



# EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

## STRONG UNIVERSITIES FOR EUROPE



# **The revision of the ESG: Background, goals and a bit about the contents**

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# Overview of the presentation

- European QA framework and the role of the ESG
- Reasons for the revision
- Guiding principles during the revision
- Focus on internal QA: the revised ESG

## State of play

- Different approaches when creating national QA systems
  - ✓ Trend towards institutional approach, yet often combined with programme level
  - ✓ Accreditation, evaluation or audit
  - ✓ Aligned with the ESG, but national characteristics and criteria on top
- Institutional policies and systems mostly in place
  - ✓ Development of past 10 years
  - ✓ How developed or efficient are they?
  - ✓ QA identified among the most influential reforms/trends by HEIs

# European quality assurance framework

- QA: one action line in the Bologna Process
- 2005: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG)
  - ✓ Proposed by the E4 Group (ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE)
- 2006: 1<sup>st</sup> European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF)
- 2008: European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)
- 2015: Revised ESG to be adopted
  - ✓ Proposed by the E4 Group, EQAR, Education International and BUSINESSEUROPE

## Purposes of the ESG

- **They set a common framework** for quality assurance systems for learning and teaching at European, national and institutional level
- **They enable the assurance and improvement of quality** of higher education in the European higher education area
- **They support mutual trust**, thus facilitating recognition and mobility within and across national borders
- **They provide information on quality assurance** in the EHEA

## Why revision?

- Original ESG adopted in 2005
  - ✓ Need updating taking account of developments since
  - ✓ Need clarification
- Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué April 2012

“We will revise the ESG to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness, including their scope. The revision will be based upon an initial proposal to be prepared by the E4 in cooperation with Education International, BUSINESSEUROPE and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), which will be submitted to the Bologna Follow-Up Group.”

## Guiding principles for the revision

- Keep the strengths: integrated concept and understanding of QA, broad applicability, broad ownership
- Overcome the weaknesses: vagueness, redundancies, inconsistencies
- Update: ESG as part of the 'Bologna-Infrastructure', taking into account recent developments in QA and HE
- Guarantee adaptability to future developments
- Keep a balance between changing too much and too little



## Principles of European QA

- **HEIs have primary responsibility** for the quality of their provision and its assurance
- QA **responds to the diversity** of HE systems, institutions and programmes
- QA supports the development of a **quality culture**
- QA involves stakeholders and takes into account the **expectations of all stakeholders and society**

## The revised ESG (1)

- Three parts covering
  - ✓ Internal QA within HEIs
  - ✓ External QA carried by QAAs
  - ✓ Internal QA within QAAs
- Focus on learning and teaching in HE, including
  - ✓ Learning environment
  - ✓ Links to research and innovation
- The ESG are applicable to all types of HEIs and programmes, irrespective of mode of provision
- *The standards*: agreed and accepted practice – Should be taken account of and adhered to
- *The guidelines* explain why the standard is important and describe how standards might be implemented.

## The revised ESG (2)

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance
- 1.2 Design and approval of programmes**
- 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**
- 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**
- 1.5 Teaching staff
- 1.6 Learning resources and student support
- 1.7 Information management
- 1.8 Public information
- 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes
- 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

## The revised ESG (3)

### 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

- Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the **intended learning outcomes**. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the **national qualifications framework** for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

## The revised ESG (3)

### 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

- Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

## The revised ESG (4)

### 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

- Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

## Concluding remarks

- A new focus on institutional capacity to take charge of quality
  - ✓ Are all HEIs and systems ready to respond to the challenge?
- A new focus on student involvement
  - ✓ How to make it meaningful?
- HE promoting employability
  - ✓ How to demonstrate the value added of HE?