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION

Well ahead of the site visit, the agency under review submits its SAR and related annexes to the ENQA review coordinator for distribution to the panel (please refer to chapter 4 for information about the SAR and chapter 8 for the timeline). In addition to the SAR, the agency should also submit to the review coordinator any past review reports and/or follow-up reports (unless coordinated by ENQA). Additionally, should the agency, or any part of the agency, have been the subject of research or study, the corresponding reports should be submitted to the ENQA review coordinator prior to the review.

The panel should carefully study all material available before the site visit and use it to determine the main lines of enquiry for the site visit and to draft an outline of the review report. The agency should facilitate access to such material as requested.

The documentation to be considered by the panel includes (but needs not be restricted to):

- the agency's SAR, including annexes (see chapter 4);
- any previous external reviews (submitted by the agency unless coordinated by ENQA) and related follow-up reports;
- any eventual other reports on the agency resulting from research or studies;
- publicly available information, such as the agency's website; and
- selected feedback reports produced by the agency.

N.B. 1 Panels should systematically review the feedback reports prepared by the agency on their different processes and consider the complaints that the agency may have received so that eventual issues arising may be addressed during the site visit.

N.B. 2 It is recommended that the review chair and review secretary, with input from the other panel members, request additional documentation where deemed necessary and already identified, in advance of the visit. Eventual additional documents, for which the need arises in the meeting or which may not be available electronically, may be requested and should be provided on the spot during the site visit. The main source of information during the site visit should thus be the interviews with the leadership, staff, and stakeholders.

6.2.2. PANEL'S PREPARATORY TELEPHONE BRIEFING

A preparatory telephone briefing will be organised between the review panel and the ENQA review coordinator to discuss the entire review process, and more specifically the:

- purpose of the review;
- roles and responsibilities of panel members;
- use and understanding of the ESG and judgement of compliance;
- link between evidence and information, analysis, and conclusions in the review report;
- timeline and management of the site visit;

- drafting of the report; and
- submission of the final review report and the decision-making process.

The preparatory telephone briefing also presents an important opportunity for the panel members to be introduced to each other.

The preparatory telephone briefing is compulsory and usually takes place three to four weeks before the site visit. The call lasts about 60-90 minutes, and its costs are reimbursed by ENQA afterwards (together with the site visit travel claim). The call is organised and chaired by the ENQA review coordinator.

N.B. It is important that all panel members participate in the call from a quiet location where they can take part without being disturbed.

In addition to the preparatory telephone briefing, the review panel is expected to be in regular contact as the need arises. A separate preparatory telephone call usually takes place between the review secretary and the review coordinator soon after the appointment of the panel for the purpose of a smooth overall organisation of the review process and to discuss its practical aspects. Furthermore, it is recommended that the review chair and review secretary meet or hold a telephone call after having both independently read the SAR. This is useful to tease out specific issues and to prepare a list of matters on which clarification are needed.

6.2.3 PREPARATION OF MATERIAL AND SETTING THE PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

For the purpose of developing well-structured lines of enquiry and the schedule for the site visit, it is strongly advised that the panel members draft a mapping grid, based on the ESG (see Annex III). The site visit programme will be prepared by the review chair and the review secretary, in cooperation with the agency under review, and based on advice from the ENQA review coordinator. While the precise structure of the site visit – and the number and types of people to be interviewed – will depend on the context of the agency, on the quality of the SAR, and the number and types of issues that need special attention during the site visit, the suggested outline may provide support in designing the site visit programme (see Annex II). For the profiles of typical interviewees, see also section 6.3.2.

It is strongly advised that the review secretary draft an outline version of the panel’s report prior to the site visit. This will save time during the visit (and afterwards) and will make it easier to identify areas that will require further examination or clarification and to ensure that no gaps remain after the site visit.

6.2.4 THE USE OF AN “AGENCY RESOURCE PERSON”

In order to ensure that the panel reaches a sufficient understanding of the specific national/legal context in which an agency operates, or of the specific quality assurance system to which it belongs, the panel may request to make use of an “agency resource person” during the site visit. This person would typically be a senior member of staff with sufficient knowledge on the history and present situation of the agency and the quality assurance and higher education system in question (and would likely not be the person in charge of the organisation of the review process at the agency). The panel may wish to organise a pre-

visit meeting with the agency resource person (e.g. right before the start of the site visit) to clarify elements related to the overall system and context, so that time during the interview sessions may be used in full for verification of the agency's ESG compliance. The agency resource person may also be invited to provide further clarification in between interview sessions or at the end of the first and/or second day of the site visit.

Should a panel decide to make use of an agency resource person, the review secretary will need to inform the agency before the site visit schedule is finalised.

6.3 DURING THE SITE VISIT

6.3.1 PANEL KICK-OFF MEETING

The whole panel meets on the day/morning before the site visit (before, after, or in conjunction with the meeting with the agency resource person as described in section 6.2.4). The panel members discuss the schedule of the visit (including panel meetings, meetings/interviews, and time to study documentation), the specific roles of each reviewer during the site visit, their impressions gained from the pre-visit information, and any highlighted lines of enquiry on which the panel wishes to focus, i.e. the areas of the ESG on which the site visit may need to particularly focus. Although the review needs to address all the standards contained within the ESG, by developing "lines of enquiry" the panel is able to target its efforts where there is greatest concern about the level of compliance, or where information provided in the SAR and other documentation provides less comprehensive evidence. At this point, the panel might also identify any additional documentation to which it would like to have access during the site visit. In contrast, it may be evident from the information available before the site visit that the agency clearly fulfils some of the criteria, and these areas may warrant only a briefer exploration and verification during the site visit.

During the kick-off meeting, the panel decides on the agenda for the first meetings or interviews and formulates tentative outlines for the remainder. The basic structure of the meetings, i.e. who will ask the questions and in what order, should be decided at the latest by this time.

The kick-off meeting is also an opportunity for the ENQA review coordinator to remind the panel about the requirements of these guidelines and to highlight some elements that may require specific attention during the site visit. Likewise, the panel is encouraged to clarify any remaining questions with the ENQA review coordinator at this point.

6.3.2 MEETINGS OR INTERVIEWS WITH KEY AGENCY PERSONNEL AND STAKEHOLDERS

The site visit is conducted in English. If the agency wishes to use interpreters during the interviews, it should let the review secretary and the ENQA review coordinator know, before the completion of the visit schedule, in which interviews an interpreter will be necessary. The timing of the meetings with an interpreter should be adjusted accordingly. All other interviews, i.e. those for which the use of an interpreter has not been specifically requested and agreed, should be carried out in English. The interpreters must be external to the agency's operations and need to be approved by the ENQA review coordinator. The agency bears the costs of interpretation.

During the site visit, it is strongly advised that the review panel should meet, among others:

- staff members who have contributed to writing the SAR;
- the management and leadership of the agency;
- staff members involved in quality assurance activities and reviewers engaged by the agency; and
- a range of stakeholders (such as reviewed institutions and/or programmes, academics, students, labour market representatives, relevant higher education authorities, etc.).

When building the programme, care should be taken to ensure that each group and/or person may feel as free as possible to express their views and opinions on the agency's work; for example, staff members should be interviewed separately from the leadership, reviewers separately from review coordinators, students separately from academics, etc. The size of the groups for any meeting/interview session should be kept limited. Experience has proven that group sessions with more than six people are less helpful, especially if the time available is short. One person would not normally participate in several meetings with the panel except for cases agreed separately and in advance with the review secretary and the ENQA review coordinator.

Distance interviews might be conducted during the site visit when the direct participation of some interviewees is not possible. However, this is an option for limited cases, not for the majority of interviews to be held. If any distance interviews are needed, the agency should inform the review secretary and the ENQA review coordinator before the site visit schedule is finalised. Those interviews should be clearly indicated in the schedule, and the timing should be adjusted accordingly. The agency must ensure a stable technical environment so that time is not lost resolving technical problems during the interviews.

It is often helpful for the panel to reserve the last interview slot for the leadership of the agency to clarify any remaining issues after the other interviews.

