

Note from the President

Dublin, 3 March 2017

Dear colleagues,

The first Note from the President of the year is normally sent following the spring Board meeting and Members' Forum, but in fact several important decisions were taken at last month's Board meeting, so an earlier communication than usual is appropriate.

Please be reminded that minutes from the General Assembly and Board meetings, once approved, are at your disposal on the ENQA website in the [Members' Area](#).

1. Membership and administrative issues

During its February meeting, the Board granted membership to two affiliates, the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation (ANQA, Armenia) and the Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA, Kazakhstan). On behalf of the association, I'd like to congratulate our colleagues and commend them for taking the necessary actions to ensure their ESG compliance.

The Board renewed the memberships of the Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AEQES, Belgium), the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE, Croatia), the Finnish Education Evaluation Council (FINEEC, Finland), and the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCERES, France) and granted Member under Review status to the Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (ACQUIN, Germany). Compliance with the ESG 2015 has been noticeably challenging for several long-time members of our association, and because of this, the Board urges all agencies to ensure their activities are updated before the next review.

I would like to mention once again that it is a requirement of the revised reviews process that each agency's follow-up report on membership (which is subject to a similar scrutiny procedure as the review report) addresses all recommendations given by the review panel (in the review report) and the Board (in the decision letter) and that it is appropriately reflective and analytical – yet concise. Follow-up reports should be submitted in English only and should preferably not contain annexes.

Finally, I would like to welcome back our Czech colleagues to the association. As mentioned in December's newsletter, the Accreditation Commission Czech Republic (ACCR), ceased operations in August 2016, and a new QA agency, called the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education (NAB), was established. The NAB applied for affiliation with ENQA, and the Board granted their request in February.

2. Events and activities

Registration for the [Members' Forum](#), taking place in Oslo on 4-5 May, is quickly filling up. ENQA members and affiliates are encouraged to book their accommodation soon, as the negotiated rates for the hotels will be honoured only until the March/April booking deadlines.

Those attending the Members' Forum who have extensive knowledge of and experience working with the ESG 2015 are kindly requested to consider attending the [EQUIP focus group](#), taking place the afternoon before and the morning of the Members' Forum. The outcomes of the focus group will be used to develop a study examining the implications of the introduction of the ESG 2015, innovative approaches to their implementation, and recommendations to individual stakeholder groups.

The host of the Members' Forum, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), will offer a pre-event workshop and reception from 15:00 – 19:00 at the Members' Forum venue on 3 May for those arriving early to Oslo. Individuals who are interested in attending the EQUIP focus group or the NOKUT workshop are requested to please mention this during registration.

Registration remains ongoing for the [ENQA seminar on quality assurance in the European context](#) (15-16 June, Brussels). While the seminar is open to all, it is primarily geared towards new staff of QA agencies or others with less knowledge or experience working in quality assurance at the European level who are interested in learning about developments in the Bologna Process, the European Commission's priorities concerning quality assurance and higher education, and the role of the main stakeholder bodies in the European Higher Education Area. A €220 participation fee applies for this event.

Lastly, registration is now open for the ENQA workshop, "[Exploring synergies between quality assurance and qualifications recognition](#)", taking place 1-2 June in Dublin, hosted by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). The workshop aims to reveal conclusions from the ENQA working group on quality assurance and recognition's recent survey to QA agencies, while engaging participants in discussions surrounding the latest developments, challenges, and best practices concerning the implementation of ESG standard 1.4. The workshop is open to all interested stakeholders. A €220 participation fee applies for this event.

3. European collaboration

ENQA, in collaboration with ESU, EUA, EURASHE, and EQAR, has developed the "[Key considerations for cross-border quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#)", which aims to provide information and support to higher education institutions and QA agencies that engage in cross-border QA activities – defined in this case as external QA activities of a QA agency carried out in a country other than the one in which it is based or primarily operates - within the EHEA. If you have not already done so, please take a few moments to read the short document and share it with any interested colleagues.

The E4 have also created a [LinkedIn group](#), designed to be a useful platform for connecting the European QA community in the exchange of practice, discussion of current issues, and the sharing of ideas. The group, open for about two weeks now, has already accumulated over 150 members.

There is still time to submit your candidacy for the [President of EQAR](#), the deadline for which is 7 March. Among other responsibilities, the President will be expected to chair the Executive Board, the Register Committee, and the General Assembly; represent EQAR externally at high-level meetings and

events; and ensure coherence in the work of all EQAR bodies. The position is honorary in principle, but owing to the responsibilities and workload - estimated at about 25% of a full-time position - the President will receive an annual honorarium. Candidates will be informed by 20 March whether they are being invited for an interview by the Selection Committee.

4. ENQA meetings and events

3-4 May	Oslo	EQUIP focus group for QA agencies on ESG 2015
4 May	Oslo	ENQA Board meeting
4-5 May	Oslo	ENQA Members' Forum
1-2 June	Dublin	ENQA workshop: Exploring synergies between QA and qualifications recognition
15-16 June	Brussels	ENQA Seminar on the European dimension of QA
20 June	Brussels	ENQA networking event
21 June	Brussels	ENQA Board meeting
13 September	Brussels	ENQA Board meeting
25 October	Sèvres	ENQA Board meeting
26-27 October	Sèvres	ENQA General Assembly
23-25 November	Riga	European Quality Assurance Forum

I would like to thank all those who replied to the recent survey on the evaluation of ENQA's activities, and I look forward to seeing you all at the Members' Forum in Oslo and in my hometown for the workshop on quality assurance and recognition.

Yours sincerely,



Padraig Walsh
President of ENQA