

Prof. Dr Miroslav Bobrek
Director
Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republika Srpska (RS HEAA)
1 Vuk Karadzic St., BA – 78000 Banja Luka
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dublin, 29 September 2017

Subject: Membership of RS HEAA in ENQA

Dear Prof. Dr Bobrek,

I am writing to inform you of the decision taken by the ENQA Board on 13 September 2017 regarding the application for membership of RS HEAA in ENQA.

After thorough consideration and discussion on the final review report, the ENQA Board concluded that the overall level of compliance with the ESG is not sufficient to grant RS HEAA membership at this stage. The agency is showing progress in certain areas while there are a number of areas of concern as detailed in the Annex to this letter, and a non-compliance judgement is found with two standards – ESG 2.7 and 3.4. As stated in the [Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews](#), the Board will conclude with a negative decision when it considers that there is non-compliance concerning any of the standards.

Should RS HEAA wish to re-apply for ENQA membership in the future, you can do so in two years' time from this decision. The ENQA Board advises your Agency to carefully follow up and implement the Panel's recommendations before re-applying.

In addition, RS HEAA can still avail of the voluntary progress visit – a new enhancement-led feature in the review process. The visit will not have the objective of checking the agency's ESG compliance but might be helpful to determine if the agency has addressed the areas of concern. The visit would take place in about two years' time from this decision. The ENQA Secretariat will be in touch with you in about a year's time to discuss this possibility. The costs of this visit have already been included as part of the review fee and are non-refundable except for the travel costs of the experts. More information about the progress visit can be found in the [Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews](#).

If RS HEAA is dissatisfied with the decision of the ENQA Board, it may file an appeal according to the procedures outlined in article 24 of ENQA's Rules of Procedure.

For any questions, do not hesitate to be in touch with the ENQA Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,



Padraig Walsh
President

Annex: Areas for development

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In order to attain substantial compliance with the standards RS HEAA should follow the recommendations of the panel in its report, in particular:

ESG 2.1 – RS HEAA is recommended to ensure through its accreditation activities that all institutions are fully aware of the requirements of the ESG and have in place appropriate arrangements to engage all relevant staff in the operation of their quality procedures.

ESG 2.2 – It is recommended that RS HEAA encourages greater student involvement in its deliberations and the arrangements for the review of study programmes.

ESG 2.3 – The agency is recommended to review its arrangements for study programme accreditation to clarify whether a site visit will be required and to confirm the number of reviewers involved in each review.

ESG 2.4 – It is recommended that the agency engages students further in its quality procedures, including the proposed arrangements for the accreditation of study programmes.

ESG 2.7 – The agency is recommended to develop and publish details about its complaints and appeals process and communicate them to the institutions.

ESG 3.1 – RS HEAA is recommended to re-assess its planned procedures for the accreditation of study programmes to address the expectations that review procedures are applied consistently and all programmes are considered for accreditation.

ESG 3.3 – The agency is recommended to discuss with the government enhanced arrangements for securing the operational independence of the RS agency and for promoting improved cooperation with the HEA.

ESG 3.3 – It is recommended for the RS HEAA's Steering Board to review the role of the Accreditation Council to clarify its remit and responsibilities.

ESG 3.4 – As part of its strategic planning, the agency is recommended to consider how it could review the outcomes from its quality assurance activities and make the analysis available to all relevant stakeholders.

ESG 3.5 – The Agency is recommended to seek assurances from the Ministry about the provision of sufficient resources to fulfil its planned program of accreditation.

ESG 3.6 – In consultation with the Steering Board and the Accreditation Council, RS HEAA is recommended to consider developing a code of conduct for internal quality assurance that assures integrity of procedures and fosters the continuous improvement of the Agency’s activities. It should also address the conduct of accreditation reviews and the protocols of staff engagement with higher education institutions and other stakeholders.