At the beginning of each meeting, the review chair should:

- Introduce the panel members and ask for introductions from those present.
- Outline the areas to be covered during the interview and in what order.
- Agree on the finishing time of the meeting.

After each meeting or interview, the panel discusses briefly where the meeting has taken the review – what is presently known and what still needs to be investigated. This should assist the review secretary in drawing up a list of, or completing a mapping grid on, the key outcomes of the meeting for later reference. The panel should then refine the list of themes/questions for the subsequent meetings, if necessary. In practice this means that the panel should have around 10-15 minutes in between interviews for private conversation. Typically, a panel would, in addition, hold a longer private meeting at the end of the first and second days of the site visit to map areas still to be covered and adjust, if needed, the interview questions for the following day(s).

N.B. Eventual additional documents, for which the need arises in the meeting or which may not be available electronically, may be requested and should be provided on the spot during the site visit; however, the main source of information during the site visit should be the interviews with the leadership, staff, and stakeholders.

6.3.3 FINAL PANEL MEETING

Just before the end of the site visit, the panel meets to draw together its conclusions based on the information presented. At this point it is useful to take time to work through each aspect of the ESG and confirm the panel's key findings and any areas of concern.

6.3.4 FINAL MEETING WITH THE AGENCY

The site visit concludes with a final de-briefing meeting involving the panel members, staff, and Council/Board members of the agency, as decided by the panel. The review chair can outline the panel's overall impressions but not its judgement on the granting or reconfirmation of ENQA membership. The review chair can also explain the next steps in the review process. The purpose of the final meeting is to provide some immediate feedback to the agency without prejudice to the formulation of compliance in the final report and to the ENQA Board's decision.

6.4 AFTER THE SITE VISIT

It should be noted that the agency may not submit new information to the panel after the site visit. All relevant information should be provided to the review panel either before or during the site visit. After the site visit, only factual comments on the draft review report are possible. The agency should also refrain from contacting the panel members or the ENQA review coordinator on matters related to the content of the review report prior to its completion.

6.4.1 PROVIDING FEEDBACK

After the completion of the report, but before the decision on membership by the ENQA Board, the ENQA Secretariat gathers feedback from (i) panel members and (ii) the agency through a feedback questionnaire on the review process.

In addition, the review chair is expected to provide – if appropriate, in cooperation with the review secretary – an informal feedback letter to the ENQA Board on the review process, including feedback on the overall operation of the review; usefulness of preparation activities; frankness and completeness of the documentation provided by the agency; the quality of the dialogue experienced during the site visit; coordination by ENQA; and the report-drafting process. This should be sent to the ENQA Secretariat at the latest together with the completed review report.

6.4.2 PRODUCTION AND PUBLICATION OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

The main outcome of the review process is the external review report (ERR) by the expert panel. The ERR is drafted by the review secretary, in collaboration with the review chair and the rest of the panel members, on the basis of the SAR, the site visit, and the review panel's findings.

The purpose of the ERR is to:

- Provide the ENQA Board with sufficient information on the ESG compliance of the agency under review and to enable the Board thus to take a decision regarding the agency's membership in ENQA.
- Be perceived by the agency as a fair and relevant document for the consolidation and further development of the agency.
- Give sufficient information to EQAR for listing in the register (where relevant).
- Serve as a source of reliable and transparent information for other agencies and other interested stakeholders.

The template for the ERR is provided in Annex IV and is also available in Word-format on the ENQA website¹⁰. The template gives more detailed guidance on what should be included in each of the sections. For all ENQA Agency Reviews, the ERR must be submitted using the provided template.

Even when the sole purpose of the review is to assess the agency's compliance with the ESG for purposes of ENQA membership application, the review panel may include in its report any additional reflections or developmental recommendations that it may wish to offer. If these are extensive, they can be included in the optional additional section of the report (see Annex IV), or if brief, as part of the conclusions.

6.4.2.1 Writing up findings

To enable the ENQA Board to make an assessment on the ESG compliance of the reviewed agency and to reach a sound conclusion, it is important that the findings section is written in a way that reveals both the evidence for and the reasoning/analysis behind the panel's conclusions. Under each criterion the panel should carefully describe the relevant evidence available and provide an analysis of the evidence and an assessment of compliance. The reports must be written in clear and correct English, be well structured, and use correct terminology for compliance assessment.

The following main elements should be kept in mind:

- All ESG standards of parts 2 and 3 need to be fully covered.
- Each ESG standard should be discussed separately.
- Under each ESG standard, the report should include:
 - (i) **EVIDENCE**: a short description of the evidence gathered – making reference to meetings or documentation explored and – where relevant – to changes implemented since the previous review;
 - (ii) **ANALYSIS**: a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does (or does not) meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance;
 - (iii) **CONCLUSION** (judgement on compliance): explanation of how compliant the agency is, in the opinion of the panel (based on the evidence and analysis), with the ESG standard:
 - **Fully compliant**: The agency is entirely in accordance with the ESG standard, which is implemented in an effective manner.

¹⁰ Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

- Substantially compliant: The agency is to a large extent in accordance with the ESG standard, the principle/spirit of which is followed in practice.
 - Partially compliant: Some aspects or parts of the ESG standard are met while others are not. The interpretation of the ESG standard is correct, but the manner of implementation is not effective enough.
 - Non-compliant: The agency fails to comply with the ESG standard.
- (iv) RECOMMENDATIONS (if any) and COMMENDATIONS (if any)

N.B. 1 The link between evidence, analysis, and conclusions should be mutually supportive and provide the ENQA Board members, who take the decision on membership based on the review report, with clear information on how the panel reached its conclusion on compliance. Furthermore, the recommendations should logically follow from the judgement on compliance. In other words, the judgment must clearly follow from the evidence and analysis provided, and statements such as “the panel is convinced that the agency is fully compliant” or “it was clear from the interviews that the agency fully complies” are not sufficient, if not supported by evidence and analysis.

N.B. 2 As the judgement on compliance with each ESG standard is either fully/substantially/partially compliant or non-compliant, wordings such as “full compliance has not been achieved” or “not yet fully compliant” should not be used.

N.B. 3 Progress, in respect to any previous review, should be clearly indicated through analysis on how the agency has addressed the provided recommendations (both by the panel and by the ENQA Board).

N.B. 4 The role of commendations, in addition to recommendations, is important to highlight and promote good practice and excellence in external quality assurance, and the panel is thus asked not only to highlight areas that require further development but also areas in which the agency has excelled.

6.4.2.2 Overall judgement on compliance

ENQA requires graded compliance to be practiced by the panel. The purpose of graded conclusions is to give a nuanced picture of compliance, primarily to the agency, but also to ENQA. The panel is expected to comment on the overall compliance of the agency with the ESG but not to make a recommendation about ENQA membership as such. The overall level of compliance required for ENQA membership is substantial compliance (see section 2.3). Where an agency is found to be either partially compliant or non-compliant with a standard, the reasons for this should be explained. Full or substantial compliance may be impossible for some agencies, owing to restrictions placed on them by the very nature of their work and/or legislation in place in their (predominant) country(ies) of operation. The ENQA Board will take these restrictions into consideration where duly explained and documented.

N.B. The overall judgement on compliance does not result from a mathematical calculation. However, a case of non-compliance would normally lead to a judgement that the agency is not substantially compliant with the ESG overall.

6.4.2.3 Drafting process

For the sake of both efficiency and accuracy, it is important that the report is drafted throughout the review process rather than solely after the site visit. Several of the sections may be written in an outline form before the site visit takes place, based on the SAR and other information available to the panel. The review secretary is advised to add notes to the draft report during the course of the site visit, building on the outcomes of the meetings and further scrutiny of documentary evidence.

The review secretary is in charge of providing the first post-visit draft of the report. However, the panel may decide that each member contributes with some written material from the early stages onwards. In any case, and as a minimum requirement, all panel members should carefully read and comment on the draft report.

