

ENQA report to the BFUG, 7-8 November, Brno

Highlights of ENQA's activities since November 2021

ENQA (the European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education) is the designated stakeholder organisation of quality assurance agencies in the EHEA. ENQA represents their interests internationally, supports them nationally and provides them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities. Under ENQA's umbrella, the community of agencies drives innovation in quality assurance and refines quality assurance processes.

I. ENQA STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The ENQA 2022 General Assembly meeting took place on 27-28 October in Stockholm, Sweden. At this meeting, three Board members were re-elected for second terms: Douglas Blackstock (QAA, UK), Antonio Serrano Gonzales (ACPUA, Spain), and Ruben Topchyan (ANQA, Armenia). Douglas Blackstock was re-elected as President of ENQA, and Daniela Cristina Ghitulica (ARACIS, Romania) and Øystein Lund (NOKUT, Norway) were re-elected as Vice-Presidents. Antonio Serrano Gonzales was re-appointed as Treasurer.

The General Assembly also endorsed the Board's decisions to grant membership to

- Valencian Agency for Strategic Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP), Spain
- German Accreditation Council (GAC), Germany
- Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA), Kazakhstan

This brings ENQA's members to 55 members in 31 countries of the EHEA, as well as 52 affiliates in 30 countries worldwide. There are ENQA members and/or affiliates in 45 out of the 47 EHEA countries (excluding Russian and Belarus). The external review reports of all member agencies are available in the [Review Database](#) on the ENQA website.

The past year has seen considerable change of staff at the ENQA Secretariat. Notably, Maria Kelo stepped down as Director at the end of 2021 after 10 years of service. Anna Gover was appointed as the new Director of ENQA, having previously served as Deputy Director.

2. RECENT ENQA ACTIVITIES

WORKING GROUPS

ENQA's working group on quality assurance of micro-credentials consists of 19 members from 18 agencies in 12 countries. The group conducted a mapping of activities by quality assurance agencies on this topic, which informed the development of guidance on key considerations for the external quality assurance of micro-credentials. The guidance will be published in late 2022. An online event to disseminate the findings of the working group was held on 27 September 2022 and the recording and resources are available [here](#).

ENQA's working group on academic integrity consists of 11 members from 11 agencies in 9 countries. The group conducted a survey among quality assurance agencies to map current activities in this area and perspectives on the role of quality assurance in promoting academic integrity. This will feed into the development of guidance on the steps that quality assurance agencies can take to promote academic integrity depending on their role within their jurisdiction. The outcomes will be published in spring 2023.

In addition, on the topic of academic integrity, ENQA has endorsed the **Global Academic Integrity Network (GAIN)**, founded in October 2022 by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the Australian Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). The network aims to tackle commercial cheating operations, protecting students, qualifications and the integrity of national education systems.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

ENQA places high value on engagement with other parts of the world in order to increase understanding and enhance synergies between different higher education and quality assurance systems. This is an important basis for mutual trust to support recognition, mobility and international partnerships. ENQA is involved in several initiatives to support the development of quality assurance frameworks in other regions of the world. Notably in the ASEAN region through the [SHARE2 project](#) and in Africa through the [HAQAA2 Initiative](#), both of which have facilitated the development and implementation of standards for quality assurance in their respective regions.

In addition, ENQA has:

- signed Memorandums of Understanding with AQAN (the ASEAN Quality Assurance Network) and SCIACES (Sistema Iberoamericano de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior)
- hosted study visits for quality assurance agencies from Morocco and Mauritania
- supported quality assurance and recognition activities in Latin America through the [EQUAM-LA](#) project
- held a meeting of the ENQA Board with representatives from quality assurance networks from the ASEAN region, Africa and the Gulf Region
- engaged with the OECD on support for quality assurance of cross-border higher education.

RECENT AND ONGOING PROJECTS

Quality Assurance Fit for the Future (QA-FIT)

The [QA-FIT project](#) is coordinated by ENQA and was launched in June 2022. The QA-FIT project aims to gather comprehensive evidence to inform a discussion on if and how the current EHEA quality assurance framework of the ESG is fit for purpose in the changing higher education environment. The mapping and stakeholder consultation conducted through the project will feed into a recommendation to the 2024 Bologna Ministerial Conference regarding the future of the EHEA quality assurance framework.

Supporting European QA Agencies in meeting the ESG (SEQA-ESG), 2020-2022

The [SEQA-ESG](#) project is coordinated by ENQA and runs from June 2022 to December 2022. The project has supported quality assurance agencies and national authorities in six countries (Albania, Czech Republic, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro and Slovakia) to create an ESG-compliant external quality assurance system. Project activities included peer counselling, peer support workshops, staff exchanges and development of action plans. As the project reaches its conclusion, impressive and tangible results can be seen. Several of the participating agencies are now preparing for external reviews against the ESG with the aim of ENQA membership and EQAR listing.

Following the success of this work, a second round of the project will be launched in February 2022, involving quality assurance agencies from Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Ukraine.

Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Key Commitments (MICROBOL), 2020-2022

In the context of the [MICROBOL](#) project, higher education ministries and stakeholders explored whether and how the existing Bologna Process tools can be used and/or need to be adapted to be applicable to micro-credentials. It was primarily focussed on micro-credentials provided by, or in conjunction with, higher education institutions, but it also touched on those entirely provided by companies or non-profit organisations, the system of 'open badges' and other examples of 'micro'-learning. The project was coordinated by the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training. The project results can be found [here](#).

The work of the MICROBOL project is being further developed through the IMINQA project, under the framework of the BFUG TPG on quality assurance. ENQA is leading a working group that will further explore the quality assurance of micro-credentials.

3. ENQA AGENCY REVIEWS

Over the past year, ENQA has carried out external reviews of 16 quality assurance agencies to assess their compliance with the ESG and provide recommendations for continued improvement. In addition, ENQA, in cooperation with EQAR, also introduced a new targeted review process as an alternative offer for agencies that had already successfully undergone two full reviews. The aim of this approach is to focus more specifically on enhancement aspects of the review process, while still monitoring ESG compliance. This aims to increase the added value and relevance of the agency review process for mature agencies. Six targeted have been completed so far with several more currently underway.

4. UPCOMING EVENTS

The 2022 European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF), co-organised by ENQA, EUA, EURASHE and ESU, will take place on 17-19 November in Timisoara, Romania.

The 2023 ENQA Members' Forum will take place on 20-21 April in Tbilisi, Georgia.