After revision of the draft by the review secretary, and after agreement from the review chair, the report is submitted to ENQA. The ENQA review coordinator checks and confirms that the report is submitted using the provided template and that it is in line with the requirements of these guidelines. After this check, the review secretary will submit the report – without the judgements on compliance – to the agency for comment on factual accuracy and grave misunderstandings only. The agency is given sufficient time to do this (usually two weeks). The agency should not submit any additional material or documentation at this stage.

Any further revisions to the report based on the agency's comments are agreed between the review chair and review secretary, in consultation with the panel. The final version of the report is then submitted by the review chair (or the review coordinator if not ENQA) to the ENQA Secretariat, for the attention of the Board. The final report should normally be around 40 pages in length (excluding essential annexes).

N.B. The report is not final and may not be used by the agency until the ENQA Board has confirmed the validity of the report. The decision on the validity of the report is independent from any eventual decision on ENQA membership (the ENQA Board validates also reports not used for ENQA membership if coordinated by ENQA).

In case of a review coordinated by another entity, a report drafted in a language other than English should be translated under the supervision of the review chair before submission to ENQA.

6.4.3 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

After completion of the ERR, the agency may apply for ENQA membership by submitting a letter explaining its reasons for applying for/requesting to renew their ENQA membership (including their expectations of and contribution to the Association), to the attention of the ENQA Board at least 30 days in advance of the Board meeting at which the external review is expected to be discussed (please refer to the ENQA Rules of Procedure). In the case of a review coordinated by another entity, the agency will submit the ERR together with its letter.

ENQA's General Assembly has delegated to the Board the consideration of ERRs and subsequent decisions in respect to membership. The Board uses ERRs to reach a conclusion on whether an agency is in substantial compliance with the ESG and therefore can be admitted as a member. In order to facilitate its decision making, the ENQA Board relies on the support of review committees for the initial scrutiny of the ERR. The process for the scrutiny of the ERRs is provided in detail in the scrutiny form for reconfirmation of or application for membership (please refer to the ENQA website¹¹). The main steps of the process are, however, the following:

1. The report is distributed by the ENQA Secretariat to an ENQA review committee.
2. Each member of the review committee produces an individual analysis of the report and a recommendation to the Board in the format of a scrutiny form.
3. The Board takes a decision on the basis of the ERR and the scrutiny by the review committee. The Board is not, however, obliged to follow the recommendations of the review panel nor of the review committee. The Board makes its decision in light of the gathered evidence.
4. Should the Board deviate from the recommendations of the panel and/or the recommendation of the review committee, the reasons shall be specified in the Board's letter to the agency, which will be published on the ENQA website together with the ERR¹².

The possible outcomes of the Board's decision on whether the agency is in substantial compliance with the ESG – and thus can be admitted or reconfirmed as a member of ENQA – are the following:

1. The agency is considered to be in compliance with the ESG and is admitted/reconfirmed as a member of ENQA.
2. The agency is considered as not sufficiently in compliance with the ESG.
 - A. In the case of new applicants, the agency will receive a letter outlining the main recommendations and areas to be addressed before a new review may be carried out. The minimum period before a second review after an unsuccessful one is usually two years. During this time, the agency may – and is encouraged to – become (or remain) an affiliate of ENQA.
 - B. In the case of current members, the agency will be designated as a “member under review”. The agency may continue to be an ENQA member (and maintain its membership rights) for a “grace period” of maximum two years, within which they need to make the necessary changes to reach a sufficient level of compliance with the ESG and undergo an additional partial review to verify progress. The details of the procedure for a partial review are described in the ENQA policy for partial reviews (available on the ENQA website¹³).

The Board will conclude with a negative decision when it considers that there is non-compliance at any standard. Other than that, the decision is based on a holistic assessment and is not the result of a mathematical equation.

¹¹ Information available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

¹² Review reports and decisions are available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/review-reports-and-decisions/>.

¹³ Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

6.4.4 REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR SITE VISIT

If the ERR's contents, or the way in which the review was conducted, do not, in the Board's opinion, allow it to come to a conclusion, the Board may decide what additional information is required. This may comprise further documentary evidence, additional information from the review panel (or the review coordinator) or the agency itself, or information to be acquired during an additional visit to the agency (lasting normally one day), carried out by the review chair and the review secretary if needed, to complete the assessment on compliance. In the event that a second site visit is required by the Board, the agency will be given the opportunity to accept or refuse another site visit. In case of acceptance, an additional fee plus travel and subsistence costs are recoverable from the agency (see chapter 9).

The Board's powers in respect to membership matters, and the rules relating to appeals against a decision of the Board, are contained in the ENQA Statutes.

After the completion of a review process, the final report, together with the Board's decision and the related recommendations, is published on the websites of ENQA and the reviewed agency.

6.5 FOLLOW-UP

In order to provide better developmental support to the agency, a follow-up report (due usually two years after the Board's decision) is obligatory and complemented by a small-scale progress visit to the agency (two members of the original panel, whenever possible). This visit will be used to discuss issues, based on the ESG, considered of particular importance or to be a challenge by the agency. As such a conversation is carried out separately from the "compliance-review", the benefits are expected to be greater for the agency. The price of this visit is included in the review fee (see chapter 9), so that no extra fee is charged to the agency.

6.5.1 FOLLOW-UP REPORT

An agency is requested to submit a follow-up report usually within two years of the Board's positive decision on membership. This may be reduced to one year in cases where urgent action is considered necessary. The purpose of this follow-up is to engage the agency in a continuous reflection on its quality work. The follow-up report is expected to address the recommendations from the ENQA Board and from the review panel. In addition, the agency may also highlight other developments or changes in the agency's activities and processes that may be relevant in view of its ESG compliance.

The report is to be submitted spontaneously by the agency within the timeframe provided in the letter containing the Board's membership decision. The follow-up report should be sent to the ENQA Secretariat, to the attention of the ENQA Board. The follow-up report will be published on the ENQA website as additional material to the review report as soon as it has been considered by the ENQA Board.

N.B. The follow-up report must be in English and should be self-standing and self-explanatory without further documents annexed.

6.5.2 PROGRESS VISIT

The ENQA Agency Review fee includes a voluntary progress visit by two reviewers from the original review panel (when possible). The progress visit will not have the objective of checking the agency's ESG compliance, but rather to generate a stronger enhancement-oriented dialogue that might be difficult to truly integrate in the ordinary site visit. The agency may suggest specific areas of interest to be discussed with the reviewers and may focus on areas in which the agency is struggling to meet the requirements of the ESG, or to discuss specific sub-sections of one or more ESG standard. The two experts who attend the progress visit will not be engaged in the following full review of the agency to avoid possible conflicts of interest.

The additional voluntary site visit will take place two years after the completion of the review process and will last one day. The agency may request to not have a progress visit performed by informing the ENQA Secretariat at least ten months before the approximate timing of the progress visit. However, due to the non-investigative nature of the progress visit, most agencies are likely to benefit from this additional service.

7 REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS' ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The review panel is composed of four members, of which two are assigned the specific duties of the review chair and the review secretary.

Each member of the panel is expected to actively contribute to the work of the team. Therefore, reviewers are advised to carefully consider their workload before accepting the assignment. Failure to actively contribute to the panel and its duties, for whatever reason, is deemed a breach of the ENQA Code of Conduct for Reviewers (Annex V) and may lead to a reduction of the expert fee proportionate to the work not yet completed/contribution yet to be provided. The ENQA Board will assess the need for intervention on a case-by-case basis and will take the feedback of the ENQA review coordinator and/or the review chair into account.

7.1 REVIEW CHAIR

The review chair has overall responsibility for the review, the assessment of the agency against the ESG, and the production and quality of the report and to ensure the terms of reference of the review are respected. More specifically, the review chair shall:

Before the site visit

- Liaise with the review secretary and the agency to establish the timetable of activities for the site visit.
- Review the documentation, including the SAR and any other information available prior to the site visit, to ensure it is complete and adequate for the needs of the panel.
- Request additional documentation from the agency, in agreement with the other panel members, prior to the site visit where necessary.
- Agree on the lines of enquiry to be pursued during the site visit, with contributions from the rest of the panel.
- Work with the review secretary to produce an outline report.

During the site visit

- Chair all meetings and discussions.
- Ensure that all lines of enquiry identified are satisfactorily covered.
- Ensure that all panel members participate in the visit actively and in a balanced way, following the agreed sharing of tasks.
- Ensure that these guidelines are respected throughout the review process.

After the site visit

- Comment on the initial draft report produced by the review secretary.
- Review any changes suggested by the ENQA Secretariat in view of respecting the requirements of these guidelines.
- Review any changes suggested by the agency after it has commented on the draft report.
- Submit the final report to the review panel and the review coordinator.

- Provide – if appropriate and in cooperation with the review secretary – an informal feedback letter to the ENQA Board on the review process, including feedback upon the overall operation of the review, usefulness of preparation activities, frankness and completeness of the documentation provided by the agency, the quality of the dialogue experienced during the site visit, and the report-drafting process, at the latest when submitting the final review report.

At all times

- Identify possible misunderstandings of concepts within the review panel.
- Inform the review coordinator about any eventual breach of contract by the agency or any of the reviewers and alert the coordinator to any concerns regarding the integrity of the review process.

7.2 REVIEW SECRETARY

The review secretary is a full member of the panel of equal status to the other members, but with specific and different duties. The work of the review secretary requires an experienced person (having a good knowledge of international quality assurance in higher education and of the ESG, as well as excellent communication and English writing skills), with adequate time available to carry out the tasks both before and after the site visit.

It is the specific responsibility of the secretary of the review panel to:

Before the site visit

- Liaise with the chair and the agency to set up the timetable of activities for the site visit.
- Ensure that the timing of the site visit is feasible and that the facilities provided by the agency correspond to the needs of an independent review process.
- Review documentation, including the SAR, received from the agency/ENQA review coordinator and distribute the documentation to the rest of the review panel.
- Work with the review chair to produce an outline report.
- Produce a mapping grid of the ESG.
- Produce a short briefing paper for the panel outlining the background of the review and the lines of enquiry that have been agreed.

During the site visit

- Act as the panel's chief liaison with the agency during the course of the site visit.
- Take notes during the meetings and during the panel's private discussions.
- Keep a record of matters which require further clarification and bring these to the attention of the panel.
- Ensure a friendly but professional atmosphere during the meetings so that all interviewees may feel comfortable during meetings with the members of the review panel.
- Support the review chair in ensuring that the previously agreed timetable (including possible sections with interpretation) is respected.
- Alert the ENQA review coordinator to any significant problems encountered during the site visit, so that remedial steps may be taken as soon as possible.

After the site visit

- Produce a draft of the review report based on the documentation provided and the notes taken during the site visit, as well as – if agreed – on the written contribution from the other panel members.
- Circulate the draft report to the other panel members for comments, observations, and further contributions.
- After incorporating any additional suggestions, supply the draft report to the ENQA Secretariat to check for its alignment with these guidelines.
- After incorporating any suggested changes, supply the draft report to the agency to check its factual accuracy.
- Include the agency's amendments (if any and if accepted by the review panel) in the draft report.
- Produce a final version of the report using the ENQA Agency Reviews Template (Annex IV) and ask the review chair to submit it to the review panel and the review coordinator.
- If requested, draft (together with the review chair) an informal feedback letter to the ENQA Board on the overall review process.
- Amend the report at the request of the ENQA review coordinator or the ENQA Board.

At all times

- Act as chief liaison for the panel with the ENQA review coordinator and the agency.
- Keep the ENQA review coordinator informed of progress throughout the review.

7.3 PANEL MEMBERS

It is the responsibility of all members of the review panel to:

Before the site visit

- Review the documentation, including the SAR and any other information available prior to the site visit.
- Indicate to the review chair if any essential documentation should be requested from the agency in addition to that which was provided with the SAR prior to the site visit.
- Respond swiftly to emails from the ENQA review coordinator, the review secretary, and the review chair regarding the review process in question.
- Make appropriate travel arrangements, ensuring that the most economic and feasible option is used and inform the review secretary of the planned arrival and departure times.
- Contribute to developing the lines of enquiry to be pursued during the site visit.

During the site visit

- Actively participate in all meetings and discussions and contribute to pursuing the lines of enquiry as agreed in the site visit kick-off meeting.
- Take occasional notes during the meeting in order to be able to constructively contribute to the panel's judgement on the agency's ESG compliance.

After the site visit

- Contribute to the drafting of the report as agreed by the review panel and under the coordination of the review secretary.
- Carefully read and comment on the initial draft report produced by the review secretary and give any comments or amendments before the set deadline.
- Contribute to the amendment of the review report if requested by the ENQA review coordinator or the ENQA Board.

7.4 ENQA REVIEW COORDINATOR

ENQA assigns a trained and experienced staff member of the ENQA Secretariat as an ENQA review coordinator for each of the reviews coordinated by ENQA. The main tasks of the review coordinator are to:

- Draft and agree on the terms of reference and the contract with the agency.
- Select and employ the review panel (including the elaboration of contracts and of non-conflict-of-interest declarations) following the ENQA Board's consideration and decision on the panel's composition.
- Serve as an initial liaison between the review panel and the agency under review.
- Support the panel in the practical arrangements for the hotels and meals of the panel during the site visit and liaise on these with the contact person at the agency under review.
- Discuss with the agency the process and its practical arrangements to ensure they comply with these guidelines.
- Check the SAR.
- Attend the site visit to monitor the integrity of the process and to ensure that ENQA's expectations of the review are considered and met.
- Check that the draft final report meets the ENQA guidelines.
- Receive and file the final review report.
- Forward the review report to an ENQA review committee.
- Pay reviewers' fees and reimburse travel and accommodation expenses.
- Receive and analyse feedback on the review process.
- Inform the review panel on the decision of the Board.

N.B. The review coordinator is not a member of the panel. He/she will thus not participate actively in the interviews during the site visit, will not contribute to the actual drafting of the report, and will not carry out any other tasks assigned to the review secretary or other panel members.

8 TIMELINE

The following timeline gives an indication of the schedule that a review might follow. A specific timetable is established for each review undertaken. It should be noted that the review process may take 12-15 months from the first request by the agency until the completion of the procedure. This may be of particular relevance for agencies whose membership needs to be renewed or those agencies that intend to use the review for purposes in addition to ENQA membership, such as registration to EQAR or for national purposes.

The agency informs the ENQA Secretariat that it wishes to undergo an external review. An ENQA review coordinator is assigned to the review.	Month 0
The applicant verifies with EQAR that it is eligible to apply for registration.	Month 0
The terms of reference – which includes clarification of the agency's activities to be addressed in the external review – are drafted and agreed by ENQA, the agency, and EQAR (if relevant). Once finalised, the terms of reference are published on the agency's website.	Month 1
The preliminary timetable for the review, including the dates for the site visit, is drafted by and agreed between ENQA and the agency.	Month 1
The agency starts to produce its SAR.	Month 2
The review coordinator appoints the review panel in accordance with ENQA policy and distributes the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews and the Code of Conduct to the panel members. A preparatory telephone call is held between the review secretary and the review coordinator soon after the appointment of the panel to discuss the review's organisation and practical aspects. The ENQA Board approves the terms of reference and panel composition for all reviews of agencies seeking ENQA membership, including those that undergo an external review which is coordinated by an entity other than ENQA.	Months 3-4
The agency submits its SAR, along with any other documentation of relevance, to the review coordinator.	Month 7

ENQA EQAR ENQA/EQAR 

<p>The review coordinator carries out a pre-screening of the SAR to ensure it meets the requirements.</p> <p>If the SAR meets the requirements, it – as well as the additional documentation of relevance supplied by the agency – is sent to the review secretary for further distribution to the panel members.</p> <p>If the SAR does not meet the requirements, the agency is requested to make the necessary modifications and re-submit the SAR within two weeks from the request by the coordinator. After that, the SAR – as well as the additional documentation of relevance supplied by the agency – is forwarded to the review secretary for further distribution to the panel.</p> <p>The review secretary may ask that the agency revise and resubmit the SAR in the event the panel considers it is lacking relevant, thorough, and evaluative information.</p> <p>The SAR is published on the agency’s own website.</p>	Month 8
<p>It is recommended that the review chair and review secretary meet or hold a telephone call after having both independently read the SAR.</p> <p>The review chair reviews the documentation provided by the agency and makes an initial identification of lines of enquiry considering the terms of reference of the review and the information received from the agency. These are developed further in consultation with the rest of the review panel.</p> <p>At the request of the review chair, and in consultation with the review panel, the review secretary may request the agency to provide additional documentation if considered important at this stage.</p>	Month 9

<p>A telephone briefing gathering the review panel and the review coordinator takes place to discuss the process of the whole review, to ensure a shared understanding of the tasks of the review panel and the objectives of the review, and to point out any specific issues related to the review.</p> <p>The review secretary agrees on the site visit schedule with the review chair and agency.</p> <p>If the review panel wishes to make use of an “agency resource person”, the review secretary should inform the agency before the site visit schedule is finalised.</p> <p>If the agency wishes to use interpreters during any interviews, it must inform the review secretary and receive approval from the review coordinator before the site visit schedule is finalised.</p> <p>If distance interviews will be utilised, the agency should inform the review secretary and review coordinator before the site visit schedule is finalised.</p> <p>The review secretary drafts an outline of the review report in collaboration with the review chair and a briefing paper outlining the background, schedule, and draft lines of enquiry for the review and circulates this to the review panel.</p>	Month 10
<p>The review panel conducts the site visit according to the agreed schedule while also carrying out the following requisite meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before the site visit begins, the panel members meet to discuss the schedule of the visit and to agree how the lines of enquiry will be pursued. 2. After the first (and second) day of the visit, the panel meets to assess the gaps to be covered in the remaining interview sessions and to identify any additional documents or interviews that may be required. 3. A panel meeting takes place as the penultimate session of the site visit. At this meeting the team reviews the evidence presented, drawing together any preliminary findings and, if possible, organises these into a “skeleton” report. 4. The panel conducts a debriefing meeting with the representatives of the agency during which the review panels’ immediate feedback or overall impressions are communicated. 	Month 11
<p>The review secretary produces the initial draft review report and circulates it to the review chair and panel members.</p> <p>Within two weeks of receiving the draft report, the panel members review it and provide their comments to the review secretary.</p>	Month 12

<p>The review secretary produces a revised draft which, after agreement from the panel, is submitted to the ENQA Secretariat in order that its compliance with the guidelines may be verified.</p> <p>The review secretary produces a revised draft (if required) which, after agreement from the panel, is submitted to the agency for comment on its factual accuracy.</p>	Month 13
<p>Within two weeks of receiving the report, the agency submits any amendments (relating only to any factual inaccuracies) to the report to the review secretary for consideration, and the review secretary produces a final version of the report.</p> <p>The review secretary submits the final review report to the review chair, who in turn shares it with the review panel and submits it to the review coordinator. The review chair may submit an informal feedback letter about the review process to the review coordinator for the attention of the ENQA Board by this time at the latest.</p>	Month 14
<p>The ENQA Secretariat asks the panel members and the agency to complete a feedback questionnaire on the review process – to be completed before the date of the Board’s expected decision.</p> <p>The agency submits a letter requesting membership/re-confirmation of membership no less than 30 days before the Board meeting at which the external review is expected to be discussed. This – together with the review report – comprise the agency’s application for membership.</p> <p>In cases where ENQA is not the review coordinator, the agency submits its application for membership (including both the review report and letter) to the ENQA Secretariat no less than 30 days before the Board meeting at which the external review is expected to be discussed.</p> <p>The review coordinator forwards the application for membership to the relevant review committee for scrutiny.</p>	Month 15
<p>The Board approves the ENQA Agency Reviews external review report, or it may request additional information, thus delaying the process somewhat.</p> <p>If the report is satisfactory, the Board takes a decision on the question of ENQA membership.</p>	ENQA Board meeting

ENQA EQAR ENQA/EQAR 

ENQA informs the agency of the Board's decision and publishes the report and the letter containing the Board's membership decision on its website.	After ENQA Board decision officially sent to agency
The agency may submit its application to EQAR.	Annual deadlines 15 March and 15 September
Possible clarification requests may be made by EQAR (to the agency, panel, or the coordinator).	Before the meeting of the EQAR Register Committee
The Register Committee considers the application.	Register Committee meeting
EQAR publishes the external review report.	After decision officially sent to agency
The agency submits its follow-up report to ENQA.	1-2 years of the ENQA Board's decision
The progress visit is conducted. If the agency does not wish to have a follow-up visit performed, it should notify ENQA at least ten months in advance of the approximate timing of the progress visit.	2 years after ENQA Board's decision

ENQA EQAR ENQA/EQAR 

9 FINANCIAL ISSUES

ENQA charges the agency a fee to meet the full costs of the review. This includes the expert fees, travel and accommodation expenses, and a fee for the coordination of the review. The fee also includes the costs of the voluntary progress visit to the agency by two panel members approximately two years after the completion of the review process.

The amount of the fee is stated in the review contract between ENQA and each panel member. The expert fees and ENQA administrative overhead are determined by the ENQA Board; travel and accommodation expenses are charged at cost. The approximate total of the whole review is payable by the agency to ENQA on signature of the contract. ENQA does not undertake any further preparations for the review until the payment has been received.

In the event of a second, short site visit aimed at completing the assessment of compliance (see section 6.4.4), an additional fee for the reviewers is recoverable from the agency to compensate for the additional work, as well as all travel and subsistence costs.

N.B. The travel costs (both for the actual site visit as well as for the voluntary progress visit) will be paid as real costs. Should the travel costs remain under the provision, the agency will be reimbursed the difference. Should the travel costs be above the provision, the agency shall pay the difference to ENQA. In the case of the progress visit not taking place, the travel costs reserved for this purpose will be reimbursed to the agency. The expert fee provision is, however, non-reimbursable.

Information about current fees for ENQA Agency Reviews is available on the ENQA website¹⁴. The financial guidelines for reviewers may be found in Annex VI.

¹⁴ Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>.

10 UNDERSTANDING THE ESG FOR ENQA MEMBERSHIP

It is important that all ENQA Agency Reviews are undertaken rigorously, fairly, transparently, and consistently. It is therefore necessary that review panels are briefed about the way in which the ESG are understood and used by ENQA. To this end, ENQA organises training sessions for experts of agency reviews (see section 5.2). In addition, ENQA has established an ENQA-IQA working group composed of representatives of member agencies with the objective of analysing the findings of the ENQA Agency Review reports in order to capture, from practice, the way in which ENQA member agencies, the ENQA agency reviewers, and the ENQA Board understand the requirements of the ESG as they apply to European QA agencies. The information collected will feed into the reviewer training process and to the improvement of the ENQA Agency Review process on a regular basis.

The ESG should be read carefully in their entirety both by the agency undergoing the review, as well as by all members of the review panel. Please note that the ENQA Agency Reviews address all standards of parts 2 and 3 of the ESG. The agency's willingness to contribute to the aims and objectives of ENQA are not assessed through the external review, but are expressed in the letter to be submitted by the agency to the ENQA Board when applying for membership.

11 APPEALS PROCEDURE

ESG 2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

STANDARD: Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions (here: the agencies)

Guidelines: In an appeals procedure, the institution (here: the agency) questions the formal outcomes of the process, where it can demonstrate that the outcome is not based on sound evidence, that criteria have not been correctly applied or that the procedures have not been consistently implemented.

If an agency wishes to appeal the decision of the Board or the judgement by the review panel that it is not compliant with the ESG, the ENQA Appeals and Complaints Committee will hear the appeal. The details of the appeals procedure are provided in the ENQA Rules of Procedure.

ENQA reserves the right to modify the present guidelines at its discretion.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: GUIDE OF CONTENT FOR THE SAR

The self-assessment report should follow the provided main structure:

1. Introduction

2. Development of the self-assessment report (SAR)

Describe the means the agency has used to develop and produce the SAR (appointment of a team, involvement of stakeholders, etc.).

3. Higher education and QA of higher education in the context of the agency

Describe the higher education system and the evaluation of higher education in your country/ context (as relevant).

4. History, profile and activities of the agency

Describe the history, profile and all activities of the agency as well as its position and status in the national context (where relevant) and its compliance with the national requirements.

5. Higher education quality assurance activities of the agency

Define the external QA activities undertaken by the agency including its possible cross-border QA activities.

6. Processes and their methodologies

Provide details on the processes and methodologies applied for each QA activity including: the different steps of the process; an account of the selection process and role of external experts; any relevant documentation.

7. Agency's internal quality assurance

Describe the agency's internal QA procedures.

8. Agency's international activities

Give information on the agency's international activities, if applicable (e.g. involvement in international projects, external relations abroad, membership in international networks, etc.). N.B. cross-border QA activities should be defined in chapter 6 and addressed in the chapters 10 and 11 together with all other QA activities of the agency.

9. Compliance with European Standards and Guidelines (Part 3)

Address each standard individually for each different QA activity of the agency. In case the procedure for cross-border QA is differing, please describe it here as well.

- 9.1 ESG Standard 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance
- 9.2 ESG Standard 3.2 Official status
- 9.3 ESG Standard 3.3 Independence
- 9.4 ESG Standard 3.4 Thematic analysis
- 9.5 ESG Standard 3.5 Resources
- 9.6 ESG Standard 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct
- 9.7 ESG Standard 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

10. Compliance with European Standards and Guidelines (Part 2)

Address each standard individually for each different QA activity of the agency. In case the procedure for cross-border QA differs, please describe it here as well.

- 10.1 ESG Standard 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance
- 10.2 ESG Standard 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose
- 10.3 ESG Standard 2.3 Implementing processes
- 10.4 ESG Standard 2.4 Peer-review experts
- 10.5 ESG Standard 2.5 Criteria for outcomes
- 10.6 ESG Standard 2.6 Reporting
- 10.7 ESG Standard 2.7 Complaints and appeals

11. Information and opinions of stakeholders

Describe the agency's main stakeholders and provide information on their opinions of the agency's key stakeholders. More substantial analysis can be added as an annex (e.g. a feedback analysis on the quality and consistency of the services of the agency). Information on eventual complaints and appeals can also be provided here.

12. Recommendations and main findings from previous review(s) and agency's resulting follow-up (for second and subsequent reviews only)

Address the previously made recommendations by the ENQA Board and/or by the review panel and show how the agency has followed-up on them and in a more general approach, provide a short summary of the main findings of the previous review(s) and subsequent actions taken by the agency.

13. SWOT analysis

Analyse the agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

14. Current challenges and areas for future development

Glossary of Terms

Annexes

Enclose the most crucial documentation (within reason, not more than ten annexes) you consider may support the analysis of the report as well as a recent analysis of feedback received from stakeholders and any cases of complaints, if applicable.

ANNEX II: SUGGESTED SCHEDULE FOR MEETINGS

[DD.MM.YYYY]			
	Review panel's kick-off meeting and preparations for day 1 A pre-visit meeting with the agency contact person to clarify elements related to the overall system and context (if requested)		
[DD.MM.YYYY]			
TIMING	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED
30 minutes	Review panel's private meeting		
45 minutes	Meeting with the CEO and the chair of the Board (or equivalent)	Name, title	
45 minutes	Meeting with the team responsible for preparation of the self-assessment report	Name 1, title	
Name 2, title			
Name 3, title			
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion		
45 minutes	Meeting with representatives from the Senior Management Team		
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion		
45 minutes	Meeting with key staff of the agency/staff in charge of evaluations	Name 1, title	
Name 2, title			
Name 3, title			
60-90 minutes	Lunch (panel only)		
45 minutes	Meeting with department/key body of the agency 1	Name 1, title	

Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion			
45 minutes	Meeting with department/key body of the agency 2	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
As necessary	Wrap-up meeting among panel members and preparations for day II			
	Dinner (panel only)			
[DD.MM.YYYY]				
TIMING	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
30 minutes	Review panel private meeting			
45 minutes	Meeting with ministry representatives (where relevant)	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				

[DD.MM.YYYY]				
TIMING	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion			
45 minutes	Meeting with heads of some reviewed HEIs/ HEI representatives	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion			
45 minutes	Meeting with quality assurance officers of HEIs	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion			
45 minutes	Meeting with representatives from the reviewers' pool	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
60-90 minutes	Lunch (panel only)			
45 minutes	Meeting with stakeholders, such as employer representatives, students, local community...	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
10-15 minutes	Review panel's private discussion			

45 minutes	Meeting with stakeholders, such as employer representatives, students, local community...	Name 1, title		
Name 2, title				
Name 3, title				
As necessary	Wrap-up meeting among panel members: preparation for day III and provisional conclusions			
[DD.MM.YYYY]				
TIMING	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
30-60 minutes	Meeting among panel members to agree on final issues to clarify			
60 minutes	Meeting with CEO to clarify any pending issues			
90 minutes	Private meeting among panel members to agree on the main findings			
60-90 minutes	Lunch (panel only)			
60 minutes	Final de-briefing meeting with staff and Council/Board members of the agency to inform about preliminary findings			

ANNEX III: MAPPING GRID FOR PANEL MEMBERS

			Issues for discussion	Session number
ESG Part 3: Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies	3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	3.2 Official status	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	3.3 Independence	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	3.4 Thematic analysis	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	3.5 Resources	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies	Standard:	Guidelines:	

		Issues for discussion		Session number
ESG Part 2: Standards and guidelines for external quality assurance	2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	2.3 Implementing processes	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	2.4 Peer-review experts	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	2.5 Criteria for outcomes	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	2.6 Reporting	Standard:	Guidelines:	
	2.7 Complaints and appeals	Standard:	Guidelines:	

ANNEX IV: EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT TEMPLATE

N.B. This template is available in Word-format on the ENQA website¹⁵.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This sections states the aims and purposes of the review and provides a brief description of the agency subject to review. It summarises the degrees of compliance with the various ESG standards and provides the panel's recommendation. This box to be deleted before publishing.

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INTRODUCTION

The reason for commissioning the review should be included below. This box to be deleted before publishing.

This report analyses the compliance of [agency's name] ([agency's name in native language], [agency's abbreviation]) with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG). It is based on an external review conducted in [period in months (from self-analysis until the finalisation of the review report), year].

BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW AND OUTLINE OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW

ENQA's regulations require all member agencies to undergo an external cyclical review, at least once every five years, in order to verify that they act in substantial compliance with the ESG as adopted at the Yerevan ministerial conference of the Bologna Process in 2015. As this is [agency's name] first external review, the panel is expected to pay particular attention to the policies, procedures, and criteria in place, being aware that full evidence of concrete results in all areas may not be available at this stage.

OR

As this is [agency's name] [second/third/etc.] review, the panel is expected to provide clear evidence of results in all areas and to acknowledge progress from the previous review. The panel has adopted a developmental approach, as the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews aim at constant enhancement of the agencies.

¹⁵ Available at: <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/enqa-agency-reviews/>

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE [YEAR OF PREVIOUS REVIEW] REVIEW

If the agency underwent a previous review, a summary of the conclusions/levels of compliance should be mentioned here (with a mention of the corresponding annex). This box to be deleted before publishing. In the case of a first review, this section can be deleted.

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Review process

This section describes how the review was carried out, e.g. what was the work method employed, how consensus was reached within the Panel, what were the administrative support arrangements, etc.). This box to be deleted before publishing.

The [year] external review of [agency's name] was conducted in line with the process described in the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews and in accordance with the timeline set out in the Terms of Reference. The panel for the external review of [agency's name] was appointed by ENQA and composed of the following members:

- Name (Chair), position, country;
- Name (Secretary), position, country;
- Name, position, country;
- Name, position, country

Please also mention above which of the panel members was an ESU nominated student member, which one was a nominee of EUA/EURASHE and, if applicable, which of the panel members was a representative of the employers/world of work. This box to be deleted before publishing.

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Please note that ENQA's editing guidelines require the words "agency", "review panel", "review", etc. to not be capitalised. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Self-assessment report

This section includes a description of the self-assessment process, overview of SAR and an evaluation of its contents. This box to be deleted before publishing.

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Site visit

This section offers a summary of the activities of the site visit and a generic list of stakeholders who were interviewed (the specific list of interviewees is in the annex). This box to be deleted before publishing.

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HIGHER EDUCATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM OF THE AGENCY

Higher education system

This section contains a description/history of the higher education system in which the agency predominantly operates (where relevant). This box to be deleted before publishing.

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Quality assurance

This section provides a description of the history/role of quality assurance in the aforementioned higher education system/context (where relevant) and the main actors involved, as well as their relationships. For non-nationally and non-regionally placed agencies the role and relationship to eventual related national/regional agencies should be described. This box to be deleted before publishing.

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[AGENCY]

This section explains the history/establishment/foundation of the agency. This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Agency's name] was established...

[Agency]'s organisation/structure

This section explains the organisation/structure and governance of the agency. This box to be deleted before publishing.

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[Agency]'s functions, activities, procedures

This section explains the functions/activities/procedures/methodologies of the agency in its “home” jurisdiction and abroad (if applicable). The section should also include a description of the international activities of the agency (other than quality assurance activities/cross-border activities which need to be addressed and described with the other quality assurance activities of the agency). This box to be deleted before publishing.

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[Agency]’s funding

This section explains the funding of the agency. This box to be deleted before publishing.

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FINDINGS: COMPLIANCE OF [AGENCY] WITH THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA (ESG)

ESG PART 3: QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES

ESG 3.1 ACTIVITIES, POLICY, AND PROCESSES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard: Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

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Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under “evidence”. This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 3.2 OFFICIAL STATUS

Standard: Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under “evidence”. This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 3.3 Independence

Standard: Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

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Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under “evidence”. This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 3.4 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Standard: Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

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Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under "evidence". This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 3.5 RESOURCES

Standard: Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under "evidence". This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 3.6 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Standard: Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis of the evidence provided under "evidence". This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 3.7 CYCLICAL EXTERNAL REVIEW OF AGENCIES

Standard: Agencies should undergo an external review at least once every five years in order to demonstrate their compliance with the ESG.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under "evidence". This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)**ESG PART 2: EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE****ESG 2.1 CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Standard: External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG.

Under this standard, the report should describe and analyse the way in which the agency addresses the IQA system of the institutions and a mapping of the standards used by agency against the ESG Part 1 standards 1.1 – 1.10. This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

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[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 2.2 DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE

Standard: External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

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[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES

Standard: External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent
 - an external assessment normally including a site visit
 - a report resulting from the external assessment
 - a consistent follow-up
-

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

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[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)**ESG 2.4 PEER-REVIEW EXPERTS**

Standard: External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that include (a) student member(s).

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

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[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)**ESG 2.5 CRITERIA FOR OUTCOMES**

Standard: Any outcomes or judgements made as the result of external quality assurance should be based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

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[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)**ESG 2.6 REPORTING**

Standard: Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under “evidence”. This box to be deleted before publishing.

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ESG 2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Standard: Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

[Year of previous review] review recommendation [quoted, if any]

Lorem ipsum....

Evidence

In this part, evidence on implementation of not only the standard, but guidelines as well should be given with explicit reference to the written documents (SAR, agency methodologies, review reports, analytical papers, legislation, etc.), oral testimonies (of agency staff and other stakeholders), and any other available evidence when and if applicable. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Analysis

In this part, the panel is expected to provide an analysis (a consideration of how far, based on the evidence available, the agency does [or does not] meet the ESG standard and eventual reasons or explanations for lack of compliance) of the evidence provided under “evidence”. This box to be deleted before publishing

[Panel commendations]

Lorem ipsum....

[Panel recommendations]

Lorem ipsum....

Panel conclusion: (fully/substantially/partially/non-compliant)

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS (OPTIONAL SECTION)

Even when the sole purpose of the review is to assess the agency's compliance with the ESG for purposes of ENQA membership application, the review panel may include in its report any additional reflections or developmental recommendations that it may wish to offer. If these are extensive, they can be included in this optional additional section of the report, or if brief, as part of the conclusions. This box to be deleted before publishing.

HEADING 1

Lorem ipsum....

HEADING 2

Lorem ipsum

CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS

[A list of commendations in relation to each ESG standard if applicable]

OVERVIEW OF JUDGEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

[A list of judgements and recommendations in relation to each ESG standard]

In light of the documentary and oral evidence considered by it, the review panel is satisfied that, in the performance of its functions, [agency's name] is in compliance with the ESG.

OR

In light of the documentary and oral evidence considered by it, the review panel considers that, in the performance of its functions, [agency's name] does not comply with the ESG. The agency is recommended to take appropriate action to achieve at least substantial compliance in all standards at the earliest opportunity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The panel would like to make some general and more detailed suggestions, extending beyond strictly interpreted ESG and/or linking several ESG, which [agency's name] may wish to consider when reflecting on its further development. Some of them have already been signalled in the previous sections. This box to be deleted before publishing.

Lorem ipsum

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

This section includes the schedule of the meeting. This box to be deleted before publishing.

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REVIEW

This section includes a description of the main stages and timescale of the review. This box to be deleted before publishing.

ANNEX 3: GLOSSARY

This section provides an alphabetical listing of the abbreviations mentioned in the report, to be written out in their first use in the text and abbreviated each time thereafter. This box to be deleted before publishing.

ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2015
HE	higher education
HEI	higher education institution
QA	quality assurance
SAR	self-assessment report

ANNEX 4. DOCUMENTS TO SUPPORT THE REVIEW

Documents provided by [the agency]

[list]

Other sources used by the review panel [if any]

[list]

ANNEX V: ENQA CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REVIEWERS

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

ENQA Agency Reviews are designed to assess a quality assurance agency's compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

ENQA has a responsibility to ensure that all ENQA Agency Reviews are prepared to the highest achievable standards. This means that all reviewers involved in ENQA Agency Reviews should manifest integrity and follow the principles of good review practice. With the present Code of Conduct, ENQA aims to ensure ethical and responsible conduct by reviewers in undertaking ENQA Agency Reviews.

This Code of Conduct (the "Code") describes rules of good behaviour relating to the agencies' external review procedure, and more particularly to the conduct of the site visit. It is intended to assist all review panel members, including the chairs and secretaries, by providing general guidance on the expected standards of good behaviour and defining more specifically the reviewers' responsibilities. However, it cannot be exhaustive and is not intended to cover every possible situation which may arise and all activities of each review panel member.

The present Code is intended to be used in the ENQA Agency Reviews (i.e. reviews coordinated by ENQA). The Board of ENQA recommends, however, using this Code also in external reviews of ENQA member agencies conducted by other entities.

1.2 APPLICATION

The Code is to be viewed as the minimum principles with which reviewers (i.e. all members of the review panel) should comply, and reviewers are expected to conduct reviews within the spirit of the Code. In case of any doubt concerning the applicability of a particular section of the Code, reviewers should be in contact with the ENQA Secretariat.

ENQA expects that all reviewers involved in ENQA Agency Reviews are familiar with and adhere to the Code and its contents, and commit themselves to respect the rules contained in this document. Upon signature of their review contract, reviewers indicate that they accept the present Code of Conduct.

Any evidence concerning a serious breach of the Code or unprofessional conduct not mentioned in this Code may lead to an immediate termination of a reviewer's contract and prohibition to perform future reviews in the subordination of ENQA. The debarred expert will be replaced by another reviewer where possible. An alleged breach of this Code or any unprofessional conduct not mentioned in this Code will be handled by the ENQA Board on a case-by-case basis.

1.3 TERMINOLOGY

For the purposes of this Code:

“Confidential information” means information that was obtained as a consequence of conducting the review and that is not publicly available. Confidential information includes any information (financial, legal, etc.) that the Agency treats as confidential.

“Integrity” means acting honestly and ethically, being objective, and maintaining independence.

“Conflict of interest” means the following: (1) a “real conflict of interest” means that the expert has personal or organisational interests which might influence the performance of its review duties and responsibilities; (2) an “apparent conflict of interest” means any situation where it can be reasonably perceived that the reviewer’s private interests might influence the performance of his or her duties and responsibilities. A review panel member who has worked in the agency under review within the last five years constitutes an example of conflict of interest.

“Misconduct” means an intentional or negligent failure to observe the rules of conduct set by this Code. There is misconduct when an expert has engaged in unprofessional or incompetent conduct.

II. CODE OF CONDUCT

A. Reviewers’ duties

In the conduct of all external reviews, all members of the review panel are at all times required to observe the following general principles and to conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring ENQA into disrepute.

Confidentiality and discretion

- Safeguard all information made available to you, especially communication containing details of a personal nature, in strictest confidence.
- Exercise maximum discretion with regard to all matters relating to the review, in particular in disclosing to anyone external to the panel any confidential information acquired during the review process.
- Not to disclose any information concerning the evaluation procedure without the written approval of the ENQA Secretariat.

Conflict of interest

- Act with strict impartiality and objectivity.
- Identify and declare any real or apparent conflict between personal interests, whether direct or indirect, and ENQA’s interests.
- In the case of an actual conflict, notify ENQA in writing and do not participate further in any processes related to the review in question.
- Inform ENQA immediately of any changes in or additions to the interests already disclosed which occur during the term of your contract.
- In case of doubt as to whether a conflict exists, refer the matter to the ENQA Secretariat for guidance.

Integrity

- Be honest and act with propriety and accountability when conducting the review.
- (Review Secretary) Report any cost or timescale overruns as they become manifest.
- Do not offer or accept under any circumstances any undue reward or extra attention. If you are experiencing or witnessing such an offer, report the incident to the ENQA Secretariat immediately.
- All reviewers must refrain from any form of review misconduct. Report to the ENQA Secretariat a breach of this Code in writing, when you know or suspect that a review panel member or a member of the agency's staff has engaged in misconduct.

Finances

- Follow the ENQA financial guidelines, practice economy in the use of resources, and ensure that the review runs within its allocated budget.
- Carry out the practical (travel, etc.) arrangements of the site visit in good time before the visit to ensure economical prices.

B. Principles of good practice

ENQA encourages all reviewers to adhere to the following principles of good practice in carrying out their work.

Openness and cooperation

- Be as open and clear as possible in the discussions you have with the agency and other stakeholders during the site visit.
- Always crosscheck and question the findings and evidence received.
- Be tolerant and courteous in all your dealings with agency's staff and stakeholders.
- Respect the varied cultures and backgrounds of each participant in the review process.
- Respect and contribute to establishing a good and productive working environment, in which each panel member is an equal partner, takes responsibility, shows commitment, and cooperates.
- (Review Chair) Always exercise your authority in a fair and responsible manner.

Communication

- During meetings, ask questions in a friendly, constructive manner. Remember to remain critical.

Raise concrete questions and avoid personal questions.

- (Review Chair) Ensure that the views of all participants are valued and taken into account, and foster open exchange of opinions.
- (Review Chair) At the end of each meeting, recapitulate the main topics covered in the discussion in order to make sure that all issues have been brought to debate, and thank all participants for their contribution.
- (Review Chair) Make sure that there are no unsettled issues or questions by the end of every meeting and by the end of the review process.
- (Review Chair and Review Secretary) Ensure that everyone in the agency, especially those having low English skills, feel comfortable during meetings with the review panel.

Commitment to competency and professionalism

- Exercise and maintain professional competence at all times.
- Dress appropriately throughout the review.
- Do not deliberately withhold information in your possession unless it is confidential information.
- Participate only in assignments which you are qualified and competent to perform. If you consider yourself to be insufficiently expert to properly conduct the review, make this clear to the ENQA Secretariat in writing.
- Be well prepared in advance for meetings (examine the documentation provided by the Agency thoroughly and any other information available prior to the site visit, get information on the interviewees, etc.).
- (Review Chair) Keep the time schedule.
- Give full attention to the meetings (turn off mobile phones, etc.).
- Do not debate with other panel members during meetings; an agreement should be reached beforehand or in between meetings.
- Participate in all meetings and discussions.
- Take notes at the meetings attended and the panel's private discussions.

ANNEX VI: FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR ENQA AGENCY REVIEWS

Financial guidelines

ENQA Agency Reviews

1. General information

The ENQA Secretariat is responsible for the financial management of the ENQA Agency Reviews. The contact details of the Secretariat are as follows:

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
Avenue de Tervuren 36-38, bte 4
BE-1040 Brussels
E-mail: secretariat@enqa.eu
Internet: www.enqa.eu
Phone: +32 2 735 00 18

Fax: +32 2 735 61 53

All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses related to the review should be submitted, together with original receipts and boarding passes, to the following address:

ENQA Secretariat
Avenue de Tervuren 36-38, bte 4
BE-1040 Brussels

2. Reimbursement of the travel and accommodation costs

The reviewers are expected to pre-finance their travel costs (flight/train), and they should inform the ENQA review coordinator concerning their arrival and departure times. When the pre-financing of the travel costs is not possible (e.g. in the case of the student members), the expert should contact the review coordinator to find an alternative solution well in advance of the site visit. The ENQA review coordinator organises the hotel accommodation with the help of the agency and pays directly the costs related to hotel, meals, and eventual local transportation during the site visit.

Should any additional costs occur, ENQA reimburses the reviewers only for the travel, accommodation, insurance, visa, and meal costs relating directly to the site visit, upon receiving the relevant documentation. The ENQA Secretariat cannot reimburse any costs for which the receipts are missing. No per diems are provided, and therefore the expert should remember to retain all receipts. Travel and insurance costs are based on the actual costs incurred. Economy class fares must be used when travelling by air, while business class is acceptable when travelling by train and for long-distance (non-European flights) and upon prior agreement with the ENQA Secretariat. All travel-related costs should be kept reasonable.

There are **two** ways in which **to claim** travel expenses:

- a) **Official invoice.** An official invoice must be used in the case where the organisation of the reviewer has paid for his/her travel and accommodation expenses, and **these expenses will be reimbursed to the account of the organisation**, not to the reviewer. The official invoice from the organisation has to include **specification of costs and copies of the travel documentation and of the receipts** (the originals are not needed in the case of an official invoice). The invoice can be sent to the ENQA Secretariat as an email attachment or by post.
- b) **Travel claim form.** Reviewers should use the travel claim form provided by the ENQA Secretariat when s/he has paid the travel and accommodation expenses him/herself, and they **will be reimbursed to his/her private account**. In this case, the **original receipts and boarding passes** must be attached to the travel claim form, it has to be signed by the expert, and it has to be sent by post. If the original documentation is missing, the ENQA Secretariat, due to its accounting procedures, will not be able to make the reimbursement. All other currencies used must be converted into Euros by the expert him/herself. The expert should state the appropriate currency rate on the travel claim form. The travel claim form is provided to the panel after the site visit.

Both the travel claim and the official invoice **must include the following bank details**:

- Name of the bank;
- Address of the bank;
- Name of the account holder;
- Bank account number; and
- SWIFT and IBAN codes.

3. Payment of the reviewer fees

The fee is paid by the ENQA Secretariat after the successful completion of the review, i.e. after the final decision of the Board of ENQA. A form is provided by the ENQA Secretariat for claiming the fee.

4. Deadline for claiming expenses

All direct expenses must be claimed from the ENQA Secretariat **within 40 days after the site visit**. The ENQA Secretariat **cannot reimburse claims that arrive after this deadline**.



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